

# Mobile is not overhyped - Vincent Maher

By  Sindy Peters: Africa editor

28 Oct 2010

Is mobile overhyped as a platform to reach consumers? Does content need to be shortened and dumbed down for mobile users? These were some of the questions answered by Vincent Maher, co-founder of [Motribe](#), on Thursday, 28 October 2010, day two of the Integrated Marketing Communication Conference, organised by Living Your Brand.



## Higher number of mobile Internet users

Maher ([@Vincent\\_Maher](#)) discussed 'the mobile universe' in relation to social networking, gaming and advertising on the mobile platform.

In response to whether mobile is overhyped, he said definitely not. According to statistics he provided, 10-11 million people in South Africa are using the mobile Internet - this number, said Maher, is close to double that of desktop Internet users.

"That's where the people are, and at the end of the day, that's where all your customers and your target audience are going to be," said Maher in reference to the mobile platform.

Maher believes mobile is definitely worth exploring as it has many benefits: advertising inventory is abundant; things happen faster and there is a big pool of users on which companies can have a bigger impact.

## Building brand loyalty

Mobile can be used to build a database, a database companies can communicate with on an ongoing basis, says Maher, but not just through intermittent campaigns. Campaigns are great but companies need to ensure that they keep interaction on-going in between or users will forget them. The aim is to build ongoing brand loyalty, rather than just awareness.

"If you create a precedence that what you see today is not what exists tomorrow, that's how they're going to remember you. You're not going to get that ongoing loyalty," Maher explained.

## **Integrate mobile with other mediums**

Maher advised using a good agency with the necessary skills when experimenting with mobile and integrating mobile with the web. Also, one should use traditional mediums to market the message, but mobile to promote it.

Using [The Grid](#), a Vodacom initiative Maher worked on, he explained how organic growth is not always the best option and that mobile advertising could be used as a better tool for growth in the initial stages as time is not always available for projects to spread virally.

## **Users engage, focus more with mobile**

The attention span of mobile users, said Maher, is presumed to be low, but this is not true. There is no need to shorten content or to dumb it down. Mobile content is quicker to read than on a desktop because of the format and there are fewer distractions on the medium because few mobile devices are able to multitask.

"The best thing for an iPhone user, in my opinion, is the fact that the device can't multitask so the user doesn't have to multitask... People engage longer with the content," said Maher.

The different media also make a difference to concentration levels. Mobile is used in different contexts in more private environments where one is more focused, while using a desktop at work means a busier, more distracting, environment and a lower user attention span.

## **Gaming and 'gamification'**

According to Maher, we will see the presence of gaming on mobile platforms increasing over the next few years - known as 'gamification' - describing it as fundamentally social in most cases. He used the example of Farmville (one of the biggest gaming platforms on Facebook), noting how simple a concept has become so popular.

Maher advises that gaming can be used to add value to something uninteresting by creating a competitive environment. "Anything that's really dumb and boring, if you can put a game in it, it will become feasible. That's the underlying philosophy of it."

"If you're going to go into mobile, just do it. If you thinking about doing it, do it now. Gain that experience," he said in conclusion.

Other keynote speakers today are Walter Pike of Pike.co.za; Ben Wagner, CEO of Stonewall; and Prof Melius Weideman, SEO author and research professor at Cape Peninsula University of Technology. The conference has been taking place at the Crystal Waters Hotel and Spa in Cape Town.

### **For more:**

- Official site: <http://www.imcc.co.za/>
- Twitter: [@imccconference](#)
- Twitter Search: [#IMCC](#)
- Motribe: <http://motribe.com/>

Sindy Peters (@sindy\_hullaba\_lou) is a group editor at Bizcommunity.com on the Construction & Engineering, Energy & Mining, and Property portals. She can be reached at [sindy@bizcommunity.com](mailto:sindy@bizcommunity.com)

- #BizTrends2021: Youth in leadership - transformation requires genuine intent - 3 Feb 2021
- Social listening can impact your day-to-day business - 11 Jul 2016
- Infrastructure Africa to focus on regional opportunities - 18 May 2016
- [AfricaCom2014] FB's mission: to get Africa online - 13 Nov 2014
- Loeries 2014: Less efficiency, more magic - PJ Pereira - 22 Sep 2014

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>