

Need for Speed

By MICHAEL KARIKIS

Internet is the lowest Common Denominator.

Leading on from the question of a 'Need for Speed', mobile providers have really struggled to launch hit new services. One reason for this is too much of an engineering mindset rather than looking at things from a consumer perspective and working backwards.

So where do they go for guidance? At least one place with a track record (as they start) is the internet. Fixed line applications and services have a history, with the main task being extending value while on the move. But a lot of popular internet services still aren't available, or at least optimised, for mobiles.

Major Priorities

1. Consumer push email. Note where internet advertisers see most eyes looking by genre. According to NetRatings figures, over 50% of advertising is on email sites. Bolting advantages onto handsets is needed for when consumers are away from their desk. Consumers email users must number at least 800 million around the world, making it a more important mass market service than some of the business email solutions which are already over hyped.

2. Interactive services such as social networking are expected to grow. There's a lot of psychology. Due to the interactive and personal nature of social networking, pushing advantages onto mobiles



simply, interactively and affordably will have people at phone screens a lot more often.

3. Services that are leveraged by handsets always being available things like commerce, reminders, suggestions, helpers and indicators. However, these need to be benched marked from a consumer perspective rather than a complex engineering mind sets.

Reality, not just wishful thinking

And before anyone even thinks of mentioning the word music understand one really important thing. Perhaps around 90% of digital music consumed by Australians has not been paid for (in that form). Most digital music has either been downloaded for free using file sharing programme or ripped from CD's. Early adapters have embraced platforms such as Napster, Audio Galaxy, iMesh, Kazaa, Limewire, Morpheus, Sole Seek and so on.

Going from paying nothing to \$3 for a song on a mainstream bases is nothing but a fairytale. And by mainstream I mean on a weekly bases, not just downloading a song every three months as averages now suggest. Legal downloads from the internet are growing, but compared to the overall number of songs people have on their harddrive the percentage is miniscule. So understand how much of a quantum leap some mobile providers are dreaming about – customers going from paying nothing to several dollars per track. Until now a few other barriers have existed but the biggest deterrent is still price. Personally the way things currently stands without subscription music I'd pay less rather than more for tracks downloaded from the mobile.

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Kerime Bozaoglu, EA above with colleagues and below is our recent annual GSM held in Melbourne, AUST



Melbourne QA team ready to take your call by Ben Wilson, Bree Schleebs and Lisa Walker: from the left; Kim, Brooke, Christine, Juan Marc, Mustafa, Michael T, Jared, Daniel, Peter, Steve, Ben, James, Lisa, Bree, Samantha, Elsa, Bharath, Tony, Tina and Annie.