

## MOKO

**Date service launched:** on-deck on 3 August 2005 in Australia and May 2006 in the UK; December 2007 off-deck

**Service partners:**

- Technology and/or platform provider: Loop Mobile Limited
- Access/connectivity: on-deck with 3 Australia, 3 U.K, and Virgin Mobile Australia; globally via www.moko.mobi
- Brand/content: MOKO and UGC
- Aggregator: MIG and MX Telecom
- Any other partners: Carrier Grade hosting, Macquarie Telecom.

**Community categories:** Me and My Circle, Me, My Circle and Content, Friending, Entertainment, Fame

MOKO is a 3G-centric WAP-based community service emphasising the creation, sharing and critiquing of social media (photos and video). High emphasis is placed on instant chat communication among community members around content and niche/fan club development. Service expansions centre on community services for media brands, musicians (MOKO Music) and celebrities (e.g. TV).

### Service features

**Figure 2.38: MOKO service features**

Service name	MOKO
Browse the community	w/registration
Create/edit personal profile page	w/registration
One click log-in	Yes
Commenting (text) on profiles of others	Yes
Audio recording	Upload via MMS and web upload site, viewing via streaming introduced December 2007 Download via WAP
Photos	Upload via MMS, view in WAP page
Videos	Upload via MMS and web upload site, viewing via streaming introduced December 2007 Download via WAP
Rate content	Yes
Chat	Yes, public and private
Tell (invite, recommend) a friend from any page	Yes
Events	Yes
Status or mood indicator	No
Launch a voice call	No
Launch a video call	No
Audio streaming	Yes
Location-enabled services	No
Presence	Yes
Blog or twitter	Yes
Moderated (quality controlled)	Yes

Source: Informa Telecoms & Media

**Number of community registrations:** 100,000

**Page impressions per month:** 100 million

**Average user session time (as of last measure):** 75.8 minutes per session as of October 2007

**Geographic coverage:** Australia, the UK on-deck and globally off-deck

## Business model

The operator partners that have launched MOKO (3 Australia and 3 UK) generate revenues from subscription fees plus premium charges. In Australia (Planet 3) the community access charge is AU\$4/month or AU\$1/day. On 3 UK network, becoming a member of MOKO costs £1.5 (US\$ 2.9) per month. The tariff includes chat, viewing social media. The carrier charges a premium fee for MMS (picture and video uploads). Within the community premium service charges apply to private messaging (AU\$0.50) and the set up/operation of private chat rooms.

## Lessons learned in this service to date

- Mobile communities and online communities are very different at many technical and business levels
- Device management and media presentation is very difficult across a wide variety of handsets; mobile browsers are improving but it remains very much a challenge to ensure consistency across the user base (required for on-deck placement)
- Monetisation with subscriptions is best when done (on-deck) via the operators billing management system
- One result of charging for access to the community is that the participants are more loyal and 'stickier' than with a free service
- A strong editorial culture (with human moderators) is important to ensuring that the community maintains 'good hygiene'
- A service can build a huge community, but people want to focus where their passions and interests are and this (with community leadership) is what will hold them.

## Analysis of future prospects of this service

Loop Mobile has been in the UGC over 3G category for more than two years at the time of preparation of this profile. It is one, if not the most, technologically mature of the mobile UGC-centric, social media sharing category of community providers. Some of the exceptional strengths of this company are due to the diverse management team coming from graphics, technology management and operator business backgrounds.

The company's mobile social media platform is both ready for mobile network operator implementations (provided that the network operator's subscribers are all on 3G) and the second prong of the technology strategy – WAP – was introduced in December 2007, providing the required balance and risk minimisation from both the technology and revenue equations.

### **Barriers to entry**

Loop Mobile's experience should allow it to capitalise on the 3G-only opportunities with mobile network operators in other regions of the world, once the company localises its platform and this should reduce competition, at least in the 3G operator segment.

With the WAP, off-deck side of the business, there are already other providers and in this camp, MOKO is the newcomer which others must try to prevent from gaining a foothold. Provided the company uses its innovation and multiple business strategies, it should not have great difficulty building up an attractive base of content creators.

### **Likelihood of retention**

On the 3G side of the operation, the mobile subscribers with advanced handsets and networks are eager to utilise them with a service such as MOKO. On the WAP side, however, where the service is offered at no cost to the user, the members will be kept just to preserve access to their existing social media. It's too early to tell how well Loop Mobile will do with its WAP service, although there is plenty of time for the company to get it right and gain significant market share in the future.

### **Likelihood of meeting the technology challenges ahead**

Given that the company's platform is optimised for 3G service delivery and has been performing up to 3 service standards in two markets, it is probably well hardened and capable of delivering on the promised value. The question that remains is whether the company's device detection and management are up to the task when put to the test on the public Internet and with WAP. In addition, the public and ad sponsored side of the business could need some time before it is replicated and properly balanced in the geographies where the greatest number of users are accessing the service.

### **Likelihood of meeting the business challenges ahead**

The business challenges for Loop Mobile will be to get visibility off-deck with fresh marketing strategies and to sell its inventory of impressions to brands that are already being approached by larger networks of UGC providers. In the future, Loop management could explore strategic alliances in which its platform is white labeled for other 3G community types, such

as productivity communities, fame and other types, which are best served with a multimedia-rich offering. It could also begin to provide its UGC creators with the ability to syndicate their content to other mobile communities or content portals, via cross promotions or direct business contracts.