

Building a successful mobile marketing strategy for 2014



By [Howard Moodycliffe](#)

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The mobile phone is now firmly entrenched as a part of the marketer's toolkit - but the art of successful mobile marketing is still young and rapidly evolving.

Over the past year or so wiGroup has supported a large number of mobile campaigns and processed over R1.5bn in mobile transaction value flow through our platform, wiPlatform. As a result, we're starting to see some clear patterns in what works and what doesn't.

Here are the top five things we think mobile marketing strategists need to understand for 2014:



1. Move beyond engagement

Customer engagement and brand awareness are lovely things - but at some point, they need to translate into sales. In 2014, we expect to see an increasing awareness, among agencies and brands alike, that engagement for its own sake can be an expensive exercise that's difficult to justify.

"Look how many Facebook fans we've gained" is not going to be enough anymore. The technology to track every mobile customer interaction from 'first touch to till point' not only already exists, it's widely available and easy to use. Mobile campaigns will increasingly be measured according to how much revenue they generate at the point of sale.

2. Discover the profits in the space behind the curve

Location-based marketing, near-field communication, creative ways to use QR codes - agencies love to play with the possibilities created by new tools. But when we look at the numbers, they don't always add up just yet. There's a place for trying new technology to drive innovative campaigns, and to drive adoption, but it's important to keep your strategic goals in mind.

If driving sales at volume is the objective, some of the most successful campaigns we've seen to date - the ones that have had the biggest effect on the client's bottom line, not necessarily the ones that win awards - used plain old USSD, and SMS to relevant, 'opt-in' and active databases. These technologies may not be sexy, but they work well for large sections of the South African population.

3. Be inspired by diversity

This follows from the previous point: Successful mobile marketers in 2014 and beyond will be the ones who deeply understand their audiences, and have mastered all the tools at their disposal.

In South Africa and the rest of Africa, our reality for the next couple of years at least is not smartphones and high-speed broadband connections. It is five-year-old feature phones and users who wring as much value as they possibly can out of every rand of airtime.

Successfully crafting mobile campaigns for this market is a creative challenge agencies should be excited to grapple with. Get it right and the rewards are huge.

4. Integrate mobile with everything else

Our experience has shown us very clearly, time and again, that standalone mobile campaigns don't work well. Successful campaigns integrate traditional above- and below-the-line media with social and mobile elements to get the customer's attention, hold it and then drive action.

One of our favourite clients, a mass-market fast food chain, has used a clever, cost-effective combination of TV and print ads, in-store media and mobile couponing to drive a series of very popular campaigns that translated into over a million redemptions at their tills.

5. Open and shareable beats closed and exclusive

Nobody likes to be locked in. Consumers resent having their choices constrained, and retailers are wary of making exclusive commitments to services that might not work out.

From both perspectives, it makes sense to choose open platforms over closed ones whenever possible - especially in a market that's moving as fast as mobile. Be wary of apps, wallets or suppliers who demand you use them exclusively - instead, choose systems that will allow you to use whatever tool works best for each client and each campaign.

ABOUT HOWARD MOODYCLIFFE

Howard is Head of Marketing and International at wiGroup. He has 15 years' experience in B2B and B2C marketing and operations across a range of industry sectors from ICT (Logica - UK), to publishing and media (News Corporation - Australia) and mobile (wiGroup - South Africa). He has built up significant experience in marketing online and mobile platforms with his most recent role being CEO of Australia's largest peer-to-peer car rental online marketplace, Drivenycarrentals.com.au.

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