

The mighty mobile... untapped

SINGAPORE / JOHANNESBURG, SA: Mobile devices are more important to consumers than money, keys or food, yet marketers are yet to unlock the full potential of mobile.

A global survey just released by BuzzCity, the international mobile advertising network, shows that consumers are now constantly connected and heavily reliant on their mobiles when travelling, with the majority (60%) regarding their mobiles as indispensable.

The latest edition of the BuzzCity Report shows how much consumers interact with their mobiles when on the move, revealing that phones are the highest priority item for people to take with them as they leave the house (60%). The majority of consumers are using their mobile phones to stay constantly connected and updated - in real time - wherever they are - around two thirds (65%) check their emails both before and during travel. Almost three quarters (69%) use their daily commute to listen to music, watch videos or read emails, tweets and status updates from friends via their handsets.



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Many regard their mobile as more important than money (39%), keys (29%) or food (16%), and almost half of leisure travellers (49%) use their mobile for travel-related activities such as checking routes (17%), researching public transport schedules (7%) or finding local attractions, amenities or general tourist information (25%). A quarter of respondents (25%) use their mobiles to make last minute bookings and reservations.

Travellers' demands still not being met

Yet although consumers' reliance on mobiles is clear, the survey indicated that travellers' demands are still not being met by service providers, with around a third of respondents (35%) wanting more hotels, cafes and restaurants to provide free WiFi to ensure that they are continuously connected to their world via a mobile. And just 27% of commuters use their mobiles to book or pay for their journey to work, suggesting that mobile transactions are still not a priority for many public transport companies.

DR KF Lai, CEO of BuzzCity, said: "Our research paints a picture of a constantly connected traveller. This strong consumer reliance on mobile presents significant potential for travel service providers when consumers are on the move - either for work or pleasure. Companies can take simple steps like optimising their websites for mobile, ensuring strong WiFi connections and making mobile transactions as straightforward as possible to meet consumer demand and provide a more mobile-friendly travel experience."

Opportunities

The survey demonstrates the multitude of opportunities for service providers wishing to invest in the full potential of mobile as an extension of service delivery; by providing innovative local content and applications that help address daily travel challenges such as parking, airport security and visa applications, service providers can adapt to consumer demand for a more personalised, customisable mobile experience when travelling. Similarly the fact that less than a quarter of respondents (19.1%) still prefer to pay by card than via their mobile presents an opportunity for providers to maintain and encourage consumer confidence in mobile commerce by making mobile payments more convenient.

The survey results forms part of the BuzzCity Report covering the first quarter of 2013. During this period the network delivered some 62 billion banner ads, a year-on-year growth of 36% compared to 2012. To view the South African advertising infographic, go to page 16 of the report. For more information or to view the report, visit reports.buzzcity.com.

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