

Mobile 411 Services: an Advertiser's Dream

Directory assistance (411) provider, V-Enable has published the results of a nationwide survey that they commissioned from Local Mobile Search (LMS), an Opus Research Advisory Service. The study revealed key information on 411 users' behavior, needs and expectations. Among the findings, LMS found that mobile Directory Assistance (DA) users are in the purchase decision mode; precisely the types of consumers most attractive to marketers.

One of the major findings of this study is that typical Mobile 411 users are consumers on the go who want and expect accurate results immediately. As opposed to a typical Internet user who can spend hours browsing and searching for news and sports or accessing entertainment, social networks or any information of interest, the typical DA user is overwhelmingly a person with intent to buy, an important subset of mobile audiences that may appeal to marketers.

Respondents were asked to give their top two reasons for using DA. Inquiries about a business product/service and business hours or business location scored 40.1%, 40.1% and 48.9% respectively.

Annually, there are over 5.4 billion DA calls made in the USA - that's over 10,272 calls a minute. These calls are most often made by consumers en route to conduct a transaction, so not only are consumers making the Directory Assistance a multibillion dollar industry by paying for assistance, but they also represent an active channel of consumers intent on making yet another purchase in local markets.

"As advertising spreads to mobile devices, 411 becomes an attractive way to reach consumers," said V-Enable Executive Vice President and CMO, Craig Hagopian, whose Mobile411 service also lists sponsored listings results next to many other voice-enabled features and capabilities.

"It's clear from the data that users of Directory Assistance are some of the most qualified buyers out there," said Greg Sterling, Program Director of LMS. "Directory Assistance has emerged as the mass-market entry point for mobile search."

Five years ago, fixed-line DA call volumes were double those of mobile but that has been changing. The trend is clearly toward mobile DA usage, which is accelerating with rising mobile penetration of the industry and the growth of mobile-only households.

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Posted to the site on 5th February 2008

Attachments

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Aside from DA users making more calls from their mobile phones as a general industry trend, the LMS survey found that a full 66.9% of consumers who use mobile DA do so when they are in the car, validating the study's observation that Directory Assistance is a "gateway to mobile commerce".

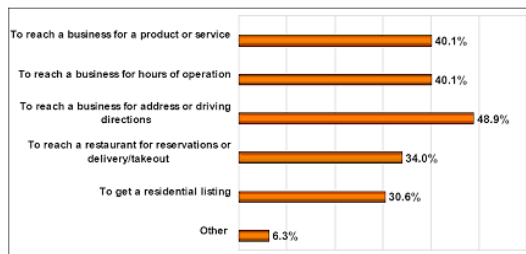
Consumers Still Unaware of the Price of a 411 Call

Perhaps the most understated result from the study is that while billions of 411 calls are made annually, consumers, for the most part, are unaware of the charges associated with 411 calls. More than 50% of the respondents underestimated the actual cost of mobile Directory Assistance charges and, of that group, almost 19% thought it was free. Another 18% didn't know the cost at all which means that roughly 70% were incorrect compared to actual fees. Additionally, the survey found that many people were unaware of the free 411 options; roughly three-fourths of mobile DA users have not used one of the free alternatives to date.

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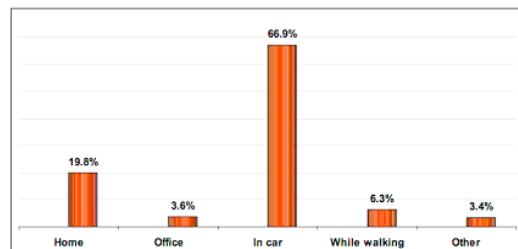
What is your most frequent intention in calling 411 from your mobile phone?
(Select top two choices)



Source: Opus Research (12/07), n=556

Top reasons for calling 411

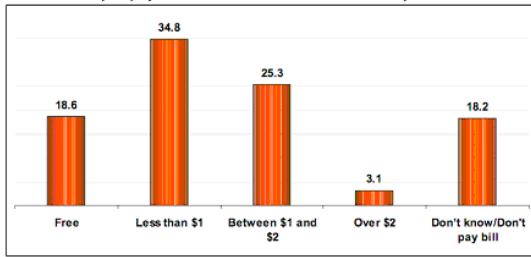
In the past year, when using your mobile phone, where did you make most of your calls to 411?



Source: Opus Research (12/07), n=556

Where do you call 411 from

How much do you pay for each call to mobile 411 directory assistance?



Source: Opus Research (12/07), n=549

How much do you pay for 411 calls

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