

MOBILE

Ralph Lauren steps up mobile game with customized QR codes

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By RACHEL LAMB

U.S. lifestyle brand Ralph Lauren upped the QR code ante with customized bar codes to lure consumers into its store locations.



The new bar code, complete with the brand's polo player logo, is in Ralph Lauren store windows. The point was to entice affluent men into stores and allow them to engage with the brand through a chance to win tickets to the US Open tennis tournament.

"The codes we create provide analytics to track scans and operating systems and that kind of stuff," said Matt McKenna, founder and president of Red Fish Media, Miami. "It's a great branding exercise.

"QR codes are generally boring, so having something branded that is in-line with the design and the promotion is a win," he said.

"Custom QR codes have a three-to-one ratio of scans over traditional codes."

Red Fish Media designed the QR code for Ralph Lauren, as well as assisted the brand with other mobile initiatives such as SMS and mobile-optimized sites.

The Ralph Lauren campaign ended with the US Open Sept. 12.

Play ball

The Ralph Lauren QR codes were on the front windows of Ralph Lauren locations and aimed to lure consumers in-store or get them to scan the code.



The customized QR code

Ralph Lauren, the apparel sponsor for the US Open, designed specialized polo shirts that could be accessed through the code.

Scanning the QR code brought consumers to the mobile site at <http://www.m.ralphlauren.com/usotennis> where users could buy apparel.

Furthermore, brand enthusiasts were able to sign up for a chance to win tickets to the 2012 men's US Open finals and a \$3,000 Ralph Lauren wardrobe.

This likely collected vital user information that Ralph Lauren can use in the future for other campaigns and promotions.

Cracking the code

Ralph Lauren has put much of its effort into mobile lately.

For instance, the brand bought out a solo sponsorship of The New York Times iPad application in September with content including streaming and embedded video and commerce from Ralph Lauren Magazine ([see story](#)).

Furthermore, Ralph Lauren has numerous mobile apps, an optimized site and has SMS-led campaigns for various initiatives.

Indeed, various luxury brands have been using bar codes to make their in-store, magazine or out-of-home ads more interesting and engaging.



The QR code in a Ralph Lauren store window

For instance, department store chain Bloomingdale's upped its out-of-home advertising strategy by including QR codes and an MMS call to action on phone booth ads to connect consumers with videos and content about new fashion trends ([see story](#)).

"QR codes make passive media like a newspaper ad interactive, which is really great," Mr. McKenna said.

"They allow brands to really capitalize on their investment of advertising on billboards or anything else that is passive," he said.

Final Take

Rachel Lamb, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York