


The future is mobile

 By Yusuf Begg

11 Dec 2012

Mobile devices are without a doubt an intricate part of our global technology. In fact, more Africans access the internet through cell phones than laptops or desktop computers and it is this vital fact that highlights the significance of Mobile Web in Africa 2012.

Held at The Venue Melrose Arch in Johannesburg, South Africa, and hosted by All Amber, the Vodacom sponsored event provided many dynamic perspectives about harnessing the potential of the internet and applications on mobile devices. The conference is now in its fourth year and ran from the 27-29 November 2012, enjoying a generous turnout of experts in social media, mobile and advertising.

Mobile Marketing Africa Focus Day

Day one, Mobile Marketing Africa Focus Day, covered topics such as extending brands and driving mobile marketing, successfully engaging with the consumer and delivering through innovative campaigns.

Lynne Gordon, general manager of Brandtone South Africa, explained how mobile was utilized to create award-winning marketing campaigns for Carling Black Label. Mobile platforms were used to allow consumers to "Be The Coach" and resulted in 11 million brand engagements, a full stadium of fans and one happy client.

"SMS, Voice and USSD are familiar and pervasive and allow anyone with mobile phones to participate." she said, in regards to the success of feature phones used in marketing campaigns.

The main conference, which took place from 28-29 November, covered topics such as mobile as a facilitator to change society, taking mobile apps to the next level, embracing feature phones and the impact of social media.

Etienne Louw, MD at mapIT, elaborated on new mapping technology available and how it can benefit us. During his presentation he charismatically spoke about the emergence of location based services, check in apps and Way Tags.

"Location based services are the most wanted mobile feature because one fifth of users are already utilizing it to find friends. This creates opportunity for business." Louw said.

Mobile as part of the marketing mix

The Mobile Marketing Association of South Africa (MMA), whose primary focus is to establish mobile as an indispensable

part of the marketing mix, was a proud participant at this year's MMA "Sideload" Preview.

Guest speakers from the likes of Google, Deloitte and Nokia shared their hard earned expertise and experiences with attendees. The conference allowed key industry innovators, senior members of the MMA and evangelists to contribute in an open forum discussion around mobile, focusing on why (stats, findings, research), what (what platforms are used in mobile and how best to maximize from these) and when (targeting, reaching the correct markets and implementation of successful campaigns) in order to provide the audience with various perspectives, best practices and strategy.

The MMA is diverse and its members include agencies, advertisers, hand held device manufacturers, wireless operators and service providers, retailers as well as software and services providers. Together they collaborate to promote, educate, measure, guide and protect the mobile marketing industry worldwide.

"The MMA Sideload is about peer to peer sharing of issues, experiences, best practices and case studies around mobile" says Raymond Buckle, MMA SA chairperson.

ABOUT YUSUF BEGG

Yusuf Begg is currently working as part of the MMA SA team (Mobile Advertising Association of South Africa) to establish mobile as an indispensable part of the marketing mix and to promote, educate, measure, guide and protect the mobile marketing industry worldwide. Contact Yusuf on ybegg1983@gmail.com and follow @D1g1boyB on Twitter.

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