

# Full adoption of mobile marketing in Africa

 By [Henk Swanepoel](#)

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***"Mobile... to become the leading mass media channel for Africa."***

The impact of the mobile phone is one of the most important changes to have taken place in Africa in the last century. It has changed people, societies, communities and relationships. It has enabled millions that were incapacitated, and it is difficult for anyone in the developed world to even contemplate the impact of this technology upon Africa.

In 2015, mobile will become a premium advertising channel that offers advertisers a unique customer interface opportunity for their brand. Combined with the next evolution of mobile advertising by means of, for instance geographical subscriber targeting and unsurpassed measurability, mobile is set to exponentially gain market share in Africa from traditional media channels, and to become the leading mass media channel for Africa.

The scope of a mobile media and marketing channel will offer enormous benefits, opportunities and value to African consumers. For some, these benefits are not available in any other way - or are certainly not as accessible, present and inexpensive. 2015 will be the year full advantage is taken of the mobile opportunity.



Andriy Popov via [123RF](#)

More people across Africa have access to a cellphone network (93%) than they do to electricity (64%), piped water (59%), or a police station (38%). Africa's gross domestic product will grow by 50% to US\$3.7 trillion over the next five years as the continent's rapidly expanding middle class helps drive faster rates of urbanisation and increased consumer demand for goods and services. It is also predicted that the expansion of Africa's economy will see mobile subscription penetration grow from its current 72% to 97% by 2017, as the continent adds 334 million new smartphone subscribers over the next three years.

Reliable data in Africa is scarce and in most places non-existent, and traditional media's measurability is very limited. Mobile is set to play a fundamental role in shaping consumers' consumption of media and therefore, marketing messages. When we review the devices people use to access the internet around the world, Africa stands out as a mobile continent. This means when consumers engage, they engage using their phones.

Mobile phones offer the most direct, most personal, most measurable way for marketers to connect with consumers, using content that is relevant and impactful. Consumers in the developed world are saturated by media content and filter out anything that does not add immediate value to their lives. Conversely, emerging market consumers look to media, content and brands as entities that enrich their lives. They look for opportunities to learn, engage and better their own lives and the lives of their families, peer groups and friends.

The right content, wrapped the right way, has enormous impact.

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