

Use mobile - it's a cost saver

Given the global financial crunch, companies are turning to mobile for major cost savings in their marketing and communication to their customer bases.

 By [Eddie Groenewald](#) 8 Apr 2009

Whether it's advertising, brochures or even invoicing, mobile is proving to be the most cost-effective communication channel and is also the most measurable.

Examining all the options

Looking at the TV, companies have to pay an agency to conceptualise a campaign, put it together, utilise media buyers for placement of the content and pay for the airtime. Along with the costs involved, this is a time consuming process with airtime having to be booked way in advance.

Measurability is also sketchy at best.

Radio similarly requires the conceptual work around the ad, the commissioning of the voice artist, the placement and so on.

With print advertising, the creation of the advert may be less onerous, but once again, placement costs are high - even for a black and white advertising in newspapers - not even mentioning the costs of glossy magazine advertising. And then there is the fact that companies can't accurately measure how many people have seen the specific advert - although there are estimations in place.

Online is obviously cheaper and quicker to implement, but the audience is much smaller as there are only seven million people who access the Internet each year in South Africa with about 1.5 million broadband connections.

Furthermore, it's hard to confirm whether someone has received an email let alone read it, and temporary addresses make tracking users problematic.

When it comes to direct mailing, bills and brochures can cost as much as R15 each to print, package and send out to customers.

Mobile is more cost effective

The most important thing to say about mobile is that it can cover all the other channels. Video content can be placed on a mobile website (mobisite) as can podcasts and songs. In addition, mobile radio will be launched in the near future. Then there are the other types of mobile content (wallpapers, ring tones, games etc.). Lastly there are the usual digital marketing options on mobile as well.

Secondly, mobile is the most measurable medium to communicate with. Companies can build profiles of their user base and in the case of MMS and mobisites, see when the MMS are downloaded or when people visit the site and measure the correlation between the two. Unlike Internet sites which can generally only calculate unique visitors per day (because of temporary IP addresses) and cannot say who those are -

mobisites identify the actual cellphone number providing a unique identification mechanism.

Moving on to why mobile is more cost effective, there are the obvious cost savings on airtime on TV and radio or the cost of printing. And even on invoices or brochures, costs can be cut down to R1.95 an MMS.

There is no concern about delivery of the bill because it is sent straight to users' cellphones and there is a download receipt on MMS. If bills are placed behind a secure login on a mobisite, companies can see when the bills have been viewed.

Along with being the most cost effective, all encompassing and measurable medium, mobile also has the largest base in South Africa with around 35 million users. It is also the most personal of communication devices.

Email and post office boxes may be ignored, but most people keep their cellphone in the same room as them.

It's therefore not surprising that mobile is growing and will soon be one of the most used communication mediums by companies from all sectors.

ABOUT EDDIE GROENEWALD

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