

THE ECONOMIC TIMES NEW DELHI MONDAY 21 JULY 2008

RINGING VOLUMES: Caller tunes may soon ad jingles to cells

Mobile VAS Co OnMobile Set To Launch Audio Advertising Platform Called AdRBT For Operators

Nitasha Chawla
NEW DELHI

NEXT time your mobile rings it might be a call-cum-commercial break: *Lifebuoy hai jahaan tandurusti hai wahaan... LIFEBOUY!* Advertisers are now gearing up to offer ads with such jingles. This latest mode to invade the advertising ecosystem is called AdRBT (Ad Ring Back Tone). Via AdRBTs, each time a person calls he will hear an ad instead of a ring tone.

Indeed, mobile advertising is becoming bigger and better each day not only in value but also when it comes to introducing new forms of advertising. Mobile value-added services (VAS) company OnMobile is going to launch an audio advertising platform called AdRBT for operators.

Says OnMobile mobile marketing and m-commerce head Debraj Tripathy: "We will launch AdRBT with other operators both within and outside India. We believe that it's a potent advertising option and provides a win-win solution for advertisers, operators and consumers. The brands that have approached us are Kwalify Walls, ITC and Cadbury's."

Mobile advertising market, valued at Rs 40 crore, is slated to grow to around Rs 150 crore by 2009-end. Says Mobile2Win co-founder and country head Rajiv Hiranandani: "AdRBTs are part of the entire mix when it comes to mobile advertising. This product can be seen as having the maximum reach as compared to other ad products that include advergaming, adfunded content and WAP advertising."

Here's how AdRBTs work: When a caller calls an AdRBT subscriber he gets to hear an ad instead of the normal ring (until the called party answers the call). When the ad is being played the caller has the option of pressing "#" as a response to hear the product/offer being advertised. This key press is recognised and remembered by the system. Once the call ends the system triggers an action such as delivery of the offer through a coupon or automatic call back giving information about the product or a WAP URL push, etc.

There are a few challenges too. One97 Communications director Rajiv Madhok says: "Every ad is not suited to every caller, hence it's necessary to choose the ad according to the caller. Caller profiling is important. But profiling is limited within the operator, that

AdRBT FUNCTION

When a caller calls an AdRBT subscriber he gets to hear an ad instead of the normal ring (until the called party answers the call). When the ad is being played the caller has the option of pressing "#" as a response to hear the product/offer being advertised. This key press is recognised and remembered by the system. Once the call ends the system triggers an action such as delivery of the offer through a coupon or automatic call back giving information about the product or a WAP URL push, etc.

is that it's non-intrusive and has a mass reach. Mr Debraj believes that from advertisers' perspective, this is an in-call advertising option. Hence it provides a relevant and captive audience to advertisers. It has the capability to elicit instant response, so advertisers know what is working and what is not. I

RCOM created one of the first of its kind AdRBTs for the Reliance Power IPO, which hit the markets in January 2008. Says an RCOM official: "Any mobile, landline or ILD customers calling RCOM subscribers during that period heard the Reliance Power jingle as the caller ring back tone (CRBT). Reliance Power jingle was estimated to have been heard 800 million to 1000 million times, which is 3-5 times over other traditional media reaching millions of people across the globe."

Tata Teleservices has been active in using AdRBTs. One of their campaigns was with Parachute advanced hair oil, which along with other media used CRBT to promote the balladic flavour of their jingle: *Timn Ho Goraovos Hamesha*. Company president (VAS) Pankaj Sethi says: "The campaign saw high recall, customers crawled for the free jingle and we targeted this for up market RBT users in Delhi and Mumbai

circle for Parachute Advanced."

Mr Madhok feels that people might not subscribe to AdRBTs even if they are free. So, in order to woo people, various combinations have to be tried. It can be either free SMS or a caller tone and AdRBT combination at a discount. It can also depend on the number of incoming calls received by a subscriber. Agrees Mr Sethi: "During IPL, we saw over eight lakh downloads of the jingle Cricket Ka Karmyudhi in 45 days. We even gave prizes like cameras and allowed users to enter an SMS contest on IPL to win merchandise."

AdRBTs are still a new medium for advertisers and VAS companies say that plan differs for different products. Mr Debraj says: "AdRBT can be used by different kind of brands for different purposes, for example FMCG brands can run a brand campaign on AdRBT while durables could run a special offer. Local retail, on the other hand, could run special time-bound promotions. A TV brand can promote a special offer of let's say a 20% off."

Mr Madhok feels: "The products best suited for AdRBTs are those belonging to FMCG category as these ads are interesting and easier to connect with." Hopefully call receivers will agree.



PURNIMA