

PART IV - DEALING WITH F**K

& Other User Generated Content Challenges for Digital Out of Home Networks

Stephen Randall, August 2009



Introduction

Displaying text-to-screen, mobile photos or real-time web feeds on public displays is very challenging, and far more problematic than displaying similar content on websites.

The first question anyone asks when thinking about text-to-screen applications is “Do you have moderation?” The answer has to be “yes” but that’s neither the complete answer, nor the whole question.

This is the final part 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*

Contact loca_info@LocaModa.com for a copy of any of the White papers.

Talk Is Cheap – But Not Always Clean

Anyone thinking about live user generated content (“UGC”) on public screens must consider a holistic, real-time content management system that supports Filtering, Moderation and Curation.

Filtering: Content filters set rules for directing messages according to predefined categories. Subject to those rules, content is blocked from social, web or mobile messaging streams.

Many of the mischievous workarounds such as misspelling bad words or putting spaces between the letters of bad words are easy for good filters to catch. However, while filters can remove obvious bad words, they cannot remove all offensive content. For example, the message “I want to kill you” is obviously unacceptable, but the message “My favorite book is To Kill a Mockingbird” is acceptable. The system cannot assume the word “kill” is

a bad word. Computers find this kind of contextual moderation extremely difficult. Nonetheless, filters can dramatically reduce a moderator's work, enabling greater speed and scalability for real-time messaging.

LocaModa's Wiffiti (see www.wiffiti.com) filters UGC using a movie rating metaphor. Wiffiti screens are built by tagging desired content (e.g. messages tagged "RedSox") and then selecting a background image, and then selecting a rating of G, R or X.

1. Add Tags (up to 5)

Add some tags (ie Life, Liberty) and see messages containing those words.

2. Choose Message Sources

- LocaModa Mobile Messages
- LocaModa Web Messages
- Add Twitter Messages
- Add Flickr Photographs

3. Set Content Rating

- Rated G Messages
- Rated R Messages
- Rated X Messages

LocaModa's Wiffiti content filter. Messages from mobile phones (sent to LocaModa DOOH screen codes), websites (for example, sent to an embedded version of Wiffiti in a brand websites or Facebook), Twitter or Flickr are filtered according to the Content Rating, G, R or X.

Screens marked as G Rated will not display content automatically filtered and marked R or X. Similarly, screens marked as R Rated will not display content automatically filtered and marked X. Screens marked as X Rated, will display all permissible content.

Filters can also be used to remove messages with URLs (which are commonplace in social streams such as Twitter, but are not relevant as they are not clickable on digital out of home screens) or phone numbers if desired.

Moderation: Real-time messaging systems designed for DOOH must include or interface with good moderation applications. The moderation application must provide multiple

moderators an easy and fast method to decide which messages can be displayed on specific screens and networks, according to agreed policies. Good moderation software will also make this job infinitely easier and more scalable by filtering messages as described earlier, before they arrive on a moderator's screen.

Other live moderation functions are possible with best-in-class DOOH systems and give operators at the location further control over the content. For example, the moderation software should be able to run concurrently onsite or remotely. LocaModa's DOOH systems also provide for a local "zap" command that can be sent via white-listed mobile phones or a web interface to remove messages that have been moderated but which a local administrator wishes to override.

Network Manager | Wiffi | Venue Marketing | Authenti | Venue Manager

Announcements | Posters | Wiffi Clouds | Mobile Campaigns | Apps

Wiffiti Text Jockey (17234 unapproved) / Feed Moderation (4574 unapproved)

Select your moderation view: [Queue](#) / [Curation](#)

Tags: @ddlovato, @demi

Sender	Message	Robo	Jockey
13349960 JungliWeszel1: 37 min ago	"@demi hey dem! i love your music come to austin,tx"	G	Unrated
13347571 CrapberryJay1: 50 min ago	"@demi i love you Demi Lovato! Your concert was amazing! Please come back to Fresno!"	G	Unrated
13321034 BiorerRat1: 3 hours ago	"@demi I'm going to your concert August 10th! Cant wait.. :)"	G	Unrated
13321053 RubyOkapi1: 4 hours ago	"@demi i love u so much ur songs rock!! Do u have a myspace"	G	Deleted
13321052 RubyOkapi1: 4 hours ago	"@demi i love u so much ur songs rock!! Do u have a myspace"	G	Deleted
13321046 BittersweetEd1: 5 hours ago	"@demi U Are Awesome... I Love Your Music... Vivian"	G	Unrated
13321045 BittersweetEd1: 5 hours ago	"@demi I Love U dem!... And I Love U Music...I Awesome..."	G	Unrated

LocaModa's Wiffiti Moderation Software

Content from Mobile phones, websites, Twitter or Flickr can be rated and deleted before being displayed on specific screens, groups of screens or networks.

Curation: Curation is an editorial role and can often be conducted via good moderation software. Curation is often required by brands or locations wishing more control over the nature of the messages being displayed.

If at all possible, curation should still permit as much freedom of speech and authenticity as a brand, location and/or network owner will allow. If messages are unduly limited, the audience is likely to disengage.

Legal Considerations

NOTE: I am not a lawyer and I am not making any legal recommendations, so please seek your own legal advice.

Mobile Code of Conduct

DOOH Network Operators need to be mindful of mobile carriers' rules for mobile content. A number of excellent documents are available on the Global Mobile Marketing Association's ("MMA") website, including the Global Code of Conduct and U.S. Consumer Best Practices Guidelines for Cross-Carrier Mobile Content Programs:

<http://www.mmaglobal.com/main>

Under MMA rules and good user experience guidelines, mobile users responding to a call to action ("CTA") must have a clear understanding of message pricing. In general, I recommend that users are not charged a premium for messaging to DOOH systems, as that could be a barrier to entry. The focus should be on engagement.

Ideally, monetization can happen via the "big screen" *not* the user's mobile screen. However, whatever the pricing policy, the user needs to know, especially as many will be concerned that they will get spammed if they engage with the system.

Freedom of Expression vs. The Terms of Service

The use of UGC on DOOH networks can raise legal issues, particularly around copyright, defamation, and privacy rights.

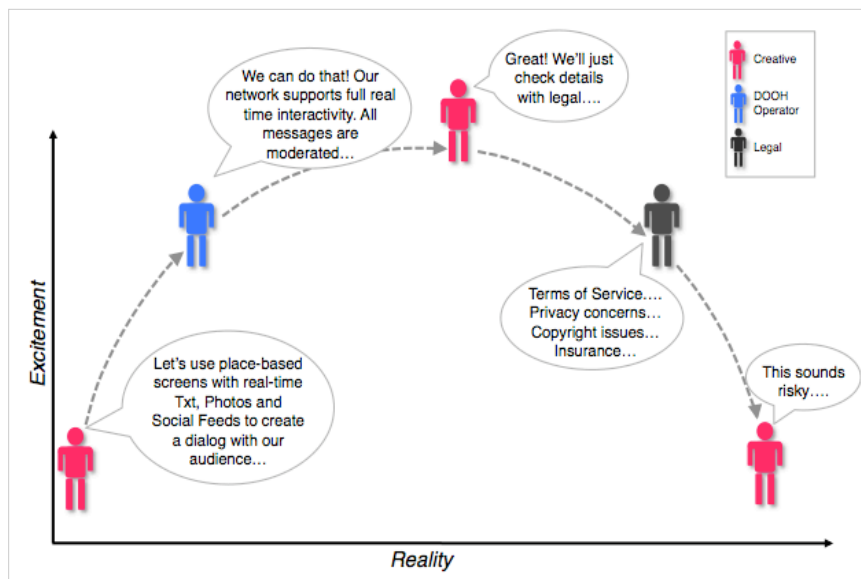
Any company enabling interactive social media to be displayed in public needs to be mindful of the legal minefield. Users want to consume and distribute content on their own terms. But unfortunately, unless they own the content or have permission to share it, they cannot. Most users will respect the rules, but there are always a few who feel they have the right to say and do anything. They are wrong.

Make sure the Terms of Service spell out what behavior is unacceptable, but hopefully not at the expense of a good user experience. Users should not abuse, harass, threaten, impersonate or intimidate other users or conduct illegal activities. They must also comply with all local laws regarding online conduct and acceptable content. In terms of abusive behavior, users cannot incite violence, create propaganda for war, advocate hatred based on race, religion, gender, ethnicity, or incite harmful behavior.

Display of UGC can implicate privacy and publicity rights as a result of the unauthorized use of photos and other media protected by

privacy laws. Copyrighted content cannot be shared without appropriate permission. Claims for damages could be based on causing embarrassment and/or damage to reputation.

To minimize liability for the use of publicly displayed UGC, companies need to be vigilant about their Terms and Conditions and implementation of best practices, such as employing filters,



moderation and/or moderation services to ensure that no inappropriate messages get through to screens.

DOOH systems need to be able to determine that any content they can receive from the public domain can legally be repurposed. Twitter explicitly asks its users to mark their messages as “private” if they do not want them to appear on the Twitter public timeline. With Flickr, the default setting for posted photos is copyrighted. Unless Flickr users explicitly mark their photos as being available for public use under Creative Commons, the DOOH system should not display them and a good UGC system should be able to automatically filter out content that has not been flagged as Creative Commons.

Liability and Insurance

Brands and agencies will expect, and should demand, that the DOOH network, event planner or messaging suppliers have adequate Professional Liability (sometimes known as Errors and Omissions) insurance. Such insurance covers (among other things) the possibility that inappropriate content is displayed publicly and triggers some form of claim; for example, pertaining to breach of privacy, abusive content, wrongful use of copyrighted material etc.

Every company supplying or enabling interactive social media should seek their own insurance and/or legal advice as to the level of coverage they might need per incident. Often the level of coverage will be a prerequisite of a client, brand or agency’s involvement.

Don’t abuse the txt back

I am a strong proponent that the *users*, *not brands* need to control the media around them. While brands and agencies tend towards push thinking (“How can we get our message to the audience and have it spread virally?”) the model for UGC is pull (“How can we motivate audience engagement with the message?”).

Once a user interacts with mobile marketing or interactive DOOH systems, the systems have the user’s mobile phone number and must adhere to mobile carrier guidelines as well as the CAN-SPAM act which can be found on the U.S. Federal Trade Commission’s website here:

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/business/ecommerce/bus61.shtm>

This is also strongly emphasized in the previously mentioned MMA guidelines, but in short, NEVER send a message to a user that they have not opted-in to receive. In the case of premium SMS, the user will need to double opt-in. Not only is it illegal, but it is also a bad user experience to spam a user and will destroy any good will that was previously created by the experience. Text backs, such as “Thanks for your vote. Visit this URL for more info” or “Bring this message to our store to get a discount” will also need to be accompanied by opt-out messages. Carriers specify the requirement for systems to support termination messages such as STOP, QUIT or END to confirm that the user has indeed requested that the service be terminated. (Note: Carriers even require opt-outs for services that are not subscription based, which is confusing to users, but hey, those are the rules.)

Conclusion

Unlike content designed only for websites, UGC is uniquely challenging for public display.

There are plenty of user experience challenges and legal concerns that lawyers can and do worry about. Businesses need to balance cost and potential or hypothetical risks of displaying UGC. For many, the safest thing to do is give up! For others, the focus is on best practices combined with the best user experience.

Clearly, large companies still need to adjust to the fact that social networks enable a culture of openness. Being too restrictive about content, especially content that might be critical of the brand, endangers the

authenticity of UGC applications. But brands need to understand the balance between controlling the conversation and directing it.

The trend is towards an open dialogue rather than the old school advertising model that was closer to a monologue, i.e. talking *to* the audience not *with* the audience.

When large companies get involved with UGC, they are likely (for good reason) to be more cautious than smaller entrepreneurial companies. They are still wrestling with the speed, openness and free-flow of information that mobile and social networking technologies allow.

As with all disruptive technologies, not all companies will rush in to social media, although most will be considering how they deal with its impact. This creates challenges as well as opportunities. Companies that authentically embrace a more open dialogue with their audience should do so across multiple platforms; web, mobile and DOOH and will therefore need to touch at least some of the issues discussed in this white paper.

Of course, some companies will rush into social media and immediately fall flat, but in my opinion, over time, the bigger casualties will be companies that remain stuck in the “command and control” model of traditional media. Whilst many companies might fear social media, they can no longer stop their audience from talking and their competitors from being eager listeners.

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