

Does your PR campaign fit into your customer's pocket?

 By [Andre Fourie](#)

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The PR industry is in a battle for consumers' attention. *Time* magazine earlier in 2015 reported that the average human attention span now sits at eight seconds, down from 12 seconds in 2000. To put this into perspective: a goldfish has an attention span of nine seconds.

These findings were the result of a study by Microsoft, who wanted to understand the effect that our increasingly digitised lifestyles have on our concentration levels. The study made another very important finding: when asked what they do when nothing is occupying their attention, 77% of respondents aged 18-24 stated that they reached for their mobile phones.

And there lies an opportunity.

Power in your pocket

At the beginning of 2015, global social media agency We Are Social released some interesting statistics about mobile internet usage in South Africa. It found that 61% of all web page views were on mobile phones, and that the average person spent three hours and four minutes a day accessing the internet from their mobile devices.



Image via Pxabay

Instant messaging services such as WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger topped the list of most-used mobile applications, but mobile banking, internet browsing, video content and location-based search all showed strong adoption by South African consumers.

A separate UK study found that the average smartphone user picks up his phone a staggering 1500 times every week.

All of this raises an important question: how can brands reach and influence consumers who have eight second attention spans and access all their information about the world around them through their mobile phones?

Developing smarter campaigns

The answer lies in smarter, more condensed campaign content. Developing PR content that is suitable for a broad range of media is now a prerequisite to most campaigns. But content creators that understand that their customers live through their phones, and that they lack the attention span to consume content that isn't broken into small, easily digestible bits, will have a natural advantage when reaching and influencing their customers.

The fundamentals are simple: every PR activity should have a direct link back to mobile. Have an amazing activation? Make sure you reward your audience for creating and sharing content from the event. Create a bespoke app that feeds branded content to them while giving them some form of reward for creating and posting their own brand content.

Launching a new product? Give your customers a discount when they interact with the brand via their phones. Introducing a new retail store? Why not create a mobile loyalty system that rewards your customers for doing what they love to do - whipping out their phones at a moment's notice and creating, consuming and sharing content.

It is unlikely that our attention spans will improve any time soon. The continued proliferation of mobile and digital technologies is speeding up the digitisation of our lifestyles. Smart PR campaigns will take advantage of this by putting mobile front and centre of all campaigns.

ABOUT ANDRE FOURIE

Andre Fourie has worked in the field of public relations and strategic communications for the past ten years, managing the strategy formulation and campaign implementation for clients in the ICT, leisure, government, political, academic and business sectors. He is the founder of South Africa's first on-demand strategic communications consulting firm, Fury Strategic.

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