

Smirnoff mobilizes  
the brand:

To its users, it's  
a pocket guide  
to vodka and more.

To big brand  
marketers, it's the  
way forward...



Daniel Rosen, Managing Director of AKQA Digital, talks to mobiThinking about Smirnoff.mobi, the enormously influential mobile experience. On the way, he shares his views about the brave new world of mobile marketing – and how we’ve only just started to scratch the surface of this powerful new medium.

### Here’s a transcript of the interview...

Hi, my name is Daniel Rosen. I’m the managing director of AKQA Mobile. AKQA Mobile is the dedicated mobile division of AKQA, and AKQA is one of the world’s leading global digital marketing agencies.

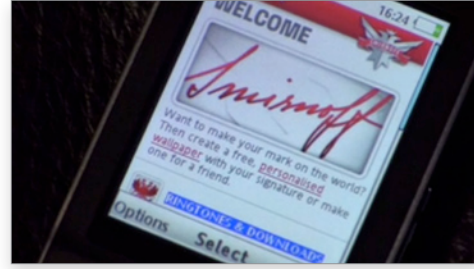
#### On ‘dotcom thinking’

...there is a temptation from some digital agencies to extend their web campaigns over to the mobile, with no consideration for the medium in itself, and paying specific attention to the needs of the mobile consumer when they’re out and about....

...the frame of mind that a consumer is when they’re sitting in front of a PC screen is very different from that of a mobile user, so one of the key mantras that we go by at AKQA Mobile is ‘Online Search, Mobile Find.’

... people want to find specific things, and the quicker and easier the brand make it for people to get to where they want to be, the more advantages for that brand...

... if you just take your .com site and transpose that onto a smaller screen, then you are probably not optimising the experience creatively for consumers... we always recommend creating some specific made-for-mobile content on mobile sites as well.



### Mobile in the marketing mix

...a lot of brands who we talk to are under the impression that mobile is about youth marketing. I think what we’ve seen over the last three, four, five years is that that’s just not the case any more...one of the fastest-growing age groups in terms of usage of mobile is actually the 55+ market and... one of the most active demographics of the mobile internet is the 45-50-year-old age group.

...mobile can be effective right the way across the marketing mix. What we’ve found is that where it is implemented in the most effective fashion is where it’s part of a proper strategy. Of course it can fulfill tactical objectives and it has been particularly successful within the area of sales promotion, for example, where it will continue to be, I’m sure, but by incorporating it within a marketing strategy and having a strategic approach to mobile, you’ll really be able to optimise the experience for consumers and get the most out of it for your brand.

#### On creativity in mobile

...mobile is a new channel; it’s a channel which for marketers is something that they may not have dealt with before, and therefore there are new challenges for creative directors. In order to optimise the medium, they need to consider things that they haven’t considered before.

...we need to distill copywriting into much smaller spaces, and really make it work harder. I think often some of the most creative work appears very, very simply... Mobile done well shows huge amounts of creativity.



### On Smirnoff.mobi

...Smirnoff.mobi is a pocket guide to vodka, which allows consumers to find out anything they want to know about vodka while they are on the go.

...people sometimes get intimidated when they are inside bars, and tend to order the same drink again and again. People want to know about what kind of cocktails they can be drinking, so that is why we created a product called The Pocket Bartender.

...another service on Smirnoff.mobi is the Nightlife Guide. [The Nightlife Guide is] a great service, and [allows people to find bars in their local area, where they can get a great Smirnoff cocktail...and it can provide them a map and...tell a friend about various different bars that they are going to, so therefore tying into the viral nature of mobile 2.0.

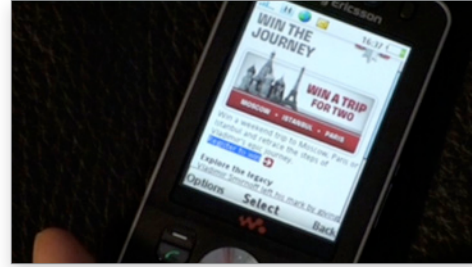
... Smirnoff.mobi is not a campaign site. This is Smirnoff creating a sustained presence in the medium, that is going out globally and they have already announced that they have long-term plans for mobile.

...Smirnoff.mobi is a great example of how a brand can really invest money in mobile, and move things to the next level and actually move beyond the test-and-learn mentality.

### On naming the site

...we felt it was important that consumers realised that when they accessed the site, it would be optimized for mobile and that they wouldn't just be getting a web page they would find it difficult to navigate around.

...what I would say to marketers who are wondering what URL to use for their mobile site, all I would say is that we have found the use of .mobi to be really helpful for consumers.



### The mobile web 'tipping point'

...the mobile internet is going through an extreme area of growth at the moment... We're very excited about that and what we're seeing is that brands obviously want to be where their consumers are and as more consumers adopt the mobile internet, more brands will go to reach their consumers using the mobile.

...there are challenges whenever any new medium comes in and I think we've seen that it's taken marketers quite a long time now to get to grips with the web and the PC-based internet, so now a new way of accessing that web via the mobile has come along, obviously there will be an amount of time for marketers to really get any depth of knowledge in terms of how the ecosystem works and what they should be doing in the medium and how they'll be able to make the most out of it, but what we have seen so far is a great appetite for marketers to learn and some of the more innovative brands, such as Smirnoff, have obviously made the leap in terms of investing in it and they're certainly reaping the benefits now

...In terms of how far we are in the mobile evolution, I'd say we're right at the very beginning. I think that we're just at the cusp of what is actually going to be possible on the mobile.