

Business opportunities in the growth of mobile app usage in South Africa

If you have not yet joined the mobile app bandwagon now is the time for you to contemplate on this ideology so that you don't get left behind. The app market is extremely big and continues to grow each day. In the year 2013 Google's Android market reported 50 billion app downloads and featured over 1 million apps available on their play store. Respectively in the year 2014 Apple reached 75 billion app downloads and featured 1.2 million apps in the iTunes store.

 By [Sufyan Mkwanda](#) 26 Oct 2015



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This staggering growth has analysts predicting that by the year 2017, there will be well worth over 268 billion downloads and 77 billion dollars in revenue will be made from this market.

The above results are captured from a global perspective and I am sure you are pondering on where Africa as a whole stands and compares to the rest of the world. Although the notion of South Africa being Africa's very own "Silicon Valley" may be debatable by the Kenyan people, South Africa leads in mobile application downloads in the Sub-Saharan African region. Consumers in Nigeria, Ghana and Kenya are yet to catch up.

Smartphones taking centre stage

There are many factors to the distinctive growth of mobile app usage that we see in South Africa today. The fundamental factor that sees the growth in the usage of mobile apps locally and globally is the increase in smartphone sales and adoption of these devices. According to [eMarketer](#) the number of smartphone users worldwide will surpass two billion by the year 2016. That is a 12.6% increase from this year.

This shows a slow decomposition in feature phones which will become a minority in the telecommunication world. You may sometimes reminisce on the old days where your phone battery life would last up to five days because it did not have an android or IOS operating system to power up its hardware and interactive user interface. Smartphones however, are taking centre stage when it comes to accessing the internet and reports show that 48% or rather 17.7 million of the 37.2 million adult populations make use of mobile apps access the internet via their smartphones. - Source of this report is the MMAS.

Opportunities for business

Advancement of network technologies, lowering of mobile data usage costs, growing adaptation of smartphones and the increase in application usability have also contributed tremendously to the growth of mobile application usage in South Africa. This represents great opportunities for businesses that would like to leverage on the growth of smartphone adaptation and mobile app usage. Businesses can look at this as an opportunity to broaden their target audiences, improve their marketing strategies, align their brand to adopt mobile are just few of the many opportunities presented here. The use of desktop machines, laptop as well as the late boomer of tablets has seen a drastic decline while mobile continues to soar.

With more mobile internet users than desktop users, it is yet another sign that digital media is evolving towards mobile first. If businesses choose not to explore this opportunity, the least you can do which will be beneficial is invest in a responsive, mobile-ready website. A time will come where desktops could be extinct and if you have not caught on the mobile revolution you should do so now or be left behind.

ABOUT SUFYAN MKWANDA

At SMGlobal Tech we believe that managing your IT infrastructure correctly can improve business efficiencies, productivity and help businesses reduce costs. We believe in using technology to assist SMEs attract and retain new customers, reduce day to day IT operational costs, secure data and understand cloud computing.
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