



Acision provides innovative mobile solution for SPH Search

From being Singapore's local search and directory engine to providing the nation's first mobile location-based search and directory service, Rednano advances its search technology in Singapore

When SPH Search, a subsidiary of the Singapore Press Holdings Limited (SPH), Southeast Asia's leading media organization, decided to launch Singapore's first location-based mobile search and directory service called Rednano Locate, it chose to partner with Acision, the world's leading messaging company and Seeker Wireless, a leading provider of zone detection technology and member of the Acision Innovation Network Programme. SPH Search employed Acision and Seeker Wireless' technological leadership to aid in its goal of providing this revolutionary mobile search marketing solution. Acision conceptualized, designed and implemented the service infrastructure as well as the client user interface on the handsets.



Key benefits:

- The first cross-telco mobile location-based directory search for the mass market
- Enabling users to have localized search results at their fingertips anytime, anywhere
- Revenue generated from advertising on banners, directory and promotion listings found within the application
- Helps bridge the divide between the marketing world and mobile world, in a largely targeted and relevant manner

Redefining the search experience

SPH Search, the company behind rednano.sg, Singapore's local search and directory engine, was born out of a collaboration between two media powerhouses – SPH and Schibsted Group. These two companies, headquartered in Singapore and Norway respectively, have long been in the business of providing useful information that is accurate, relevant and timely to people. It is on this premise that rednano.sg was first conceptualized.

Aiming to be the premier destination for anyone seeking information about Singapore, its people and its businesses, rednano.sg is an online home-grown search and directory engine that aims to simplify the search process for users by providing localized search results such as directory listings, news updates, maps, images, people search and even information from the worldwide web. With the success of rednano.sg in Singapore, SPH Search decided to extend its search experience through Rednano Mobile, its mobile touch point by providing location-based search and directory results to users via their mobile phones.

With a mobile penetration rate of 131% in 2009*, Singapore's mobile market has a high level of mobile ownership, making it highly attractive for mobile marketers, and providing a wider reach to consumers. This, combined with the country's advanced IT infrastructure and the prevalence of free national mobile broadband, enables consumers to be mobile and connected at all times.

The population of Singapore is known to be enthusiastic about new mobile technologies, with a tendency to be early adopters. Aside from the general populace's affinity for mobile gadgets and services, leisure activities such as shopping and dining are considered a national pastime.

Because of the highly mobile nature of the Singapore consumer market, introducing a mobile marketing model where the users choose what information or ads they want to be exposed to and when, is bound to be more successful than untargeted and unsolicited SMS push advertising.

As a result, Rednano Locate, the first cross-telco mobile location-based search and directory service was developed and enabled by Acision and Seeker Wireless.

Overcoming the perception of mobile marketing

By targeting advertisers who want to utilize the mobile channel, SPH Search wanted to offer a service that was not only an evolution from the untargeted SMS push advertising model but one that delivers value which is deemed superior by consumers, businesses and brands alike.

However, rolling out an advanced mobile marketing service is not without challenges.

Firstly, SPH Search's core business was in media and as such, its competency in mobile marketing and expertise in location-based technology was limited. At the same time, SPH Search also realized that its extensive content repository would provide a potential goldmine for brands wanting to take their businesses to the mobile channel.

Secondly, with mobile location-based technology being a key component to the SPH Search mobile marketing service model, it had an edge over the traditional broadcast SMS advertising model. Therefore, the SPH Search's mobile service had to offer a new level of user experience; from the handset client interface to how search results appear on screen.

On top of this, SPH Search sought to address the negative consumer perception of location-based mobile marketing in Singapore, which has traditionally been delivered via a "push" delivery model. Typically, once a consumer enters a specific geographical location or cell, they are bombarded with SMS ads that are mass-broadcasted. Such ads are often irrelevant to the consumers' preferences and consumers are generally not given a choice to opt-in to or opt out the service. This was the kind of end-user experience that SPH Search knew it had to avoid.

As a result, together with Acision and Seeker Wireless, SPH Search developed Rednano Locate, a mobile location-based search and directory service as its key differentiator.

Paul Jansen, CEO of SPH Search, said: "We were essentially looking for a mobile application that will be adopted by mobile phone users when making location-based decisions whether it is for work or for play. The challenge was to invent a new mobile service where information is what the user seeks, as what is pushed to him has a likelihood of being irrelevant to his needs."

(Below are some of the examples of the Rednano Locate screenshots available on a handset)



Directory

Maps

Traffic

Promo

“Partnering with Acision enables us to leverage its specialist knowledge of the mobile marketing space to deliver an innovative mobile solution while offering value to consumers. This service forms an important part of our business as SPH Search endeavors towards serving up localized search results with point information.”

Paul Jansen
CEO of SPH Search

Enabling a revolutionary mobile search marketing solution

As the world's leading messaging company, Acision works with over 300 network operators and service providers globally. The company's proven products and services, experienced people and leading service innovation allow organisations like SPH Search to meet the challenges of today's converging telecommunications market.

Seeker Wireless, a privately held company that pioneered cellular location technology was selected to provide the location component to the service. Seeker Wireless has developed the world's leading zone detection technology, enabling the delivery of innovative voice and data services based on real-time subscriber location. The technology uses innovative techniques to determine when a subscriber moves into or out of a pre-defined area, which can be used to trigger events such as mobile advertisements.

To start using Rednano Locate, a user with a supported mobile phone can download the free application by texting to a short-code number. The mobile application is then sent over the mobile network to his handset and can be installed through a simple click-through process. Once this is done, the user can activate a search query, relevant to what he is searching for at that time and Rednano Locate will provide relevant search results of the product or service, located nearest to him. Brands wanting to be first on the search results list and to be displayed more prominently than competing brands can pay a premium for such optimized results.

Delivering real value to customers

Rednano Locate enables consumers to search from more than 100,000 vendors through its directory of business listings. The search results from this application will have location-specific information on the establishment, including an option to view a map of the selected destination. Users can also find out the latest traffic information to better plan their route. Moreover, they can also get to enjoy the latest retail promotional offers in their current vicinity.

Paul Jansen, CEO of SPH Search, said: “Partnering with Acision enables us to leverage its specialist knowledge of the mobile marketing space to deliver an innovative mobile solution while offering value to consumers. This service forms an important part of our business as SPH Search endeavors towards serving up localized search results with point information.”

The service is currently free to all end consumers who are not charged for downloading the application or using it for their search queries. The revenue for this service is derived mainly from advertising on banners, directory and promotion listings found in the application.

Most consumers search for directory listings and maps, which proves that the service addresses the needs of consumers who need ready access to information even on the go. Promotion listings are increasingly popular as consumers like to check out bargains and discounts that they can enjoy, no matter where they go.

For more information

To contact your nearest regional office, please visit our website or email: contact@acision.com

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Partnering for future growth

Although mobile marketing is still in its infancy, it holds a tremendous promise as a mechanism to deliver a tailored and targeted campaign to the consumer. Acision has facilitated SPH Search in launching the first cross-telco mobile search marketing solution, by leveraging on the mobile channel to enable users to have localised search results at their fingertips anytime, anywhere.

The launch of Rednano Locate illustrates that Acision is at the heart of SPH Search's strategic business objectives, collaborating together to help SPH Search to achieve profitable and sustainable growth.

The deployment also reaffirms that success in mobile marketing depends on bridging the divide between the marketing world and the mobile world, and in a largely targeted and relevant manner.

For more information about SPH Search and rednano.sg, please visit www.sphsearch.sg and www.rednano.sg respectively.

For more information about SPH, please visit www.sph.com.sg.