Rich media: The new digital currency

By Daniel Schmidt , issued by Mark1   9 Mar 2015

Digital media is changing the way businesses inform their audiences. Rich media, the 'new kid on the block' in display advertising, has a big role to play in this regard. SA's designers are driving Africa forward in this space, as they apply their crafts for the continent's leading brands. A rich media ad is a web ad that offers more ways to involve an audience. It contains images, video or a function to expand while the user hovers over it, which brings about higher user interaction.

Studies show that mobile is the fastest growing digital medium in Africa. An abundance of 'feature phones' on the continent often shades the growth of complete smartphones. Make no mistake though; it is likely that smart devices are expected to be in the hands of at least 30% of Africa's population by 2017. More and more, brands and consumers can engage with one another over this growing medium, and rich media is poised to become the choice currency in what promises to be an immense market.

The 'wow factor'

It's no secret that design software and techniques evolved with technology and now play an important role in advertising campaigns. Rich media and well-thought out UX (user experience) design create a certain 'wow factor'. Nowadays, people see so much 'clutter' online that modern campaigns need an edge in order to engage consumers. There needs to be a value exchange to win the interaction of a viewer - time is precious and web users expect entertainment and quality information in return for clicks. In 2015, UX and UI (user interface) will be the most important metrics when seeking traffic.
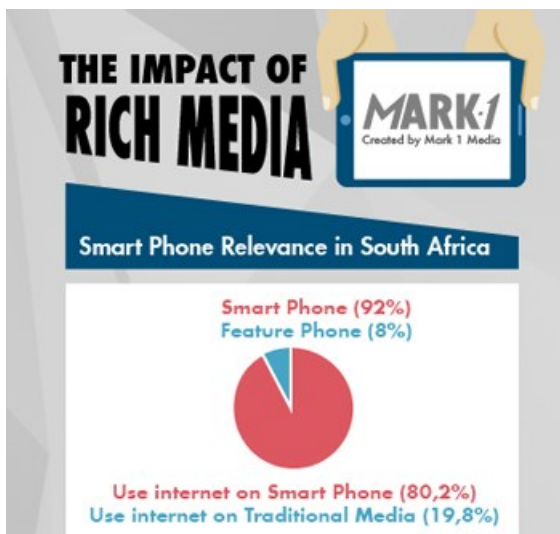
click to enlarge

The entertainment value of your ad will be judged by first impressions. 'Don't judge a book by its cover' is a phrase that holds no sway online, where web users skim through content rapidly. This is where rich media can become a gold mine. Curiosity is a natural human trait; if you satisfy your community's interest with something that entertains them, your campaign has made an impact.

People enjoy interacting with brands, if they didn't then there wouldn't be any advertising on our screens. But more and more, brands are going to rely on 'attention currency'. Getting people to interact with an ad unit, and spend more time with a brand, is how awareness (and eventually trust) is going to be built in the digital age.

In conclusion:

• Advertisers are going to need to find a middle ground between static (perceived as boring) and flashy (seen as spam).

• Technological advances in design (not to mention analytics) have assisted marketers in delivering measurable results. This is more entertaining and also brings more 'bang for your buck' than traditional advertising.

• A shift has occurred from the display of primarily flash banners to rich media units, a trend fuelled in part by the modern marketer's need to engage and captivate consumers.

• The mindset that a campaign can be built around one idea needs to change. As the campaign gains traction, the agency needs to ask themselves how they can develop the concept further (while making the most of rich media technology and capability to keep the audience engaged).

• The future of ad units lies in rich media ads that act as 'mini mobi sites' with high entertainment value and strong calls-to-action. Web users feel as though clicking through is going to benefit them and add value to their online experience.

More information on rich media ads:

Rich media ads are built using HTML5, where truly scalable, cross-screen HTML5 technology can be implemented. In this way, the web user can be served an ad that does not compromise the user experience no matter what device they are viewing. These ads contain many functions (they can expand, resize, get access to device functionalities, etc.) that increase the time consumers engage with them.

MRAID (Mobile Rich Media Ad Interface Definitions) is a project established by the IAB Mobile Marketing Centre of Excellence to define a common API (Application Programming Interface) for mobile rich media ads that will run in mobile apps. The project's goal is to create a standardised set of commands, designed to work with HTML5 and JavaScript, that developers creating rich media ads can use to communicate what those ads do with the apps into which they are being served.

Without MRAID different apps (incorporating different rich media vendors' Software Development Kits) have disparate requirements in terms of the APIs that creative developers must use to communicate with the app. MRAID therefore cancels the need for the same creative to be rewritten in order to run across different apps.

ABOUT DANIEL SCHMIDT

Head of Search at Mark 1, Dan began his career in Project Management but soon after graduating from CPUT with a Bachelor of Technology, he discovered that writing was a passion. A preoccupation with branding, writing and consumer psychology have given him an edge in Search Marketing, where he focuses on producing performance-driven ad copy.
View my profile and articles...

- **Is out of home in your digital strategy?** 24 Aug 2023
- **Forget the Metaverse and say hello to ChatGPT.** 20 Jan 2023
- **World-first 'anamorphic programmatic' DOOH campaign comes to the V&A Waterfront** 18 Nov 2022
- **Content Marketing 101 - in 2022** 20 Jun 2022
- **Programmatic Digital Out-of-Home** 7 Jun 2022

Mark1

Mark1 is a technology driven and creatively focused Digital Media Business.
Profile | News | Contact | Twitter | Facebook | RSS Feed

For more, visit: https://www.bizcommunity.com