

The significance of mobile strategies

 By [Philani Mdingi](#)

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A few months ago I was in Cape Town attending an email marketing campaign on behalf of Everlytic. Following this successful event, my interests shifted to Cape Town's night life and like a typical Joburger, I sought to enjoy the assortment of watering holes this city has to offer. Sadly my bar hopping adventure was cut short when my brother and I were skilfully relieved of our cell phones.

One phone mysteriously disappeared at the bar, and the other, snatched from my brother as we left. With our street cred down the drain, I recounted the story to some Cape Town friends. Apparently cell phone theft plagues the Cape of good dope to such an extent that you're more likely to get your car broken into for the pure intent of nabbing a cell phone, than for actually stealing the car.

Of course, this got me thinking. In terms of technology, mobile phones now compete with high end computers, television sets and leading tech entertainment tools. In essence, mobile phones are productivity and entertainment tools rolled into one - they're not called smartphones for nothing!

It's no wonder the gadget is so sought after; almost everyone has one and it ranks up there with other entertainment essentials like a tablet or an Xbox.

Penetration stats speak for themselves

The African mobile penetration stats speak for themselves. More than half the internet connections in Africa are exclusively on mobile; Africa is the second biggest mobile market in the world.

I don't want to bore you with the numbers but it's increasingly clear that savvy marketers should have a mobile strategy or at least be working on one. Even Capetonian thugs have caught on to the importance of mobile, though their mobile strategy leaves much to be desired.

The importance of mobile as a channel seems to be obvious, but why then are we not seeing a correlation in marketing-spend by companies? With this increasing importance given to cellular phones, (I'm not referring to the ads that come with SMS banking alerts) it is essential that companies adopt more progressive mobile marketing technologies.

When SMS banking alerts came out, it was an exciting solution that solved real world problems. But there are even more mobile platforms that companies can embrace to be able to reach consumers. Think MXit, rich media ads, email marketing for mobile and location based services for upwardly mobile hipsters in Cape Town, just to name a few.

"Mobile only" internet connected audience

I bet my lunch money that the marketing tactics doing well in mobile are email marketing and rich media ads. Some may argue that there is audience fatigue as far as these tactics are concerned. But I don't agree, mobile phones are opening up a totally new "mobile only" internet connected audience. And guess what happens when this audience connects to the internet for the first time? They sign up for an email account and engage with adverts that speak their language. These are the millions of people that would otherwise not have been able to connect to the internet; the millions that you are not reaching, because there's no mobile strategy in place to connect with them.

The next time I'm in the Cape, I'll not only be keeping an an eye on my phone but on good mobile content that can only come from having a well-planned mobile strategy.

ABOUT PHILANI MDINGI

A Digital Marketer by default, dreamed of changing the world through words when he was younger and in matric learned that this was called copywriting. Is a qualified Marketing Practitioner of South Africa (MPSA) having been admitted by the Chartered Marketing Council of South Africa. Holds a Diploma in Sales Management from the Institute of Sales and Marketing Management, has an IMM marketing qualification and a qualification in copywriting from City Varsity School of the Arts. Follow @philani on Twitter.

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