

Mobile social networking enhanced with mig33

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Global mobile social network, mig33 - with more than 18 million global users and over two million in South Africa - reports it has added a range of enhancements to keep users up-to-date with the latest trends in mobile social networking.

“Unlike many other mobile applications, mig33 is not just chat,” says mig33 co-founder & VP Marketing, Mei Lin Ng, “it’s a community and lifestyle. With these new enhancements, we’re adding more interactivity and personalisation for our users, as we continue to build and grow the mig33 community.”

Users can now track what their friends are doing in real time with ‘Updates’, and also immediately update their own status, broadcasting it to their network of friends. New themes allow users to customise their mig33 experience by changing their screen colour and images.

“Mobile social networking is about immediate, up-to-the-minute communications,” says Ng. “The new ‘Updates’ allows users to be even more connected with what is going on with their mig33 community, both while they are online and on their return to mig33, and live links to enhance their social experience while they chat on mig33.”

Internet-based social networking sites grew 47% in the year to April 2008, reaching 45% of web users globally, with social networking sites becoming “the reality television of the Internet”, according to Nielsen/NetRatings. The soaring popularity of social networking is fast spreading into the mobile Internet space, with accessibility as the key driver.

In South Africa, at the end of 2007, there were over 6 million personal computers in use, and just under four million people – a mere 8% of the population – accessed the Internet, as measured by World Wide Worx research.

In contrast, there were more than 30 million cell phone subscribers – 60% of the population. “In developing countries such as South Africa, where millions of people connect to the Internet for the first time from their cell phones, the mobile platform provides access to the digital age,” says Ng.

“Mobility has become a must-have, even for regular computer users. The local market has huge upside potential. There is virtually no learning curve and no technical-support challenge to overcome in loading the mig33 social networking application, and the potential for expansion of the services delivered over the mobile device is unlimited.”

The integration of mobile phones and the Internet has given rise to the rapid uptake of social networking, and is generating a huge amount of user-generated content, such as instant messages, photographs and social data.

“As the mobile social networking market becomes more competitive, we realise we must provide consumers with distinct content they can identify with,” says Ng. “This means we have to live by the rules of social media: communication, interaction and innovation.

“While there is still a bias towards teenagers and young adults, consumers of all ages are turning to mobile for activities such as text messaging, chat, ring tones, photos, games, music, online access, location awareness and email, and we need to make sure we are in tune with their needs. “Unlike many other social networking services, mig33 offers a full suite of communications and entertainment services such as cheap calls, cheap SMS, e-mail, instant messaging, chat rooms, text messaging, profiles, photo sharing and mobile content.

“We’ve created a vibrant and active user community, where people are sharing information – from local stories within friends’ networks to what’s happening on the other side of the world – and finding like-minded others in chat rooms and through profiles.

“People around the globe are using mig33 to exchange more than 300 million messages a day, and to share more than a million pictures a month.” Basic communications services are provided free, so users can get started by communicating globally with friends and family via chat and instant messaging.

“We’ve also established a commerce system, where users use a prepaid card or voucher to buy credits for fee-charging services such as premium emoticon packs, SMS and cheap mobile calls.

“We plan to add more communications, entertainment, information and commerce tools, such as mobile content and services, to enable users to stay more connected to friends and family and to engage in the increasing range of services now accessible on the mobile phone.”

To join the mig33 mobile social network, cell phone users should point their WAP browser to wap.mig33.com. For information on where to buy prepaid cards for cheap calls or premium emoticons, [e-mail here](#).

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