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KFC heats up mobile strategy with interactive ad campaign

By Rimma Kats

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Fast food giant KFC is running an interactive mobile advertising campaign that not only promotes its new Chunky Chicken Pot Pie, but entices consumers to engage with the product on a deeper level via a branded Pandora radio station.

The company is no stranger to mobile and has used the medium

in the past to build a one-on-one relationship with consumers. A mobile advertising campaign such as this is an effective way for KFC to promote its new product, but also keep the consumer relationship going with a radio station that constantly advertises the Chunky Chicken Pot Pie.

"I think it is a great idea for company such as KFC," said Rick Singer, CEO of GreatApps.com. "Pandora allows its users to create unique stations.

"If KFC is targeting a more youthful audience for its product, then most likely, listeners of, let's say the classical music channel, may not be a target audience," he said. "I am not indicating that people who listen to classical music do not try KFC per se, however, a company such as KFC who is spending a lot of money on a campaign like this, wants to reach the best audience.

"A campaign on Pandora will help them reach a more targeted audience."

Audience engagement

KFC is running mobile banner and audio ads within Pandora's iPhone app.

The ads promote the company's new meal, as well as encourage consumers to launch the KFC Classic Radio.

Additionally, through the mobile ads, consumers can find the nearest store location to try out the Chunky Pot Pies, as well as view the company's other menu items and browse nutrition facts.

"I feel this is very clever," Mr. Singer said. "If you are trying to reach an audience ages 16-28, you do not want to find most of your resources for a campaign is too widespread.

"The cost of effective marketing continues to climb," he said. "Companies want the best chance to reach their core audience in a cost effective manner," he said. "This engagement does give them the opportunity."

Targeted campaign

KFC has been testing mobile in the past few years.

In June 2010, KFC ran a 12-day mobile advertising campaign with eBuddy that achieved more than 180,000 impressions.

To create awareness for the iTwist, KFC filled every position available on eBuddy Mobile and the eBuddy iPhone application.

Consumers in the Netherlands that clicked on the banner got a buy-one-iTwist-get-one-free coupon. In addition to the 180,000-plus impressions generated via eBuddy, 1,150 consumers clicked through to get the mobile coupon ([see story](#)).

In August 2010, the company launched a multichannel mobile program that included an application sponsorship, banners and SMS advertising.

The objective of the campaign was to drive awareness of KFC's Doublicious sandwich among adults ages 18-49, while focusing in on adults 18-24 ([see story](#)).

Last year, KFC ran a mobile campaign to promote its Hot Wings that included in-application and mobile Web display advertising,

as well as custom brand integration within a mobile game ([see story](#)).

KFC's new mobile ad campaign is a great way for the company to build a consumer-brand relationship.

Consumers are constantly on their mobile device and a mobile ad campaign is a great way to reach them while they are on the go.

Additionally, offering a mobile incentive – in this case a radio station – helps engage the user on a deeper level.

"Mobile advertising continues to grow," Mr. Singer said. "As mobile seems to be taking over the world, companies are scrambling to get the position to reach consumers via mobile.

"I think we will see more creative advertising campaigns throughout 2012," he said. "I feel consumers are not necessarily happy seeing banner ads or pop-up ads on their smartphones."

"Publishers will continue to explore new avenues to have a platform for advertisers and not scare off users."