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hipcricket

Jameson whiskey runs mobile campaign for St. Patrick's Day

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By Mickey Alam Khan

Text to the last drop

Pernod Ricard USA is running a mobile marketing campaign to promote its Jameson Irish whiskey brand in time for St. Patrick's Day.

The liquor marketer is using HipCricket Inc.'s mobile marketing platform to send Irish toasts through text message to consumers who have opted in to the Jameson Full-On Irish sweepstakes.

"Mobile provides an entertaining and personal way to connect the brand with consumers when they are celebrating together," said Steve Siegel, New York-based vice president of brand solutions at HipCricket.

"On St. Patty's Day, a fair amount of consumption occurs out of the home or in pubs, so the mobile is the only way to reach and interact with consumers," he said.

Toasts can be sent daily through March 17, St. Patrick's Day, and hourly March 16-17.

Two pegs for an Irish experience

Consumers of legal drinking age can opt in to get toasts and enter the sweepstakes by texting IRISH to 80782. Consumers at participating bars and restaurants can text JAMESON to 80782.

"It's a fun way for Jameson to interact with customers and prospects," said Jeff Hasen, Bellevue, WA-based chief marketing officer of HipCricket. "Jameson will have multiple touches with opted-in consumers, giving them an opportunity to reinforce their message.

"Rather than opting for one message, consumers are signing up for multiple toasts," he said. "This gives Jameson an enviable opportunity to get in front of consumers repeatedly. Of course, the customer, as always, can opt out at any time. It is all permission-based."

HipCricket's platform will allow thousands of Jameson drinkers to text simultaneously. Pernod Ricard USA can use HipCricket's platform to measure the results of the campaign with drill-down analytics.

The Jameson Full-On Irish effort offers five grand prize trips to the Old Jameson distillery in Dublin, Ireland.

Irish whiskey is said to be one of the fastest-growing spirits categories nationwide. Jameson's is a triple distilled Irish whiskey blend.

The Pernod Ricard USA mobile campaign is intended to tie in its Jameson brand with one of the most popular Irish festive occasions nationwide. Texting toasts involves family and friends and also furthers the brand's reach.

"This campaign was unique in that the approach and experience was different depending upon where it is activated from," Mr. Siegel said.

"For store purchases, where consumption would likely take place in the home, Irish toasts were sent on a weekly frequency," he said. "For on-premise activation, toasts are sent on hourly intervals, with the mindset that consumers at a pub, at a celebration and in the moment. Both ways constituted a contest entry."

Beverage leverage

Pernod Ricard USA creative agency Marketing Drive created the national campaign for Jameson. Other clients of Marketing Drive include ExxonMobil, New Balance, Procter & Gamble Co. and Dannon.

Based in Purchase, NY, Pernod Ricard USA is a subsidiary of the world's No. 2 spirits firm, Pernod Ricard S.A. It is No. 3 in the United States by sales value and No. 5 by sales volume.

The U.S. company's brands include Kahlua Liqueur, Chivas Regal Scotch Whisky, Seagram's Extra Dry Gin, Beefeater Gin, Wild Turkey Bourbon, The Glenlivet Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Malibu flavored rum and Stolichnaya Vodkas.

HipCricket has run interactive mobile marketing campaigns for marketers such as Staples, Hershey's, Coca-Cola Co., NBC, Cox Radio, Clear Channel Radio and Bonneville International. Interestingly, some of the most successful mobile campaigns involve the beverage category, Mr. Hasen said.

"One of HipCricket's stations on the Jersey Shore paid for mobile marketing services for a year with one contract by a beer manufacturer," he said. "That beer company had exclusive rights to market via mobile to consumers at a local club."

Campaigns such as Jameson's push for St. Patrick's Day are an indication that mobile is steadily gaining acceptance as a relationship marketing tool for beverage brands.

"I think liquor marketers are just starting to take mobile more seriously," Mr. Siegel said. "Budweiser did an interesting program around the Super Bowl [and] HipCricket ran the 'Gr8 Guinness Toast' for last year's St. Patty's Day.

"I think they've gotten over the idea that the only people using mobile are teens, which is certainly not the case," he said. "Also, activation is usual at point-of-sale, where consumers must be of legal drinking age anyway. In addition, we request a participant's birthdate as a precursor to campaign.

"What they must start to do is stop leveraging mobile as just a tactic, and start to use it as a re-marketing vehicle. I'd like to start seeing short codes ubiquitously across all their media -- TV, radio, out-of-home."

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