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Dialing IN To Dial UP Your Hispanic Engagement

by Gregory Wester, Thursday, Nov 13, 2008 12:45 PM ET

As Hispanic marketers, we still want to try new things, even as marketing budgets tighten in 2009. However, there's a heightened need for measurability and performance advertising. Mobile marketing is certainly one of the hottest new areas marketers are exploring -- let's see how much you know. Pop quiz: in the three examples below, identify the new media format being used to engage the consumer. Your choices are iPhone App, text message or mobile Web site.

A) While using her phone, your customer clicks to get up-to-date news from her home country, Mexico, which is sponsored by your brand.

B) Another customer is using his phone and learns of high pollen levels. He clicks and hears "Three Steps to Allergy Relief," an advertorial created by your brand.

C) A third customer is using his phone when he opts into getting a message with info on an event your brand is sponsoring.

The answers? Actually, none of these are examples of mobile marketing.

They are all examples of "In-Call Media." And they're all examples of how brands are reaching and engaging millions of Hispanics as they place hundreds of millions of phone calls using prepaid calling cards. Over the past several years, In-Call Media has grown in size, and now represents a goldmine of opportunity. I thought I'd share a few highlights.

Pre-Paid Calling Cards - An Untapped Market

Rather than merely offering low-cost international calling, hundreds of pre-paid calling cards are using In-Call Media to offer callers access to new ad-sponsored features such as: news from home, sports scores, horoscopes, offers from local merchants and more. The audio advertising is interactive, allowing interested callers to further engage with your brand to learn more.

As they make a phone call, callers hear a 10-second message highlighting news, information or a targeted offer. If they are interested, they press a key to engage; otherwise, they continue with their call.

In the above examples, as consumers made pre-paid calling card calls, they had options to:

1. Hear news from their home country -- a great opportunity for brands to place their interactive message as a content sponsorship.
2. Hear allergy tips -- a great example of In-Call Media's branded content opportunity.
3. Get a text message with the time and address of an event of interest - an example of using In-Call Media for event/marketing support.

These interactive audio messages are dynamically inserted the same way that Internet servers dynamically insert interactive ads/content into Web sites based on the individual, the time of day, the individual's behavior, location or a variety of targeting behavior.

In the same way the Internet browser allows advertisers to engage consumers on a PC, In-Call Media now allows advertisers to engage consumers in a phone call.

TOOLS

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EMAIL | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SUBSCRIBE |
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GREGORY WESTER

Greg is a 20 year veteran of interactive advertising strategy, product design, optimization and research. At VoodooVox, Greg heads up the development of In-Call Media products and company strategy. Most recently Greg was founder and President of Soapbox Marketing, a word of mouth marketing agency. Prior to Soapbox Marketing, Greg held positions at the web developer, Organic Online as VP of Analytical and Consumer Methods, the Yankee Group as the founder and Vice President of its Internet Market Strategies practice, and at GTE as Principal Interactive Researcher.

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Ringling Up ROI

Because in-call media shares the characteristics of other interactive media, everything is measurable. This means that you can not only measure clicks, but you can also do controlled media studies.

Individual campaigns vary, but advertisers are experiencing well above average rates of interactivity and increases in brand awareness for two primary factors:

1. Advertising messages are delivered directly into the ear
2. All consumers need to do is push a single key on their phone

Jeffrey Pray of Starcom MediaVest spoke to the bottom-line impact of a past In-Call Media campaign for a film release. He cited a third-party research study showing that those consumers exposed to In-Call Media were found to be 20% more likely to express interest in buying tickets to the advertised movie.

Additionally, according to a recent segment on CNBC, Fox Searchlight used In-Call Media to promote its recent movie, "La Misma Luna," to the Hispanic market. In-Call Media allowed it to reach a very targeted audience that was calling home, much like the character in the movie, who spent the best time of his day calling his family abroad. It gave the studio 10 times the response rate it expected from Web ads which, for any Hispanic marketer, is a ringing success.

Who Else Is Using In-Call Media

In-Call Media is being used for a variety of marketing objectives including: branding, product sampling, event support, education, customer acquisition, tune-in reminders, consumer research and more.

- Financial services are using In-Call Media to engage non-acculturated audiences around educational campaigns and even as a way to market new credit cards. Callers have the ability to "push 9" to connect directly with an agent who can help consumers learn more and signup for services.
- QSR and CPG brands are using In-Call Media's targeting capabilities to build event support for local promotions.
- Mobile agencies for a variety of industries are using In-Call Media as an alternative to buying banners on WAP sites.
- TV networks and movie studios are using In-Call Media to build awareness for shows and movies.

With In-Call Media, advertisers can both target specific audiences and create campaigns with lots of interactivity. And in all cases, advertisers can monitor and optimize their campaigns in real-time via a Web-based system.


Getting Started

1. Start with a Pilot - While some brands are already spending six figures on In-Call Media campaigns, it's easy to get started for as little as \$20,000. There are several companies who are active in the space including VoodooVox, IDT, and Epana, each offering a different audience and a slightly different offering.


2. Work with Your Partner - Whether you're looking to extend a new media, print or radio campaign, In-Call Media is a perfect way to add reach and measurability. Many of the top firms in this space can also provide access to audio production to make sure your ad sings to your audience in English or Spanish.

3. Use the Metrics - As mentioned above, In-Call Media provides real-time tracking of all measures. Use them. They'll give you all the justification you need in crafting your own six-figure campaign the next time around.

2 Responses to "Dialing IN To Dial UP Your Hispanic Engagement "

 **INORA RODRIGUEZ** from CVT PREPAID SOLUTIONS INC
commented on: November 14, 2008 at 2:57 PM

Hello everyone, The article above is very interesting. I work for a prepaid calling card company called CVT Prepaid Solutions. We have distribution in the whole USA to about 80,000 retail outlets with about 150million to the whole world. We sell cards mainly to call all of Latino America. We are working in the posibility to start ofering In- Call Media service to several companies. If you are interested please call email me inora.rodriquez@cvtprepaid.com

 **INORA RODRIGUEZ** from CVT PREPAID SOLUTIONS INC
commented on: November 14, 2008 at 3:59 PM

I meant 150 million minutes a month.

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