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PRESS RELEASE

Marks & Spencer launches UK's first on-pack mobile barcodes

Marks & Spencer is the first UK retailer to launch on-pack mobile barcodes. Mobile barcodes will be carried on over 1.2 million bottles of M&S 'Freshly Squeezed' juices distributed nationwide for 8 weeks in until the end of September. The pilot campaign has been developed by M&S, its mobile agency Incentivated [and Big Gig Strategies.]

Shoppers will snap the barcodes with their mobile phone cameras to visit an M&S mobile internet site containing product provenance information and unique codes which can be redeemed for in-store discounts. The mobile 'magazine' site allows M&S to make this information available 24/7, wherever customers browse the mobile internet, and includes jokes and facts of the day. A feedback form enables customers to tell M&S what they expect to see on such a mobile magazine.

Used extensively in Asia, 2D mobile barcodes provide users with a quick and easy route to the mobile internet. In the UK only 7% of handsets have barcode reading software pre-installed which led M&S to tackle the problem of readers in a neutral manner; instead of promoting one reader M&S directed users to the best one for their handset from multiple providers thereby maximising compatibility.

A product range needed to be selected that would fit with the technology. The lunchtime 'Food to Go' range was chosen given the demographics of this particular customer segment and the out-of-home nature of the product (bought and consumed at lunch by urban workers).

M&S selected Datamatrix barcodes in preference to the slightly larger QR version in order to fit it on pack and avoid the corner of the bottle, which might cause scanning problems. A new icon is carried on the front of the bottle with instructions about using the mobile barcode service on the side above the barcode. Together these two images (and the text) create a powerful call-to-action.



Those with scanners on their phone go straight to the site (www.mands.mobi/ftginc) upon scanning the code. For those unsure whether their phone carries a barcode reader, product labels invite them to text INCFRESH (keyword for demo purposes as part of this entry so as not to affect real reporting) to 65006.

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managing mobile interactivity

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Their handsets will be 'sniffed' and their profiles matched against Incentivated's proprietary Phone Capabilities Database, which contains details of over 5,000 handsets and is updated dynamically every day, and sent the appropriate scanner.

To support the campaign, posters for M&S's 24,000 store staff have been created, explaining how the service works, and inviting them to enter a competition to win an iPhone. Spot checks on M&S stores show a sound understanding by store staff of the mobile barcode service.

Incentivated advised on the choice of barcode type, liaised with M&S staff on pack design, delivered the right barcode reader to the right phone using our proprietary handset detection platform, designed, built and hosted the mobile internet site and devised a staff education campaign so store staff could answer customer questions about the service.

Jonathan Bass, Managing Director at Incentivated comments: "More advanced handsets and a better understanding by consumers of how mobiles improve our lives are unlocking more opportunities for today's brands to engage with us. We commend Marks & Spencer for being the first UK retailer to trial on-pack mobile barcodes. This move cements the brand's reputation as a true digital marketing pioneer".

For further information:

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Notes to Editors

Incentivated works with brands, the public sector and charities to help them communicate with customers instantly and easily via their mobile phones.

We develop and manage mobile marketing and advertising campaigns and services on local, national and international levels. We reach people in all corners of the world and in many languages, using text messaging, mobile internet and all other mobile data formats.

We believe the mobile phone is an intensely private medium. Respecting this principle, our campaigns provide information that consumers find useful and welcome.

Founded in 2001, Incentivated's fast growing client base includes British Airways, Central Office of Information, Halifax Bank of Scotland, Hilton Group, Macmillan Cancer Support, Masterfoods, Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Scottish Power, Transport for London and VisitBritain.

For more information please visit: <http://www.incentivated.com>

About M&S and mobile

M&S had already launched mobile marketing initiatives and was looking to show consumers that the brand was truly innovative (having already launched a Twitter service and Facebook site).

In autumn 2008 a 'Back to School' customer acquisition campaign drove SMS respondents from press ads to a WAPsite featuring children's school clothing ranges and prices, a click to call link, and unique promotional codes for customers to redeem discounts online.

In early 2009 M&S started an 'offers and updates' CRM campaign with fortnightly online and SMS alerts for in-store promotions. This campaign has seen customers invited to text a unique code sent to them by direct mail in order to link their existing customer record to their mobile number to tailor the alerts service around their interests and also their nearest store. '2D mobile barcodes' acquisition and CRM campaign is the most ambitious and technically complex mobile service run to date by M&S.