

How to Create a Mobile Barcode Program

White Paper
February 2011



Marketers, advertisers, publishers, and brands alike are embracing the opportunity of 2D barcodes to provide their customers and prospects with what they expect today: instant, rich, value-added engagement.

The integration of a mobile barcode, also called a 2D barcode, into a marketing initiative is an ideal way for a brand to activate a campaign, making it engaging, immersive and interactive for the consumer. Mobile barcodes open up new opportunities for pull marketing with the ability to engage consumers through compelling information or services and a direct call to action. With mobile barcodes, consumers can connect with their favorite brands and participate in interactive communication at the moment of impulse (when they scan the barcode).

Mobile Barcodes - A myriad of Opportunities and Benefits

Today, mobile barcodes are being incorporated into a vast array of media and initiatives, demonstrating the potential of this medium to impact the way people conduct business and go about their day-to-day lives. For instance, mobile barcodes are often utilized in:

- Promotions and special offers
- Point of sale interaction
- Ticketing and couponing
- Inventory control
- Workforce management
- News and Information
- Networking

Incorporating mobile barcodes into a cross media campaign adds a new dimension, bridging the gap between the static and interactive worlds. A barcode allows the consumer to easily and quickly engage with a brand in a multi-sensory fashion.

No longer does the consumer passively engage with your message. The call to action is instantaneous – no more lag time between message receipt and reaction. For instance, a consumer may see a billboard with directions to a website to learn more, but has to wait to log onto the website listed before they are able to access information about the featured product. With a mobile barcode, the consumer sees the billboard, scans the barcode with their mobile device, and is instantly directed to the right mobile content within seconds, enabling immediacy, hyper-relevance and interactivity at the point of desire – shifting the consumer paradigm from ‘search’ to ‘get.’

Mobile barcodes provide marketers a multitude of opportunities and benefits, allowing them to:

- **Create rich media experiences for consumers**
 - Make products and services interactive and accessible everywhere
 - Build innovative relationships and 1:1 dialogue with customers and prospects
 - Turn traditional media impressions into interactive digital experiences that build the brand
- **Measure the effectiveness of campaigns with rich reporting and analytics information (demographics, location-based, channel-based, etc.)**
 - Increase the value of print and out-of-home buys and establish an ROI metric for traditional media
 - Improve marketing results by gaining insight into customers
 - See trends, adjust marketing plans, and optimize investments in real-time, including integration with location based-services
- **Give consumers control over the moment of engagement**
 - Increase customer flexibility and convenience
 - Enable customized content delivery to targeted consumers
 - Enhance brand image and strengthen brand awareness through use of the latest technologies

If planned and used correctly in a campaign, a mobile barcode can be the most effective strategy to add a digital dimension to traditional marketing campaigns and turn them into immediately interactive and unprecedented brand experiences that are targeted and measurable.

Mobile barcodes can be incorporated into a wide variety of media, allowing for maximum flexibility in displaying and delivering a message. For example, mobile barcodes can be used in:



Figure 1.1. Print
Source: NeoMedia / IQ Mobile



Figure 1.2. On-Screen
Source: techmagnews.com



Figure 1.3. Outdoor
Source: Squidoo.com



Figure 1.4. On Device
Source: NeoMedia



Figure 1.5. In Architecture
Source: hslu.ch



Figure 1.6. Social Media
Source: sparqcode.com



Figure 1.7. At Shelf
Source: kaizenadv.com



Figure 1.8. Geo-Targeting
Source: socialmediadiy-workshop.com



Figure 1.9. On Package
Source: NeoMedia



Figure 1.10. Clothing
Source: Etsy.com



Figure 1.11. In-Store
Source: 2d-code.co.uk and NeoMedia / Esprit

So, how can marketers design and create effective mobile barcode campaigns to take advantage of this exciting new mobile media element?

Planning for Success

Proper planning for a mobile barcode campaign is essential. This means that mobile barcodes should be planned as part of the overall marketing initiative, ensuring they are, for example, incorporated into digital and traditional media as an integral campaign element. A few questions to consider as you plan:

- What will the overall consumer experience be like?
- Where will the code be placed? On billboards, print ads, window displays, at shelf, on the product package?
- How will the barcode be incorporated into overall media design? Consider the code's positioning, size, assimilation into color scheme, etc.
- What is the incentive to the consumer to scan?
- Is the scan's call to action clear and meaningful?
- What mobile content is being delivered to the consumer once they scan? Should content be filtered to target certain psychographic or demographic information?

Also, establish a plan for longer term consumer engagement as part of the overall objectives. The immediacy of this medium elevates consumer expectation. When they scan a code they:

1. Anticipate receiving compelling, interesting, relevant content
2. Expect to engage with the brand in a meaningful way

The content delivered may allow the consumer to learn more, get excited about a product, make a purchase decision, tell their network, etc.

Mobile barcodes are ideal for continued engagement, giving brands and marketers the ability to change and customize content over time and 'on the fly.' For instance, one set of content can be delivered on Mondays and an entirely different set on Tuesdays – all using the same code.

Defining Requirements

Before selecting a vendor to assist with the implementation of mobile barcode campaigns, it is important to make a list of needs in order that the evaluation of your partner can be better understood. Requirements may include:

- Type of code to be used: standard (QR, Data Matrix, Aztec) or proprietary (EZcode, Tag)
- Desired interaction: scan to video, scan to web page, etc.
- Reader capabilities: devices supported, symbologies, etc.
- Geography and reporting requirements: psychographic and demographic information
- Message targeting and dynamic update capabilities available over the campaign's lifecycle

Outlining your requirements will enable the most informed decision possible and help to set a foundation for campaign success.

Selecting the Right Vendor Partner

Although putting a mobile barcode campaign together is relatively straightforward, selecting the right vendor to help guide, share their expertise, and supply the appropriate technology is an important step to successful implementation. The partner may provide mobile barcode reader applications, barcode creation, resolution, management and data reporting as well as digital assets, while also ensuring appropriate geographic coverage and high-quality user experiences.

It is vital to select a vendor who provides analytics, such as usage times/location and demographic information; allowing brands to make informed decisions on how to leverage mobile barcodes effectively in their initiatives. In fact, the ability to generate analytics is one of the key benefits of using a mobile barcode partner. While there are many 'free' barcode generation services available today, they do not typically provide any backend solution allowing brands and marketers to gather consumer data. A good partner will provide a robust set of analytics.

Take the time to select the partner that is right, ensuring that they are able to deliver on the requirements that you have outlined.

Selecting the right Symbology and Methodology

An important consideration for brands wanting to achieve maximum impact from a barcode campaign is the use of global open standard symbologies, such as QR (Quick Response), which can be scanned by all universal readers. The number of users that can 'read' a mobile barcode is determined by the number of handsets running reader applications. This establishes the campaign's reach and is a primary concern in ensuring that a campaign reaches the largest number of consumers.

For more information on symbologies and methodologies as well as selecting which is best for your campaign, please refer to our *Definitive Guide to Mobile Barcodes*, available from NeoMedia's website at: http://www.neom.com/resources/white_papers.

Symbology Size and Design

To ensure that mobile barcodes are scanned efficiently, and with a high degree of accuracy, brands should consider the following design points:

- Allow for any necessary white space around the code to make it easy for the reader application to scan.
- Print the code in black and white (or other high-contrast colors) to ensure ease of scanning with the majority of mobile devices and barcode readers. Adding multiple colors within the code can make it increasingly difficult to scan for many code reading applications, thus limiting reach.
- Embed your brand image, if desired, in a manner that keeps the first two bullets in consideration.

Ensuring Effective Integration into Campaign Designs

The design of the campaign is paramount to ensure strong consumer response. Ensure the mobile barcode is positioned in a way that:

- Makes it easy for the consumer to identify and scan
- Is placed in an area of prominence within the ad
- Is positioned on a flat surface rather than, for example, between folds in the magazine which will hamper scanning



Figure 2.1. **Design & Communication** - Mobile codes are placed prominently within the advert

Source: Kodak

Also include a short descriptive call to action next to the code directing the audience to download a reader application if they do not already have one in order to scan the code. Consumer education remains a critical step in accelerating mass market adoption and therefore achieving maximum reach for campaigns.

A few good examples of design and communication of the scanner application are shown below:



Figure 2.2. **Design & Communication** - White space included around the code

Source: 2dbarcodestrategy.com



Figure 2.3. **Design & Communication** - Descriptive text guides the consumer to scan

Source: 2dbarcodestrategy.com

Following these simple design steps will help facilitate positive (repeat) consumer participation, ensuring that the maximum number of consumers can interact easily with the campaign – and help the marketer achieve their desired results.

Add Value to Mobile Codes

Consumers will readily opt in to receive communications when they perceive that it will be of value and relevant to them – whether that be in financial terms by means of giveaways and discounts or in less tangible services based on information, entertainment and utility. Thus, it is important to ensure that value is delivered to the consumer with each interaction.

Whether the call to action and scan resolves to a product demonstration, promotional literature, sales presentation, press release, exclusive video, coupons, event promotion, etc., the content must deliver value, relevance and meaningfulness to the targeted audience.

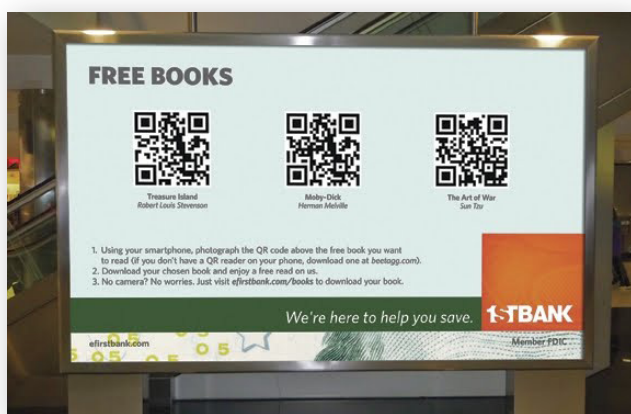


Figure 3.1. **Value-added campaigns** - Deliver special, unique content

Source: Motivators.com

Consider asking the following questions when determining what content a code will deliver:

- What motivates a consumer to scan a code and engage with the brand?
- How does this engagement enhance the consumer's experience with the brand?
- Where or what is the value to the consumer?
- Will the consumer want to share the content provided with his/her friends?
- How does the overall campaign improve the consumer's interaction with the company?

By doing so, not only will the consumer eagerly engage, but the campaign is more likely to create buzz and go viral, allowing people to share the content with their network and further extending its reach.



Figure 3.2. **Value-added campaigns** - Incorporate as part of a sweepstakes or promotion

Source: bigorangeslide.com



Figure 1.2. **Value added campaign** - Create a more informed consumer, allowing access to additional product information

Source: GAP/2d-code.co.uk

Delivering an Optimized Experience

To ensure the best possible experience for the consumer, it is important that the content delivered to the mobile device is optimized for the mobile environment. Content that is not optimized will discourage the consumer from investigating further and/or discourage them from scanning mobile barcodes in the future.

It is also important to ensure the content delivered is targeted and specialized for the consumer on the go. Relevant content will be more appealing and drive ROI for a brand, so consider:

- Are consumers being driven to a mobile website? If not, is the site easy to view on a variety of device types?
- Does the content work properly and take minimal time to view or upload?
- Is the content relevant to the target audience and application?
- Is the content easily digestible for a consumer on the go?

Testing

Consumers will be deterred from using mobile barcodes if their initial experience is unsatisfactory. To ensure ongoing consumer participation, barcodes should be tested using a variety of reader/scanning applications and mobile devices.

Anticipate that consumers will use a wide variety of scanning applications across a multitude of devices. Given the wide variance of the user experience across devices and the different capabilities of available scanning applications, it is important to ensure that a code is easily scanned across the largest number of devices and scanning applications possible. Not all barcode reading applications are created equal. Some read standard barcode symbologies, like Data Matrix, QR, and Aztec, however, many companies have developed their own, proprietary barcode formats which have unique features, differentiating them from the standardized formats and requiring custom readers in order for consumers to be able to scan. For instance, Microsoft's Tag application reads only its proprietary Tag code format while NeoReader™ reads multiple standard formats, including UPC/EAN, Data Matrix, Aztec, and QR codes.

Another critical piece is to ensure the content works across various device types. Ensuring content is optimized for mobile is a first step, but it is also important to consider how the user experience differs between operating systems – for example, Android, iPhone, and Symbian. Be certain that content renders properly across these various devices.


Consider too the external environment. You may want to consider testing the mobile barcode scanning experience in different light settings (daylight, twilight, florescent lighting, etc.) and at different angles to ensure the code can be resolved easily. As well, you will want to ensure that the placement of the barcode has adequate cell phone reception. For instance, placing a barcode inside a subway station may make for a poor experience as the user will not be able to access mobile web content without a signal.

Properly testing the user experience reaps dividends. Nothing hampers consumer receptivity to a product and brand like a poor initial experience. If the content delivered is not appropriate, the linking does not work properly, or the site is not optimized for the best viewing on an array of mobile devices, this will result in a negative experience for the consumer. Thus, delivering a fully tested campaign goes a long way to ensuring the consumer will continue to engage with the product or brand through the mobile barcode.

Tracking, Analysing and Optimizing Success!

One of the unique benefits of mobile marketing in general, and mobile barcodes in particular, is the ability to gather real-time data about the target audience. Measuring the data generated from a campaign helps determine the success and ROI, helping to shape future campaigns and ensure the initiative is optimized for consumer engagement.

Few mediums can deliver such precise information about an audience. Understanding campaign demographics will help to properly target consumers and ensure the brand is maximizing the investment on the campaign. For instance, mobile barcodes allow content to be filtered, e.g. on the basis of gender, enabling one message to be delivered to men and another to women. This level of precision greatly enhances the consumer experience, driving consumer behavior towards an action point (e.g. – purchasing the product or taking up the service).



Mobile barcodes are poised to become one of the dominant mobile media elements worldwide, ushering in a new era of enhanced interactivity and one-to-one dialogue with the consumer. They are flexible and can be easily incorporated into multiple mediums, allowing marketers to start an immediate conversation with the target audience and generate buzz for the brand.

For consumers, mobile barcodes are simple-to-use, unique, and very engaging.

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

Follow these simple steps and try it 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, 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 coupon & affiliate marketing, mobile ticketing & POS integration and IP licensing. Learn more at www.neom.com.

NeoMedia Technologies, Inc.

Two Concourse Parkway, Suite 500
Atlanta, GA 30328
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

