E: ask@SKOPOS.info
T: +44(0) 207 953 8359

M-Media Snapshot #1: Opportunities within the small screen

By Vern Chin and Michaela Coulton

SKOPOS Market Insight has recently completed the first wave of MTrack™, a series of studies examining mobile behaviour in the UK.

Consistent with industry-wide reports, findings reveal that the handset is indeed to be the future in buying, reading and connecting, with 77% of respondents who were mobile users indicating they believed so, and 7 in 10 saying it was something worth trying. However mobile still has a way to go as the gap between current online and the future of mobile internet still exists, with three quarters showing a preference for online over mobile.

Mobile Media: Gaining a foothold

The content that those in the UK currently like to read or access most via mobiles is the weather (31%). This comes ahead of social networks and the latest news, at 27% and 26% respectively. In contrast the activities that respondents most commonly do on their mobiles were access e-mails (36%), play pre-loaded games (30%) and use social networks (also 30%).

SMS message advertising was found to be the most common of mobile ads, with 41% having seen or received these. However it was clear that targeted advertisements performed better in terms of actions taken. One fifth of those who had seen or received SMS advertising had clicked or replied to them whereas in comparison, a third of those receiving deals and discount vouchers had responded. Images and technology do also appear to help, as 29% of those seeing or receiving MMS/ picture based advertising had clicked or replied.

The most profitable entertainment avenue was in gaming, as the most common activity that respondents currently paid money to do was download new games (29%). Despite complaints of small screen size and slow connection speeds, approximately 16% of respondents currently stream or download movie clips over their handsets.

SKOPOS
Strategic Research
E: ask@SKOPOS.info
T: +44(0) 207 953 8359

Looking to the future, between 12% and 22% of respondents say they do not currently consume some kinds of media on their mobiles but are likely to do so in time. Most were likely to download video clips to their mobiles (22%), and approximately 1 in 5 said they would download music and articles, listen to the radio or watch streamed video on their handsets. Respondents were most likely to *pay* to download books (38%) or gamble (35%).

Present and future: why the gap?

Despite the obvious upward trend in mobile media consumption however, there remains a section of the digital society who do not look to the mobile as an avenue for consuming media. Findings indicate that 44% of respondents felt reading, listening and watching via the mobile was “not for me”, and approximately 1 in 3 found it boring or difficult.

The small mobile screen was, unsurprisingly, a problem with accessing media over handsets amongst current and potential consumers. Nearly 40% shared this sentiment, some even strongly opposing it, as seen in the comment:

“The screen is far too small, a generation with damaged eyesight is on the way.”

Limited visual enjoyment and increased effort and time involved were other less favoured aspects of consuming media on the small screen. Perhaps surprisingly, only 7% named weak or unreliable signal strength as a disadvantage of reading, listening or watching via the mobile.

Going forward...

Clearly, elements of apprehension do exist and prevent a large-scale adoption of the mobile in media consumption. However the market is already seeking dynamic ways to fill the gap, for example with docking mobiles that integrate into the laptop experience, and interactive bus stop ads that play movie trailers on mobiles. In our first wave of research respondents have spoken of how the handset empowers them in ways such as being able to *“carry whole libraries of music, video and literature on (one) small device...”* as well as *“...make a long trip seem shorter”,* and 21% have already said that they see *no disadvantages with reading, listening or watching over the mobile.* Though these sentiments do not make a majority of our findings for now, our first exploration of the mobile behaviour in the UK has demonstrated that further opportunities to coax mankind into embracing the mobile future remain.

Following this first wave of research, MTrack™ will continue to uncover insightful and relevant trends on M-media and mobile behaviour. To have the UK active digital society answer any burning questions required to advance your business, join in with some leading-edge brands in the industry to conduct Wave 2 of the study - being launched now. Contact SKOPOS via e-mail at ask@skopos.info or paula.juson@skopos.info,or by telephoning +44 0207 953 8359