

Mobile: The remote control to turn your customer on!

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How do you do that? Here's a four-step plan to engage with your customer and turn them on, on mobile

As you can see the cellphone's reach has in the last couple of years passed that of radio (about 28 million) and TV (about 27 million). Does that mean we should kill our TV and radio marketing budget and move it to mobile marketing?

You might think it strange for me, as a Mobile Marketing Consultant, to be answering a question like that with a big, resounding "NO!"

No one medium ever replaces another. It merely alters the way you use them.

As a marketer, you cannot communicate via mobile if you do not have the person's mobile number, or permission to engage with it. So the trick of entering, or using mobile marketing, is to leverage other traditional media, like TV and radio, to reach out to your customer or prospective customer and ask them for their number in order to begin your conversation with them on mobile. In other words, you make the mobile phone the remote control to your customer.

How do you do that? Well, we have developed our 4-step plan to engage with your customer and turn them on, on mobile:

Step 1: Get their cell number ? SMS Short Code, USSD, Image Recognition, Interactive IVR, Mobile Advertising, Targeted Data Rental

Step 2: Provide a mobile home for info ? Mobi-site, Mobile Web, USSD, Mobile Apps

Step 3: Send them a message to invite them over ? SMS, MMS, Bluetooth, Automated Voice Message (AVM)

Step 4: Serve & entertain them ? Mobile Content (Value Added Services), Mobile Survey, Mobile Statements, Celebrity Ringtones, Airtime Rewards

Step 1 is where it is so important to be integrating mobile into your TV or radio campaign by placing a call-to-action on mobile.

At the end of the day, mobile is a technology. Do not use a technology just because it is there, or new, or the flavour of the month. Use it because it provides your marketing campaign with tangible, measurable benefits and value, if integrated effectively.

We have had great success in integrating mobile into the entertainment world by adapting our 4-step process to enrich TV and radio game shows:

Step 1: Get their cell number ? Entry Mechanism

Step 2: Provide a mobile home for info ? Mobile Website

Step 3: Send them a message to invite them over ? Contestant/Viewer Messaging

Step 4: Serve & entertain them ? Creating a Valuable/Rewarding experience via Instant Gratification Rewards & Prizes

Here are some practical examples of how we have used mobile in various TV and radio campaigns:

Shield No Sweat Golden Goal Challenge

- The No Sweat Golden Goal Challenge was a nationwide 5-a-side action soccer tournament broadcast on eTV. We used mobile to recruit male adult soccer players at grass root level nationwide. A mobi-site (www.nosweat.mobi) was developed for the target market to access information together with messages and

SMS reminders sent to reinforce engagement with the brand.

Vaseline Men Strength-to-Strength Challenge

- Vaseline Men wanted an easy entry mechanism on mobile that would provide contestant information to be able to shortlist them to compete in the 12 week Strength-to-Strength Challenge TV show. We set up an SMS short code and USSD number to log entrants and shortlist compatible contestants in each province based on age, weight and height.

Surf Pick-a-Box

- Surf required us to recruit Surf customers as contestants for a TV game show. The challenge was that Surf wanted the entry mechanism to be free to the consumer. We utilised the free "Please Call Me" (PCM) service where customers could send a PCM to a cell phone number. In return, the entrant received an Automated Voice Message (AVM) from the host of the show asking them questions about the Surf product they had bought. Valid entrants were randomly selected to be contestants on the show.

Oude Meester Masters of Jazz

- Oude Meester sponsored a 30 minute Masters of Jazz radio show on seven different radio stations. The challenge was to convert one message into several different languages. We built up a database with an SMS competition. Participants were then sent an AVM with the DJ's voice of the radio station they listen to, and the DJ asked them questions about the show. Participants received an entry for every correct answer. Rewards included airtime and celebrity DJ ringtones.

In commenting on the above case studies, you may now say to me, this is all very well for big brands with huge budgets, but what if you are a smaller brand, or a big brand with a smaller budget. Where do you start?

I would say that the first step is to find a specialist in this field to assist you, an independent mobile marketing consultant you trust. Next step is to ask questions. What questions do you ask? To give you some idea about that please turn to my opinion piece on page xx entitled "It's all about asking the right questions".

Another valuable resource in South Africa is the Mobile Marketing Association.

The Mobile Marketing Association (MMA) is the premier global non-profit association established to stimulate the growth of mobile marketing and its associated technologies. The MMA is a global organization with 700+ members representing over 45 countries. MMA members include agencies, advertisers, hand held device manufacturers, carriers and operators, retailers, software providers and service providers, as well as any company focused on the potential of marketing via mobile devices.

It is an action-oriented organization designed to clear obstacles to market development, establish mobile media guidelines and best practices for sustainable growth, and evangelize the mobile channel for use by brands and content providers.

The local South African council was established just over a year ago, and is making great progress in the various working groups to achieve their mandated objectives in SA.

Please read all about the latest initiatives at the MMA of SA to see how they can assist you with your mobile marketing requirements.

So, is mobile marketing just hype or the real thing? Being involved with mobile marketing every day, we get to see how

popular and effective and widely used it really is, especially in the lower LSMs in South Africa. It is truly such an effective medium to open up the channels of communication to your customers, and not only talk to them, but listen to them!

We see it everyday when we read the heart-warming and personal replies we get to brand messages sent from their customers. It reminds us that we are not dealing with a database or a list of numbers, but real, true South Africans with heart, valid opinions and a voice, and now with a technology that gives them the opportunity to be heard: the mobile phone!

In summary, and as mentioned previously, no one technology replaces another. Your responsibility as a brand is to open the channels to market, carry your message on as many communication platforms as is feasible and relevant to your target market, and then let your customer decide how they want to communicate with you at any given point. Empower your customer or prospective customer by offering them choice: and you will see that mobile will become a popular one and you will see that the first thing they will do is reach for that remote control, the mobile phone, to initiate and turn on the interaction with your brand!

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