

Opera wins major market share in SA and rest of Africa

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Opera the cellphone browser developer and manager, has gained more than 60% of South African market share and more than 70% of African market share in five years.



Image by 123RF

The company is now trying to attract premium cellphone users with its Opera Max browser, which manages to compress data, as has been a feature of its other browsers.

This week, a Chinese consortium bought most of Opera, which is a Norwegian company, for \$600m. Opera has 10% of the global mobile market.

Senior marketing manager for sub-Saharan Africa at Opera Software, Jo Crawshaw, said Opera Max was now being directed to SA's Android phone users and developed markets, where users were more likely to own top-end phones.

Users in Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana and other African countries had entry- and mid-level phones. Many of those who owned top-end phones had already installed Opera Max.

"Perceptions were that Opera was a browser for feature phones and not for smartphones. But Opera Max has challenged that, and we believe we can attract more top-end smartphones," she said.

Crawshaw said Opera had innovated by introducing built-in ad-blocking, data and video compression, and a built-in virtual private network (VPN). A VPN is a private network that extends across a public network or internet.

It enables users to receive data across shared or public networks as if their computing devices were directly connected to the private network.

Opera Max reduces data consumption across the majority of applications available on Android phones as much as 50%, offering users cheaper mobile internet access.

Furthermore, users who streamed video on Netflix and YouTube could save about 60% of the data usually spent on this media, without a noticeable loss of quality, Crawshaw said.

Opera has said that it expected more than 100-million Android phones to be shipped worldwide with integrated Opera Max by 2017.

Source: [*Business Day*](#)

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