TNS Study Reveals Penalty For Not Keeping Up In Relentlessly Changing Mobile Category

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TNS Mobile Life 2011, the largest ever global research study into todayâ€™s mobile consumer.

Insatiable consumers continue to drive market growth for advanced mobile technologies, with video calling, live video and video downloads the next critical developments

* Device brand is key, but handset manufacturers are losing out as content brands and partnerships make rapid gains in importance when consumers make purchasing decisions
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* Apple and Googleâ€™s ability to deliver more effective rich media experiences to consumers is translating to victory in the platform wars

TNS, the worldâ€™s largest custom research company, today launched TNS Mobile Life 2011, the largest ever global research study into todayâ€™s mobile consumer.

Now into its sixth year, TNS Mobile Life is the result of more than 25,000 hours of interviews with over 34,000 respondents in 43 countries. It provides a complete understanding of consumer experiences with mobility today and insights into how this will change tomorrow.

The findings highlight that as â€œstaticâ€• functionality such as SMS and still imaging become commoditised, growth will be driven through further demand for social functionality and new demands for video calling, streaming and sharing services:

* The number of mobile web users visiting social networking sites grew from 30% to 46% globally, and from 26% to 50% in emerging markets*, leapfrogging much of the developed markets
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* Only 18% of consumers globally managed to upload photos or video directly to the web from their mobiles, during the same period, but a further 44% would be interested in doing so in future
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* Consumers in emerging markets are more likely to want to upload content (49%), but more than half (55%) do not have the ability to do so

â€œWith mobiles increasingly becoming the primary device for internet access and communication, particularly in emerging markets, entertainment and multimedia features are a key requirement for engaging with consumers,â€• said James Fergusson, Managing Director, Global Technology Sector, TNS.

â€œHandset manufacturers need to ensure that entertainment offers, particularly mobile music, gaming, pictures, video and social networking are available and easy to access. Many are missing a trick in not bringing more smartphones to market in high-growth countries.â€•

Many emerging markets users outpace their western counterparts, leading demand for the latest mobile technologies Camera features may have reached a saturation point, growing only 1% between 2010 and 2011, but nearly a quarter of global consumers (24%) say the ability to take and share pictures and video will play a major role in their choice of next device.

TNS Mobile Life shows the strongest growth in new services in the last 12 months has come from social video (10% to 15%) and Live TV (9% to 12%). Over half of consumers (54%) are interested in video calling, despite not yet using the service and half are interested in watching live TV (50%) or in downloading or streaming video (48%).

In Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa, demand for Live TV in particular is higher still, reaching upwards of 70%. â€œEmerging Tier 1 markets, such as China, Brazil and UAE already have penetration levels that match mature markets,â€• Fergusson continues. â€œMultimedia content presents an opportunity to leverage growth potential in emerging economies. Income constraints in many of these markets ensure the importance of imaging and video services through mobiles increases.â€•

Brand, partnerships and demand for tablets â€“ challenges in maintaining market share in a crowded environment Across developed (44%) and emerging (77%) markets handset brand is considered an important factor in product decision making. Content brands, however, are building equity in the mobile ecosystem, with more than 1 in 4 global consumers saying content and apps are a key consideration at the point of purchase.

The results from TNS Mobile Life show that as markets mature, key purchase influencers shift to content and application offerings, along with operating system. Providing desirable content â€“ and engaging with local partners where appropriate - is a clear opportunity to capture equity in markets where content brand share is low, but increasing.

Partnerships will become increasingly important as handset manufacturers look to maintain marketshare as tablets rapidly expand on the scene. Tablets are already generating substantial momentum, with intended ownership rates as high as 31% in Asia and 28% in Europe. Fortunately for handset manufacturers, consumers typically view the tablet either as a complementary device, or as a replacement for a PC, rather than a mobile.

Apple and Google continue to win the platform war, delivering better access to rich media
Further findings from the TNS Mobile Life study show that content and service offerings are also playing an increasingly important role in terms of operating systems, with consumer loyalty supporting the continued growth of Android and iOS systems.

Googleâ€™s operating system â€“ Android, as well as OMS and Tapas â€“ have gained 24% share in the past 12 months, grow from 9% to 33%**. This loyalty is due, in part, to Appleâ€™s and Googleâ€™s ability to keep pace with consumerâ€™s content demands, particularly with regard to social networking and rich media functionality. For example:

* Over half of Apple (56%) and Android (52%) customers access social media via their mobiles daily, but this figure drops to 44% and 41% for Windows Mobile and Symbian, respectively
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* 51% of Apple and 49% of Android customers are â€œvery likelyâ€• to stay with that operating system, while that figure drops t 30% and 31% for Windows and Symbian

â€œWhile there has been previous research into mobility, Mobile Life has truly set a precedent in its scope, depth and breadth of information on mobile consumersâ€™ behaviour and decision influences,â€• said Fergusson. â€œThe study reveals significant breakthroughs and detailed analyses of the interests, key drivers and influencers in consumersâ€™ purchase decisions across the globe.â€•

*Countries included in the â€œemerging marketsâ€• grouping of TNS Mobile Life are: Tier one emerging markets - S Arabia, UAE, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, China, Indonesia, S Africa, Chile, Morocco Tier two emerging markets - India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Thailand, Nigeria, Kenya, Philippines, Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Guatemala & Costa Rica, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda **Source: Canalys estimates, 2011.

About TNS Mobile Life
www.discovermobilelife.com

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