

Mobile aims at targets

Measuring the advertising spread an important feature of new marketing tool, writes Alf James



POCKET POWER: Russel Stromin says mobile is the medium of the common man.

MEDIA fragmentation has resulted in a wider choice of coverage between general, specialist, traditional and new media, says Russel Stromin, MD of Strike Media.

He says advertisers and marketers have been crying out for something efficient, effective and affordable that lets them talk directly to the consumer.

"Mobile marketing delivers on all counts and can increase responsiveness to market trends, news events or creative opportunities that present themselves.

"Mobile is the medium of the common man — by using this channel marketing and advertising move from being the exclusive domain of companies with big budgets and impressive creative agencies to the hands of anyone with the desire to talk directly to their customers."

Stromin says there are an estimated 10-million cellphone owners browsing the mobile internet in SA and an estimated 7-million PC users.

"However, while many PC users only have internet access at work, during office hours and in a controlled environment, mobiles are mostly attached to the individual user at all times. In Africa, mobile will often be the first screen people have personal access to that offers advertisers the first direct, affordable route to large, untapped markets.

"A mobile handset is personal — it is mostly always on and in the user's pocket. Advertisers can talk to customers at the point of purchase or before a decision is made."

Stromin says that response can be measured immediately, particularly if there is a call to action in the message, as opposed to traditional marketing and advertising methods that often lack genuine measurement tools.

"With mobile there is instant statistics to gauge the delivery of your message, and mobile marketing is inexpensive compared with other media. Even those with shoestring marketing budgets can embark on sophisticated campaigns.

"The mobile has overtaken the landline as the dominant form of communication in the home. Mobiles offer marketers the unique opportunity of communicating one on one — it is just you talking directly to your consumer, without noise, filters or interference. It allows your message to be personal and private.

"New-generation handsets are effectively mobile internet browsers, full colour, multimedia, multifunctional, that can include technology for location awareness and mobile payments."

He says research has shown that 90% of SMS messages are read within 15 seconds of being received, and SMS response rates are typically 15 times higher than traditional marketing.

"It is instant — you can embark on an SMS marketing campaign and literally reach tens of thousands of recipients in a matter of minutes with a targeted message and without incurring huge produc-

tion costs and long production times.

"The message is interactive and the target can reply or respond instantly. SMS is totally measurable. You can tell how many messages are delivered, opened, and if there is a call to action in the message, you can measure response.

"This allows your return on investment to be calculated quickly and accurately. As mobile marketing is cheap, a 30c SMS can yield a return of more than R1 000 — even R100 000 — a sale if done properly."

Stromin says mobile marketing's power to persuade is based on getting the right message to the right target at the right time in the right place, which is a direct communication talking unhindered to the consumer.

"Mobile marketing is permission based, so consumers are receptive given that they elected to receive communication from you. Even if the phone is off they will still get the message."

He says that as broadband capacity grows and becomes cheaper, internet access via handsets will grow together with subscribers' hunger for new, upgraded handsets as technology advances, opening up even more sophisticated marketing opportunities.

"The future of mobile is all about more. More subscribers, more speed, more sophisticated handsets and more content and services," he says.