

MOBILE PHONES ARE MUSIC TO THE EARS FOR RADIO SAY TNS

Contributed by TNS
Friday, 29 February 2008

26.02.2008 Music via mobile is leading the way to a wave of new customers for mobile operators MOBILE PHONES ARE MUSIC TO THE EARS FOR RADIO SAY TNS PDF (0.07 mb)

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Music applications are the fastest growing services on mobiles today, a report from TNS Global Technology has found. The TNS Global Telecoms Insight study, which interviewed 16,000 respondents across 29 countries, found in the last year that the use of MP3 players on mobile phones has risen by 78% and the use of radio via mobile by a massive 140%.

Growth has occurred in every region with particularly rapid adoption seen in Latin America and in emerging Asia, where 45% of users list FM/AM radio as one of their top-3 choices for purchasing a mobile phone – making it a more popular application than SMS (texting), internet access or even a camera.

Matthew Froggatt, Managing Director of TNS’s Global Technology sector says, “Radio-enabled mobiles take away the need to have a separate music device like an MP3 player and should lead phone manufacturers to win the battle for control of the earphones.

The increased use of radio in the Asian markets is also extremely important. It is driving a whole new wave of customers to service providers and has massive implications for spreading media communications out to a wider audience more quickly. The radio is a hugely underrated media tool which has suffered at the hands of TV music channels and the internet – this new outlet through mobile phones may help to sustain its life well into this millennium. In some markets, like India, launching a mobile phone without radio-listening capabilities is a major barrier to winning consumer sales.

Two thirds of young people aged 16 - 21 now listen to some form of mobile music on the go, but it is also surprisingly popular with more senior generations: The study shows that 20% of people aged 51 - 60 tune in to music on their handsets. Globally, 43% of all mobile users and 73% of Smartphone users now listen to some form of mobile music.

However, the music industry needs to be cautious of seeing this as a money-spinner: 22% of global users now sideload music (transfer from PC or laptop) compared to just 16% who download directly. Many consumers already have their music libraries in a digital format and are often put off downloading directly to their mobile because of high price perceptions. Using the phone as a music player gives device manufacturers an opportunity to increase consumer involvement with their products, but for network operators and music rights owners, incremental revenue growth through downloading may be limited.

Froggatt concludes, “For the networks, enhanced real-time data services, like mobile internet or location-specific information may be a better bet to increase consumer spend.