

What do users want from the mobile web?



From James Whatley, digital marketing product manager, SpinVox

It would be easier for content providers to provide mobile services if the mobile internet were clearly defined.

Ask anyone what the mobile internet is and the responses will vary between "Vodafone Live!", "Orange World", "WAP" and "Web'n'walk". I once overheard someone say, "I don't use the internet, I just use Facebook."

That's just operator confusion. What about actual usage? Do I type <http://m.yahoo.com> or <http://www.yahoo.mobi>? The former is free to set up, shorter for the consumer to type and is scalable internationally (m.yahoo.fr rather than www.yahoo.fr.mobi).

Traditional content publishers are in the same boat. They don't know how to present their content because they don't know what the mobile web represents.

Until publishers realise that users don't want the internet on their mobile (they think they do, but what they actually want is the information from the internet optimised for their handset), they'll never be able to capitalise on the potential revenue.

Listening to online buzz is long overdue



From Chris Reed, director, Fishburn Hedges

Your feature on tracking what consumers are saying about your brand (NMA 17.01.08) was long overdue. Over the years, a speedier analysis of and response to online buzz could have protected a number of companies from damaged reputations.

The Kryptonite lock-pick incident has been well-documented, as has Dell's transformation from near-lethargy to the ultimate 'listening' company. Sony's 'All I want for Christmas is a PSP' campaign a couple of years ago was ripped apart online for being a fake blog, before being pulled and a much-needed apology given.

It's vital that brands know what's being said about them online, both positive and negative, so that they can react appropriately.

Dealing with press complaints is now just as important online



Tim Toulmin is director of the Press Complaints Commission

A group of teenage boys are in a field being videoed by a friend. They're dressed in hooded tops, horsing around and laughing, while a freight train passes at low speed on a railway line in the background. One of the boys produces a bottle full of fuel, lights it and throws it at the train. The front of the train catches fire. It looks serious but fortunately the fire doesn't spread and no one is injured.

"DEMAND FOR THE PCC'S SERVICES COMES NOT JUST FROM THE PUBLIC BUT ALSO FROM THE MEDIA ITSELF"

The boys are amused by their arson and post the video of it on YouTube. Someone alerts the local newspaper, which publishes a story headlined 'Yobs on film' and embeds the YouTube video on its own website. But the father of one of the youths thinks that this intrudes into his son's privacy and complains under the print industry's code of practice to the Press Complaints Commission (PCC). The PCC investigates the complaint and rejects it.

This happened last summer. Part of the complaint's significance was that the PCC could deal with it at all – given that the focus of the complaint was about the use of video, whereas the PCC has traditionally concerned the print media only. Early last year, the PCC's remit extended to include audio-visual material, reflecting the reality of media convergence. As a

result, the PCC currently has the greatest internet penetration of any UK media regulator.

Media convergence has challenged established models of content regulation. Some even see rules on journalistic content withering entirely – although not at the PCC. We think there are clearly defensive reasons (keeping the Government and European legislators at bay) and positive ones (brand reinforcement and enhancing trust in media services) for subscribing to a professional standards body like the PCC.

Demand for the PCC's services comes not just from the public but also from the media itself: our authority comes from the fact that the code of practice has been agreed by the newspaper and magazine industry and their online publications.

Given this degree of buy-in from the press, our recipe for regulation is to work with the industry, rather than against it. It's an effective approach as it means that we can get complaints about online material resolved satisfactorily in an instant.

Quick, meaningful and often confidential remedies to privacy intrusions will be far more important in future than delayed settlements following starchy legal battles, simply because of the permanence and global reach of online publication.

It should be said that, taken as a whole, complaints about online journalism are small in comparison to those about the printed product. This is largely because the internet is naturally self-regulatory, particularly when it comes to accuracy. People are encouraged to challenge inaccuracies or reply to articles about them, and there's the space to do so. So perhaps it should be a warning that those complaints we do get tend to concern privacy.

With the code of practice being underpinned by general legal rights to privacy that apply to everyone, it's worth any online publisher – whether or not they're a professional journalist – bearing in mind what limits there are on what they can say.