



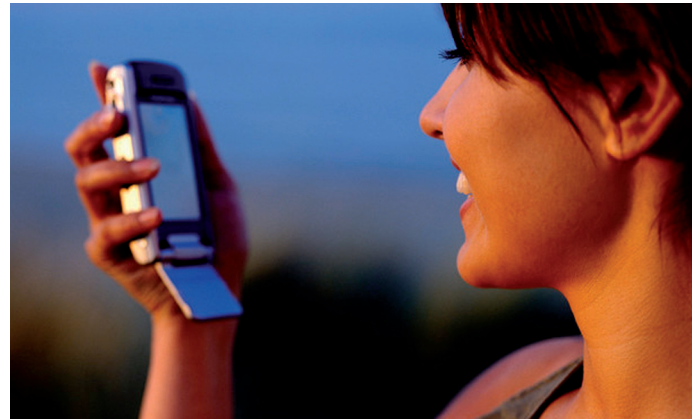
Where next for the “mobile internet”?

Understanding the operator opportunity

Mobile internet: assessing the opportunity

The potential opportunities offered by the internet as accessed from mobiles – in short, the “mobile internet” – are enormous. There are already four mobiles to every PC in the world and a GSM Association study carried out in 2006 predicted that 1.3 billion people will be connected to the Internet through mobile devices by 2008. Many people’s first computing experience will be through a mobile phone, and in parts of the world where access to computers are limited, mobile will be the primary means of access for the internet. To realise the potential of the mobile internet, however, it needs to be easy, useful and cost-effective to use.

The widespread take up of the mobile internet will benefit the entire mobile ecosystem and increased data usage will boost operators’ revenues significantly. According to Chetan Sharma Consulting, the top 10 operators in terms of mobile data revenues made almost \$24 billion from data in the first half of 2006. There is still plenty of scope for improvement; figures from Wireless Intelligence show that of the mobile operators that reported the proportion of their revenue from data in 3Q06, less than a quarter of them had a figure higher than 20%. The mobile internet will play a vital role in helping all operators exceed this target. However, it’s not only operators who will benefit, the mobile internet will also give content providers and publishers a platform and the opportunity to create economically viable businesses.



The user experience

The technology and infrastructure required to deliver a compelling mobile internet experience is already in place and widely available and includes:

- High-speed data connectivity over 3G networks
- 3G and data phones with high resolution screens
- Positive consumer experience of operators’ on-portal sites

However, browsing the mobile internet still poses a number of challenges for users. In particular, they need to contend with multiple formats of mobile URLs, such as bbc.co.uk/mobile, guardian.co.uk/pda or wap.nytimes.com, which are difficult to enter on the standard numerical keypad on many mobile phones. What’s more, users do not have a simple way to ascertain whether a particular site is mobile-optimised, before they access it.

To overcome these usability issues, many mobile operators have concentrated their efforts on developing their own inclusive portal – or walled garden. URLs are not required and everything has been purpose-built for mobile. However, content in walled gardens is by definition limited and as users get more familiar with mobile internet browsing, they will want to access sites outside of the operator’s portal.

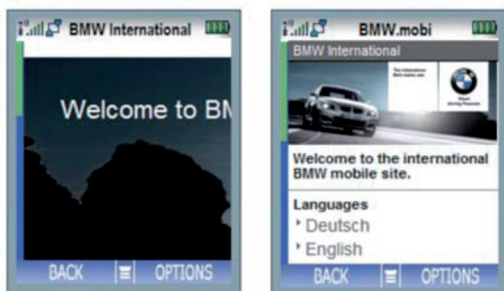
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Using .mobi

If the mobile internet is going to be a success, users need to have a good browsing experience, regardless of the content being viewed. To achieve this there are two possible approaches. The first is to make existing Internet content work on the mobile device. Although great advances have been made in mobile devices, the screen size and processing power is always likely to lag that of PCs. In most cases, the content and browsing experience that works on PC screens with a full-size keyboard is difficult to translate to the mobile internet. Also, the content that users want to access on their mobile device is often quite different from what they want to access in their home on office.

The alternative approach is to recognise the unique characteristics of the mobile device, both in terms of the size of screen available and the users' expectation of content and context, and create a version of content adapted specifically to work on it. This approach is being advocated by a group of leading mobile and internet players, supported by the relevant bodies of both industries.

The cornerstone of their initiative is a domain called .mobi, which signifies that "this site is designed for use on a mobile phone." But unlike any other internet domain, it is also a set of enforceable standards, developed and agreed by key industry bodies and based on existing best practices, to ensure a good mobile user experience. The .mobi domain is managed by dotMobi, which is also a sponsor of the Worldwide Web Consortium's Mobile Web Initiative. Investors in dotMobi include Ericsson, Google, GSM



How a normal web site and .mobi web site compare on a mobile screen

The dotMobi Web Developer Guide is now available at dotmobi.mobi. Key points include:

- XHTML mobile profile
- Second level domain site
- No frames, no pop-ups, no auto-refresh
- Clean navigation, appropriate graphics, minimal scrolling
- No embedded objects, no tables
- Minimal keystrokes

Association, Hutchison, Microsoft, Nokia, Orascom Telecom, Samsung Electronics, Syniverse, T-Mobile, Telefónica Móviles, TIM and Vodafone.

The address for mobile sites is a .mobi URL, which is as easy for users to remember as a .com address. For example, Nokia.com becomes Nokia.mobi. And as .mobi is a top level domain, it does not require the prefix "www," which simplifies typing on a mobile keypad.

The standards, which are strictly enforced, are published in dotMobi Style Guides, and cover the key areas of:

- **Web content development**
- **Search**
- **Messaging**
- **Handsets**

These Guides are based on the work of the Worldwide Web Consortium's Mobile Web Initiative and its "Mobile Web Best Practices" documentation, intended to encourage best-practice site architecture so that content most relevant to mobile users is easily accessible.

Through .mobi, users are able to experience a consistent and usable browsing experience for sites on the mobile internet, therefore overcoming one of the key barriers that they currently face.

Making content pay

The open mobile internet using .mobi offers companies a great opportunity to invest in mobile content. It is an open system which offers access to all mobile consumers, irrespective of what mobile network they use or which country they are in. Content providers are able promote their .mobi website to all consumers and promotional activity can be independent of specific operators. If content providers are confident that they're dealing with an open market to which everyone has access, they will innovate, invest and develop their own business models.

The market opportunity is enormous; according to 2006 research from Informa Telecoms and Media, advertisers will spend more than \$11.35 billion globally by 2011 to place ads on consumers mobile devices. Established brands will create .mobi sites and find new ways of building relationships with their customers. Marketing campaigns will start to use the mobile internet as the most cost-effective and immediate response channel. The mobile platform offers advertisers several advantages over other forms of advertising:

- Advertisers are able to target adverts by location
- Advertising can be personalised for individual users
- The mobile platform allows advertisers to run extremely time-sensitive campaigns

For m-commerce sites, .mobi can also support the same payment platforms as the internet, whether they are merchant services paid by credit card or consumer. This is backed up by Kelton Research, which found in 2006 that more than one in four Americans with a mobile phone (28%) say that they'd like to use their phone or handheld device for purchases and financial transactions.

Finding content

Mobile search is a vital part of the mobile Internet and there are two main approaches to making search more accessible. The first is a platform-agnostic approach. Search engines and browsers, such as Opera Mobile™, with rendering technology can transcode normal web sites for a mobile device; in theory, this means that any web site can be viewed, and all information accessed on a mobile device.

The second is a mobile-specific approach. While being able to access any web content on your phone is attractive, the best mobile content uses a different approach to site architecture. It needs to take into account the specific needs of mobile users as well as the differences in terms of screen information and presentation, bandwidth and device navigation.

To offer the best mobile internet experience, it is important that mobile sites can be distinguished from normal web sites.

This allows people to choose, and search engines to find, web sites optimised for mobile use.

.mobi enables search engines to prioritise mobile-specific content, and in so doing, will revolutionise the off-portal experience and increase the likelihood of consumers exploring the "made for mobile" internet.



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Customer understanding

For the mobile internet to succeed, it requires the cooperation of individual mobile and internet companies. While marketing their own services, they must also be persuaded to engage in a common, cohesive theme. This needs to be simple to understand and independent of any particular commercial interest. This is where .mobi can play the biggest part of all. .mobi is perfectly placed to engage all the different players involved in creating the mobile internet.

As a domain, it's an essential catalyst of the mobile internet. But it's also a banner to promote a mobile internet that is effective, open to everyone and, above all, builds consumer understanding and trust. This banner already exists in the form of a .mobi certification mark which .mobi-compliant sites and handsets can display.



.mobi: the solution

.mobi was created by mobile and internet companies who recognised that the mobile ecosystem was incomplete. It provides the cohesion needed to bring it together, both in terms of the standards to deliver a good user experience and in terms of the different players who can create a new marketplace where everyone stands to gain, provider and user alike.

- Publishers, brands, marketers and businesses of any kind need to create mobile friendly content under the .mobi address.
- Search engines need to offer an experience tailored to finding this content
- Handset makers need to indicate that their devices are .mobi compliant
- Operators need to ensure that the customer journey – from provisioning of handsets, through to accessing search pages and attractive data pricing – is geared towards supporting the mobile internet
- And everybody needs to promote it together, so that customers can see that the mobile internet is an open and democratic system, just like the PC-based internet they already know.

Through .mobi, the industry can create the right conditions for the mobile internet to deliver the growth everybody wants to see, consumers included.

