

The changing face of marketing:

Are you ready for mobile texting?

by Douglas Knorr



Douglas Knorr, known as a "retail marketing activist," is president of Knorr Marketing (www.knorrmarketing.com), a full-service marketing and advertising agency specializing in the home furnishings industry. The agency provides strategic planning, creative production, public relations, sales promotions, website development and media buying services. Headquartered in Traverse City, Mich., the firm serves clients throughout the United States.

We live in an exciting time for marketing and advertising. Sure, it's not as easy as it used to be when you could reach 66 percent of Americans on Sunday night as they all watched *The Ed Sullivan Show*. And yes, we are dealing with greater media fragmentation than could have even been imagined twenty years ago.

Hundreds of cable channels, satellite radio stations without local commercials and a reduction in the effectiveness of consumer print advertising are just some of the challenges we now face as we try to effectively and efficiently reach consumers today.

In addition, we are dealing with the Internet, which has provided the consumer a whole world of choices. Today's consumer is not like yesterday's; instead of settling for what she can get locally, she demands control over the entire buying process and she will no longer accept at face value what we tell her.

What's more, we continue to see the emergence and maturing of robust social media options that are now considered mainstream to successful marketing initiatives. Social media options such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have profoundly changed consumer marketing.

Communication is transitioning from one-way and static (newspapers) to Interactive (the web) and just lately, to interactive in real time with SMS (Short Message Service) Mobile texting.

Mobile texting, along with new technology such as QR codes, will change the face of marketing and advertising forever. With this revolutionary technology you will be able to integrate mobile texting and QR codes into your marketing and advertising and take advantage of the power of immediate pull-through with real-time marketing.

Here are just a few highlights of what mobile texting is and does:

- Mobile text messaging lets you communicate with your contacts in real time so you receive instant replies.
- You can “mail” mobile text messaging without downloading additional software.
- You can use mobile text messaging to communicate with your contacts that have an SMS-enabled mobile phone or other communications device.

In the next issue of NHFA's *Home Furnishings Retailer*, you'll learn more about mobile texting and how you can use it to build a stronger relationship with your customers. You'll find that mobile texting can help you create frequency marketing that will bring you incremental sales increases.

To get you thinking about this marketing phenomenon and what it can do for you, here are three case studies that show how mobile texting has already improved connectivity and made marketing more successful for other operations.

Case study one: *American Idol*

A few years ago, AT&T and the producers of *American Idol* teamed up to let *Idol* viewers vote on their favorite contestants via SMS (mobile texting). In 2008, fans voted in record numbers, sending in 78 million text messages. In 2009, AT&T expanded their *Idol* efforts to include “voting reminders, trivia, and a TXT-n-Win sweepstakes promising the winner \$1,000 cash and a trip for two to the *Idol* series finale in Los Angeles, and contestant ringtones and video clips featuring outrageous audition moments.” This resulted in a new record of more than 178 million text messages!

In 2011, viewers of the show will be able to cast votes through Facebook, along with phone and text messages. Imagine how many messages that will inspire! Now, that's getting customers involved with your product!

Mobile texting has already
improved connectivity
and made marketing more
successful for other
operations, from vital
charities to political
campaigns to popular
TV shows.

**Now, it's retailing's
turn to benefit.**

Case study two:

President Barack Obama's 2008 Election Campaign

Political historians will be studying Barack Obama's historic campaign for decades to come. There is one thing that everyone already agrees upon and that is Obama's “new media” team leveraged the web, social networks and text messaging in unprecedented ways to communicate with supporters, recruit donors and enhance get-out-the-vote (GOTV) efforts.

Famously, the Obama campaign announced the selection of Joe Biden as Vice President to opted-in subscribers via text message. The message went out to 2.9 million mobile phones. The phone numbers went into the campaign database.

Finally, when Election Day came, supporters received text messages reminding them to vote. This was much more than a nifty way to end a campaign that used text messaging so successfully. Research has found that SMS (text messaging) is more effective than all other get-out-the-vote methods except for old fashioned door-to-door visits (canvassing). Research has found that, of all the methods used to get out the vote, SMS is more effective than anything except canvassing, and canvassing costs nearly 20 times as much per recruited vote. Text messaging is extraordinarily effective — and cost-effective.

continued on page 62



Case study three:

The American Red Cross


In 2008, the American Red Cross raised \$250,000 with its Text 2HELP program.

This program is activated during major disasters. According to the Wireless Foundation, "subscribers of participating wireless carriers can send a text message to "2HELP" (24357) containing the word "GIVE" and when the text is initiated a tax-deductible donation will be made to the American Red Cross for disaster relief efforts. Donations will appear on customers' monthly bills or be debited from a prepaid account balance.

In 2008, the Text 2HELP campaign was advertised across various communications channels and received its biggest boost when both Presidential candidates called their constituents to action.

During the Republican National Convention, Mike Duncan, the chairman of the RNC, asked convention attendants to take out their mobile phones and text in a donation. The Obama campaign leveraged their own text messaging campaign to aid the Red Cross, sending their entire database of subscribers a

message asking them to text GIVE to 24537 (2HELP).

I will restate again that the face of marketing has changed forever. And it will continue to change. If you are willing to join the new marketing and advertising programs that include technology to offer greater consumer interaction and real-time marketing, you'll get the attention and the market share you know you deserve! 

Coming next issue: What you really need to know about SMS (mobile marketing).




<http://www.furniturehomeland.com>

Buy Direct...
Buy from Overseas...
Buy from Furniturehomeland.com!
Your most reliable source.

Contacts:
E-Mail: info@furniturehomeland.com
Tel: (852)2566-3638
Fax: (852)2566-2803









A green circular button with white text. The text reads "BE A PART OF THE REVOLUTION" in a bold, sans-serif font, with "BE A PART" on the first line, "OF THE" on the second line, and "REVOLUTION" on the third line. Below this, separated by a thin white horizontal line, is the date "June 12-14, 2011" in a smaller, sans-serif font. The button is set against a dark blue background.

VOLUME
June 12-14, 2011

“Making Sense of the Social Media Revolution”

Monday kicks off with a workshop by Kerry Jo Richards focusing on the basics of social media - what it's all about, why (and if) you should participate, the "rules" of social media and where to start.

“Legislative Issues That Affect You”

Tuesday morning begins with an update on current legislative issues that impact the retail home furnishings industry, followed by retailer-to-retailer round table discussions.

Registration: \$49 for each SHFA member and guest.

Special Offer: If you are not an SHFA member, or are a member who has not attended an SHFA conference in the last 3 years, you can receive a complimentary registration and one free night's stay.



Kerry Jo Richards
independent social media
marketing coach



SHFA

Annual Conference Myrtle Beach, SC

June 12-14, 2011

Marina Inn at Grande Dunes - Myrtle Beach, SC

Contact Mary Jane Bolek at mbolek@nhfa.org or call 800-888-9590 ext.6116