

# Designing mobile advertising: User Experience factors for enhancing user adoption

## EXTENDED ABSTRACT

As mobile-based applications and services are expanding, the need to take a human-centred approach in their design and adoption becomes ever more important. This study aims to provide an understanding of users from different countries and principles that support better design of user experience (UX) in the context of mobile advertising. According to [2], in the US alone, mobile advertising spending is expected to be more than doubled by 2014 to \$2.6 billion (from around \$1.1 billion in 2011), yet user adoption has been consistently poor with mobile ads (50%) being more likely to cause users negative feeling than website ads. A key challenge with overcoming user resistance includes harnessing the complex interplay of five usability principles relative to mobile UX: context, relevance, permission, privacy and sociability. [1] identified the influential variables affecting consumer behaviour as follows: 1) Privacy - the degree to which personal information is not known by others; 2) Purpose - the type of purpose the receiver is trying to satisfy by using a mobile device; and 3) Performance - response and attitude toward mobile advertising. [3] furthermore argues that the following factors are critical regarding messaging in mobile advertising: 1) Content (relevant content is king in mobile advertising; content being informative and entertaining); 2) Credibility (consumer's perception of the truthfulness and believability of advertising in general); and 3) Customization (mapping and satisfying of customer's goal in specific context with a business' goal in its respective context). The current study compares users' attitudes of mobile advertising and the factors influencing purchase decisions in different cultural contexts, namely USA, Greece, and China. The data were collected through an online survey with 34 questions originally developed for this purpose as well as demographic information from diverse groups of mainly smartphone users. The questionnaire was then distributed to respondents via emails and on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Convenient sampling has been employed with the questionnaires being collected from a total of 282 respondents after eliminating invalid or incomplete responses: 114 (USA), 94 (China), and 74 (Greece), respectively. The main study findings are summarized as follows:

- Chinese participants have higher expectations for information value, relevance and usefulness of mobile advertisements compared to USA and Greece.
- Chinese participants prefer more symbolic and animated forms of receiving mobile advertisements information compared to USA and Greece.
- Chinese participants appear to enjoy more implicative and indirect expressions in the

mobile advertising messages, while USA and Greek participants prefer textual information which explains the benefits of the advertisement.

- We did not find evidence that location/profile-specific content or additional user control functionality would lead to higher acceptance of mobile advertisements in the three countries studied.

Consequently, we offer a broad set of propositions to enhance mobile advertising adoption and UX:

- Mobile advertisements will be more attractive and valuable if they can provide some connotative reasons to engage people in a social activity.
- Support for local customs and forms of expressions of a cultural nature.
- Focus more on the social elements (e.g. friends and family) within its cultural context to guide the consumer through the purchase flow.

First -and to the greatest extent possible-companies should try to integrate their mobile advertising into the social lives of users, to avoid being a nuisance. To allow users to comprehend mobile advertising, these should be embedded in a familiar context, which the user is able to understand. For example, the ad could provide a suggested tour of a city centre (social and cultural context), where the offer is not only relevant (e.g. nearby restaurants, bars) but also embedded as part of a familiar social and cultural activity. Mobile advertisements with social experience features may have higher possibilities for success. In particular, ads could customize the user preferences with their group preferences. For example, a loyalty member, when purchasing an item on mobile, automatically generates a special offer or invite to his/her friends; this approach enables the person to "brag or inform" of this purchase in a very subtle way while making him/her feel special that he/she is able to share a special offer with his/her friends. We hope that this study opens new dialogues for UX research by considering the relationship between social and cultural factors in mobile advertising.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Bauer, H. H., Barnes, S. J., Reichardt, T., & Neumann, M. M. (2005). Driving Consumer Acceptance of Mobile Marketing: A Theoretical Framework and Empirical Study. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, 6 (3), 181-192. [2] Emarketer (2011). Consumers expect mobile ads to inform, Retrieval date March 16, 2012 from <http://www.emarketer.com/Article.aspx?R=1008210>. [3] Kotler, P. (2000). *Marketing Management: The Millennium Edition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.