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SUCCESS STORY

Creating Awareness and Demand for Mobile Money

“I found the service quite helpful. I particularly liked the fact that I can keep my money safe in the phone and send it to others... Even if I lose the phone my money remains safe. I have since advised my friends to register for mobile money.”

- Wellington Richard, 36 year old fish seller from Salima District



Clients registering for Airtel money during the Agriculture Fair.

Photo credit — FHI 360/M

The Mobile Money Accelerator Program (MMAP) successfully raised the profile of mobile money in Malawi through participating in the 10th Malawi National Agriculture Fair from August 29th to 31st. A joint mobile money exhibit was launched with competing mobile network operators TNM and Airtel. Throughout the three days of the fair, Airtel and TNM registered a combined 667 clients for mobile money.

The event brought the two competing mobile networks together in a joint effort to promote the benefits of mobile money. While bringing the two competitors was not an easy venture, the exhibit’s success was marked by a visit from the event’s guest of honor, Malawi Vice President, Right Honorable Khumbo Kachali. Additionally, one of Malawi’s most renowned economists, an influential social commentator and writer, Dr. D.D. Phiri, registered for Airtel money during the event.

MMAP provided prizes of e-values worth MWK1000 (approximately 7 USD) to the first 147 clients for TNM and 142 clients for Airtel who registered for mobile money during the event. Promotional materials were also distributed to raise awareness on mobile money and generate demand during and beyond the event.

TNM and Airtel created a lively environment by providing various prizes through interactive quiz competitions focusing on mobile money that ran for all the three days of the event. Prizes included branded t-shirts, caps, internet dongles, and key holders. Additional attention was garnered through theatre performances, traditional dances, comedies, and radio adverts all in promotion for mobile money.

In the two days leading up to the fair, Zodiak Radio aired a 30 minute live radio program on mobile money which featured TNM, Airtel and MMAP. MBC Radio 2 aired a similar programme on August 30th. Each station reaches approximately 8 million listeners. Additionally, a press conference attended by journalists from key media outlets in Malawi was conducted shortly after the official opening of the fair on August 29th.

The general reaction of visitors to the exhibit was quite receptive to the benefits that mobile money has to offer, agreeing that it can help to save time and costs incurred in financial transactions. The event was attended by a diverse group of Malawians, numbering in the thousands, including politicians, decision makers, policy makers, organizations in agriculture value chains, private sector institutions, people from remote areas, and farmers, among others.

The attention that the dynamic exhibit garnered at the fair went a long way in raising the profile of mobile money. Media attention and high profile visitors show early signs of the hoped for “snowball effect” that will increase mobile money registrations and transactions.



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