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A Contribution to Theory Building for Mobile Marketing: Categorizing Mobile Marketing Campaigns through Case Study Research

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Abstract

Marketing experts consider the mobile device as an extremely promising marketing tool as it supports them to cope with their major challenge: getting time and attention from customers. Current mobile marketing research mostly covers success factors and acceptance analysis. Categorization, when addressed, lacks in appropriate foundation and is not linked to objectives at all. In this article we examine 55 case studies in order to identify relevant characteristics of mobile marketing campaigns. The outcome of the paper is the derivation of four mobile marketing standard types and an examination of campaign objectives that can be addressed by mobile marketing. The proposed scheme allows to unambiguously characterize any given mobile marketing campaign and to identify the respective objectives.

1. Introduction

In earlier years, when only few television channels existed, it was relatively unproblematic to capture a large segment of society by using commercials. As well as with other mass media the access to customers became more complicated by the increasing fragmentation of the market [7]. Additionally, a new mass medium, the Internet, has evolved and is overloaded with advertising messages which frequently annoy customers these days [31]. As a result of these developments, getting time and attention from customers has turned into the major challenge for advertisers [13]. Compared to click-through rates of less than 1% in online advertising [16], response rates to mobile marketing campaigns can clearly exceed 10% [21]. Hence, mobile marketing is an extremely promising marketing tool providing the opportunity to target messages at customers in much better ways than present mass media types [4] [17].

A sizeable body of research on mobile marketing evolved in recent years. However, this research mostly covers success factors and acceptance analysis. Categorization, when addressed at all, lacks in

appropriate foundation. In this early stage, marketing managers using mobile marketing can only rely on intuition, creative insight and personal experience for their decisions. Therefore, the mobile marketing manager is still merely an artist instead of a professional worker. The latter would require a well-defined toolbox for mobile marketing campaigns.

This paper aims to contribute to this objective and presents the results of a case study research concerning mobile marketing campaigns. The outcome of the paper is the derivation of four *mobile marketing standard types* along with clear reflections of their usage for addressing the different *campaign objectives*.

The paper is organized as follows: In section 2 we provide a literature overview and define mobile marketing. Section 3 describes the research methodology. In section 4 we present and discuss our results: In section 4.1 we identify and classify characteristics of mobile marketing campaigns within a morphological box [42]. Based on this, in section 4.2 we derive four mobile marketing standard types. In section 4.3 we discuss the objectives in mobile marketing campaigns and finally, in section 4.4, propose a framework which brings together the standard types and the campaign objectives. In section 5 we outline the main findings, draw conclusions and comment on implications for future research.

2. Background

2.1 Literature overview

Scholars provided conceptual models of customers' willingness to accept mobile marketing [8] [25], have conceptualized success factors [9], examined the effectiveness empirically [4] [15] [5], analyzed the emerging industry [21] and discussed business models [12] [23]. There have been several attempts to categorize mobile marketing campaigns. [4] identified six types: brand building, special offers, timely media teasers, product, service or information requests, competitions and polls. [19] proposed a framework of three types including push, pull and dialogue

campaigns. Likewise [21] provided four models of mobile marketing campaigns depending on the type of permission given by customers (one-off push, one-off pull, continued dialogue and fundraising). However, presented categorizations are not linked to campaign objectives or neglected an appropriate foundation.

2.2 Mobile marketing

[28] argued mobile marketing should be considered within the context of mobile commerce and is therefore a subset of that. For the purpose of this paper, we define *mobile commerce* as any kind of business transaction, on the condition that at least one side uses mobile communication techniques [38].

According to the American Marketing Association (AMA) marketing is defined as “the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives” [1]. Hence, the marketing mix is classified according to [26] in product, price, place and promotion.

The focus of mobile marketing lies in the fourth P, namely promotion [35]. Therefore [36] suggested the better term would be mobile marketing communication. We define *mobile marketing* as form of marketing communication using mobile communication techniques to promote goods, services and ideas.

Several reasons contribute to continued growth of mobile marketing: high global penetration of mobile devices [5], adoption of mobile devices with larger screens [41] and higher connection speed through 3G [28]. Also the groundbreaking characteristics of mobile communication techniques (ubiquity, context-sensitivity, identifying functions and command and control functions [3]) allow potentials for marketing managers not realizable by the use of other media types. Compared to the features of traditional mass media mobile marketing can provide interaction, exclusiveness, location and situation dependency, targeted addressing of customers, immediate transaction and measurement of campaigns’ effectiveness [12]. Hence, the mobile device is ideal for individualized and dialogue-oriented communication [5].

3. Method

This exploratory research is based upon theory building from case studies [10]. This approach is especially appropriate for obtaining complex details

and novel understandings about a specific phenomenon under investigation. Case study can be used to accomplish various aims: to provide description, test theory, or generate theory [10]. The interest here is in the last aim, theory generation from case study evidence.

In order to distinguish different types of mobile marketing campaigns, we identify and classify relevant characteristics of mobile marketing campaigns within a morphological box [42]. The classification scheme was developed based on literature review and preexisting research [32]. Prior to data collection, the research instrument, coding categories and operational definitions were tested by two coders individually and refined. Data were coded individually by both coders. Afterwards, 55 accurately described case studies were analyzed according to the process described in [10] in order to derive mobile marketing standard types. A list of typical case studies used as examples in this paper is provided in table 1¹.

To identify objectives in mobile marketing, we analyzed 30 of the 55 case studies which included a description of campaign objectives. In addition, we asked 44 European mobile marketing experts from industry and academia about possible objectives. For a more detailed description of the applied method, the sample and further results see [40].

Then we structured the relationship using the Cartesian product $X \times Y$ of mobile marketing standard types (X) and campaign objectives (Y) to create the proposed framework.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Characteristics of mobile marketing campaigns

Basically, two main categories of mobile marketing campaigns can be distinguished: push and pull [14] [24] [34]. Within push campaigns messages are sent unsolicited, whereas within pull campaigns other supporting media serving as trigger for customers’ request are required [29] [9] [21]. Many authors [5] [21] stated that customers will only accept mobile marketing, if they perceive a benefit in receiving advertisement. Hence, mobile marketing must be carried out with a basic intention to offer something of value to customers. Possible added values can be distinguished between information, entertainment, raffles or monetary incentives (for more detail, see

¹ Detailed descriptions of the case studies are available from the authors upon request.

Table 1. Description of case studies used as example in this paper

| ID | company | campaign | description |
|----|---|----------------------------------|---|
| 1 | ARAL | SMS Fuel Oil Price Information | provision of actual fuel oil prices |
| 2 | BMW | Formula BMW Racing Game 2003 | provision of a Java game |
| 3 | Calvin Klein Cosmetics | Summer in the City | SMS raffle (prize: travel to New York); SMS answer provides link to stationary Web portal (opportunities: free voice messages / SMS / MMS / logos / ring tones, perfume postcards, discount vouchers for physical products) |
| 4 | Cinestar Bamberg | Beamzone | provision of trailers, cinema dates and diverse mobile content via Bluetooth |
| 5 | Coca Cola | Festifever 2004 | SMS raffle with diverse mobile content (e.g. mobile music clips) and event tickets as prize |
| 6 | Coca Cola | Ibiza 3 Friends and You | SMS raffle with diverse mobile content (e.g. mobile language course) and travels as prize |
| 7 | Coca Cola | Thrill Seeker | raffle with cars and event tickets as prizes (winner positioned via GPS and visited by a promotion team) |
| 8 | Coca Cola | Message in a Bottle | each participant gets a gift (out of 200 categories of mobile content) |
| 9 | Columbia Tristar Film | Mona Lisa Smile | raffle with cinema tickets as prizes |
| 10 | Discotheque Treppchen 2 | Treppchen 2 News | SMS event newsletter |
| 11 | Ferrero | Shrek 2 Promotion | each participant gets a gift (out of 50 categories of mobile content) |
| 12 | Ferrero | tic tac and talk | SMS raffle (prizes: 1000 mobile phones); SMS answer provides link to stationary Web portal (opportunities: send voice greeting cards and free SMS/MMS) |
| 13 | Johnson and Johnson Vision Care | Acuvue 2Colours | order of a trial package; information about the nearest point of sale |
| 14 | L'Oréal | Studio Line, SMS Advent calendar | raffle with snowboards, diverse mobile content and a personalized party newsletter as prizes |
| 15 | O ₂ Germany | O ₂ Music-Flash | invitations for spontaneous music events |
| 16 | Raiffeisen Bank Group Austria | Raiffeisen Club | provision of a virtual chat partner and diverse mobile content |
| 17 | s. Oliver | Mobile Coupon | discount on (physical) products |
| 18 | Mobile Commerce Working Group, University of Augsburg | MCTA Conference Promotion | conference fee discount if a personalized SMS invitation is sent to 10 other people |

section 4.2). The characteristic cost reflects the monetary costs of customer within a mobile marketing campaign [12]. Before sending ads to customers' mobile device, it is necessary to convince customers to "opt-in", e.g. to give their permission to receive mobile ads [28] [8]. The mobile device allows mobile marketing to be highly interactive. Besides no

interactivity (unidirectional push advertisement), we differ reaction and dialogue [33]. Mobile communication technology providing mobile marketing can be classified according whether wide area network (WAN), local area network (LAN) or personal area network (PAN) is used [37]. Another important technical issue is the underlying enabling

technology for sending, replying and forwarding messages. We differ Interactive Voice Response (IVR) [28], Short Message Service (SMS) [8] [21], Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS) [29] or Wireless Application Protocol (WAP) [23]. Also high-level languages like Java can be used for mobile marketing purposes in order to realize applications such as games [11]. There are various examples for implementing mobile marketing coupled with location-based services (LBS) [38] like proximity triggered advertisements that informs customers about various on-going specials in surrounding areas [25] or directions to the nearest point of sale [8].

For a more detailed analysis of the instances, see [32]. Based on the discussion above, the main characteristics of mobile marketing campaigns and their instances can be summarized in table 2.

4.2. Derivation of mobile marketing standard types

The previous section has outlined that a broad variety of characteristics is necessary to classify a single mobile marketing campaign. The examination of 55 case studies shows that neither these campaigns and their instances are evenly distributed within the introduced scheme, nor typical patterns exist which are valid over all of the relevant characteristics. A hierarchical cluster analysis we conducted using various methods also did not provide a satisfactory

result. Therefore, we have to state the absence of accurately definable disjoint types. Anyhow, in conducting cross-case search we can identify single instances of the shown characteristics as respectively constituent for a significant group of mobile marketing campaigns. These groups represent different concepts, but are not totally disjoint. Any of the current mobile marketing campaign can be ranked in at least one of the groups as well as a single campaign can use more than one group. We term these groups *as mobile marketing standard types*.

The *information standard type* is defined by the instance information of the characteristic added value. Typical examples include information about products (case study 1), information about the nearest point of sale ideally using LBS (case study 13) or mobile newsletters (case study 10). But also news, weather, traffic, market rates, horoscopes or songs just played on the radio are possible [8]. From the viewpoint of customers the information must be relevant [28], otherwise they view mobile marketing pushed to their mobile devices as importunate and unwelcome [4] [41]. Relevance of information will increase, if customers receive information based on time of day, location, roles or prior given profiles [27]. Within-case analysis shows that the information standard type is often coupled with other standard types, typical with the coupon standard type, to increase added value of the whole campaign.

The *entertainment standard type* is defined by the

Table 2. Morphological box of mobile marketing characteristics and instances

| characteristic | instances | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----|----------|------------------|--------------------|-------|
| initiation | push | | | | pull | | | |
| medium | print | outdoor advertising | radio | TV | Internet | on-pack | mobile device | other |
| added value | information | | entertainment | | raffle | | monetary incentive | |
| cost | premium rate | | transmission costs | | | none | | |
| opt-in | conventional | | electronic | | mobile | | none | |
| degree of interactivity | dialogue | | reaction | | | no interactivity | | |
| mobile communication technology | WAN | | LAN | | | PAN | | |
| enabling technology | high-level language | WAP | | MMS | | SMS | | IVR |
| positioning | mobile network dependent technology | | specialized positioning system | | manual | | none | |

instance entertainment of the characteristic added value. According to [2] entertainment is one mobile service that produces value to customers. [6] stated if the entertainment is amusing and emotional enough, the advertising message will be communicated subliminal. Starting points for this standard type are humorous, aesthetic or stylistic elements [39]. Typical examples are campaigns providing videos (case study 4), music, (case study 5), games (case study 2) or offers used for customizing mobile devices, i.e. ring tones, logos and answering machine announcements (case study 8). To provide more than one entertaining element special marketers can use WAP download-centers (case study 11). In so doing they can stimulate collecting ambition and consequently generate multiple contacts with customers. Typically, customers use entertaining elements such as games several times and therefore customers meet with advertising message more than one time, a positive brand image can be built up. As most people, especially adolescent, have a natural playfulness, providing entertaining elements yields high participation to mobile marketing campaigns [15]. However, perceived added value through entertainment depends on the social and situational conditions and the personage of customers [39]. Though, it may be difficult to address older target groups with entertainment.

The *raffle standard type* is defined by the instance raffle of the characteristic added value. Although the prizes vary widely in type and value, most mobile raffles follow the same process. Customers are called attention to the raffle by other media. Then they answer a question, vote for something or someone or send a certain code by SMS and have finally the chance to win cash and goods prizes. Prizes are either digital, like above-mentioned entertainment elements (case study 5), or non-digital, like mobile devices (case study 12). The main advantage of raffles is that the prize provides customers with a tangible reason to contact the advertisers. The more attractive the prize is to the target group, the higher the chance of success, because customers compare the probability of winning with the estimated value of prize and then decide to participate to the campaign [14].

The *coupon standard type* is defined by the instance monetary incentive of the characteristic added value. By monetary incentives marketers have created the value to message instead of sending the message with general promotion [14]. The most common mobile coupon is a straightforward SMS that has to be shown at the point of sale. Typical coupons include discounts (case study 18), trial packages (case study 13) or free-SMS/ -MMS available on advertiser's website (case study 12). Also discount tickets sent to

the mobile phone, e.g. after a mobile payment, and collected in a virtual discount ticket book belong to the coupon standard type. Depending on the value of the coupon, security features such as validation code and special scanner at the cash desk are incorporated [8] in order to make sure it is a genuine coupon (case study 17). Mobile coupons have two categories: impulse coupons and pre-selected coupons [14]. Impulse coupons are highly time sensitive coupons with the aim to increase impulse purchases. Particularly impulse coupons are sent to customers who have opted in but they don't know when they will receive them. In contrast, pre-selected coupons have been pre-selected by customers who have expressed an interest in specific products.

Traditionally, *spam* is any relationship between advertisers and customers that is not opt-in [36]. As noted in section 4.1, advertisers must have permission before sending ads to customers. Following Will Harris, global marketing director for Genie, British Telecom's mobile Internet service, who emphasized spam is tantamount to brand suicide [19], we do not introduce the standard type spam due to its irrelevance for "good" marketing.

4.3. Objectives in Mobile Marketing

In this section, we present empirical results concerning objectives in mobile marketing. Through the expert interviews and the content analysis of 30 case studies we identified following *campaign objectives*.

Building brand awareness aims at the customers' ability to recognize and recall a brand in purchase and consumption situations [18] and becomes important for market launches of new product and services. *Changing brand image* aims to change the perception of the brand by the customers. Brand image [22] refers to the set of associations linked to the brand that consumers hold in their memory. An often mentioned campaign objective in the case studies and in the expert interviews was *sales promotion* that aims to stimulate quicker or greater purchase of a product or service [20]. *Enhancing brand loyalty* [22] aims at consumers' commitment to repurchase the brand. *Building customer database* aims to collect Mobile Station ISDN (MSISDN) or profiles of customers. A profile is defined as a set of features with their relative weights and characterizes the preference and the activity of customers [17]. Online marketers craft online questionnaires to collect relevant profile information [37]. This may be difficult for marketers using mobile marketing because of device limitations.

Table 3. Mobile marketing framework

| | information standard type | entertainment standard type | raffle standard type | coupon standard type |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| building brand awareness | provision of a push SMS with information about the product (case study 9) | provision of a trailer for a new film (case study 4) | raffle advertised by a multiplicity of different media types (case study 12) | provision of a coupon via push SMS to customers who opt-in for such services at a mobile marketing company ^a |
| changing brand image | provision of a SMS invitation for a special event to enhance young image (case study 15) | provision of a Java-game to gain innovative image (case study 2) | placing image through the prize of the raffle (case study 6) | provision of a coupon for a promotional gift that place the desired image ^a |
| sales promotion | provision of an information services during an on-pack campaign ^a | provision of a ring tone during an on-pack campaign (case study 8) | provision of a raffle during an on-pack campaign (case study 7) | provision of a coupon for a trial package (case study 13) |
| enhancing brand loyalty | provision of a mobile newsletter including actual product information (case study 10) | provision of a Java-game for existing customers ^a | provision of a raffle for existing customers ^a | provision of a mobile discount ticket book ^a |
| building customer database | personalized information on condition of registration (case study 14) | provision of a logo and a ring tone on condition of registration (case study 16) | request for registration after the raffle (case study 6) | provision of a coupon on condition of registration (case study 10) |
| mobile word-of-mouth | provision of high relevant information with adding "send to a friend" ^a | provision of a greeting card via IVR (case study 3) or provision of a ring tone in return of mobile word-of-mouth (case study 8) | participation in the raffle requires participation of other people (case study 9) | receiving a discount requires passing message on other people (case study 18) |

^a devised example

As a result mobile marketing is used to lure customer on a website where the opportunity of profiling is provided. *Mobile word-of-mouth* (also called mobile viral marketing) aims at passing on advertising messages from customer to customer via mobile communication techniques. Experts stated persons, who got the initial message from a familiar sender, participate more frequently in a mobile marketing campaign as initial contacts, because the personal message gains more credibility than those coming directly from the self-interest advertiser (see also [30]).

4.4. Mobile marketing framework

Up to this point, we have identified relevant characteristics of mobile marketing campaigns, derived four mobile marketing standard types and introduced campaign objectives. The final step will be to bring together the dimensions standard type and campaign objective in order to build a conceptual framework which we call the *mobile marketing framework*. Table 3 presents the framework and provides typical examples. The framework is intended primarily as a basis for designing new mobile marketing campaign, since it allows identifying as well as comparing mobile

marketing campaigns based on mobile marketing standard type and campaign objective. This will be helpful for practitioners when they need to develop a particular campaign, since the mobile marketing framework in combination of the morphological box (cf. section 4.1) allows rating mobile marketing campaigns according to their chances of success, revealing their limitations, and thus providing recommendations. However, the final decision for the development of a particular mobile marketing campaign must be made having in mind target market, market positioning and marketing mix.

5. Conclusion

In this paper we examined characteristics of current mobile marketing campaigns on the basis of literature. The outcome of the paper is the derivation of four mobile marketing standard types (information, entertainment, raffle and coupon) and an examination of campaign objectives that can be addressed by them. The proposed scheme, the morphological box in combination with the mobile marketing framework, allows unambiguously characterizing any given mobile marketing campaign and to identify the respective campaign objectives and therefore provide recommendations for designing new mobile marketing campaigns.

According to [10] our next step will be to compare the emergent conceptual framework with a broad range of literature. In so doing we will build internal validity, wider generalization and higher conceptual level as well as get deeper insights of the relationship between standard types and campaign objectives.

The theoretical contribution of this paper is the introduction of four mobile marketing standard types which will be used in our future research. On issues of future research, the paper offers some other interesting research avenues. Firstly, the effectiveness of the proposed standard types should be investigated. Research assessing ways to create and increase added value of mobile marketing campaigns - the identifying characteristic of the standard types - will be very valuable for the further development of mobile marketing. Secondly, the specific campaign objectives building customer database and mobile word-of-mouth should be addressed. The all-dominant questions will be: how can marketers convince customers to divulge personal information, in particular their preferences and how must a mobile marketing campaign be developed, so that customers pass messages on other people. Our future research will begin to tackle these challenges.

Mobile advertising will undoubtedly become more important in the future for marketers, because such campaigns provide several opportunities to build personal one-to-one relationships with customers via mobile devices. Big brands like BMW, Coca Cola or L'Oréal are just forerunners of this evolution in practice. Thus, we believe that mobile advertising will turn from infancy to adulthood in the near future.

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