



Look beyond the Apple iPhone

By Jeff Hasen

It is pretty safe to say that the iPhone has changed the face of mobile marketing. In May 2009, Brightkite and GfK NOP stated that iPhone users are more likely to recall mobile ads than non-iPhone users.

That is great news for the entire marketing community. After all, it is our job to find the best ways to market our companies in a way that sticks.

But is the iPhone truly the best way to reach our core audiences? Well, to quote Reverend Lovejoy, the minister from “The Simpsons” television show, in explaining a much more complex mystery: “Short answer, yes with an if; long answer, no with a but.”

The catch is that while marketers are falling over each other to embrace the iPhone, many of us fail to realize that there are around 20 million iPhones in use and it is hardly a representative sample of America.



Those cool iPhone applications that have people buzzing are accessible to a very small segment of the consumer audience. And they may be the audience you want in your target demographic, or they may not.

MyPhone?

iPhone applications are no doubt cool and memorable, but they are only a single element of mobile marketing.

Let us think of a pyramid. The iPhone is at the apex – if we were thinking about Dick Clark’s “\$10,000 Pyramid,” the iPhone is the \$300 answer.

But as mobile marketers, we need to guide our clients through a

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strategic process that covers the entire spectrum of mobile marketing to make certain that their marketing reach hits all of their prospects, not just the ones with the coolest phones.

SMS is at the base of the mobile marketing pyramid. It sits at the bottom foundational layer – it gives brands and agencies the greatest reach and taps into the behavior and interests of hundreds of millions.

To extend the TV analogy, it would be a \$100 answer. But without the \$100 answer, you could not move to a \$200 or \$300 question.

However, as you do embrace SMS, marketers can move up the pyramid, adding layers on such as mobile Web/WAP, mobile advertising, richer custom applications, and, yes, even an iPhone application.

These provide less and less reach but often drive a viral component that adds to the overall program—and may also hit a specific demographic in your target audience.

And let us face it: as marketers, we are often most impressed by the latest and greatest and, in this case, the iPhone application is just that. Cool, buzz-worthy. But is it selling more widgets?

Wily marketing

Consider the case of Wiley Publishing, publisher of the wildly popular “For Dummies” book series. The publisher came to us with a goal of reaching the masses and delivering a rich brand experience via mobile.

Together, we devised and executed an integrated campaign that included the following:

- Text: A text-to-win sweepstakes gave consumers a chance to win high-end consumer electronics prizes via SMS, using the keyword “DUMMIES” to reinforce the brand.

All who entered received a rebate for \$5 off any Wiley “For Dummies” title. Consumers even had the opportunity to opt-in for future offers and information. This was the point-of-entry for the campaign and the best way to set a baseline.

- Mobile banner ads: Through optimization via our platform, we delivered more than 1.3 million impressions with a call to action and branding familiar to consumers.

More importantly, click-through rates were four times as high as those produced by the companion online campaign.

- Mobile WAP site: The “richest” brand execution delivered the “For Dummies” logo, look and feel and gave those interested an easy way to opt-in to receive offers and rebates.

The site even featured a store locator to find the closest store, as well as a list of the most popular “For Dummies” titles.

How did the campaign do?

It moved product as well as the loyalty scale. There was a 34 percent conversion rate for consumers joining the TXT4Dummies Club. The campaign received the prestigious Cross-Media Integration award from the Mobile Marketing Association.

In this case, Wiley never made it to the top of the pyramid – and did not need to. The base provided more than enough reach to meet or exceed each of Wiley’s goals while only getting part way up the mobile marketing pyramid. ■



Jeff Hasen, CMO, HipCricket

Jeff Hasen is chief marketing officer of HipCricket, Kirkland, WA. Reach him at jhasen@hipcricket.com