

Mobile leads the way through the information age



By [Eddie Groenewald](#)

10 Sep 2008

Mobile technology is providing effective answers to companies and consumers trying to find their way through the information age, says CEO of Multimedia Solutions Eddie Groenewald, who also reckons that with the rise of cyberspace, companies wanting to communicate to consumers have a huge challenge in trying to do so.

“Consumers working in an office environment wade through multiple messages being flung at them every day. The onslaught begins with TV and radio in the morning and moves onto the hundreds of emails they receive every day, phone calls from colleagues and clients, meetings, reading online and in print and so on,” he says.

Groenewald says the reality is that with the rapid growth of information, people just cannot take it all in anymore. This has led to an erosion of the effectiveness of most mediums. People begin to switch off radio and TV; they stop reading their emails; ignore their post; scan information on the internet and the print media and remember little.

“Consumers become tired of being spammed through various media channels and are simply switching off,” Groenewald says. “It is into this environment that social media came onto the scene.”

The power to interact

The internet and mobile technology began to give the power to the consumer. Previously the flow of information had largely been one way - from the mass media to consumers. However, with social media, consumers began to publish their own content, read the content of other consumers and began to comment and discuss issues.

“This empowerment began to re-awaken the interest of consumers in communicating and people have begun to wade through the mass of information out there, ignoring what they are not interested in, to find information that does interest them and mediums that give them an opportunity to interact,” Groenewald says.

Access to information therefore became very important and people want to get straight to what they are looking for without too much getting in their way.

Mobile meets the need

Mobile began to meet people's need for direct access to information through SMS notifications and WAP-based sites accessed from their cellphones.

However, in the last few years, Groenewald says the advancement of handsets, with better screens and faster download capabilities, has meant that the cellphone is able to deliver far richer content.

MMS allowed for a dynamic sound enabled, video or animation slide show presentation and now mobile websites (mobisites) offer streaming video, rich graphical content and easy access to information.

“Most importantly, however, the cellphone has become the consumers' first choice when it comes to reaching out to other people. It therefore enables consumers to find content they are looking for as well as publishing their own content and communicating about it,” Groenewald says.

One step further

The cellphone will therefore become the ultimate social media device, but mobile technology has not finished yet. Groenewald says because of the mass of information out there, an important key for people is being able to find what they are looking for. User preference is therefore becoming key in communication.

Mobisites are not only allowing consumers to customise what content they want to see, but provide an important profiling tool - the cellphone number.

“Each cellphone number is picked up by a mobisite when the consumer downloads it. This means that publishers of mobisites can begin to profile exactly who is visiting their site. That information can be matched with the consumer's preferences stated in their mobisite profile, their browsing habits and other information known about them,” he says.

This enables mobisite publishers to start customising content based on consumer interest. They are also able to measure exactly what content is working by being able to analyse exactly who is looking at it. This allows publishers to constantly update mobisites and even simultaneously display unique home pages to different users at the same time, resulting in consumers getting quickly to the information they want.

Groenewald says mobile technology is leading the way through the information age because it is the only technology that remains with consumers 24 hours a day and gives them access to the information they want, when they want it.

The future

The future of mobile technology is bright. Mobile technology is now linking in with location based services and the improvement in this technology and wireless broadband internet access means cellphones are now taking over the functions of other technologies including CD players, radio and TV.

“People are no longer using multiple devices to get digital content. They are just using their cellphones to access it. Cellphones are moving into the computer realm as more and more people access the Internet from their phones as opposed to their desktops,” he says.

The cellphone will therefore become the ultimate tool to access any kind of information from anywhere on the planet. And if that information is location based, then the cellphone will also be able to assist people in getting where they want to go.

“The cellphone is therefore becoming an all encompassing device that not only manages diaries and contact information, but provides access to all media types and location based information, positioning it to be the dominant communication tool for the foreseeable future,” Groenewald says.

ABOUT EDDIE GROENEWALD

Eddie Groenewald has 27 years experience in the ICT industry, of which more than a decade has been in the Digital Marketing sector. He now focuses on a True Multimedia Offering, ATL, BTL and Digital.
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