

# E-News!

## When Advertising is Moving Home...

81-year-old Tahakasa Omi, a Japanese grandma of four, had spent her day excitedly anticipating the arrival of a package from Do-Co-Mo. Do-Co-Mo, the largest operator of mobile phones in Japan, if not the world, had spent the last two years developing a concept for people just like Tahakasa Omi. It's not hard to understand why. Japan has the oldest population in the world – and it's a market worth an estimated \$120 billion.

Tahakasa Omi's package didn't contain a flashy new mobile phone – what arrived was a picture frame. With a simple click on the side, the frame would immediately connect to the nationwide Do-Co-Mo mobile network and in turn connect with Omi's four kids. The moment one of her children took, say a photograph of a grandchild, they could press their 'Grandma' button, and within a few seconds the photo would appear on the frame in her living room. The 1,200km physical barrier separating her and her children seemingly vanished in an instant. And, by the way, the picture frame was free.

But this is far from the full story, since there's more than pictures appearing on the screen. The Do-co-Mo invention is the latest in an ongoing stream of initiatives from mobile operators from Japan – all seeking to explore new advertising channels.

Advertising penetration in Japan is by far the highest in the world – with the average Japanese consumer watching eight hours of TV commercials,



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seven days a week for seven years! That's one whole year more than Americans. Step outside any Japanese doors and you'll see that every space, every square centimeter, contains a commercial message. When you stroll down the streets of Tokyo, even the air is pumped with thousands of sound messages from every display, point-of-sale counter or store.

With Do-Co-Mo's picture frame the ads have not only moved inside the home onto the mantelpiece beside the TV screen, they've also managed to achieve what the television set has so far failed to do – a steadily growing, in-depth insight about its users. They not only know the users network of friends, but they know that full attention will be paid to each picture when it arrives. Not only that, the cost of the images are all paid for by the mobile phone users – like Tahakasa Omi's four kids. But even they have a choice – they can elect to receive commercial messages instead.

The picture frame is by no means the only commercial initiative on offer from the telecommunication giant. Geo-position based advertising has become a reality – allowing advertisers the opportunity to push messages to their audiences according to their demographic. Contextual Branding, as I dubbed the concept when the technology first appeared in Japan some years ago, is now offered to every major advertiser. Companies can now communicate with all Do-Co-Mo's subscribers who opted for the lower subscription rate. And these advertisements are of course targeted directly to the recipients' profiles, as well as the where they are at any specific time of day.

Do-Co-Mo is not the only company to branch out from conventional communication and distribution channels – the home Gecko is the latest invention converting homes and offices into retail stores. Imagine a hotel mini-bar – then place it in your office instead. The mini-bar is stocked several times a week with new product innovations. So, for the staff that arrives in the morning the mini-bar is stocked with new coffee products from Nescafe, then at lunch there's the latest Maggi product and as the afternoon wears on, the mini-bar is restocked with energy drinks and snack bars. Every product in the mini-bar is straight out of the test kitchens, and they are distributed to specifically target the description of the office workers they are catering for. Furthermore, the companies are then in a position to determine exactly how their spanking-new product is received, all paid for courtesy of the users.

Now the office Gecko is moving home. There are 20 million people concentrated in the city area of Tokyo, and Gecko is becoming part of many of these homes. Suddenly they all have a mini-bar to supply the latest products. This is by no means a new concept in Japan. For more than 100 years, Japan's largest pharmacy chain has kept a small cupboard in Japanese bathrooms all stocked with headache tablets, band-aids, and liquid

disinfectants.

For brands this means more than another distribution opportunity – it means an instant feedback on what works and what doesn't. Whereas most brands in the West rely on research data, focus groups and interview sessions to access the success of a product, Japanese companies have realized that there's nothing more real than the real thing. They allow the consumer to experiment with their product in their home environment. There are no one-way mirrors or questionnaires to be filled in. If they like the product, they'll buy it.

This trend is transforming the entire nature of research in Japan. Restaurants, cafes and even bars are offering companies to sample their products in real environments with sophisticated "behind the scenes" monitoring tools. Concepts like SampleLab and SampleCafe – offers thousands of brand-hungry consumers the opportunity to enjoy a cup-of-something while testing the latest anything – from beer to chewing gum. The consumers are aware of it, but are perfectly willing to participate since they are given access to the latest gizmo.

Next week it's Tahakasa Omi's 82nd birthday. She eagerly anticipates what new stuff Do-Co-Mo will deliver.

By: Martin Lindstrom

## 10 Tips to Improve Email Marketing & Grow Your Business

We've all heard of email marketing, but it can appear daunting with all the laws, spam filters, and confusion over the best method to use. Whether you're an e-marketing novice or you've tried it before, learning the tricks of the trade can make the process more comfortable and successful. After reviewing the campaigns we've run for customers, we came up with the following 10 tips to get the best results from your email marketing campaigns:

**1) Start with the reader's point of view in mind** - this may seem obvious, but you have to approach all marketing from a reader's point of view. This is especially true for email marketing, where the recipient will judge usually within seconds whether they want to open your email. If you yourself would not open it if it came to you, chances are your readers won't either. But that doesn't mean it's hopeless. Just think of something that would draw their attention and go with that!

**2) Choose a compelling subject line** - this is probably the biggest success factor in getting yourself exposed. Remember, no one will see all you have to offer them if they don't open your email, and they will choose whether to open it based on the subject line. A catchy subject line can be a little creative, or very to-the-point if you are advertising a basic need that everyone can use (i.e. "Reliable Local Plumber"). What you might view as your best benefit may not be the best subject line, because remember; readers need to *trust* you in order to open your mail. You can get to the rest within the body.

**3) Structure your email body right** - this is more

complex, but very important. Once again, you need to look from the reader's point of view, and think about their eye flow as they read. This might mean leaving wordy information for the end of the email and instead starting with a compelling question, offer, or great benefit to capture the reader's attention. A few pictures can enhance your email, but remember it is not a website. Too much content will overwhelm the reader and they will get bored quickly.

4) **Think strategically** - as a business owner/manager, you must market yourself based on the real *best* reason to do business with you. There might be many impressive aspects to your company, but think about the reason people will actually choose to buy. This can really be different than your first instinct on email marketing.

5) **Lead the reader intuitively to buy** - Some of the best emails I've seen give very compelling reasons and very *naturally* convince you to "click here" for more information or to get the stellar offer they advertise. Simply putting a link to your website will not give you as many clicks/sales.

6) **Pick your target market effectively** - this means choosing a large enough market for you to get results, in the right areas, and with the best demographic information (if applicable). Really think through who your current customers are, and who you'd like to reach - meaning who do you think would be your next most likely customers? This might not be simply residents nearest your place of business; it could in fact be a more family-oriented suburb a couple of ZIP Codes over, for instance. You also might wish to expand your radius to really saturate your target area.

7) **Repetition is key** - Email marketing studies have shown that most prospects must see the same or similar email three to seven times in order to buy. Don't give up after one or two email campaigns that don't get the initial results you are looking for. Remember, it takes time for a new prospect to grow used to seeing your offer, and to trust you. It won't happen if they only see your emails once or twice, but persistence and continued relevance can and will pay off!

8) **Make a good offer** - an informational or benefit-driven email is usually not enough. A good offer will entice the reader to *act* - especially if it is a limited time offer. This creates urgency, which drives buying behavior. Typical "limited time only offers" include a dollar-value savings, or giving something away free that is inexpensive for you but of value to your prospects. If your offer is "a percentage off" remember to include the original price - these types of offers aren't as effective unless the reader knows what the initial cost is so they know how much they are saving.

9) **Include some information, but not too much** - if your industry is one that people may not know much about, it is important to educate them. Give them the most basic information, often what you take for granted, but which might be interesting to them - i.e. benefits of creative childcare, key financial information, or steps to take when looking for a new car. However, don't give *too much* away, or your reader will simply use your information without having a need to follow up with you first.

10) **Find a convenient sending solution** - most small to medium sized businesses are not set up for mass email

marketing, but it has a payoff in terms of the reach, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness. Most mass email providers will only let you send to your current customers from your own opt-in list, but you want to reach new people too. There are companies that can do the whole process for you; from design to supplying the email lists to sending your emails and tracking your results (while still staying CAN-SPAM compliant).

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