

2014 UFI Marketing Award - Mobile Marketing: How did you use it in 2013?

Reed's Gift & Home event is one of the largest gift fairs in China. The show is held twice a year, featuring 2,500 exhibitors and 80,000 visitors from across the country. This event is known as the premier platform to source gifts and housing products produced within China.

In 2013, Gift & Home launched a mobile app to serve as a digital guide for the event. The show has also since launched an official account on WeChat, the popular Chinese mobile text and voice messaging communication service. Because WeChat is one of China's fastest growing online mobile instant messaging platforms, with over 400 million active users each month, the social networking channel has proven integral to the mobile marketing efforts of Reed's Gift & Home events.

Objectives:

- What were the objectives for implementing your mobile marketing activity?

We added the mobile app and WeChat account to our mobile marketing measures to:

- ✓ Improve exhibitor satisfaction and boost their ROI by offering more publicity opportunities via the app and WeChat platforms, before and during the show;
- ✓ Give visitors a better onsite experience. The show is spread across 10 halls. The mobile marketing app features a site guide so that navigating the event and finding key exhibitors becomes quick and simple. The app is packed with handy information, including visiting tips, product listings and exhibitor lists, booth locations and news of onsite events. The useful pocket guide keeps key show details at participants' fingertips.
- ✓ Boost the number of trade visitors following the official WeChat account. This digital engagement proved effective in strengthening participants' loyalty to the show. On WeChat, we feature various stories, up-to-date exhibition news and gift giveaways;
- ✓ By achieving these objectives, we raised show revenue

- Which target group did you address?

All Participants of *Gift & Home*.

- ✓ For Visitors, we targeted gift buyers, trade visitors and other professionals engaged in the gift and home product industries who have taken part in the event before.
- ✓ On the exhibitor side, we targeted all exhibitors who supply and manufacture gifts.

- Did your mobile marketing activity replace an existing activity or was it a newly applied solution?

Both the app and the WeChat account are new initiatives, tailored to the Chinese gift industry.

What added value did your mobile marketing activity seek to provide?

- ✓ Mobile marketing boosts interaction among the event organizers, exhibitors and visitors. It makes the show more interesting and helps visitors better understand the show, the exhibitors and the products displayed.
- ✓ Both the app and WeChat are interactive. We believe that this kind of two-way communication significantly strengthens participants' loyalty to our show. At Reed we consider ourselves relationship brokers, connecting the right exhibitors and visitors. Visitors can search for products and plan for the show before they come. This makes for a more efficient visit and facilitates a higher return on their investment.
- ✓ The gift show features over 2,500 exhibitors across 10 halls. What the new digital app does is make an expansive floor plan fit in the palm of a person's hand. Not only does that make the exhibition site easily navigable and compact, it also gives visitors a helicopter view of the different segments into which the exhibits are categorized.

- ✓ For exhibitors there is greatly enhanced access to, and understanding of, visitors, through this online, onsite accessibility. For Reed, as the event organizer, it boosts the quality of our service to show participants.

Actions:

- What measures did you take to reach your objectives?

- ✓ For the app, we listened to our customers, first and foremost. The exhibitors wanted a mobile platform on which to effectively and efficiently promote products. The visitors wanted help on navigation at the show site.
- ✓ The design of the Gift & Home mobile app lets visitors find the products and exhibitors they seek before and during show with ease. We showed 2,500 exhibitors how to upload images and descriptions of their products, to ensure that the app had key information that will help visitors develop their onsite agendas.
- ✓ We keep a comprehensive and current exhibitor list, including company name, product information, booth map, navigation, onsite forum and event news. We emphasised to visitors the benefits of the app to convince them of its value, so they would download it.
- ✓ For exhibitors, we educate them about this high value platform on which to promote brands and products before and during the show.
- ✓ On WeChat, we plan various campaigns to attract visitors and boost visitor flow. The channel features exhibitors' latest product information and bolsters the view of their brands and products among readers. The WeChat feed has an auto-responder that shares visiting tips and exhibition info for with the channel followers.
- ✓ To promote the app and the WeChat feed, we tailored EDMs to visitor contacts in our database. We also used a number of other social networking channels like Weibo, online communities and China's top social networking platform . Tencent QQ - groups to publicize the event. Our Sales staff also called exhibitors, encouraging them to post products online and make the most of this powerful digital platform. Exhibitors were also able to upload products to the app at any time.

- What were the specific challenges faced when implementing your mobile marketing activity? How were these overcome?

- ✓ As with anything new, when we launched the show app, we had to invest a lot of time in convincing exhibitors of its value. With 2,500 exhibitors, our Sales team had to invest a lot of effort into marketing communications and tech support, to ensure that exhibitors' product images and information were correctly uploaded.
- ✓ Getting visitors to engage with the app for the first time was a challenge too. We had to move from absolute zero to getting 30% of attendees to download it. To ensure visitors saw the app's full value, we had to educate them on its features and benefits. There is a communication plan just to drive mobile App and WeChat adoption. We revised call center scripts to ensure that while doing visitor recruitment, agents also talked about the benefits of downloading the app. Many of our communications materials had to be ready a full three months before the show to ensure that visitors began downloading well in advance. We sought out exhibitors to sponsor gifts to incentivize visitors to download the app. A lot of work went into driving engagement with both products.
- ✓ Many activities drove visitor engagement of both the show app and the WeChat feed. We also integrated a visitor's info point into our WeChat channel to answer questions about the show.

- Was your initiative developed in-house or with an outside partner?

We developed it in-house

Results:

- Were your objectives reached?

We are delighted to report that the results matched our expectations:

- ✓ On WeChat , we saw a steady and sustained growth in number of followers from the time we debuted the account. We had over 7,000 followers within the first month. More than 1,000 of those actively engaged us, asking questions about the show. Each day, our live info point on WeChat responded to an average of 50 questions.
- ✓ For the app, we achieved just under USD320,000 in download sales during the period immediately post-launch.
- ✓ Through surveys, major exhibitors expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the online publicity and information measures at this year's show.

- What are the benefits for your customers and for your company?

For our customers:

The 24-7 phenomenon that is mobile marketing allows exhibitors to promote their wares before, during and after the show. At pre-show activities, visitors can get to know exhibitors, products and the floor plan in advance - which drives exhibitors' ROI. In the long run, exhibitors can expand their brands through these mobile marketing channels, for fresher, more numerous business opportunities from a greater number of clients.

For visitors:

They can navigate the show site more effectively. 100 buyers told us that they spent much less time searching for the right exhibitors the first year the app was introduced.

For Reed:

We improved exhibitor satisfaction, as they got more value for the investment they make by participating in the show. Visitors also felt more connected to the event, thanks to the mobile experience.

- Did you increase your revenue?

Yes. For the mobile app service, we charged USD130 for each exhibitor. As a result, we saw an USD320,000 increase in revenue

- What were the quantitative and/or qualitative effects on your exhibition activity?

A total of 26,233 app downloads, and 7000+ WeChat followers.

Through continuous publicity and online information sharing through the mobile solutions developed, the exhibition effect and exhibitors' promotional profiles rose before, during and after the show.

Visitors cut the time they spent looking for target exhibitors in half, thanks to the app . making their days onsite much more productive.

We took in over USD320,000 from app sales alone. And exhibitors said they felt it was a good way to increase exposure for new and existing products, particularly as more and more exhibitors join the show, and ad space shrinks.

What's particularly noteworthy is that these results are easier to track and quantify than those

yielded by traditional marketing methods like advertising in trade magazines.

With the launch of the Gift & Home mobile app, 2,500 exhibitors uploaded descriptions and images of up to 5,000 new products and services online. Instantly, we have valuable online content.

The WeChat official account campaigns engaged audiences very well. In one campaign, 1% of followers forwarded our chat messages, out of the 5% who took part.

Another very good indicator of success is that the high number of exhibitors who have already booked for next year have opted for the exhibitor package that includes the app.

Recommendations:

With this successful case study, and many more successful cases of mobile applications and marketing within Reed such as NEPCON China events (monetize over USD70,000) and G2E Asia (monetize over USD30,000) in 2013/2014. We strongly recommend shows to start or continue improving mobile marketing and activity. Due to the sharp increase of smart phone usage worldwide, many of the show participants (exhibitors and visitors) become reliant on mobile content to help increase value of show participation. For shows without mobile app or mobile activity, it would be good to start planning for one. For shows which already have mobile activity (like Reed) we would need to keep improving engagement of our mobile products, keep improving users experience and enable participants to see the value. As a return, we are be able to monetize these products successfully (and sustain the revenue for years to come!!!).

Thank you!