

The V.I.B.E.

Value In Brand Engagements

Featured Article



Study: Value-exchange advertising works

We've partnered with the research experts at KN Dimestore to ask people exactly what they think about value-exchange advertising and the brands they engage with, and the results are compelling. When you give people the opportunity to earn something of value for interacting with your brand, they welcome the experience and pay attention... lots of it. Learn about the findings, methodology, and results and what they mean for your brand.

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A Cause for Every Month

Each season offers an array of opportunities for brands to better the world as they wow consumers in unique ways. We've outlined a few nonprofit initiatives for each of the upcoming months to get your creative (and charitable) juices flowing.

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Did You Know



Engagements designed to promote virality are shared up to 40% of the time.

Featured Engagement



Campaign Spotlight



Fuse TV was looking to bring a new music video award show to viewers, The MuchMusic Video Awards. The strategy was to create a sense of urgency for the live event and to allow would-be viewers to be personally invested in the show's outcome.



Virtual currency not just for gamers: Do you know what's new with virtual cash?

Do you know where your consumers are spending their time and their virtual dollars? Stay on top of the trends in virtual currency and find out it is spurring real world purchases and adding value for brands.

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Study: Value-exchanged advertising works



We've been crunching the numbers and asking people exactly what they think about value-exchange advertising, and what we've found is pretty compelling.

When you give people the opportunity to earn something of value for interacting with your brand, they welcome the experience and pay attention...lots of it.

In a recent study conducted with the research experts at Dimestore, SocialVibe surveyed over 30,000 individuals as to why they engaged with value-exchange advertising (also known as incentivized advertising) and what its affect was on their perception of the brand. We found that when consumers engaged with an incentivized ad, 31% of them initiated the experience because of the brand as much as the incentive. The amazing part is that 48% reported that while they may initially opt-in to a brand engagement for the incentive, they end up staying and paying active attention to the brand message.

In total, 91% of consumers provided an average of 63 seconds of active attention to the brand's message. What's more, value-exchange ads lead to an average increase in brand perception of 38% (ranging from 18-77% across 8 different brands participating in the study).

But let's back up for a moment. Misconceptions about incentivized advertising may stem from an unfounded assumption that consumers looking for the incentive merely "sit through" an ad experience for the benefit. However, the research shows that opt-in incentivized engagements actually increase a brand's value and improve the consumer experience. In contrast, other incentivized models such as CPA and "offer" marketing have given incentivized a bad name. Where SocialVibe only asks for a consumer's attention, CPA- and offer-based models typically require an ancillary sign up or purchase (like a subscription) that either scares the consumer away altogether or only encourages them to sign up for unwanted services and then quickly opt out of them.

SocialVibe values the consumer's attention to a brand's message, and we work with the best brands and creative teams to assure a premium ad experience. As we found in the Dimestore study, 91% of people who said they initiated an ad engagement ended up paying active attention to the brand's message. This is a testament not only to the value of providing an incentive in exchange for attention, but also to the compelling and engaging advertising content within the ad engagement. The result, then, is that the incentive is an enhancement but not the focal point of the ad experience. The old logic and negative generalizations about incentivized advertising are simply false. When used correctly, as with SocialVibe's engagement model, incentivized advertising can be an incredibly powerful branding vehicle.

The high rates of interaction, sharing, and click-throughs drive the point home for value-exchange, especially when compared the alternative: display advertising. While the creativity employed in display to interrupt, gate, fly over, bombard or generally annoy consumers into paying attention has been impressive, it rarely leads to a positive consumer experience. When marketers do these things, they're only getting in the way of what the consumer actually wants. People go online with a purpose, and most ad formats are interruptive to that experience, not additive.

And "additive" is the core of good value-exchange advertising. The way to capture a consumer's real attention is to get them to actually want the carrot that's at the end of the stick. The best way to do this is to take what they're already doing and offer them something that can make it better. Social games? Give them in-game currency. Streaming content sites? Eliminate pre-roll ads. Charity sites? Make the donation for them so they don't have to open their own wallets.

In return, you'll get your consumers' undivided attention.

So, let us pose a few questions to you today, if we may:

- Do you want consumers to choose to interact with your ad?
- Do you want them to spend over a minute with your brand?
- Do you want an increase in brand perception and purchase intent?

If you answered yes to all three, you just confirmed that value-exchange advertising is more good than bad.

If you didn't, we have some below-the-fold banner space on our next newsletter we'd like to talk to you about.

A Cause for Every Month



This month we challenge you to think about what your brand's purpose is and how you can communicate this throughout the entire year. Gone are the days when corporate social responsibility was optional – today's savvy citizens are quick to note which brands have words like "fair trade" on their labels, which ones donate proceeds to causes they care about, and which ones they continually see in their friends' Facebook feeds.

In his book, *We First: How Brands & Consumers Use Social Media to Build a Better World*, Simon Mainwaring declares, "the future of profit is purpose." This is great news since consumers have come to expect the "purpose" part as brands successfully weave these messages into their DNA in creative ways.

Each season offers an array of opportunities for brands to better the world in unique ways. We've outlined a few for each of the coming months to get your creative – and charitable – juices flowing.

September

Each September, charity: water asks people born that month to "donate" their birthdays by having friends and family donate a dollar for each year of their life instead of a gift. Did you know that one in eight people in the world lack access to clean water and basic sanitation? This is a crisis that causes 30,000 deaths each week, 90% of which are kids under five. This September, think about how you can tie your "back-to-school" campaign to providing access to clean, safe water for children in developing countries. Access to clean wells could allow children in an entire village to attend school instead of spending hours each day gathering water far away from their homes that is likely to make them sick.

The start of a new school year is the perfect time to get involved with DonorsChoose.org. Teachers across the U.S. post requests for items needed for their classes. Individuals can choose projects and donate as little as \$1 each until the project is funded. When the class receives the items, you get thank you notes and pictures of the happy kids.

October

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a cause that reaches far beyond its monthly recognition with award-winning brand integrations, events, and campaigns. The power of uniting supporters with global events like the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure have pioneered the way brands can give back and amplify the impact of a charitable cause.

October is also Adopt a Shelter Dog Month, a cause very close to many of our own Socialvibers' hearts who have taken in shelter dogs. If you love furry friends too, think about gathering your friends and coworkers for a volunteer day or adoption drive at a local shelter in October. There are also lots of ways for brands to donate to shelters or encourage fans to share stories and pictures about their four-legged friends online.

November

Red ribbons are an iconic symbol of AIDS Awareness month in November, which leads into World AIDS Day on December 1st. From advancing the Millennium Development Goals to getting involved with education programs like MTV's Staying Alive Foundation, the month draws global attention and opportunities to give back to worthy cause.

This Movember, brands can take a cue from hipsters everywhere and encourage their fans and followers to grow mustaches. The month-long campaign is a great opportunity to get involved with something fresh and fun while raising funds and awareness for men's cancers.

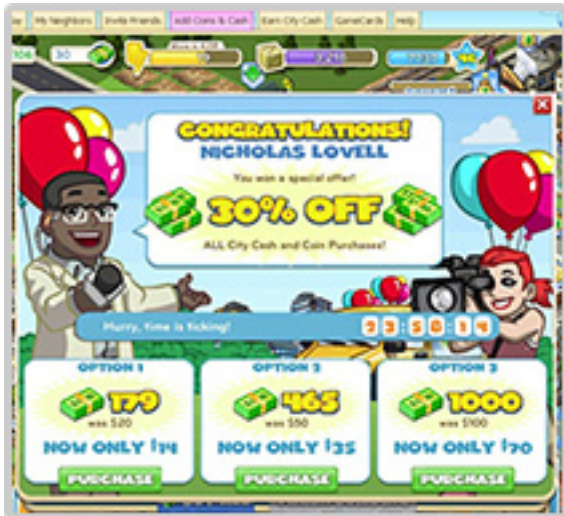
December

The holidays are a busy time for us all, especially for those of us in advertising! It's important to plan ahead so that you don't get lost in the hustle and bustle of the season. Charities like the World Food Programme or Feeding America could use the extra help around this time, and of course local gift drives and local initiatives like the Salvation Army's Adopt-A-Family program are great options too.

Libations are a big part of the festivities during the holidays, making December Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention month. It's a great time to partner with organizations like Partnership for a Drug-Free America or Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) to drive awareness and education about these causes.

Whatever the cause, people will be happy to see your brand joining the "we first" movement to create positive change around the world. SocialVibe works directly with brands to help them give back to charity all year round on Causes.com and Give.SocialVibe.com.

Virtual currency not just for gamers: Learn what's new with virtual cash



It's difficult enough to keep up with your checks, credit cards, and PayPal, let alone cold hard cash (do they still make that stuff). However, there's a burgeoning virtual currency ecosystem out there that continues to shape the ways we interact online. Once thought of as the currency of nerds and gamers only (sorry LARPer, we love you!), the virtual currency ecosystem has broken out of the realm of gamers to become a widely accessible, useful, and highly valuable commodity for our everyday interactions on the Web.

The implications of virtual currencies for advertisers are HUGE, and you'll need to keep up with the trend lest you be left in the virtual dust with virtually empty pockets.

We're used to thinking about virtual cash as only being useful to buy virtual goods, but if you pay attention to the trends and advances in technology, you'll see that consumers will increasingly be able to exchange "fake" cash for "real" stuff. Sites like Swag Bucks have been doing this for a while (earn virtual swagbucks to buy real stuff), and it's important to note where else this model is reaching the masses.

People can also interact with brand advertising in order to earn Facebook Credits. As each person drops Facebook Credits into their virtual coin purse online, these Credits will be used for a variety of purposes as even more apps, businesses, and services integrate with the Facebook Platform. Here are a few more ways we think virtual currency will come into the purchase flow in the months ahead:

- Discounted online movie rentals & in-theater movie tickets
- Cash or credits in exchange for local check ins
- Discounts on everyday household products (virtual cash as coupons)
- Payment for news subscriptions and premium content access
- Music downloads and music streaming

Any opportunity to interact with an advertisement instead of digging into one's wallet is certainly a welcome exchange for the consumer, and it's a way to case your brand in a good light. Hundreds of brands have benefitted from value-exchange advertising, and with the expansion of virtual currency improving consumer experience, it's important to consider how you can work virtual currencies into your brand campaign to maximize ROI.

Virtual currency will find its way into your everyday life, and with brands in the mix to increase your virtual holdings, it's important to stay on top of the trends.