



## The Green Revolution

Smartphone technology paves the way for the market to adopt greener approaches. Encouraging greater use of mobile services helps to limit the need for multiple devices, extend the product lifecycle and offer consumers more ways of being green

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"Technology companies can never be green". A casual comment dropped into conversation when discussing the idea of 'green technology'. Of course, 'green technology' already exists in the form of multi-million pound, global scale projects that help reclaim water, produce renewable energy and generally help meet global climate change targets. Green technology, as it stands, does not mean the 'greening' of technology.

Making technology a little greener would mean creating a shift in the way that technology products – consumer ones that is – are used and consumed. My argument is that the first steps to any

greening of the consumer technology space would be lengthening the product lifecycle. Today, the very nature of the market tells a tale of rapid uptake and obsolescence; parts break or newer, quicker, more innovative versions come along leaving many devices left for good old Mr. Landfill. Looking at the wider consumer landscape, which is successfully adopting greener behaviour, it seems like the right time for technology to adapt.

Recent data from a GfK NOP Technology survey amongst a representative sample of UK adults\* which asked about attitudes towards everyday technology products like MP3s, PCs and mobile phones revealed that obsolescence is not a desirable feature. When it comes to

mobile phones specifically, more than half (56%) say that they are more interested in keeping their device for longer. This offers an opportunity for the rapidly growing mobile services industry. More on this later.

The finding is reflective of wider concerns about the environment and suggests a growing demand for a greener technology market. In particular, 41% of consumers want to know more about what their mobile phone brand or network is doing to be more green in order to help make decisions about future purchases. Consumers now have more choices than ever before to help 'being green' more easy, but whether technology products can add to the offering remains to be seen.

Enter the smartphone, which according to Gartner, Inc. saw sales growth of 48.7% across the global market in the first quarter of 2010. Smartphones bring mobile services to the lives of consumers which Mobile Marketer estimate will be worth \$1 trillion by 2013. Services

available through smartphone technology are already a valuable commodity for global technology companies including Apple, Microsoft, Google and Nokia who, despite raging patent wars are rolling apps, music, messaging, maps and other everyday 'services' the mass market might desire over 3G and wireless networks.

The benefits of mobile services extend beyond helping consumers rely more on their mobile phones. In particular, our research reveals that 40% of consumers are more interested in updating the services they use on their mobile phone than the device itself. This figure is not only music to the ears of software developers, network providers and mobile manufacturers who are diversifying

to technology. They can be updated and replaced regularly and help transform mobile devices into a highly personalised experience. Not only this, but due to the way that they bring a variety of functions together, e.g. camera, music player, clock, etc, they reduce the need for multiple technology devices. All of which contributes a 'greener' technology market.

However, mobile services can not only help limit environmental impact of products, they also encourage and enable greener consumer behaviour and offer more choices for a greener lifestyle. Nokia, the world's leading mobile manufacturer, is helping demonstrate how. Kirsi Sormunen, Vice

President of Nokia Environmental Affairs, says that the company is continuously looking at "new ways in which mobile technology can contribute to sustainable development," as well as "inviting consumers to the journey towards sustainability." To support this they have created



into this services market, but also to consumers looking for more ways of being green. Services can extend the product lifecycle through satisfying a wide variety of consumer needs when it comes

a series of videos demonstrating and hinting at ways that using a mobile phone with internet access is yet another way of 'being green'.

The videos show mobile phones helping us to help the environment through reducing travel, browsing the internet and carrying an all-in-one device. Nokia is not new to the move to making technology more green. The company came top in Greenpeace's guide to consumer electronics earlier in the year. Their progression from making the manufacture of handsets more green to making the relationship between consumers and their devices more green, is an encouraging move for the technology market.

With the rapid uptake of smartphones, according to Gartner, Inc. figures, 54.3 million units globally are already helping people use their mobile phones to access the internet and services, limiting the need for multiple and separate devices. A green revolution in consumer technology has already begun, particularly where consumers want to keep their mobile devices for longer. Despite the global giants of Google and Apple being the pioneers of smartphone technology, it is companies like Nokia who have already realised the environmental benefits of mobile services who are paving the way for the greening of technology.

### \*Notes on the research

GfK NOP Technology conducted a survey among 862 UK adults in March 2010. The interviews were conducted online and are representative on UK adults who have access to the internet.

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