Digital radio growth offers targeted ad reach

As broadband connectivity reaches more of the country's population and affordable tablets and smart phones multiply, digital radio is set to increase, with services such as listener-driven radio (LDR) giving users more reason to tune in online.

According to Attila Bernariusz, divisional head of Kagiso Digital, the company is seeing an upward trend in digital radio, with digital radio listeners ramping up and advertiser interest in the medium growing. Where online was once merely an extension of the radio experience, it is now evolving into a medium in its own right with a growing audience.

The company has been at the forefront of digital radio for a number of years, understanding that online will grow into a product in its own right rather than merely being a value-add for listeners and advertisers. It was reportedly the first company to bring LDR to the local market through the Ja.fm online platform for Jacaranda FM.

LDR allows users of an online radio site to vote for which song they would like to hear next on the main selection screen on the Home Page, or the mini one on the rest of the site. Listeners can also input into the playlist from elsewhere on the web, by embedding the 'widget' on their own site or blog. This approach allows an online radio station to offer more diverse and interactive content with listeners, making them feel like the content is responding to their tastes and needs in near real-time.

Targeting tastes

Digital radio is a powerful platform for advertisers because it is targetable and offers insight into the tastes and responses of users, especially when combined with listener-driven technologies.

Advertisers can leverage market intelligence gleaned from the listener-driven technology to change messaging and creative in live ad campaigns. Digital radio is said to create a faster feedback mechanism for digital campaigns, enabling marketers to update their creative or messaging, in order to increase the effectiveness of the campaign, before the actual campaign ends. Ads that are not performing can be pulled out at any time and replaced, based on data about the effectiveness of the campaign in question.

The technology can also allow two different users to listen to different songs or music genres. Behavioural targeting can also be used to determine routes on the site that users most regularly use so that advertising plans can be developed accordingly. The targeting can be done according to demographics, geographic data, age splits, gender splits and music genre.

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