
Payment by mobile

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Mobile's journey to the centre of our lives is always reinforced at Mobile World Congress. Beyond the latest handsets are a raft of integrations, be it the use of virtual reality headsets for training medics or the fact that it's now possible to pay for fuel without leaving your car.

Perhaps the best illustration of the centrality of mobile to our lives as consumers in the 21st century was the announcement from Jaguar Land Rover and Shell of the world's first in-car cashless payment system.

Integrating Apple Pay and PayPal functionality into the 2018 Jaguar XE means that

consumers can use the in-car touchscreen to pay.

The consumer benefit is not just the faster speed of refuelling but also, for parents, the ability to do so without having to disturb sleeping children.

You could almost be forgiven for thinking that MWC was turning into a car show. Among the exhibitors making splash was Mercedes Benz promoting their ability to “Connect you to your car and your car to the world” via AI.

The German brand’s intelligent in-car assistant makes suggestions based on driver recognition and context. If it’s raining, or if you use your car on a commute it can make recommendations on route updates accordingly or to alert you to what it calls gaze control to make the driving experience safer.

However, MWC is not just about cars and for advertising folk some of the most exciting action is typically in the ad:tech hall. This year, however, it’s more of a VC bunfight with fewer exhibitors and lots of new venture capital backed start-ups providing very similar services to existing players.

Increasingly the focus for mobile ad:tech is not so much on the halls but on the ever-increasing number of yachts moored outside the W Hotel. This is where the deals are being done that will dictate the process and stage of consolidation in this space.

Most years, some of the biggest deals in the sector are concluded or at least initiated here. The major results of the show will probably be seen in the M&A announcements in the weeks and months to come.

The only real question is whether you can pick up a mobile ad:tech solution using Apple Pay.

MOBILE