# Getting Started in Mobile Media Ministry

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# 1. Getting set up with the right hardware

## A. Overview

What kind of mobile/cell/smart phone OR mobile media player are you going to need to be able to get going in mobile media outreach?  I will list detailed specifications in perceived order of importance, but first let me share with you the most essential bottom-line features for those of you who don't have time to read the more extended listing:

a) Mobile phone (as opposed to a PDA or iPod type device)
b) 2.4 inch/6 cm MINIMUM and 3 inch/7.5 cm plus RECOMMENDED display size that is brilliant/has high resolution
c) LOUD/clear speakers
d) Computer connection cord and software in the box
e) Bluetooth connectivity
f) 512MB+ memory with ability to expand to at least 2GB
g) Typical brand used by your target audience (to help ensure your ability to send to their devices)
h) While trying to meet the above specs try to get something that isn't necessarily the latest greatest model with a high WOW factor- you want them to focus on the video and not the phone.

## B. Choosing Between a Mobile Phone, Mobile Media Player, or PDA

My bottom-line piece of advice on this one is that you should get something that your intended audience uses.  If your intended audience actually uses PDAs it might be a good idea to use one.  If your target audience typically uses iPods/video MP3 players you can save a bunch of money and get a large screen version of one of those (the "GodPod Touch" is a ministry-specific/low cost device ($55 USD) that can be found at this website:

http://www.indigitech.net/index.php?page=shop.product_details&flypage=flypage.tpl&product_id=1&category_id=1&option=com_virtuemart&Itemid=234).

If your target audience pretty much only uses mobile phones for their mobile media needs (which is what I think most of the developing world is doing) get a mobile phone.  One HUGE advantage of a mobile phone over most iPods/video MP3 players (at present) is that the latter devices currently are not equipped to wirelessly (Bluetooth or otherwise) swap files.  Therefore, if you use iPods or other video players it will be much more difficult to pass your videos on to your viewers.

## C. Display

The larger the display the more enjoyable the viewing experience will be and the greater the number of people who will be able to see the action.  I currently use the Nokia 5800 which has a 3.2" display with good resolution and I find that three people can enjoyably watch the screen at the same time.  That works out to one inch of display per viewer if you are looking at phones with smaller screens.  Don't forget, though, that smaller displays make it really hard to follow the action in a film, especially when using video that was meant for the big screen originally.  Conversely, the larger the display is the more ungainly and unpocketable your mobile device will be. Manufacturers are attempting to get around this by either using touch screen phones that don't use keyboards or by using slide-out keyboards set behind the screen when not in use.  Brilliance of display is another important feature as you will find yourself wanting to share a video in bright daylight on occasion-- if the screen isn't all that bright in the showroom it's not going to hack it out on the street (FYI a review I just read states that the new generation of "AMOLED" screens may look good in a showroom but don't do well in direct sunlight).  One final thought here is that projection from a mobile phone (think of your mobile taking the role of a film projector) is coming in the next couple of years and may provide some new opportunities in sharing media (a pocket sized projector that is already available is the 3M MPro 120).

### D. Sound

If you are traveling and want your fellow passenger to be able to hear what is being said on your video you're going to need good speakers to rise above the roar of the engine and chatter of other passengers. I've listened to an iPhone, Nokia 5800, and LG Cookies KP500 and the first two have what it takes to be used on the street while I was left feeling that the last phone's speakers were a bit too tinny and weak. You need to actually hear audio playback of the phone you're thinking of buying, whether in the store or by listening to a friend's phone. You have the option of going with the work-around of either letting a person listen to it on earphones (or, with a splitter, letting two people listen in on different earphones sets) or attaching speakers which allows for a good listening experience but neither of these are quite as portable nor as "natural"/normal as just pulling out the phone and hitting play.

### E. Mobile Device-to-Computer Connection

To be able to get materials onto a mobile media player most users will want to transfer them from a computer. You can do this either with a supplied USB cord or through Bluetooth as long as you have Bluetooth ability on your computer (Bluetooth is a kind of short-range wireless for transferring data). I highly recommend that anyone pioneering mobile media outreach only walk out of the store with a phone that has a USB cord and computer software in the box. Having the software and cord helps to ensure that you really will be able to transfer your outreach materials onto your phone. Most desktops and laptops don't come pre-equipped with Bluetooth and my experience with computer Bluetooth adapters hasn't been wildly successful. For those not pioneering a mobile media outreach it may be possible to rely on Bluetooth to Bluetooth transmission from a mobile phone that is already loaded with the materials to your phone but this can be quite time-consuming. One cautionary note- although a phone with a USB cord packaged with it should be able to connect with your computer there are rare occasions where the software that comes with the phone is not compatible with your computer's operating system.

### F. Phone-to-Phone Connectivity

If the videos you use are going to get out among the community you are trying to reach you are going to need Bluetooth connectivity built into your phone. If you are considering the purchase of a large screen phone with good speakers I can almost guarantee that the phone comes equipped with Bluetooth.

### G. Memory

If your mobile phone doesn't have more memory than it takes to store your phone list you're not going to get very far in turning it into a mobile media outreach tool. The videos we are currently using run from 3MB up to 30MB for one to five minute videos (in MP4 or 3GP formats). If you plan to use a "mini-Bible" of approximately 40 clips and say another 5-10 evangelistic videos you're looking at the potential for nearly a gigabyte (1000 MB) of memory usage. You may not have that much material now, but don't plan for the here and now, plan for what could and hopefully will be some day. If you try to have your clips in more than one format (MP4 for clarity, 3GP for ease of bluetoothing) that leaves you needing as much as two gigabytes of memory. My recommendation is the 512 megabytes (0.5 GB) should be a minimum memory size to start off with. Make sure the phone you walk out of the store with either has that much memory built in, OR that it has something like a MicroSD card slot that can accept a one gigabyte or higher MicroSD card.

### H. Compatibility

The reason I purchased a Nokia 5800 rather than an iPhone was that I wanted to ensure that I would be able to send the files I produced and used on my phone to my intended audience's phones and that they would be able to play them once they were received. Considering that Nokia has a HUGE

lock on the market in the country where I live, I decided to purchase the Nokia. My friend who purchased an iPhone has had difficulty transferring the videos I developed from his phone to other users' phones and I'm not sure at this point if that is due to the size of the files (too big) or to the possibility that the iPhone changed the files into an iPhone proprietary format so that they don't play on Nokias any longer.

### I. "Wow" Factor

To get a phone with all those specs at the time of writing (09/09) requires that you get a pretty high end phone. Hopefully within the next two years these features will be more commonly available. We have noted in our outreach that the wow factor of having a really high end phone can pull attention from the video being shown and put it on the device showing it. If you live in a high crime (especially violent crime) area you may also want to avoid having such a phone for safety-sake. Try to get a phone that meets your needs without drawing too much attention to itself.

### J. File Organization

This is a difficult to observe at the store and your best hope is to get other users' input on it. When comparing the iPhone and the Nokia 5800 I find that it is a bit easier and faster to find and play the video you want on the iPhone and when you are sharing with someone you would rather not make them wait too long as you bumble around trying to find the video you're looking for. This factor, though, is less important than the ones I have mentioned above.

### K. Research

A high-quality mobile phone isn't cheap and getting input from other users is helpful so ask around and check the web for reviews too (http://reviews.cnet.com/cell-phones/ ; http://www.mobileburn.com/ ; http://www.mobiledia.com/)

# 2. Getting set up with the right software

### A. For "Mobile-izing" Existing A/V Materials

#### i. Introduction

You may need to alter existing video in some of the following ways prior to using it in mobile media outreach
1. Convert materials from analog to digital format (for audiotapes and VHS tapes)
2. Download from the web (when the media is available on the internet on sites such as YouTube)
3. Convert video into a digital format that is viewable using mobile media players (typically MP4 and 3GP) (I NEED INPUT ON DivX ?)
4. Clip videos down to into one to five minute segments
5. Splice together footage from different clips
6. Adjust the volume of the audio track so it can be clearly heard on the mobile device
7. Add contact/follow-up information (website, phone number, etc.)

You will need software which allows you to perform those functions while avoiding too much loss of audio-video quality in the process. Here are some thoughts about the different processes and programs that will help you in them:

### ii. Conversion from analog to digital format

1. Audiotape- You need some hardware to do this (at a minimum a tape player and a cable with two-male ends in order to connect your tape player's earphone jack to your computer's microphone in-jack. An MP3 player with audio recording function or a specialized digital audio recorder may be even better. I do not know what software is available to help in this process of digitizing audiotapes. (INPUT NEEDED)
2. Videotape- Here is where having a digital video recorder with A/V "in" ports can help. If you can play your VHS tape on a VHS machine that has its video output hooked up to the video in on your digital video recorder you can record the video into digital format as it plays. You can do the same with a computer if it has a Firewire (IEEE 1394) port, a cord to attach your video player and the Firewire port, and specialized software. I don't know which software to recommend for this. (INPUT NEEDED)

### iii. Downloads from the Internet

You may find some videos on the internet that you would like to use for your outreach but not know how to download them (www.youtube.com makes it very difficult). Many internet videos (but not all) can be saved them by copying the website address and then pasting it in such websites as [www.vixy.net](www.vixy.net) or [http://keepvid.com/](http://keepvid.com/) which will then download and convert the video in a digital format you choose and allow you to save it on your computer hard drive.

### iv. Conversion to Mobile Device Format

Once you have digital media files (vob (from DVDs), avi, mov, wav, wmv, mpeg, mp3, etc.) you need to convert them into a format that can be played on mobile media devices, particularly mobile phones. Two of the main video formats are 3GP and MP4. In general 3GP files are smaller than MP4 files but they also have a lower viewing resolution. I keep video files in both formats on my phone so that I can have the higher resolution of MP4 for showing to people and the smaller size 3GP files for bluetoothing to them (3GP, besides being a smaller file, is more likely to be viewable on older handsets than MP4 files). To do the conversion you will need special software that isn't included with PCs. We tried several freeware downloads from the internet but were dissatisfied with the audio or video quality of the files they produced. In the end we were introduced to Total Video Converter ($41 USD download at [http://www.effectmatrix.com/total-video-converter/](http://www.effectmatrix.com/total-video-converter/)) and we were impressed with the video quality of the files it produces. One great feature of this program is the ability to adjust the audio volume of the video files it produces. On the other hand, I recently tested a trial version of Wondershare Video Converter Platinum ($36, [www.dvd-ripper-copy.com/video-converter-platinum.html](www.dvd-ripper-copy.com/video-converter-platinum.html)) and I was equally satisfied with the audio and video quality. I appreciated the ability to add text to the video, but I would find myself missing the ability to increase/decrease the volume of the audio if I only had this program. One other program I have yet to try that seems to offer most of the capabilities needed for this kind of work is Video Charge Studio ($100 USD, [http://www.videocharge.com/Products/vcs/details.php](http://www.videocharge.com/Products/vcs/details.php)). Two freeware video conversion options that have been suggested (although I haven't had the opportunity to test them) are FFMPEG ([http://ffmpeg.org/](http://ffmpeg.org/)) and HandBrake ([http://handbrake.fr/](http://handbrake.fr/)).

### v. Clipping Out Video Segments

For clipping out just the 1-5 minutes of video you want from a longer video the programs listed above have the capability you need.

### vi. Adding Text to Video

For adding text to your video (particularly useful for adding a website address or phone number to allow the viewer another step to contact someone or obtain more information after watching the video) Wondershare Video Converter Platinum (described in section "iv.

Conversion to Mobile Device Format") has the capability while Total Video Converter does not. Two other programs that performs this task are Video Watermark Factory ($49 USD, http://www.videowatermarkfactory.com/products.htm#VFW) and VideoCharge ($30 USD, http://www.videocharge.com/Products/vc/main.php). It should be noted that VideoCharge does not work with MP4 and 3GP files so the "watermarking" would have to occur prior to their transfer to such a format (I am uncertain as to whether or not Watermark Factory recognizes/works with MP4 and 3GP files).

### vii. Splicing Video Together

For splicing different segments of video together Total Video Converter has the capability while Wondershare Video Converter doesn't appear to.

### viii. Volume Adjustment

For adjusting the audio volume of the media Total Video Converter has the capability while Wondershare Video Converter doesn't.

### ix. Closing Thoughts on Software for Mobilizing Existing Media

In my mind someone starting out in mobile ministry should probably try and get BOTH Total Video Converter (specifically for the ability to control volume playback level) AND Wondershare Video Converter Platinum (specifically for its ability to add text to the video) which means a total outlay of $77 USD for software.

## B. For Creating New A/V Materials

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Here's some initial thoughts on important aspects
1. Avoiding propaganda/advertisement feel
2. Intended audience owned. They should be involved in choosing topics, themes, music, choices of visual expression, and so on.
3. Compelling/catchy
4. Materials should be ones that users will want to watch with friends and pass on. This is what will allow them to work "virally".

# 3. Gathering and "mobile-izing" existing outreach materials

## A. Gathering Materials

i. Audio (either for standalone presentations or for use as a ringtone on your phone)
1. The Bible on tape, chanted Bible, dramatized Bible readings, etc.
2. Christian songs, poems, etc.
3. Radio programs (check to see if there are MP3 files of programs at the radio's website)
4. Evangelistic talks, sermons, testimonies, etc.
5. Internet "broadcasts"
6. Documentaries that cover Bible topics
7. Etc.
ii. Video
1. Bible films translated (audio, not subtitling) into your target population's language
   a. Biographical

        i. Jesus' life (Campus Crusade Jesus or Magdalene film, The Hope, other Jesus films)

        ii. Other Bible characters' lives

    b. Historical

2. Evangelistic videos currently available on DVD or CD
3. Christian Satellite programs
4. Internet videos
5. Documentaries
6. One website that is helpful in determining what videos are available in your language group look is http://www.christianvideos.org

iii. Literature

1. Although I am more hesitant to recommend using a mobile media device for distributing the written word (due to orality issues) it is possible and in some cases this may be the most immediately available material you can work with

2. Materials you might want to consider

    a. The Bible or Bible portions in your target language. Currently mobile "enabled" Bibles exist for download on the internet in English (http://www.bible4phone.com/), Arabic (www.bebalash.com) and several other languages (http://gobible.jolon.org/) (http://www.e-sword.net/pocketpc/downloads.html)

    b. The "Watchword Bible" (http://www.watchwordbible.com) is basically a scrolling text of Scripture accompanied by audio narration, overlaying visual scenes related to the topic of the passage of Scripture in question. This could lend itself to mobile use.

## B. Selecting compelling one to five minute segments of audio/video

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Some criteria you might consider:

    i. Clear beginning/ending within a 1-5 minute time frame

    ii. Includes a truth you want to communicate

    iii. Is engaging (relevant, attractive, credible, uses their style of teaching/learning (orality vs. literacy, etc.))

## C. Adding a "next step" to the audio/video

You want to give the viewer of the video another step they can take if God is speaking to them. My thought at this point is to EITHER include a webpage URL/phone #/postal address either on a solid screen at the end of the video or having that appearing during the video AND/OR having the same information spoken at some point in the audio/video

## D. Converting the media to a format that can be played on your mobile device

See section 2A #s 1-3

## E. Loading the audio/video materials onto your mobile device

Use the included USB cord and software that come with your mobile device to upload the materials to it. Hopefully your mobile is recognized as an external hard drive and you can easily drag and drop files from your computer to mobile and vice versa.

## F. Double-check the audio/video materials

    i. Does it play on your mobile device

    ii. For video, has the action become too difficult to see on a small screen

    iii. Is the volume loud enough (if not, go back and re-record the A/V material at a different setting using your software (Total Video Converter recommended).

iv. Can you Bluetooth it to another device (if not check to see what format that device can take and how much memory is on that device and troubleshoot any obvious problems you find)

# 4. Creating new mobile media outreach resources

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One group (Words of Life Productions) is doing Bible storying using the fairly low-tech approach of panning across painted illustrations (the "Ken Burns technique) while providing the voice of a narrator sharing the Bible story in the local dialect.

http://animoto.com/

http://www.gotzapp.com/

Windows Movie Maker

The Visual Story Network has a set of videos giving instruction on how to make a good script for a video production (Script Success 1-5, http://www.visualstorynetwork.com/video/video/listFeatured)

# 5. Getting out there and doing mobile media outreach

A) Potential audiences and ways mobile media can be used among them
    a. People you have a standing relationship with
        i. Whose culture and heart language you know well
        ii. Whose culture and heart language you don't know very well
            1. Immigrants you have a relationship with
    b. People you don't have a standing relationship with
        i. Whose culture and heart language you know well
        ii. Whose culture and heart language you don't know very well
            1. Immigrants
            2. People you meet on a short-term outreach
    c. People you are only interacting with electronically
        i. Via Bluetooth "hotspot"

B) Practice makes perfect
    a. Make sure to practice bluetoothing materials to a co-worker or friend prior to going out into an outreach setting and finding yourself unable to figure out how to make a Bluetooth connection and send on the media

Some thoughts to help you as you approach implementing your new mobile media ministry:
**A. Bridges**
Think through what media you have available and the truths they communicate and determine what typical situations/conversations might provide a natural bridge to sharing that media
**B. Transitions**
Think through how you might transition from the typical situation/conversation to sharing the media

**C. Follow-on**
  i. Explore
     i. Their reaction- ask what they thought about the video, how they felt about it, etc.
     ii. Their understanding of the truth in the video
  ii. Reinforce
     i. Discussing something that helps them realize/see more fully the truth expressed in the video
  iii. Send
     i. Wait for them to ask for a copy
     ii. Ask them if they'd like a copy of the video

# 6. Thinking locally and acting globally

## *A. Introduction*

Although my local audience, the people I live and work among, will not benefit too greatly from the hours I have spent researching and writing this paper I do know that other workers who are reaching the wider "diaspora" (Webster= "people settled far from their ancestral homelands") of this people group will read and hopefully implement some of what I've written. Just as importantly, I trust this paper will help the worldwide advance of the Kingdom of God if people put some of these recommendations into practice. In that vein I offer some other thoughts on how you can help advance the Kingdom of God on a more global level through the use of mobile media ministry

## *B. Educating and demonstrating*

## *C. Making the mobile media you use available on the web*

  i. Local and Global Usage of Materials Available on the Web
     1. Access by internet savvy locals
     2. Access by the "diaspora" of your target people
     3. Access by others reaching out to your target people
     4. A helpful resource for others exploring mobile media ministry. This is useful both in seeing what existing materials people have modified for mobile media outreach as well as what others have pursued in creating their own mobile friendly outreach materials
  ii. How-to's of making your materials available on the web
     1. Creating a new website- NEED INPUT- www.fliggo.com was recommended at one point.
     2. Making your existing website "mobile friendly"
        a. Internet Evangelism Day (www.internetevangelismday.com) suggests the following:
           1. It is possible for site owners to include a mobile style sheet [http://www.htmldog.com/ptg/archives/000055.php] within their website, which will be active on a mobile device.
           2. The Firefox Developer's Toolbar [https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/60] allows you to approximately simulate how your site may look in a mobile device. Better though to use the ready.mobi [http://ready.mobi/launch.jsp?locale=en_EN] page testing tool, and then use dev.mobi [http://dev.mobi/] for ways to improve its mobile usability.

         b. Two other programs that can help the inexperienced in making their websites "mobile friendly" are Wapple (http://go.wapple.net) and Mobify (http://www.mobify.me/)

    3. Getting existing websites to host your materials

        a. Choosing the Website/s

           i. Christian Websites

                1. Outreach Websites- General

                2. Outreach Websites- Target audience focused

                    a. Christian

                        i. + Workers visiting/using

                        ii. - Target audience not using

           ii. Secular Websites

                1. Aim to get your materials onto websites your target audience might typically go to/download materials from

           iii. Upload/Download Service Websites

                1. There is a free service which allows you upload items up to as much as 100 MB in size and create a weblink that others can use to access the item/s for up to one week.  This is most useful when you have materials you are trying to get to specific other individuals who don't live in your geographic area but who have access to good internet service.  The website is www.senduit.com

      b. Uploading the materials

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      c. Maintaining the website/materials

  iii. Copyrights and the posting of self-developed media versus media taken modified from "published" audio/video products

    1. Although I believe that we have the freedom to take published A/V and modify it for use in our local outreach I would think that we need to approach the original maker of the materials and obtain their permission before posting modified versions of them on the internet available for download.

## D. *Advocating for the development of more mobile friendly media*

    a. Promote the "mobile-ization" of suitable existing media by the Christian organizations that produced the original materials.  Internet Evangelism Day (www.internetevangelismday.com) says "We urge radio ministries to consider developing specific MP3-download web-pages of selected programmes which have a permanent non-time-sensitive value, especially in cultures where there is little printed material. These should explain how to place MP3 downloads onto mobile devices and ways to use and share them virally."  I would follow that up by urging that Christian broadcast and satellite TV stations consider making MP4 clips of various programs available for outreach.

    b. Promote the creation of new mobile-friendly materials by Christian outreaches (for example, a promoting an inter-agency cooperation to develop a dramatized video "mini-Bible" that  could be dubbed into all languages, much like the Jesus film)