



# NFC: Changing the landscape of marketing

Combining NFC & text messaging for impactful campaigns



BY ARMEN MATOSYAN

Marketers are still learning to navigate the waters of Near Field Communication (NFC) technology. Its most well-known application, Smart Posters, are common in the tech and business fields, providing quick and easy access to web links. Consumer use is also gaining traction. One in three mobile phones will come with NFC by 2017 and, by then, one in four U.S. consumers will use NFC-enabled devices to pay for goods in-store according to Juniper Research.

However, not every industry has fully grasped the implications NFC holds for expanding their marketing abilities. With this feature becoming standard on mobile phones, the technology is growing in popularity. According to NFC World SIA Study 94% of NFC users surveyed reported they like the feature. This provides an exciting opportunity for marketers. By combining this growing technology with text messaging, marketers can bring customer engagement to the next level.

## What is NFC?

NFC allows data to be exchanged wirelessly (without the use of internet) through electronic devices by either touching the devices together or

bringing the devices within close proximity of each other (usually a distance of 10 cm or less). NFC technology is easy, secure and works automatically. This 'tap-and-go' tool is now a common feature among businesses and the general public.

## What about text messaging?

Text messaging has become marketers' unmined treasure-trove. Consumers have adopted it. It's inexpensive. It's available on every mobile device. It's personal. These traits make it the perfect communication channel for marketers. Properly implemented, text messaging can be used to create interactive, multifaceted and affordable campaigns that even the smallest shop can afford.

## How can marketers use this powerful combination for direct marketing?

Powering a direct response campaign with NFC and text messaging components breathes life into dead offline campaigns and makes dull ads smart. It infuses marketing tools with the capability to engage users, create conversions and deliver maximum results. It creates a direct response marketing campaign that is living and active.

This magic happens through a

combination of creative marketing and backstage support from integral technology. Marketers must use deep insight into the needs and behaviours of their audience to create a campaign with both empathy and utility. Without the proper steps to achieve this, the campaign will simply be another poster lacking the ability to attract or communicate.

To illustrate how this powerful combination is used in real life, we'll follow a sample campaign by Craig Foods, Inc., a manufacturer of Tileo instant meals. The following are the five key steps the marketing department used to create an effective NFC-powered campaign for Tileo.

### 1. Set goals

As the project's foundation upon which everything else will be built, goals must be solid. Craig Foods' marketing department worked to define realistic, relevant and affordable goals.

Craig Foods' marketing department wants to:

- Get customer feedback about their new Butternut Squash & Bean Cassoulet (Goal #1)
- Increase product sales (Goal #2)
- Build a CASL-compliant mobile marketing list for future customer engagement (Goal #3)

To achieve these goals, marketers want to create a short text messaging survey (Goal #1) to be taken in-store and reward those who took the survey with instant digital discount coupons (Goal #2). The marketing department also wants to create a mobile marketing list compliant with Canadian Anti-Spam Regulations (CASL) (Goal #3) to send coupons and promotions to interested customers (Goal #2) in the future.

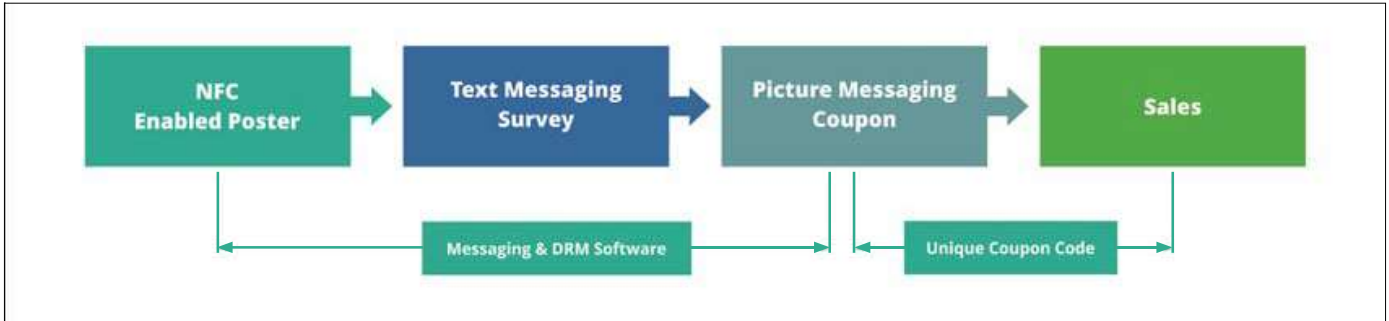
### 2. Choose the right communication channel

Craig Foods marketers know from previous campaigns that post-purchase surveys yield low results. To increase feedback, they want to create a survey that takes place at the point of impact, when the customer sees the product. To increase interaction, marketers know the survey should be short, fun, in-store near the product and offer an incentive to customers.

Based on these requirements, the marketing department decides to use text and picture messaging (assisted by NFC) as their communication channel. This provides the instant engagement they desire, without any preconditions to the customers (e.g. download an app, visit a website).

### 3. Create campaign content

To achieve their communication



channel goals, the marketing department decides to add an NFC-enabled smart poster next to Tileo shelves that invite customers to tap and take a brief SMS survey and get a 10% off coupon.

After tapping the poster and texting, customers answer a brief SMS (Short Message Service, or text) survey (Goal #1) and get a discount coupon delivered by picture messaging to their phone. The coupon can be saved in their phone's picture gallery and presented to the cashier at the checkout (Goal #2). The confirmation message will also contain an invitation to subscribe to their mobile marketing list for future promotions (Goal #3).

For this campaign content to be effective, the marketing team understands that it must contain:

**An exact offer that delivers what is promised:** The ad and text message must offer something valuable to the customer. In our case, it offers a 10% discount for the Butternut Squash & Bean Cassoulet package after the customer takes the survey.

After the customer taps the NFC-enabled poster and answers a short text message survey, the campaign delivers what the poster promises—a picture coupon valid for an immediate 10% product discount.

**Call to action (CTA):** A strong call to action is the most important part

of the advertising message. It is here that the dead poster becomes a smart one and starts a conversation with the audience. A CTA must be strong and contain a sense of urgency. Customers must feel they will miss a great opportunity if they do not act quickly.

To add a strong CTA to the Tileo campaign, the poster lets consumers know they must tap to take advantage of this bargain by a certain date.

**Content consistent with brand image:** Since campaign materials consist of different components such as website, text message, multimedia messaging service (MMS) and posters, it is important to make the style and content of all media consistent. Consistency lets the audience know Craig Foods cares about user experience and has established its own brand.

**4. Test and run the campaign**

Always test your campaign before running it.

- › Make sure the number from which people will get the message works properly.
- › Carefully proof your message.
- › Confirm your NFC tags work properly on your audience's most-used mobile devices.

Run a short campaign, analyze the outcomes, make improvements and then start this cycle again. Pay close

attention to detail as you test your campaign. Ensure it works with no bugs or interruptions.

**5. Track and analyze outcomes**

The most common mistake made by marketers is analyzing only the material outcomes of campaigns. There is no doubt that the purpose of each campaign is to increase the overall profitability of a particular company, but it is also important to understand that there are multiple ways to reach the overall goal.

To track campaigns which involve different types of goals and channels, it is important to identify funnels and understand the importance and role of each one.

Craig Foods marketers are using a four-staged funnel, each with its own unique tracking method. The illustration, above, shows how they track each action completed between conversion funnels.

By integrating text messaging software, sales software and analytics software, it is possible to track and analyze each action consumers complete in any of the channel phases.

Abandoned channels in the funnel should be analyzed and improved. Marketers may need to improve the MMS message if there are a significant number of people who scanned the NFC poster but did not use the

coupons. If customers completed the purchase but did not go to the website, the call to action may not be strong enough to push customers through all funnels.

**Conclusion**

This effective five-step process enables marketers to create impactful technology-driven marketing. Infusing campaigns with NFC and text messaging provides the speed, practicality and convenience today's consumers demand and the user-friendliness they enjoy. By streamlining complex actions, NFC provides opportunities for new user experiences. This simple tap-and-go method continues to gain popularity and visibility, providing marketers the chance to grow with it. The powerful NFC and text combination produces interactive advertising that will set creative marketers apart from their competitors. ✓

*The sample campaign can be experienced by texting Tileo to (437) 800-2223. Standard text messaging rates apply.*

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