# STEP-BY-STEP: HOW TO USE QR CODES TO HIT THE INSTANT GRATIFICATION SWEET SPOT by: Matt Mansfield



#### WHAT ARE QR CODES?



QR (or "quick response") codes have been around for a long time and were

**This is a QR Code** initially used for tracking parts in vehicle manufacturing.

Eventually however, some clever folks began to realize that QR codes could be used to link the offline and online worlds in a way that is unique, cool and very useful.

You see, once you install the appropriate app (on your iPhone, Android, Blackberry, etc. – get PB's QR code reader, **ScanShot**, for free app here: <a href="http://bit.ly/08exla">http://bit.ly/08exla</a>), QR codes can be "read" by your mobile phone. Each code contains a hyperlink (yep, just a plain web link) that takes you to a spot online.

### QR CODES ARE SIMPLY HYPERLINKS THAT YOU DISTRIBUTE IN THE REAL WORLD!

The uses for QR codes are only limited by your imagination - keep reading to learn more.

When it comes to selling more of your products and services, nothing beats the attraction of instant gratification – the promise of getting something good, right away.

Since the Internet opened for business, online shoppers have come to take instant gratification for granted. Online coupons can be instantly used to purchase online items, online books can be instantly downloaded to read, and online merchants can enable instant pre-orders of upcoming sale items.

However, up until recently, it was pretty hard for offline businesses to provide this kind of instant gratification. For example, with mailed coupons, customers still could not redeem them until they visited a store. When a sale was advertised, customers still needed to wait until the day the sale arrived.

#### This all changed when QR codes came on the scene.

You see, QR codes allow offline businesses to offer coupons and special deals while the customer is actually nearby, allowing them to get gratification right away.

QR codes also enable your customers to buy things anytime and anywhere, turning regular product and service offerings into impulse items that can be purchased on the spot.

Simply put, QR codes provide offline customers the same instant gratification opportunities that online customers take for granted.

How can you offer your customers this kind of instant gratification?

#### http://bit.ly/08exla

Let's take a look at the steps involved in planning and launching a QR code marketing campaign.

# STEP1



## Plan your QR Code Marketing Campaign

The very first step is to plan your campaign from start to finish. In particular, you need to determine:

#### 1. YOUR TRACKABLE CAMPAIGN GOALS.

In other words, what would make this a successful campaign? Some examples:

- a. An increase in sales or leads.
- b. An increase in foot traffic to each of your locations.
- c. An increase in the use of coupons.
- d. An increase in social media fans or email subscribers.
- **2. YOUR OFFER.** How will you provide instant gratification to your customers during this campaign? Some examples:
  - a. The opportunity to save money by immediately taking advantage of a deal.
  - b. The ability to buy something on the spot, right when the impulse hits them.
  - c. The opportunity to pre-order sale items before they are available.
  - d. The ability to instantly sign up as a fan, follower or newsletter subscriber.
- **3. IMPLEMENTATION.** How will you get the QR code in front of your targeted audience? Some examples:
  - a. Print a poster with a discount offer and include a QR code that links to a coupon. For example, get 75% off every day between 3 and 4pm with the coupon. Hang the posters near your store and in spots where your target audience hangs out.

- b. Create a flyer that lists special offers on "related items" and include a QR code that enables folks to save on those items right away. For example, if someone buys a pair of slacks, give them a code to buy socks that match. Distribute the flyers at the time of sale.
- c. Send a direct mail piece pre-announcing an upcoming sale or the availability of a limited item and include a QR code that allows customers to pre-order the item right there and then.
- d. Print a sticker with a QR code that allows folks to become a fan, follower or newsletter subscriber in each of your location's windows.
- **4. TIMING.** How long will the campaign run?
  - a. You can run a campaign for a limited time or forever. Limiting the time can drive customers to take action before the opportunity ends, but long-term campaigns can be used for specific purposes as well. For example, getting more traffic to your locations during a traditionally slow time of day by offering a standing discount at that time.
  - b. You can also end your campaigns when a certain threshold is met. For example, if you have a limited item, you would end when the item is sold out. If you were running a "Spring" sale, you would end when it becomes time for folks to start buying for the summer.



## **Get Everything Ready**

This is the step where some businesses can feel intimidated by the technology involved with QR codes or by unfamiliar tasks like printing posters and sending direct mail.

Luckily, Pitney Bowes has developed an "all-in-one" solution that walks a business through each step of the process. Even better, no tech skills are required.

Below, is a brief walkthrough of the solution however, you should take advantage of the free trial that Pitney Bowes offers and give it a test drive yourself: http://www.pb.com/qr-codes/

#### 1. START HERE

After logging in to pbSmart™ Codes, click the "Create New Campaign" tab, where your options are clearly laid out. As you can see in the image below, you have many ways to

use QR codes, all of which are designed to drive your customers to take action.

This section is great not only for the many options available, but also in the way you can get ideas and suggestions on how QR Codes can be used.

For this walkthrough, we are going to create a QR code that takes customers to a custom mobile page where they can enter their e-mail address to receive a free sushi coupon.

#### pbSmart™ Codes

There are a lot of reasons why I like the pbSmart™ Codes solution, but its best feature is the way it walks you through creating, implementing and tracking a QR code marketing campaign all in one place and without requiring any technical or design skills whatsoever.

Another standout feature is its mobile page creation feature.

Mobile pages look just like mobile apps and are much easier for your customers to use, which will add to the success of your campaigns!





### Connect to customers on the go with QR code marketing

Create QR codes on marketing materials that link to custom mobile web pages using pbSmart™ Codes, then sit back and track your campaign's success.

Sign up for FREE now!



#### 2. CREATE YOUR QR CODE

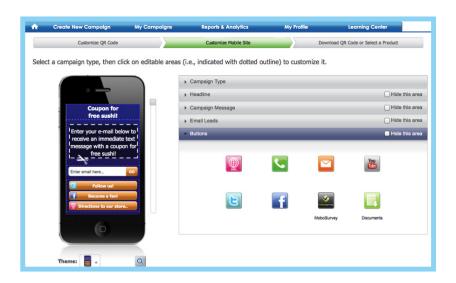
The next step is to create the actual QR code. As you can see in the image below, the QR code you design can be customized to match your branding by changing the color and by adding an image or text.



#### 3. MOBILE PAGE

One of the features that makes pbSmart<sup>TM</sup> Codes stand out is the ability to create a mobile web page. This mobile page is the spot that customers are taken to once they scan your code.

A mobile web page is a very powerful tool to help you engage customers. As you can see in the image below, you are able to add your own text and require that users give you an email address



before getting the coupon. You can also select a design theme and make changes to colors and design of each theme.

Another handy feature is the ability to add buttons at the bottom. Here we added one that allows customers to follow us on Twitter, another that allows them to become a fan on Facebook and finally one that gives directions to a location (in this case, our sushi restaurant).

GENERATE A QR CODE, BUILD A MOBILE WEB PAGE AND ENGAGE CUSTOMERS THROUGH THEIR MOBILE DEVICES.

### It's easy!

Get the most out of your marketing campaigns by adding a <u>custom QR</u> <u>code</u> to our NEW printed media and promotional items.

#### **CHECK THIS OUT**

Signing up for a free pbSmart™
Codes account is a great way to
get used to QR code marketing,
but if you're serious about QR
code marketing success, you
should check out the goodies you
get with a paid subscription plan.

I talk about some of the great paid features at the end of the this guide, so take some time to check them out.

#### 4. USE THE NEW QR CODE

As you can see in the image below, now that we have a QR code that points to a mobile web page, we can use it in many different ways

In this case, we are going to design and order a poster that will display the QR code to customers.



#### **5. SELECT A TEMPLATE**

As you can see, there are a lot of poster designs available. You can chose one that's industry-specific or you can go for a generic template that works for any purpose.



#### 6. EDITING YOUR POSTER AND ORDERING UP

Next up you will add text to the poster. You have many options here including different fonts and font sizes.

The steps are clear and straightforward, helping even a new user feel right at home.

Once you have finished designing your poster, you can specify how many posters you want to order, where you want them shipped to, and by what method (overnight, regular mail, etc.).

If you are ordering a printed product (such as this poster), there is a cost for printing and shipping which you can pay with your credit card right on the spot. If you just want to design and download a QR code, you can do that for free.



#### 7. TRACKING AND REPORTING

Of course, no marketing solution would be complete without some mechanism for tracking results. With pbSmart<sup>TM</sup> Codes, you will be able to track the number of times your mobile page was viewed as well as download all the email addresses you have collected.



# STEP3

# connect



### Launch and Track

With your QR code, mobile web page and poster all designed, you are now ready to launch your marketing campaign! All that's left is to make sure your QR code gets in front of your target audience. This means hanging up your posters, sending your direct mailers and handing out your flyers.

As mentioned above, tracking is a very important part of any marketing campaign.

Why? Because using the information you gather, you can make following campaigns even more effective.

For example, if a coupon offer campaign performs well, but a pre-order campaign performs great, you should aim to do more pre-order type campaigns with QR codes in the future.

Once your campaign ends, be sure to remove your posters and toss your flyers. Nothing is more frustrating to customers than trying to get immediate gratification only to find that the offer is done and over.

### FINAL THOUGHTS:

QR codes have changed the dynamic of offline marketing efforts, making them more immediate, compelling and easier to act on. And the more you can provide instant gratification for customers, the more successful your business will be!

#### HOW MANY QR CODE MARKETING CAMPAIGNS SHOULD I RUN AT ONE TIME?

As mentioned earlier, the timing on your campaigns can vary greatly and you may have more than one active campaign running at the same time. Is this ok?

The bottom line is this: marketing is all about trying something and then tracking to see if it

works. If you limit yourself to only one campaign at a time, you will never know if you are missing out on opportunities.

So try running multiple campaigns at the same time – you may be very happy you did.



# CHECK THIS OUT: THE 411 ON THE BEST PBSMART™ CODES SUBSCRIPTION PLAN GOODIES



Whenever I introduce a client to pbSmart™
Codes, one of the first questions they ask is, "Why should I upgrade to one of their paid subscription plans?" Rather than being cheap, what my clients are really asking is one of the most important questions a business owner can, and should, ask before spending any money:

What value will I get in return for spending this money and will it help me move closer to achieving my business goals?

To help them, and you, answer this question, let's take a look at some of the pbSmart $^{\text{TM}}$  Codes features that are available once you sign-up for a subscription plan:

# 1. STRONGER CALLS-TO-ACTION AND RICHER CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

When it comes to marketing, two of the strongest tools in your chest are calls-to-action and engagement.

pbSmart<sup>™</sup> Codes allows you to wield both of these tools well by enabling you to both upload compelling content and to present a survey to your customers.

#### **UPLOADING COMPELLING CONTENT**

Aside from price, trust is a major factor in whether folks buy from you or from a competitor. Luckily, there's no better way to build trust than by providing useful content.

With a pbSmart™ Codes paid subscription, you can upload a PDF document (such as a brochure) or link to a YouTube video that helps customers answer their questions or make buying decisions.

This is where your content can help shine a bright spotlight on a strong call-to-action. Based on your useful content, you can take the time to build a compelling case for customers to choose you and your products.

#### PRESENTING SURVEYS TO CUSTOMERS

Another way to engage your customers, and to continue building trust and good-will, is to ask your customers for their thoughts and input.

With a pbSmart<sup>™</sup> Codes paid subscription, you can conduct a customer survey right on the spot.

Not only will your customers feel gratified to be asked for their insights, but a survey will also create the feeling that they are "vested" in the outcome. That will make them more likely to view your brand, and your products, in a much more positive light.

## 2. EXTEND YOUR ONLINE BRANDING EFFORTS TO THE REAL WORLD

When you sign up for a pbSmart™ Codes paid subscription, you can create QR codes that present your brand wherever they are used.

With a branded QR code, as you can see below, your logo image and text takes center stage in each and every one of your QR codes.



Using a branded QR code extends your brand while also drawing in both new and existing customers with your brand name and promise.

#### 3. SAVE BOTH TIME AND EFFORT

Another handy feature that's enabled with a paid pbSmart™ Codes subscription is the ability to copy and reuse past QR campaigns at any time.

Whether you use the old QR code campaign "as-is" or dive in and make some changes, you will start way ahead of the game by using a previously configured marketing strategy.

# 4. MULTIPLE CAMPAIGNS = MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES

Lastly, as I mentioned above, paid pbSmart™ Codes subscribers can run more than one QR code campaign at a time. As I discussed, this ability allows you to test and try different tactics and strategies to see which approaches work the best.

Being able to run multiple campaigns at once also frees you up to strike when the iron is hot. In other words, you can implement new and timely ideas when they will have the most impact, as opposed to waiting until your previous campaign expires.

This kind of flexibility is important, especially in the dynamic and competitive world of small business.



Click here to sign up for your free trial of pbSmart™ Codes.