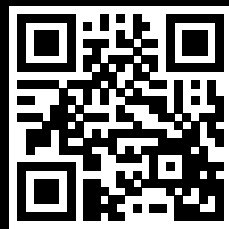


Mobile Barcode Best Practices

June 2011



Mobile barcodes have gone from niche engagement tool to center-stage digital marketing vehicle, breathing life into traditional and digital marketing media by allowing brands to instantly engage with their target audience. Adding a mobile barcode to a static print advertisement, or on package or at shelf creates a new interactive opportunity for the brand owner or retailer to engage their target audience wherever they are.

Introduction

Mobile barcode scanning has experienced quadruple digit growth amongst consumers worldwide within the past twelve months¹ and is becoming a key mobile media element for many brand owners. Mobile barcodes have also become top of mind for many consumers, with nearly half of US consumers having seen a mobile barcode and opting in via scan to engage² - in particular to access a discount or coupon, learn more about a product or service, or gather additional information about a news story³.

Major brands and agencies are also rapidly incorporating mobile barcodes into their marketing efforts with roughly 20 percent of the Fortune 50 already utilizing this technology.⁴

If you have not already added mobile barcodes to your marketing initiatives, the time to engage is now.

How does a brand thoughtfully use this technology to ensure ongoing consumer participation, increase sales, and gain a competitive advantage? NeoMedia's Best Practices, initially published in December 2010, provide a clear roadmap for brands and agencies to assist in the development and deployment of their mobile barcode strategy.

Mobile Barcode Best Practices

Best practices have long been essential to help a brand determine how to successfully launch new technologies and ensure success in their initiatives. NeoMedia has developed its own best practices, based on the successful launch of mobile barcode campaigns globally, to help brand owners and agencies leverage the mobile barcode mobile media element efficiently and effectively.

1. Plan ahead

Mobile barcodes should be an integral part of any mobile marketing campaign. Ensure that mobile barcodes are incorporated into digital and traditional media as a key element of the campaign. This will help to ensure that interactivity is an essential element of the campaign itself and not simply an afterthought.



Figure 1.1. Plan ahead
Source: NeoMedia / IQ Mobile

1 NeoMedia Launches Latest Generation of NeoSphere Barcode Management Platform, NeoMedia Technologies, Inc, March 2011, <http://www.neom.com/node/448>

2 MGH's QR Code Usage and Interest Survey, MGH, February 2011, <http://www.mgh.com>

3 2011 Cell Phone Consumer Attitudes Study, Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association, April 2011, http://www.cwta.ca/CWTASite/english/facts_figures_downloads/Consumer2011.pdf

4 Burson-Marsteller and Proof Integrated Communications, The Fortune 50 Use of Mobile, <http://www.slideshare.net/BMGlobalNews/burson-marsteller-proof-fortune-50-mobile-study>

2. Design with your consumer in mind

Consumers generally only opt in to receive communications from brands when they perceive that it will be relevant or deliver value to them, by means of giveaways, discounts, information or services based on entertainment and utility. Access to relevant content can help grab the consumer's attention and encourage interaction. By delivering value and relevance in your integration of mobile barcodes, you can increase your consumer base and promote consumer participation in your campaign, thus bringing value to the consumer in a form suitable for both your brand and campaign.

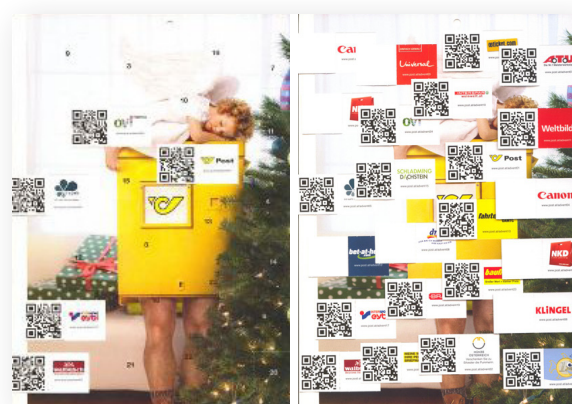


Figure 1.2. Design with your consumer in mind

Source: NeoMedia / IQ Mobile



Figure 1.3. Design and Placement

Source: NeoMedia / IQ Mobile

So, on outdoor ads, place the mobile barcodes at eye or arm level, do not place the mobile barcode at the 'feet' of your mobile consumer target.

In the print environment, mobile barcodes should be placed prominently on a page, on a flat surface and away from folds or other features that might hamper scanning. One should also allow ample white space around the mobile barcode to ensure ease of scanning. As the quality and resolution of mobile cameras varies by models, a minimum of 1x1 print specification is recommended.

Within a screen environment (e.g. TV), it is important that the code be placed prominently on the screen and is a size that is compatible with the audience's viewing environment. For example, consider the viewing experience in front of a TV vs. at a movie theatre vs. at a pro sporting event. The code should also appear on screen for a minimum of 15 seconds to allow viewers the opportunity to scan.

3. Design and placement

The placement of the mobile barcode in the design of an advertisement is of paramount importance to ensure a strong response from targeted consumers. The incorporation of mobile barcodes in the overall design of an advertisement or publication should be given as much consideration and attention as other elements of the design.

For example, the appropriate placement of a mobile barcode, so that its function is understood and it is easy to identify and scan, is essential. It is also important to place the mobile barcode in a position where it is easy to scan by the consumer.

4. Color

Mobile barcodes, with the exception of certain proprietary mobile barcodes that use color (e.g. Microsoft Tag), should be printed in black and white to facilitate scanning by the majority of camera equipped mobile devices and their mobile code readers.

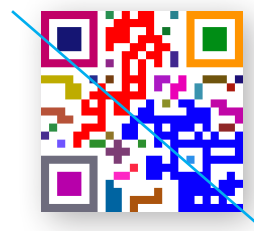


Figure 1.4. Color
Source: www.madox.net



Figure 1.5. Branding - Disney Japan
Source: <http://www.nonsolokawaii.com>

5. Branding

Mobile barcodes should be printed without branding or images included. While including a logo or image is appealing, it can damage the integrity of the code, making it difficult for consumers to scan. To ensure broadest reach, do not insert or overlay graphics on the code. By using open standards, as they should be used, one can also help ensure that the consumer easily identifies the mobile barcode implementation each and every time.

6. Open standards

In order to ensure an optimal consumer experience, it is important that brands and agencies deploy their solutions using global, open standards (for example, QR, Datamatrix) as the use of proprietary solutions may curtail universal customer access and therefore impact market penetration and overall reach.



Figure 1.6. Standard 2D Codes
Source: NeoMedia

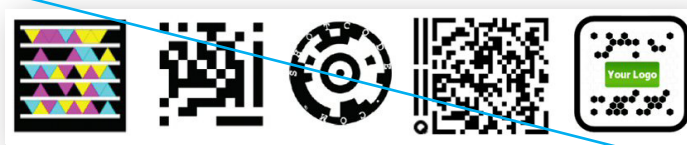


Figure 1.6. Proprietary 2D Codes
Source: NeoMedia

7. Education

Consumers are willing to adopt new technologies but marketers must deploy these technologies in a manner that makes them understandable and easy to use. Since mobile codes are new to the mass market, this means that brands are encouraged to place descriptive copy next to a mobile code in order to explain what the mobile code is, what it does and what value it provides after the scan. This simple educational element will help to facilitate and encourage consumer participation.



Figure 1.7. Education
Source: philipp.to

8. Optimize for mobile

The mobile consumer experience is different from a typical online PC experience given:

- (1) the size of mobile phone screens,
- (2) the situational context of the interaction in that consumers are often 'on the go' when engaging with their device, and
- (3) the desire of consumers looking to access information quickly so they can resume their other activities.



Figure 1.8. Optimize for mobile

Source: NeoMedia / Mazda

These elements make it critical for brands to deliver a customized mobile experience to the consumer. It can be very frustrating for a consumer to try to navigate PC-designed websites from a mobile device given the amount and size of the page content, making it less likely that they will engage with your brand via mobile again. Breaking through the clutter and developing mobile-optimized content means you can quickly deliver the right message to your audience without impediment and creates a more cohesive, fun experience for the consumer. Therefore, when you develop your mobile barcode campaign, always consider what happens after the scan and ensure that the content or URL being delivered to the consumer is optimized for mobile and achieves the brand objectives.

9. Test and test again

Consumers will be deterred from using mobile barcodes if they initially have an unsatisfactory experience. So-called 'dead links', where scanning a mobile barcode does not return any information or mobile barcodes which link to the wrong URL and the wrong information, can be damaging, not only to a given campaign, but to the brand and the adoption of mobile barcode marketing in general. In order to avoid this, every implementation of a mobile barcode should be tested to ensure correct resolution address, and ability to scan using a variety of mobile barcode scanner applications running on a number of different camera equipped mobile devices.



Figure 1.9. Test and test again

Source: NeoMedia

10. Define Your Objectives

Defining campaign goals and objectives prior to campaign start, will help a brand understand how to measure the success and effectiveness of their campaign. Analytics, available via a barcode management platform, provide vital insight into the effectiveness of a campaign, including important time and location usage metrics. These metrics allow brands to make better purchase decisions and optimize their messaging for mobile barcodes. The ability to analyze and measure the campaign data can be used to increase the success and ROI of future campaigns and ensure optimal and continued customer engagement.

11. Plan for consumer engagement

Once an initial interaction with your consumer has taken place through the first mobile barcode scan, it is important to continue the dialogue, adding value with each and every interaction. Planning how you will continue to maintain the dialogue with target consumers and planning for it early and often will serve to bolster consumer satisfaction and repeated interactions with your campaign.



Figure 1.10. Plan for consumer engagement

Source: NeoMedia / SI

Final Questions to Consider When Planning Your First Mobile Barcode Campaign

The following is a list of questions to consider as you plan your next mobile barcode campaign:

1. What is my goal in using a mobile barcode? Drive sales? Increase customer engagement? Drive consumer loyalty? Educate my audience? Etc.
2. Is the mobile barcode easily discoverable? Is it well positioned within my print ad / billboard / TV spot / packaging/ etc.? Will the consumer have to search to find it?
3. What is the consumer's incentive to scan the mobile barcode?
4. Have I taken the necessary steps to ensure the code resolves to the correct URL content and is easily scannable across multiple device types and multiple scanner applications?
5. Am I ensuring the largest possible reach for my campaign given my selected symbology, encoding, the mobile barcode's print properties (location, color, size), etc?

6. Is the content to which the mobile barcode resolves optimized for mobile? If so, how will it appear across multiple device types?
7. Have I provided an educational call to action within my campaign to direct consumers to scan?
8. Have I properly tested all elements of the campaign to ensure all works?
9. Am I utilizing a barcode management solution that will provide me with a robust set of analytics so I can properly measure my campaign's success?
10. Once I have my consumer's attention, what's next? How do I want to continue to interact with the consumer and what is my desired outcome?

Conclusion

Mobile barcodes represent the shortest distance between a brand's message and the target audience, unlocking a relevant, dynamic, and interactive experience.

These best practices are designed to guide brands and advertisers in developing cohesive, engaging, and profitable campaigns that maximize the promise of mobile marketing and spur consumer interest and participation through the utilization of mobile barcodes.

For more information on how to leverage mobile barcodes, download NeoMedia's educational white papers at http://www.neom.com/resources/white_papers.

Contact us today!

About NeoMedia

NeoMedia Technologies, Inc. is the global market leader in 2D mobile barcode technology and infrastructure solutions that enable the mobile barcode ecosystem world-wide. Its technology platform transforms mobile devices with cameras into barcode scanners, enabling a range of practical and engaging applications including consumer oriented advertising, mobile ticketing and couponing, and business-to-business commercial track and trace solutions.

NeoMedia's suite of products, services and extensive IP portfolio means it is the only provider able to offer customers a comprehensive end-to-end mobile code solution. NeoMedia's current customers include handset manufacturers, platform providers and brands and agencies looking to offer pioneering mobile barcode solutions to their customer base.

NeoMedia's product portfolio includes: mobile barcode management & infrastructure solutions, barcode reader solutions, mobile couponing, mobile ticketing & POS integration and IP licensing.

Learn more at www.neom.com.

NeoMedia Technologies, Inc.

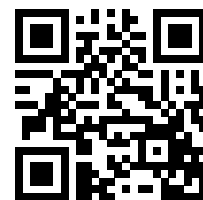
Two Concourse Parkway, Suite 500
Atlanta, GA 30328, USA
T +1 678 638 0460
F +1 678 638 0466

NeoMedia Europe AG

Jens-Otto-Krag-Straße 11
52146 Würselen, Germany
T +49 2405 49922-0
F +49 2405 49922-99

info@neom.com
www.neom.com

Follow Us  



All trademarks and associated brands' trademarks are the property of their respective owners.