

# BuzzCity predictions for 2012

By [Dr KF Lai](#)

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SINGAPORE: 2011 has certainly been a busy year for the mobile industry and there have been some real changes. Based on our experiences of the past year, I wanted to share my top five predictions for 2012...



## **1. Marketers finally accept fragmentation.**

2012 is the year when developers and brands finally give up on trying to target a particular operating system or device, because specialisation means missing out. Make the mobile internet the first port of call as well as your primary presence, regardless of platform. Beyond 2012, watch out for HTML5, which provides users with a rich app-like experience without having to download an app. However, there is still a way to go before the majority of mobile devices can support this technology.

## **2. Tablets are recognised as a medium in their own right.**

When tablets were first released, pundits worried that the new device would cannibalise the market for both PCs/laptops and phones. This hasn't happened - and it won't. A new ecosystem is forming along with new media consumption habits. This is likely to be seen in 2012, as more immersive games / applications drive consumption via tablets.

## **3. Mobile coupons steal the stage.**

The convenience and functionality of mobile wallets are not enough to drive mass-market adoption. When it comes to encouraging mobile transactions, value will be derived from opt-in coupons delivered direct to consumers' mobile wallets, who then redeem the coupons at the point-of-sale with their phones. The mobile internet plus coupons plus mobile payments is a winning formula. It will also be essential to make it cost effective for smaller retailers to drive footfall with mobile coupons, which in turn catalyses m-commerce into a mainstream tool.

## **4. Small businesses gravitate to mobile social media.**

More small business owners are turning to social media (Facebook, Twitter etc) to create a mobile and web presence to take advantage of m-commerce opportunities, particularly in emerging markets.

## **5. M-commerce comes of age in emerging markets.**

In the United States, e-commerce - including online, catalogue and mobile sales - now accounts for more than 40% of all retail sales in most sectors. Expect to see similar trends in emerging markets . . . as soon as regulators step in to halt the handful of Value Added Services players who unscrupulously take advantage of loopholes in mobile billing. Proper regulation protects consumers and legitimate businesses and encourages more people to access e-commerce for the first time.

The markets that take control and regain consumer trust will set an example in 2012 to those who are lagging behind with m-commerce, to show that properly conducted, it can pay handsome dividends.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr KF Lai is co-founder and chief executive officer of BuzzCity. Lai uses his entrepreneurial skills to spearhead BuzzCity's strategy, leading the company's engineering, product management and technology groups. Since its launch in 1999, BuzzCity has grown to be a leading global mobile advertising network. For more information go to [\[\[www.buzzcity.com\]\]](http://www.buzzcity.com).

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