

4 Advantages of using NFC technology as part of a phygital marketing campaign

Adapting to an increasingly digital world, marketers constantly seek innovative technologies in order to build meaningful connections with consumers, and organise a superior customer experience via online and offline channels. Phygital brand campaigns - with the use of technology - have yet-to-be-unlocked potential for reaching these goals.

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To date, a large variety of computer software and technology solutions promise to help brands accelerate audience reach and engagement. The 2022 edition of the Marketing Technology Landscape *lists* nearly 10,000 martech applications in 49 categories. Brands that opt for effective software tools for organising and conducting cross-channel marketing campaigns can deliver significant value. An effort aimed to seamlessly integrate technology into brand campaigns can help to build a comprehensive customer experience, remaining at the cutting edge of technological innovation.

Among other options, one solution could be NFC technology, which allows brands to reach their customers more effectively and make a lasting impression. NFC stands for Near Field Communication, a technology that allows two devices - or a device and a physical object - to communicate without having to set up a prior connection. NFC technology can be used in smartphones, tablets, digital signage, and smart posters. NFC-enabled devices became widespread in the last decade, making it easier for

consumers to interact with their favorite brands throughout the entire customer journey. The exciting potential of this technology is in the creation of personalised experiences for customers, resulting in increased brand loyalty and satisfaction.

Here are four opportunities for consumer brands to leverage NFC technology:

Rejuvenate loyalty programs

Many brands design their loyalty programs and enrich them with numerous promotional campaigns, to build long-term connections with customers in increasingly saturated markets.

NFC technology can help brands engage with consumers in the places where the brand is present. For instance, brands can provide a way for customers to join a loyalty program by using NFC technology at diverse point-of-sale locations – both in and outside of stores.

Using such technology in the loyalty programs can also reduce the time it takes to deliver promises to customers, because an efficient omnichannel system allows the brand to respond to customers' needs more quickly.

Moreover, this technology can provide a sense of joy in the experience of engaging with a loyalty program – keeping in mind the essence of brand loyalty: to delight customers, contactless technology will help brands get it back, delivering intangible benefits beyond functional utility.

Improve brand communications with the community

In our globalised and multicultural society, brands are faced with the challenge of choosing the most effective ways to provide information

about their products or services. NFC technology can fortunately help brands prioritise communication channels, delivering the message to targeted consumers who can be reached in a moment – streamlining the process of brand discovery.

An example is the use of tap-to-learn technology to give shoppers access to information about new products or services. In 2017, Nike partnered with the NBA to provide premium NBA content with the help of NFC – by interacting with *NikeConnect NBA jerseys*. Fans could access the content by tapping the NFC-enabled label near the jersey's hem.

The automotive industry provides another illustration of such cross-channel activity: the Lexus brand campaign applied NFC technology in print advertisements when they published their car ads in Wired Magazine. Readers were able to open the new app suite of the brand by tapping on a NFC label placed on these ads.

Accelerate the product discovery

The use of technology can redefine the shopping experience when choosing a brand's product. For example, it can enable customers to read product reviews in a single tap by using NFC-enabled signs or posters – outside or inside the store. The success of this method relies on a tandem arrangement, where there is physical advertising and a technology component.

When launching a new collection in 2014, Ralph Lauren used a mobile marketing approach, placing NFC stickers and QR codes on posters in Harrods in London to introduce the collection, navigating customers directly to where the collection was located in the store.

Enhance customer experience

NFC technology can play a substantial role in helping a sales assistant in an offline store, by allowing customers to get additional information about a product they are interested in.

For example, consumer brands can design smart product tags to let shoppers interact with the items they are interested in. Sales assistants can prepare and deliver these items directly to the dressing room, so when shoppers enter the store, they can immediately begin trying on their selected items. This purposeful engagement can ensure that customers receive timely support, reducing attrition and boosting satisfaction.

Of course, there are many other ways that NFC elements can be used in phygital marketing campaigns, and more creative efforts are likely to debut in the coming years. Since many people already own NFC-enabled smartphones, the technology is poised for future growth. Although NFC technology may not end up revolutionising marketing immediately, it's an intriguing possibility for brands looking for new ways to create impactful experiences with consumers.

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