

MARKETING

Emojis a missed opportunity for targeting 25-44 year olds: report

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Photo courtesy of Estee Lauder

By CHANTAL TODE

Despite the meteoric rise in the use of emojis in marketing campaigns over the past year, marketers may be too focused on younger consumers and missing an opportunity to reach 25-44 years old with the symbols, according to a new report from Appboy.

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While 43 percent of consumers 25-44 years old think it is fun when brands use emojis in messages - the highest of any age group - 39 percent report that they have never received a message with emojis from a brand, also the highest of any age group. The use of emojis by brands in campaigns has consistently grown month-over-month since last fall and has skyrocketed 609 percent from a year ago, with 2,680 June campaigns including the icons, according to a new report from Appboy.

"The big takeaway for marketers is that people really like emojis, and they are open to receiving more of them in marketing messages," said Marissa Aydlett, vice president of marketing at Appboy. "More than 64 percent of consumers we polled said they like or love emojis, and only 6 percent dislike or hate them.

"Additionally, many consumers view brands that use emojis as fun," she said.

"Most surprising is that despite the popularity of emojis, 35 percent of consumers surveyed said they have never received a marketing campaign containing emojis and 60 percent said they receive messages with emojis from brands no more than once a month."

Making marketing fun

Overall, 35 of consumers report never having received an emoji brand message, a number that drops to 30 percent for consumers 14-24. The results also show that consumers 25-44 are more open to emoji messages from brands in texts whereas those 45-years-old and over prefer email.

Consumers are receptive to brands using emojis, with 39 percent saying they are fun, 13 percent relatable and 18 percent normal. On the other side, 11 percent find them inappropriate, 12 percent say they are childish and only 2 percent find them professional.

Appboy's research shows that two times more push notifications with emojis are sent on Android than iOS. Android push notification emoji use has grown 848 percent year-over-year and is up 157 percent year-to-date. iOS push

notification growth is 365 percent year-over-year and 48 percent year-to-date.

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The use of emojis in emails tells a different story, with marketers more reluctant to embrace the symbols. In the past year, 390 million emails with emojis in the subject line have been sent and volume for June totaled approximately 48 million.

The research suggests marketers are narrowing in on the right audience for their emoji campaigns.

Finding the right audience

In the early days of emoji marketing the first half of 2015 the average number of recipients was 873,000 per campaign. However, since last fall, the average number has been 326,000.

The open rate for push messages with emojis on Android is around 4 percent, up 1063 percent since last year.

On iOS, the open rate is between 1 percent and 2 percent, up 209 percent.

For email, an emoji in the subject correlates to a 15 percent open rate increase in the past year. However, emojis do not appear to be driving click through rates.

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Conversion rates on emoji campaigns are up 135 percent year-over-year.

The overall volume of messages sent containing emojis continues to grow, with Appboy delivering 814 million messages with emojis in June, up 461 percent from 145 million a year ago.

In general, 68 percent of consumers receive one or more emoji message per day. For consumers 14 to 24, this number jumps to 84 percent, for those 25 to 44 it is 73 percent and for consumers 45-years and older, it drops to 54 percent.

Appboy found that, overall, 78 percent of consumers use emojis in their messages. However, the number is higher much higher for consumers 44-years and younger while 24 percent of consumers 45-years and older do not use them at all.

"The popularity of emojis represents an enormous opportunity for marketers," Ms. Aydlett said. "However, marketers must be thoughtful about the ways they incorporate emojis into their customer outreach.

"Start slowly by limiting your use of emojis to a subset of your total messaging to get a better sense of what resonates best with your brand's unique audience before scaling up," she said.