

Game on for retailers going mobile



By [Steve Cragg](#)

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As crisis-hit Europe continues to impact economic growth, and projections for the local economy are trimmed, the battle for a share of consumer spend is getting increasingly fierce. Retailers will rely on technology to drive innovative discount models and integrated loyalty programmes by optimising the one device every consumer has access to already - even in-store - the mobile phone.



Discussions with our FMCG partners indicate that retailers are roaring to go ... mobile that is. Expect free in-store wireless, mobile coupons, easy access to mobile information and even mobile-driven sampling.

- **Let the discount retailer war begin**

In 2013, we'll see just who and what wins over the minds and wallets of cash-strapped South African shoppers. Will it be Pick n Pay with its Smart Shopper loyalty program? Will it be the new discount coupon mobile application that Checkers has just launched? Will it be mobile specials and coupon third-party aggregator start-ups? Just what will Walmart do with Game? Or will the German might of Aldi make a move into the market? My prediction... it's game on!

- **Getting more comfortable using our phones in-store**

Shopping apps that use photo/scan technology, as well as the technologies of image recognition and augmented reality (albeit still nascent), free in-store wireless, smart retailers that begin to incentivise shoppers to use their mobile in-store and packaging design that starts to incorporate more 'mobile call-to-action' will all see the mobile smartphone become *the* point-of-sale (POS) screen.

- **Mobilise your site before your competitor mobilises your customers**

Blue-chip FMCG companies will wake up in 2013 and ensure that their websites are optimised for mobile. Visiting a site with tiny text that's hard to navigate and takes long to load will cost companies customers. A point to note is that on the home front, and globally for that matter, none of the top FMCGs have mobilised their sites, whereas sectors such as banking, car and electronics manufacturers have already cottoned on to creating platforms to suit the medium.

- **Do I Like it? No but I Recommend it... and here's why**

Do you care, or act, in any way if someone in your social network LIKES something?! 2013 will be a 'trojan' year for brands that can incorporate and succinctly flesh out the 'reason why' someone likes something. How do you do that? You give them the 'first chapter' free. You sample. The most powerful form of advertising known to man. Businesses that offer brands effective and efficient sampling infrastructure, linked to scaleable word-of-mouth, will not only help to decommo-ditise the 'like' but will certainly have a boom year.

- **Mobile becomes TV's new best friend**

Using a phone or tablet whilst watching television will reach new heights in 2013. Mobile devices will plant their flags firmly and rightfully in the living room as a second screen. Whether it be through the use of automated content recognition, TV-ad-detection applications or TV messaging, these media will drive audiences to do brand research

and comparison, or even shop on their mobile devices, while watching television. In addition, users will share, rate and review on Facebook, poll or crowd source on Twitter - interacting, synchronising and integrating screens in real time. The marriage of second screens with televisions is a partnership marketers shouldn't ignore.

- **Contrarian movement sees cinema's appeal continue to grow**

For every action, there's an equal and opposite reaction. As more and more of our life becomes drowned in text, email, messaging and social media, a medium that mandates (at least socially, anyway) a break from it all will become a really 'valued' experiences and also do well. A visit to the cinema not only becomes a cherished 'lean-back' experiences for users but continues to offer marketers real gold in terms of levels of audience attentiveness and never-to-be beaten depths of content context.

- **Year of the app-store**

Gartner Research estimates 81 billion apps will be downloaded globally in 2013, twice as many as 2012. With this level of software coding being pushed out, we will see the emergence of helpful app aggregators start to segment these apps for us, separating the heap of redundant apps from those 'must download and use' ones, that will 'hopefully' change our lives.

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