



# Radio2007

By Ivan Braiker

## Going Mobile

### Text-Based Mobile Marketing Offers Advertisers Access, Interactivity

Gone are the days of expecting listeners to line up to be the “lucky caller.” With BIA Financial Network’s report that, in 2006, the radio sector’s revenues grew less than one percent for the second consecutive year, broadcasters are scrambling to identify ways to revive their promotions to produce results quickly, easily, and efficiently.

Many station managers are exploring interactive mobile text-based marketing as a revenue-growth solution. It’s a fresh, “turnkey” approach — easy, seamless, and fast — and that’s important in today’s radio campaigns.

Jupiter Research projects that advertisers will double their spending on text messaging, from \$1.4 billion last year to \$2.9 billion by 2011. Likewise, eMarketer has found that brands anticipate spending nearly \$5 billion on wireless advertising this year, up from \$421 million in 2006.

#### NO NEED TO SHIFT GEARS

Implementing a mobile-marketing strategy isn’t about shifting gears and selling something completely different. It’s about taking ads that have traditionally worked and incorporating a mobile element. It’s about letting listeners retrieve special offers or get more information on a product or service in a way that gives them control. Radio has always been about engagement, and mobile is just another venue for the same interactions.

More than 136 million people in this country use text messaging, and most people have a mobile phone with them at all times. You want to be where your consumers live, and the mobile phone is undeniably it. What better way to get your message out and put your customers directly in touch with information resources?

#### MOBILE MARKETING DEFINED

Text messaging itself is not mobile marketing. True mobile marketing moves traditional radio marketing from passive listening into a dialogue with consumers. Basic text messaging is just advertising, while mobile marketing requires interaction, customer participation, and the development of a trusted, mutually useful relationship.

A comprehensive mobile marketing strategy can deliver measurable results and let radio broadcasters engage receptive audiences in a much more targeted way. Consider the following cases:

- At a radio station in a top 50 market, one promotional campaign generated 99,800 text messages in three weeks.
- One major-market Sports station has experienced a 61 percent response rate for text alerts and information — four times the response rate of the station’s traditional marketing campaigns.
- At a top 10-market Adult Contemporary station, text additions have added an average of \$50,000 per month in new non-traditional revenue.



- An Ohio station’s first-quarter ’07 revenues were up 24 percent in a flat market — an outcome the station attributes to the interactive campaigns it offers to advertisers.


The mission for a mobile-marketing company is to partner with station managers to develop and implement interactive marketing programs centered on the mobile phone. Integrating the mobile phone as a marketing channel and making that investment work is a great way to drive new growth, but the investment needs to work over the long term.

#### RESPECTING THE CONSUMER

While the benefits of mobile marketing are clear, consumers continue to be skeptical of mobile advertisements. But one great thing about mobile advertising is that it allows for opt-in and other preference options. For example, a call to action can be included as part of an advertisement, prompting consumers to respond before they begin receiving messages. They’re able to interact with the brand at their own discretion, and the personal information they provide helps tailor advertising to their interests. Still better, you can reach that consumer even when their radio is off!

When a commercial asks listeners to text a keyword to a five-digit short code, listeners receive the information they need, but they may also be prompted to opt in to receive other information from the station or advertiser. Once opted in, the listener is in control, as all messages must have the option to reply “Stop” to end further messages.

Mobile marketing is immediate, easy to use, and as targeted as it can get. It drives higher response rates and a more direct one-to-one relationship between advertisers and consumers. Respecting your audience and delivering value to them and to advertisers is paramount if your mobile marketing strategy is to sustain and deliver value.

Executed properly, mobile marketing allows broadcasters to engage with their audiences to increase time spent with the medium and support loyalty. Mobile-marketing campaigns open up new and immediate revenue streams and create incredibly valuable one-to-one relationships with listeners. 

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