
Mobile digital technology: Emerging issues for marketing

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Abstract The growth of direct marketing has been attributed to rapid advances in technology and the changing market context. The fundamental ability of direct marketers to communicate with consumers and to elicit a response, combined with the ubiquitous nature and power of mobile digital technology, provides a synergy that will increase the potential for the success of direct marketing. The aim of this paper is to provide an analytical framework identifying the developments in the digital environment from e-marketing to m-marketing, and to alert direct marketers to the enhanced capabilities available to them.

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, direct marketing has been understood as a marketing system that builds up relationships with customers driven by a well-developed, audited and updated database.¹ More recently, the growth of direct marketing has been attributed to rapid advances in technology and the changing market context.² Environmental threats, such as the impact of the anthrax scare on postal mail, provide a further impetus to shift to virtual communication delivery. It is argued that direct marketers have always been required to have a strong understanding of customer habits, consumer patterns of behaviour and data segmentation in order to elicit the necessary level of response.³ This fundamental ability to communicate directly with consumers and to gain a response can be markedly enhanced

because of the ubiquitous nature and power of mobile digital technology. Used strategically, mobile technology can provide a synergy that will increase the potential for the success of direct marketing. Therefore, it is proposed that direct marketers have exciting new possibilities with m-marketing and need to become more familiar with the application of marketing to the mobile environment of smart phones, mobile phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs) and telematics.

As with any new academic field, research in this emerging area is pre-paradigmatic. Bertele *et al.*⁴ have identified the research, thus far, as located in three domains within the marketing/business perspective. Specifically, these domains include: evaluation of the role of mobile Internet applications for mobile network

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operators; user-centred studies that focus on consumer responses to early product offerings; and studies that review technological and market evolutions to forecast potential new applications and their effectiveness. This paper contributes to both the second and third domains. First, it provides an analytical framework that identifies user behaviour characteristics in both the PC-based and mobile Internet environment. Secondly, it develops a comparative framework that alerts direct marketers to the enhanced capabilities available to them and highlights the key dimensions by which direct marketers can develop effective interactive marketing strategies in the evolving digital environment.

Around the world, the online population has increased markedly with the number stated to be up to 533m.⁵ Internet access and PC use are predicted to continue increasing globally to 2005 with expectations that Internet users will rise from 275m in 2000 to 840m in 2005 and PC users from 521m to 1,008m.⁶ At the same time, developments in 3G (third generation) technology and the growth in cellular connections worldwide present enormous opportunities for marketers to build new markets based on mobile devices. M-marketing encompasses this new era of interactive marketing.

WHAT IS M-MARKETING?

M-marketing should be considered within the context of m-business and m-commerce. Emerging from recent developments in communications technology, m-business represents 'mobile' business and 'refers to the new communications and information delivery model created when telecommunications and the Internet converge'.⁷ M-commerce combines the power and speed of the Internet with the

geographic freedom of mobile telephony in terms of receiving and transmitting data and, importantly, the ability to conduct transactions.⁸⁻¹⁰ The emerging capacity to communicate with any individual, from any place, over any network, and to any device, regardless of time or geographical location¹¹ provides enormous potential for marketers. For this reason, the impact on marketing strategies for direct marketers needs to be addressed. The Adidas short message service (SMS) campaign provides an illustration of this potential.¹² By utilising the 24/7 Media Europe opt-in SMS database and using a text message to alert a specific demographic group, Adidas was able to increase brand awareness and to drive users to watch the Adidas television advertisements in the first break of the televised Brit Awards (an annual music award in the UK). The media agency Mindseye Communication was looking for a new and original method to market the Adidas brand consistent with their image and to co-promote the Brit Awards. This method allowed a direct response by precisely timing the messages and alerting the target audience, people in the UK aged under 30 years, to a specific event in a specified time frame.

In this paper, m-marketing is defined as the application of marketing to the mobile environment of smart phones, mobile phones, personal digital assistants (PDA) and telematics. M-marketing is characterised by both the untethered interaction with the World Wide Web and the location-specific context which enhances communication and delivery of information. Marketing communication and information can be delivered to mobile devices via voice-activated portals or 'vortals',¹³ text applications such as SMS, using e-mail (the current I-mode application), and via Web-mediated delivery using the 3G spectrum. These applications provide ideal opportunities

for innovative direct marketing, but it must be recognised that the databases need to be developed in tandem with this new technology to ensure that customers receive welcome information at a time and in a place that they desire. The key is more to do with understanding how individual consumers will want to interact with their selected brand or content via m-marketing rather than simply using the technology.¹⁴ The Time2Flirt case provides a good example of an m-marketing application that uses the technology appropriately to meet the target market needs.

Time2Flirt is an SMS product of Carbon Partners launched in November, 2001 in pubs and clubs.¹⁵ Upon entering the pub or club customers send a text message containing a key word to a designated central number. They are then given a unique identifier number for the night. Armed with this, they can go to promotional people on the floor and claim their Time2Flirt badge, a bright easily identifiable number for sticking on their clothes. At this point people in the bar can send each other a text message through the central Time2Flirt number such as: '27 u look like babe cum c me on the dance floor 56'. The pub's or club's patrons benefit by having their needs for fun met in an enhanced format. Venues benefit by bringing more people to the pub or club for this added service and by building a database of clients. Equally importantly, they can communicate special offers to their customers on the night or in the future and begin to build an interactive dialogue.

Realising the potential of m-marketing should be high on the agenda for direct marketers despite the initial indications that consumers may be slow to adopt the new mobile enhancements.¹⁶ Indeed, m-marketing can be undertaken at an early stage of uptake of technology by consumers. Many mobile phones are

connected to networks that enable the phone to send and receive text messages (SMS). More than 24bn GSM text messages are sent per month.¹⁷ Thus direct marketers need not await the wide adoption of more advanced technology such as Web-enabled devices but can begin using current mobiles or cellular devices.¹⁸ Given the popularity of SMS, marketing applications that build on it would initially be able to access an extremely large customer base without the need for more technically sophisticated networks and mobile devices, such as the WAP phone and Bluetooth-enabled devices that can access the Internet. For example, past initiatives by Subway in Southern California have involved a pilot programme using geographically-targeted, time-sensitive electronic coupons sent as text messages to consumers on their mobile phones.¹⁹ Direct marketers have already been incorporating e-marketing applications in their strategies in that they have accessed user groups via the Internet and employed interactive website banners effectively to reach their target audience and enable them to transact business. It is, however, important to clarify the concept of m-marketing in contrast to traditional e-marketing to enable marketers to develop innovative strategies that target consumers at the evolving technology/consumer interfaces.

For instance, Mobliss was able to run a campaign with contact lens retailer 1-800-Contact using entertainment via cellphones to drive people to the call centre.²⁰ They provided a game called Jumble where a new puzzle was provided every 60 seconds. In the case of a contact lens retailer these jumbled words might include 'vision' and 'focus' and 'clarity.' This was followed by the presentation of a graphical or text advertisement to the player, but only after they had already answered the

puzzle and were awaiting the next one. In this way they were not detracting from the game experience, but the consumers could order directly by clicking a button and becoming connected with the advertiser's call centre.

TRADITIONAL E-MARKETING VERSUS M-MARKETING

It has been claimed that the Internet is revolutionising marketing and advertising as the movements of every customer are tracked and matched with numerous databases to yield 'infinite permutations' of consumer profiles.²¹ With the development of e-marketing, which uses the capabilities of the Internet to access customers primarily through the destination website and e-mail, customers were required to find the marketer²² and be lured to websites ('drive-to-site'). The use of the Web for e-marketing shifted the onus onto the customer to help themselves to information, products and services that they wanted.²³ This set up a lengthy and often haphazard process whereby customers had to first find the website, be engaged by its attractions and perceived value, perhaps revisit the site to seek and find desired information, and eventually be convinced to do business. Consequently, the imperative for marketers to know and understand the needs of their customers escalated, and they required information in terms of online search behaviour^{24,25} and online attitudes such as immediate reaction to on-line advertising.²⁶ New Internet-enabled metrics afforded marketers the capacity to track, in real time, click-throughs, page views and leads generated.²⁶

A key issue in e-marketing has been the expenditure involved in maintaining a high Web profile that inspires potential

Web consumers to visit the site and encourages them to do business. For some e-tailers, costs for acquiring new customers are more than \$100 and others are spending almost \$500.²⁷ To be viable economically, a destination website must not only attract repeat visits, but gain increasingly more information about every customer's profile with each visit. Some researchers²⁸ argue that firms using the destination model struggle to add enough value to induce customers to repeat their visits and find it even more difficult to encourage them to disclose intimate information. They suggest that the concept that a website is equivalent to a marketing strategy must be discarded, and that there is a mismatch between using the destination website as the fundamental model for e-commerce because it fails to suit the needs of most firms and customers. M-commerce, on the other hand, combines the benefits of mobile telephony in terms of receiving and transmitting information and conducting transactions with the Internet.²⁹ Thus, the strategy for m-marketing will be to use the power of timely and relevant information, the enhancements provided by the Internet, and consumer location information to reach consumers at the point where and when they are ready to do business.³⁰ In practice, effective m-marketing will depend on the ability to acquire mobile phone numbers to establish a point of contact. Efforts to obtain customer information online via e-marketing will be important to facilitate m-marketing, as well as the potential to access mobile users via the mobile network providers. Gathering data from mobile phone users can be done by utilising other media such as television or radio. For example, some television programmes encourage their audiences to send SMS messages to answer a quick quiz for the opportunity to win prizes.

Consumer behaviour

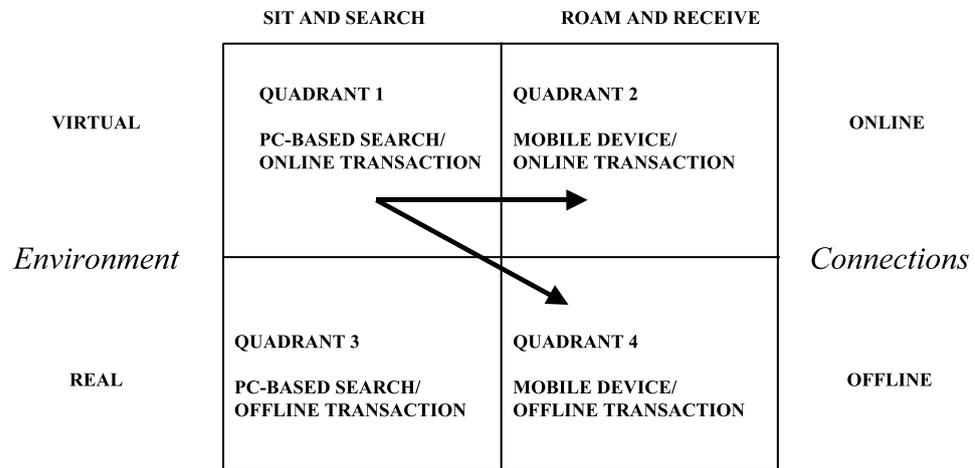


Figure 1: E-marketing/m-marketing matrix

From ‘sit and search’ to ‘roam and receive’

M-marketing has the potential to be part of ‘a pervasive electronic presence that senses and responds not only to who the customer is, but where she is and what she’s doing’.³¹ It is clear that adding value to the consumer experience will require that organisations anticipate and meet the needs of customers not only based on psychographics, demographics and behaviours, but also on their real-time personal physical location, and to travel alongside the customer to provide them with tailored messages and information at the point of need.³² This reorientation in the way that marketers must attempt to reach their target market fits well with the tradition of direct marketers and their strong customer relationship focus.

In this paper it is proposed that this shift from the PC-based website to mobile applications is characterised by a concomitant change in consumer behaviour from ‘sit and search’ to ‘roam and receive’. Marketers have focused on reaching their consumers in a virtual environment via a website. It is now

imperative that they expand their focus to a more contextually sensitive real environment. These ideas are encapsulated within the e-marketing/m-marketing matrix (see Figure 1) which highlights the three dimensions of connections, consumer behaviour and environment. Specifically, it displays online/offline connections, ‘sit and search’ versus ‘roam and receive’ behaviour and virtual versus real-world environment.

Quadrant one exemplifies the now familiar e-marketing/e-commerce scenario where consumers sit and search for information, products or services and buy, trade or make financial and other transactions without leaving home. An example of this type of consumer interaction is the situation where an individual uses his or her home computer to both search for and purchase concert tickets online.

Quadrant two denotes the m-marketing/m-commerce scenario where the user is able to roam with a mobile device, receive messages pertaining to a potential product and service and is then able to purchase

online via their mobile device. This represents the mobile Internet with consumers searching, interacting and purchasing in virtual space. In some senses, consumers are travelling in a virtual bubble while physically navigating the real world.

The third quadrant depicts the consumer's use of a PC to search the Web in order to obtain information about products or services, and following up this activity by going out to purchase offline in the 'real world'. This behaviour is becoming more widely recognised by 'brick-and-click' organisations and their Web-page developers with applications that add location-specificity to custom Web applications to assist customers in accessing the physical setting for offline purchases.³³

The final quadrant, describes m-marketing or more specifically location marketing (l-marketing). In this case, the location of the individual is known via their mobile device and appropriate messages can be sent at a time where he/she is able to act upon the information to purchase a product or service. This quadrant represents the most innovative applications of enhanced digital technology whereby direct marketers have enhanced potential for interactivity through the use of consumer location information.

As indicated by the arrows in the matrix, business and marketing strategies have in the past focused more on quadrant one whereas there is now an imperative for marketers to expand their strategies into quadrants two and four. These two quadrants epitomise the new m-marketing space, and provide marketers with opportunities to use innovative strategies in their goal to communicate, interact and transact with consumers on the move.

If m-marketing, as depicted in

quadrants two and four is to be successful, it is essential that the applications meet the Ovum's (www.ovum.com) three Cs of convenience, (low) cost and compulsive to use.³⁴ In this paper, however, it is argued that a fourth 'c', relating to contextual sensitivity, is central to the future of m-marketing. Mobile technology enables an individual to be enmeshed simultaneously both in the real and virtual world, and marketers need to develop context responsive applications to optimise m-marketing's effectiveness. The next sections will discuss each of the four 'c's in more detail.

First, convenience is a key advantage for consumers who can use their mobile device to gain information about a product or service at the time that they are making a buying decision while shopping at physical locations.³⁵ SkyCode, for instance, has provided a new service to make it easier and convenient for anyone with a mobile device to interact with advertisements instantly and in any medium.³⁶ With this service, advertisements in traditional media have a short string of numbers that a consumer is able to dial from any mobile phone to initiate an interactive session. It therefore has the convenience of the traditional 800 number and makes the mobile Internet mainstream and makes it simple for consumers to act on an impulse sparked by an advertisement. For example, if a teenager sees a magazine advertisement for a movie such as 'Lord of the Rings', he or she could dial *R-I_N_G_S* to access more information and promotions, purchase tickets, or play movie-related games on the mobile device. This is also an important advance for direct marketers who can take advantage of this added information about a consumer's location and stage in the consumer purchase.

Secondly, while mobile costs can be significant, lowered costs can be enjoyed by consumers who take advantage of facilities such as 'opt-in' messaging. For example, discounts off call bills can be provided on the basis of acceptance of advertising messages. Boltblue,³⁷ a large UK mobile Internet portal, took the opportunity to boost text messaging for thousands of students, teenagers and schoolchildren with free designed Father's Day greetings. This portal provided a free service to registered members to send Father's Day and other SMS messages and logos. In addition, users received free e-mail and personalised content such as news and travel information. The low-cost, instantaneous delivery of text messages is attractive to young people and this service allows a last-minute, personal message within an interactive medium.

Thirdly, the compulsion to use mobile phones currently exists for social communication. It is envisaged that as digital tools become smaller, faster and cheaper, they will insinuate themselves into each corner of life.³⁸ Hibernian FC/Carlsberg³⁹ developed an SMS voting football application for use at live matches. Spectators can vote for their man of the match thus building the social communication and mobile community. The Hibernian FC and commercial partners have the opportunity to initiate dialogue with supporters about other topics. In a similar way the 'Big Brother' television programme in Australia used SMS voting to evict people from the house and further reinforced the fan-base community as well as building a database.

Finally, to be contextually sensitive, applications must be responsive to location, customer needs and device capabilities. For example, time and location-sensitive applications, such as travel reservations, cinema tickets and banking will be excellent vehicles for

mobile-based promotions.^{40,41} Mobliss, based in Seattle, developed a weather-context-sensitive snow report system⁴² to meet the needs of skiers and snowboarders. Consumers can go to the Web and build preferences with the different resorts they are interested in. They can also customise directly using their mobile phone. Then they can have text message or e-mail snow alerts sent to their phone or use the phone to search four resort areas for snow reports. Mobliss partnered with Moguls a travel agency for skiing and snow boarding trips. So via a phone a skier can receive information about snow conditions then link to the travel agency to book a discounted trip to that resort or connect to a call centre to speak to a ski-travel agent.

Transactions via the mobile phone should appeal to direct marketers for a number of reasons. Mobile technology offers personalised consumer interaction often resulting from consumers opting in to the enhanced information environment, customer-location information and the possibility of continuous connection to the Internet. With the proliferation of mobile devices, user liberation and technological divergence, direct marketers can link to customers to develop new, stronger relationships and interactions that will provide them with enhanced prospects for investment return. As with e-services⁴³ the employment of these strategies by direct marketers will play an increasingly important role in raising value for consumers.

Comparison of underlying e-marketing/m-marketing factors with implications for practice

The previous section discussed the consumer behaviour changes resulting from mobile digital technology. It is also

Table 1: Comparison between e-marketing/m-marketing underlying factors⁵⁹

Key factors		E-marketing	M-marketing	Implications for practice
Technical interface	Facilitative mode	Destination website	The mobile device	
	Access points	PC equipped with Web browser	Mobile (cell) phones, Smart phones, WAP phones, PDA, e-wallet, interactive television	Need to have varied services depending on sophistication of access point
	Interface	Standard connectivity	Multiple interfaces	Need to master technology to deliver across all interfaces
Content	Information exchange with customer	Limited to customer interacting with Internet-linked PC. Less spontaneous and more restrictive	Expanded to customer interacting with mobile device at any time in any place. More spontaneous and more integrated.	Need for more sophisticated permission marketing techniques
	Mainly visual (large screen)	Audio and visual (small screen)	Enhanced audio services become important	Need to elaborate audio services and simplify visual services
	Interaction with product/service	Virtual interaction	Real interaction	Need to provide 'virtual product' information to complement real product interaction
	Content/context continuum	High content	High context	Include context in strategies for use of mobile devices
Strategy	Strategic mandate	Build on destination website. Personalise Web pages. Wait for customers to show up	Develop information and interactivity enhanced mobile devices. Be there when and where the customer is ready to buy	Need to be responsive to needs – cannot impose unsolicited information

important, however, to consider three drivers that differentiate e-marketing from m-marketing. The key factors identified as relevant in this marketing shift (see Table 1) are technical interface, content and strategic direction. The way these are manifested in e-marketing and m-marketing is presented in Table 1 together with the implications for practice.

For the technical interface factor, the focus of e-marketing is on the destination website as facilitative mode, a

personal computer equipped with a Web browser as access point and interfacing using standard connectivity. In contrast, m-marketing focuses on the mobile device as facilitative mode, with access through a plethora of points, which can include mobile (cellphones), smart phone, WAP phones/PDAs, e-wallets, interactive television and telematics and using multiple interfaces.

Implications for practice include the need to have varied services adapted to the level of sophistication of the access

point. In the PC-based Web environment, sites are set up to recognise the interface configuration of users who will be presented with a quick and appropriate upload. In the mobile environment, this will be even more crucial to ensure that convenience and compulsive use are possible. A further important issue is that marketers consider data rather than solely voice communication in the mobile environment.⁴⁴

A key aspect of the distinction between e-marketing and m-marketing lies in the different enabling technologies. Most notably, the facilitative mode for traditional e-marketing, the PC, has been a relatively large and cumbersome device that is probably deskbound and equipped with a Web browser through standard connectivity. Even when configured as a laptop, it is not conducive to ease of movement. E-marketing issues relating to speed of download, cable modem or phone line access are all directed toward accessing the one type of interaction framework and in using the Web or receiving e-mails. M-marketing is faced with the challenge of developing capabilities in a much more diverse technical context, albeit within the single framework of mobility. Mobile devices currently vary in terms of the network to which they are connected — the 'European' standard or the North American standard. The mobile device may be a simple cellular phone or may be value added with WAP or GPRS enhancements. Rapidly emerging innovations will deliver the possibility of smart phones able to use product bar codes to access product-related information and phones able to act as e-wallets, as either a prepaid card for small purchases or a fully functioning credit/debit card unit. Telematics

applications are also of growing importance.⁴⁵ The challenge to practice is to master technology to be able to deliver desired services across all interfaces and vary services depending on the level of technical sophistication of the mobile device.

The next key factor to discuss is the content in terms of information exchange with the customer, interaction with the product/service and the content/context continuum. While the basic mobile phone applications offer communication, the new interest will focus on the types of information that can be provided while on the move. Useful text-based information already provides news, weather, sport scores, stock quotes, driving directions and types of corporate data. Beyond text-based information, consumers are likely to desire music, videos, games, e-mail access and other Web-based materials. Bertele *et al.* suggest five major types of WAP application that consumers can access to meet their needs to obtain information, search online resources, purchase online, interact with others and use services. These are:

- content-based applications to provide the text-based information mentioned above
- context-based applications to provide online resources such as search engines
- commerce-based applications to allow online commercial transactions
- community-based applications to enable users to interact through chat, forum or instant messaging
- service-based applications such as e-mail, SMS messages, games and maps.⁴⁶

A significant advantage of m-applications is that they allow the delivery of individualised/customised,

relationship-based, timely and location-specific packets of information to a user. Direct marketers can take advantage of these new applications to understand and develop their consumer profiles and directly access consumers. Others^{47,48} have also noted the fact that m-applications allow the individual in the real world to be linked to virtual information and offerings. The emphasis on real-world interactions is paramount and creates a compelling difference between m-applications and traditional Web-based delivery. Moreover, the mobile environment is not suitable for surfing the net, sorting through large and random accumulations of information requiring large amounts of time. Therefore, information needs to be in small packets, and products and applications should be developed around business models likely to deliver real value using the unique features to customers particularly through the immediacy of mobile interactivity.⁴⁹ Volvo was the first company to use direct m-marketing in Australia to launch the Volvo S60.⁵⁰ This successful campaign using wireless hand-held palm pilots highlights the potential for targeting appropriate segments cost effectively by using opt-in e-mail. In contrast, Telstra, the major Australian telecommunications company, made a costly error in sending direct voicemail messages to customers promoting a new Messagebank call back service and charging their customers 22 cents to retrieve the message.⁵¹

M-assisted shopping/retailing applications are another area where information, rather than simple communication, can provide an important marketing tool for customer service. Shopping applications include the built-in ability to swipe bar codes and receive direct marketing information about products and comparative prices to

enable a more informed shopping decision to be made in real time.⁵² Other M-shopping applications might include a smart card that allows purchases through the mobile, in a face-to-face or remote application.⁵³

Allied to key technical differences are important variations in information type and information exchange with the user. Particularly useful for direct marketers will be the ability to relate information to individuals in a geographic context. For entertainment or shopping purposes consumers could receive information on entertainment and shopping options that might include films showing and film times, other shows and show times, bargains and specials in particular shopping categories, including restaurants, in a particular geographic area.⁵⁴ One model for this located individual information option involves identifying the individual specifically through a location device in the mobile phone. This has safety advantages in the event of need for emergency services, but more obviously there are privacy questions that are perhaps insurmountable in this model. Other options involve broadcasting information through mobile base stations to all mobile devices in the area at a particular time. As the mobile user pays per individual call and per minute or part thereof, however, this broadcast option still has problems. One way of overcoming this might be for users to opt-in to receiving this information from direct marketers. The junk mail and unwelcome phone solicitation issue has been a perennial one for the direct marketing industry, and it is likely that consumers would react more favourably if approached with their permission.

This type of permission marketing will play an even more crucial role in the mobile digital environment. In the Web-based environment, permission

marketing requires the consent of consumers before a website can track them with cookies or sell their data. For both PC-based and mobile devices, it involves gaining permission before sending e-mail.⁵⁵ As an enticement to opt in, consumers may gain monetary rewards, discounts or prizes, which assist them to reduce their own costs in using their mobile device. A further incentive for mobile users to register for electronic customised alerts, which notify them of deals from online or offline merchants, is the savings on shopping categories relevant to their needs and wants. It is essential that permission marketing communicates value to consumers in view of the importance for marketers of gaining access to and using location data to customise promotions and implement other l-commerce or m-commerce applications.⁵⁶

Despite efforts to encourage consumers to opt in, little progress will be made if the visual and audio formats associated with mobile devices are inadequate. The dominant information mode for the PC is visual information with some important user-initiated exchanges of audio information. For the mobile phone, delivered information has primarily been audio, with the capacity to deliver information and communication while visual attention is directed elsewhere, for example to driving or walking or interacting with the service and product environment. The large screen capacity of the PC allows superior visual information where the small screen of digital assistants, even enhanced ones, is still limited. The challenge for practice, therefore, is to develop audio and visual services to a level where they meet consumer demands for convenience, cost effectiveness, compulsiveness and contextual sensitivity.

The information exchange enabled by

the mobile devices is capable of being both more spontaneous and more integrated within the 'real' world. The type of information sought and exchanged in the mobile environment is likely to be the type of information that will enhance the 'real' world interactions rather than constitute a substitute as in the e-marketing online information interaction. Thus, direct e-marketing with its 'virtual' situation is likely to be highly content driven, whereas the m-marketing situation is likely to be much more context responsive. Interaction with products and services is a virtual interaction for direct e-marketing, but a real interaction in the case of direct m-marketing. The challenge for direct m-marketing is to be able to deliver the desired enhancement to the interaction with the real product. The enhancements might take the form of comparative product or service information on prices and durability and quality issues.

The final factor, that of the strategic mandate, also differs from the e-marketing to the m-marketing situation. E-marketing has come to be dominated, correctly or incorrectly, by the destination Web page. The m-marketing mandate, however, is posited to revolve around connectivity, responsiveness and the context embed. The 'm-assistant' and the 'personal concierge' terminology go some way towards capturing the essence of the m-marketing mandate that lies in the seamless and integrated facilitative relationship between the consumer and the mobile device. While direct marketers have long used the telephone, they are challenged to understand more clearly the relationship between the consumer and their mobile device. For example, mobile phone users are generally reluctant to make their phone number widely known and may restrict the listing of their number in formal and

informal directories. Users have adopted the mobile phone and in effect taken it into their personal space for the simple reason that they find a personal, mobile communication device valuable and useful. The challenge to direct marketers is to develop the potential of m-marketing around providing relevant information, 'being with' the user, and being responsive to needs while being determined not to impose unsolicited or unwelcome information. Strategists need technical and managerial solutions that enable them to identify when they are needed, to become a partner to the access, use and management of information to enhance consumers' real-world embedded experience with direct m-marketing.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper has presented two key frameworks to identify how the transition to the m-marketing era impacts on consumer behaviour and influences the drivers shaping marketing strategies for the future. First, consumers are no longer tethered to their PC in virtual space. The e-marketing/m-marketing matrix shows that mobile technology has freed both the consumer and marketer to roam in tandem to communicate and transact in both the real and virtual environment. The second framework provides a comparison of the key drivers associated with e-marketing and m-marketing. The value of this framework for direct marketers is the tabulation of the critical differences in the technical interface, the content and the strategic mandate that have evolved in the transition from e-marketing to m-marketing. Building on this foundation, they may be able to move more confidently and competently into the m-marketing era.

Issues that affect the use of m-marketing relate to awareness, integration, development of databases and building electronic communities based on communication. For m-marketing to thrive, the potential awareness of its possibilities and actualities needs to be developed on the part of consumers, marketers and their clients. M-marketing needs to be integrated into marketing communication campaigns and exploited for its unique capabilities. Effective use of m-marketing will depend on the development of effective databases. Databases developed by opt-in methods, as in the snow report, football club and pub examples discussed earlier all demonstrate how approaching people and getting them to volunteer to become involved can be done. The key to m-marketing is to build on the already widely accepted use of the mobile device for communicating with friends and family. Building and extending a community of friends through the opt-in approach is likely to lead to much higher response rates, of up to 10–28 per cent compared to 2 per cent for direct mail.⁵⁷ There is a tremendous amount of value in the medium for early respondents who want to be on the cutting edge. M-marketing is a new medium with its own unique potential and the ability to be used by marketers as part of an integrated marketing communication strategy.

It is recommended that direct marketers develop more adaptive business models as m-marketing customers will only accept approaches, or attempt to access information, that is compelling and vital, that conforms with the Cs of convenience, (low) cost and compulsive to use⁵⁸ together with contextual sensitivity. It is anticipated that viral marketing will mutate, and it is recommended that direct marketers develop the ability to tap into these

communication networks. As people communicate more seamlessly on mobile phones than on computer, it is likely that there will be more opportunities for direct marketers to get their message disseminated at little cost to themselves and with higher credibility and readership. The youth market, in particular, is providing direct marketers with rich prospects for connecting into a communication evolution via mobile digital technology. For example, the low-cost SMS text messaging, interactivity, personalisation and environmental friendliness of m-marketing links well with youth lifestyle. Marketers, however, must also be aware that the language used in messages will be of utmost importance in the success or failure of the advertising message. It is recommended that the style of mobile users' grammar, spelling and colloquialism be mimicked to take advantage of the connection. Failure to keep abreast of rapidly changing cyber-colloquialism will endanger the relationship between marketer and consumer.

There is further potential for direct marketers to add to their consumer profiling by segmenting the market with regard to mobile device used and to employ communication strategies that address the particular segments specifically. Using a device segmentation base as part of technographics is recommended as this will enable direct marketers to match the message format more appropriately to the technical capability of the devices being used. Not all devices will support elaborate communication strategies, but as stressed previously, opportunities still exist for marketers to use simpler technology such as SMS effectively. It is probable that slogans will become more important in view of the lack of screen size, and the fact that they are

more in keeping with conversational models that is appropriate to the mobile phone milieu. Finally, as highlighted throughout the paper, mobile marketing enables distribution of information to the consumer at the most effective time, place and in the right context. This suggests that m-marketing, via mobile devices, will cement further the interactive marketing relationship.

Finally, it is recommended that direct marketers need to put m-marketing high on their agenda because as more applications are developed m-marketing is likely to deliver the responsiveness and targeting that other media have only promised. M-marketing requires direct marketers to rethink their strategies to tap into already existing communities, such as sports fans, surfers, music fans and time-context communities such as spectators at football matches, festivals and location-sensitive communities such as gallery visitors and mall shoppers and develop ways to get them to opt in to value-added experiences through m-marketing, as for example in the Time2Flirt application that enhances a night at a pub or club.

CONCLUSION

The future of m-marketing is already developing in tandem with the rapid advances in mobile technology. Direct marketers need to confront the implications for strategy and practice presented by m-marketing if they are to succeed in this rapidly changing technological environment. This paper has attempted to alert direct marketers to the significant developments in mobile technologies and provide them with an analytical framework to identify potential opportunities to enhance their interactive strategies.

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