

# "Smart Push Notifications = Smarter Mobile Marketing"

**Ignore all that advice about minding your manners. Businesses that avoid getting pushy do so at their own peril. Your best customers are walking around with your branded app on their hips or in their purses and you need to engage with them.**

Without surprise, push notifications have emerged as a key channel of conversation between brands and their mobile customers because they can be sent even when the consumer is not engaged with the application.

However, even in its' infancy, overuse and misuse of push can already be seen. There is a fine line between what is effective engagement and what – for lack of a better term - is "too pushy." A poorly executed push notification campaign that provides little value to end-users can prompt users to opt-out of notifications or, worse, uninstall your application. What a lost opportunity!

How should a progressive brand engage their mobile customers to build a healthy, long-term relationship? When, where, with what, and how often should messages be sent?

What follows are a few high-level pointers mobile marketing managers should consider when deciding how to leverage this unprecedented engagement opportunity. They include content selection, targeting, cadence, and performance review.

## 1. Content is king

Treat customer time as the expensive resource it is. Every second is an opportunity remind customers why they love your brand, buy your products and services, and downloaded your app in the first place.

ALWAYS make sure your message is worthy of interrupting your audience.

A marginal reduction in the price of a shirt?....eh.

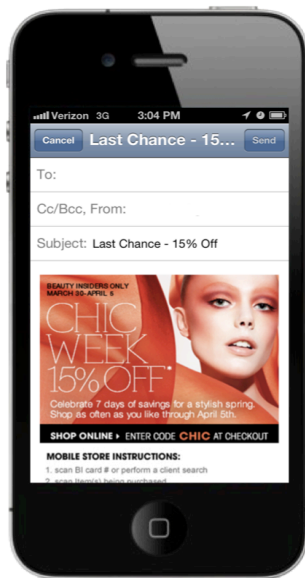
Your annual Memorial Day sale with 20% markdown? ....Awesome!

Make every push notification count by trying to delight your customers.



## 2. Send rich, branded content

Your message should be on-brand, easy to read, and possess a persuasive and compelling call to action. Include your logo and sharp designs so the user automatically associates your message with your brand.



## 3. Build deeper conversations through cross-channel interactions

You can make your push campaigns even more effective by using them to drive your customers to Facebook, Twitter, corporate blogs, and mobile websites.

A link in the push notification can take users to your social networking pages to contribute to the buzz of your enterprise campaign. Some of Xtify's best campaigns started by bringing a Facebook page to the attention of loyal brand customers.

Also, give users the ability to share your push notifications with their friends and family, even those who have not downloaded your application.

Incent viral spread! People love spreading a thought-provoking article, an emotional picture (or a video of a cat playing with a ball of yarn). Push notifications CAN and SHOULD be used for new customer acquisition.

#### 4. Deploy user preferences

App users have different opinions about what they want to see and when they want to see it. Insert a preferences page into your app that asks users what kind of content they want to receive via notification, i.e. if they want to hear about new products, scarves, pants, checking accounts, sales etc.

When sending your push notification campaigns accommodate your customer's needs and interests to improve message relevancy and campaign performance.

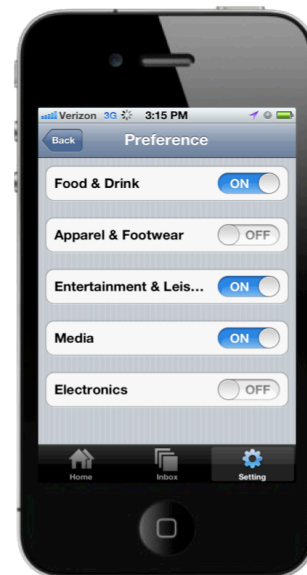
#### 5. Harness all your customer knowledge

Leverage the data in your CRM, web analytics, and offer management systems to target campaigns to a single customer or across all of your marketing channels.

For example, if you don't typically offer free shipping, group your "heaviest online shoppers" and send them a notification with a limited-time free shipping offer.

#### 6. Leverage insights from your application

Smartphone and tablet applications gather meaningful data. Information about application usage history, users' time zones, and real-time location maximize the effectiveness of your push messaging campaigns.



#### 7. Respect user privacy

It is crucial to ask permission, not forgiveness. Your plans to message your users should be transparent and your app settings should allow the user to opt-out of receiving notifications. If any personally identifiable data is going to be used for targeting or segmentation, this should be communicated to your customer in accordance with your prevailing privacy policies.

#### 8. Build a mobile app retention plan

Many users will forget about the applications on their device after months, weeks, or even days of inactivity. Create an app lifecycle management plan to send inactive users a push notification to re-engage them with your app. Better yet, create a retention plan made up of several notifications you can use to keep users coming back into your app and interacting with your brand.

#### 9. Do NOT over message

Too much of anything can have a harmful effect on app engagement. Use the same common sense you would deploy in email and SMS campaigns.

#### 10. Practice makes perfect

Keep track of each push campaign you send and take advantage of performance analytics to measure conversion and responses. Compare different campaigns to get a feel for what your audience likes (and does not like) and make improvements to yield higher responses.

"One-size fits all" is not an effective strategy in any marketing channel. An effective push notification strategy should embrace all of the concepts above to maximize message relevance and yield a beneficial value exchange between brand and customer. Pushes are a powerful arsenal in a digital marketers toolkit. But like sharp swords, their effectiveness is dependent on the wielder.

#### About Xtify

Xtify's clients -- which include InterContinental Hotels Group, Sam's Club, PacSun, American Eagle Outfitters, Ritz-Carlton Hotels, Comcast/Daily Candy, LVMH/Sephora -- use the Xtify mobile engagement platform to manage the messaging component of their smartphone and tablet app strategies.

With Xtify's code embedded in an app, marketers can influence engagement and intent on a 1:1 by messaging users based on their preferences, app usage, real-time location, and data segments from a CRM - even when the app itself is not open.

