

# PART I - THE DIFFERENT INTERACTIVE CAPABILITIES OF MOBILE & SOCIAL MEDIA ON DIGITAL OUT OF HOME SYSTEMS

Not All Systems Are Created Equal  
 Stephen Randall, August 2009



## Introduction

Mobile and social interactive media is starting to appear on the screens of digital out of home (“DOOH”) networks. Before the gold rush of anything with the words *mobile*, *social* or *interactive* gets into full swing, brands, advertisers, DOOH network operators and event planners need to understand the many differences between systems that claim to support these new media buzz words.

This is part 1 in a series of 4 white papers focused on helping brands, advertisers, digital out of home (“DOOH”) network operators and event planners understand the strategic impact of mobile and social interactive media beyond the web and to navigate some of tactical issues of bringing it to screens in public spaces.

NOTE: The 4 white papers are:

- *PART I - The Different Capabilities of Interactive Mobile & Social Media on Digital Out Of Home Systems. Not All Systems Are Created Equal.*
- *PART II - Building an Interactive Digital Out of Home Experience. Basic Considerations for Mobile & Social Interactivity on Digital Out of Home Networks.*
- *PART III - Overcoming Ghost Town. Leveraging the Network Effect to Enhance the Interactive Experience on Digital Out-of-Home Networks.*
- *PART IV - Dealing With F\*\*K and Other User Generated Content Challenges for Digital Out-of-Home Networks.*

Two earlier white papers also cover some general issues for mobile and social applications on Digital Out-of-Home networks:

- *Making The Most of Mobile Marketing: Leveraging Mobile and Social Networks to Amplify Response Rates From The “Connected Class”.*
- *The disruptive effect of the Internet and mobile phones on out-of-home digital media - Bill Collins and Stephen Randall, 2007*
- *The disruptive effect of the Internet and mobile phones on out-of-home digital media - Bill Collins and Stephen Randall, 2007*

Contact [loca\\_info@LocaModa.com](mailto:loca_info@LocaModa.com) for a copy of any of the White papers.

## Not All Systems Are Created Equal

Not all systems purporting to address the new opportunities of mobile and social media in DOOH can actually deliver on that promise. They are certainly not all created equal.

*Mobile interactivity*, as far as a DOOH network is concerned, is best characterized as a system that enables a mobile phone to be used to engage with and in some way effect the media displayed on a DOOH screen.

*Social interactivity* is the ability for DOOH networks to display socially streaming photos and messages (e.g. user generated content from sites such as Facebook, Twitter or Flickr) from the web.

Some DOOH networks market mobile interactivity, but are *not* in fact interactive. Instead, they display a call to action (“CTA”) that users text to receive messages or

content on their phones. Such systems do not enable users to affect the content or services presented on the DOOH display and are no more interactive than a poster printed with the same mobile call to action.

The various mobile and social interactive systems that are available can be grouped into the following four categories:

**Mobile marketing:** Standard mobile marketing is typically used on packaging and posters. It is best used for applications encouraging users to enter competitions (e.g. “text to win” or “text to enter”), or vote in polls (“text to vote”) or to subscribe to updates or alerts such as horoscopes, etc. Mobile marketing can be promoted on DOOH networks but does *not* provide interactivity on screens. Interactivity is limited to messaging back to the user’s phone (e.g. text or email).

Analytics from mobile marketing produce the number of respondents (unique and total), phone numbers, area codes and number/content/timestamps of messages.

NOTE: Knowing the area code of a user is not the same as knowing *where* the user interacted. Location information can be determined by using localized versions of DOOH mobile interactive applications (discussed later in this document).

**Mobile interactive:** Standard mobile interactive offerings are typified by the basic text-to-screen applications seen at many pop concerts. They do not include web or social streams or other features required for DOOH networks.

When a user responds to the CTA (e.g. “Text your message to 40411”), the location signage reacts accordingly, for example, displaying the user’s message (subject to moderation and filters etc.)

Such systems can also be used for interactive polling, (e.g. “Text VOTE1 to 40411”), with the location signage displaying the changing votes tally in a poll. Mobile interactive applications are usually designed for one screen and are not ideal for DOOH

networks which typically require greater content management features (e.g. routing messages to specific screens, content filters and moderation). As with mobile marketing, the analytics from mobile interactive applications produce the number of respondents (unique and total), phone numbers, area codes and number/content/timestamps of messages.



Example of a mobile interactive application at the US Air Guitar finals. LocaModa’s Wiffiti was used in a basic configuration to enhance audience engagement.

**DOOH mobile interactive:** Unlike mobile marketing and mobile interactive applications, sound DOOH mobile interactive applications are designed with the following requirements of DOOH networks in mind:

- Message routing (i.e. Messages can be sent to all of the network’s screens, a group of screens or a single screen.)
- Configurable user experience options for a range of audiences and location types (i.e. Messaging in a café loop is different from messaging in public spaces, colleges, events or crowded bars.)
- Configurable advertising, skinning, and messaging (e.g. text to user) options
- Platform integration (e.g. how interactivity runs inside a DOOH loop, uses memory, accesses the Internet, security, scalability, etc)
- Industrial-strength content filters and moderation
- Location-centric and network-wide

measurability

In addition, DOOH mobile interactive applications should be able to run as broadcast or localized applications. Broadcast interactive applications, as the name implies, send all messages to all screens. Localized applications focus user engagement and interactivity to specific screens in a network. For example, when a user at Joe's Bar responds to the CTA "Text @JOESBAR + your message to 40411," the screen at Joe's Bar is updated with the user's message.

Analytics from localized applications produce the number of users (unique and total), locations (where users engaged), phone numbers, area codes, and number/content/timestamps of messages.



**Example of a DOOH mobile and social interactive poll.** LocaModa-enabled application for VH1 show "The Great Debates" supported text messages and Twitter streams displayed in real-time on broadcast TV program, 350 U.S. bars (via Zoom Media & Marketing), Viacom's Times Square screen and simultaneously on VH1 websites and Facebook. All content was filtered and moderated in real time.

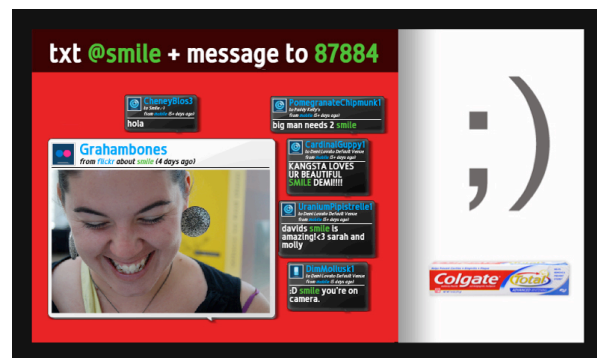
**DOOH mobile and social Interactive:** More advanced interactive DOOH systems can display real-time user-generated content from a variety of sources, in other words, not only mobile messages but also web (e.g. Twitter or Flickr) messages tagged with contextual and/or location criteria. For example, if all Boston locations in a DOOH network subscribe to messages tagged *Red Sox*, then they can display messages from Twitter and photos from Flickr containing the words *Red Sox*.

Furthermore, let's assume that a user "GreenMonster" at Joe's Bar sends the

message "@JOESBAR Hello Red Sox fans." GreenMonster's message can now be displayed, not only on a screen at Joe's Bar, but also on other networked locations subscribing to messages tagged "Red Sox." GreenMonster's message will be displayed in a localized format such as "Hello Red Sox fans" sent to Joe's Bar, Boston, from GreenMonster."

Some DOOH mobile and social interactive applications are also able to send messages from locations back to social networks. For example, LocaModa-enabled screens at Demi Lovato's Summer '09 Tour, displayed real-time text messages, photos & Twitter streams on two projected screens at the venues. The same messages were also displayed in real time on fan sites on-line. All content was filtered & moderated in real time.

For a social poll, mobile and social interactive applications can count the tagged words sent via mobile phones and/or pulled from the web and then display the changing poll/comments on screen.



**Example of DOOH mobile and social interactive messaging linked to an advertisement for toothpaste.** Messages tagged "smile" from mobile phones (sent directly to the Wiffiti screen) or social streams (from Twitter and Flickr) are displayed. All content is filtered & moderated in real time.

Analytics from DOOH mobile and social applications produce the number of users (unique and total), locations where users engaged (for localized versions of applications), phone numbers, area codes, number/content/timestamps of messages, and relevant social data if the application is capable of linking interactions to users' social network (and subject to users' permission).

SYSTEM	LEVEL OF INTERACTIVITY
<b>Mobile Marketing</b> <i>(e.g. Standard text-to-enter)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadcast text messages and photos, typically sent in response to a call to action on packaging or posters.</li> <li>• Passive (no interactivity on screens).</li> <li>• Text-message back to phone.</li> <li>• No DOOH networking capabilities</li> </ul>
<b>Mobile Interactive</b> <i>(e.g. Standard text-to-screen, Wiffiti at events.)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadcast text messages and photos, typically sent in response to a call to action on screens at an event.</li> <li>• Interactive (messages display on screens)</li> <li>• Text message back to phone.</li> <li>• Event moderation</li> <li>• No DOOH networking capabilities</li> </ul>
<b>DOOH Mobile Interactive</b> <i>(e.g. Wiffiti application on BarCast interactive network)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location-centric text messages, web-based messages and photos, able to be routed to specific screens/ location groups (e.g. city or location type) and integrated into DOOH network loops.</li> <li>• Text message back to phone, able to be customized globally (entire network or brand) or locally (services or locations).</li> <li>• DOOH grade moderation, filtering and curation for locations/groups/network.</li> </ul>
<b>DOOH Mobile &amp; Social Interactive</b> <i>(e.g. Wiffiti application for Disney/AT&amp;T Demi Lovato US tour, Wiffiti application on Zoom Media and Marketing's network)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location-centric text messages, web-based messages and photos, able to be routed to specific screens/ location groups (e.g. city or location type) and integrated into DOOH network loops.</li> <li>• Text message back to phone, able to be customized globally (entire network or brand) or locally (services or locations).</li> <li>• DOOH grade moderation, filtering and curation for locations/groups/network.</li> <li>• Tagged social streams (e.g. from Twitter, Facebook etc), ability for DOOH networks/locations/groups to syndicate specific tags.</li> </ul>

Table 1. Different Capabilities of Mobile & Social Interactive Systems

## Implications for Brands and Advertisers

The ability to extend interactive media to audiences beyond the web is extremely compelling. Far from the push models envisioned by Minority Report, the use of mobile and social interactivity on DOOH screens is based on a pull model (i.e. the audience decides if and when to engage with the media around them).

The promise is not only greater audience engagement, but also contextual relevance and measurability. Relevance is enhanced because the location is a key part of the user experience. A biker bar will have an obvious audience and appeal to certain advertisers. Engagement with that audience in real time helps the advertiser optimize their marketing.

An advertising campaign can come alive and be made more engaging by tagging real-time conversations that resonate with the brand messaging. For example, tagging conversations and photos with the “smile” to an advertisement for toothpaste.

## Conclusion

There are key differences between the four types of mobile interactive systems (See Table 1 above). A system designed to engage an audience at a pop concert is ill-equipped to be integrated into DOOH networks where it might be expected to sustain audience engagement across 1,000 bars, quick serve restaurants or cafes.

Make sure that the expectations of mobile and/or social interactivity are fully understood and agreed by all stakeholders before promising great user engagement metrics.

*Stephen Randall is CEO of LocaModa, a technology company extending interactive media to audiences beyond the web.*

CONTACT: [SRANDALL@LOCAMODA.COM](mailto:SRANDALL@LOCAMODA.COM)

TWITTER.COM/STEPHENRANDALL

CELL: +1 781 888 1417