

SAN DIEGO DAILY TRANSCRIPT

March 12, 2009

Simms targets text-message marketing campaigns



MarketInk

By Jada Thomas

Eyeing the 3.3 billion wireless cellular users worldwide, **j. simms agency** has opened a new Mobile Marketing Department to offer text-message marketing campaigns to businesses and nonprofit organizations.

Jennie Rodrigues, an accomplished operations and marketing manager for the entertainment industry, has been hired as director of the new department, announced Julia Sims, president of the 14-year-old firm located in San Diego.

J. simms agency's mobile-marketing capabilities include one-to-many and back texting campaigns, electronic content delivery via text, mobile couponing and more. Communication solutions can be custom tailored to fit the needs of any client and include message reporting and statistics. With the capability to send 10,000 messages per minute, these applications can be critical for two-way emergency response systems.

"Internationally, text marketing is common and widely accepted," explained Rodrigues. "The U.S. has been slow to adapt, but is now starting to recognize the power of text marketing and, at the same time, wireless users are growing more accustomed to using SMS platforms in place of e-mail. SMS marketing will one day rival or overtake e-mail marketing."

Simms says the applications for this type of communication

are many. Retailers can use it to let their customers know about special sales, restaurants can let patrons know their table is available, and universities can use it to communicate with students in time of crisis and those students can communicate back if help is needed.

Prior to joining **j. simms agency**, Rodrigues served as the area manager at Ticketmaster Corp. There, she was in charge of managing high-profile relationships with clients such as San Diego State University, University of California San Diego, San Diego Symphony and Qualcomm Stadium, among others. **Source Code: 20090311tia**

• • •
Red Door Interactive, an Internet Presence Management firm, announced the launch of social media campaigns on "Twitter" and "Facebook" for Souplantation and Sweet Tomatoes restaurants. Their goal is to increase customer loyalty and drive store traffic not only through promotions, but also through raising the general level of conversation surrounding the brand online.

This month, as a tie-in to the creamy tomato soup menu highlight, fans on Facebook members are encouraged to visit the site to play a "memory game," in which they share their favorite childhood food memories.

Souplantation/Sweet Tomatoes' and Red Door Interactive's intention with this initiative is to listen, engage and quickly respond to customer interest and inquiries.

"We pride ourselves in providing a delicious, healthy, community environment at

each of our locations," said Ginger Anderson, web manager and graphic designer for Garden Fresh Corp., the parent company of Souplantation/Sweet Tomatoes. "A great deal of our customers as well as their friends and family have created strong bonds on Twitter and Facebook, so it makes perfect sense for us to be there. We feel privileged for each follower and fan we've connected with online."

In the last month since the company's official foray into the social networking world, it has more than tripled its Twitter followers, and now boasts more than 800 connections on the micro-blog site. The restaurant chain's Facebook page includes fan photos, activity of the message boards, and currently holds more than 450 fans with new connections made daily. As important, the company's recent Valentine's Day social media campaign, where individuals were invited to tell Souplantation/Sweet Tomatoes, via Twitter, just what made their "Sweetie so Sweet," resulted in a 12 percent conversion rate, with people either purchasing a gift card, conducting a location search, or signing up to the e-mail list.

The company's Twitter and Facebook presences are also promoted and integrated in a number of ways, including in various email notices and its Web site. This provides subscribers exposure to the new ways in which they can interact with the restaurant chain and receive the heads up on things like special offers and new menu items.

"From a business perspective, Facebook, Twitter and other social network sites are forms

of permission marketing, where tailored promotion and awareness campaigns can result in customer insight and relevant connection with targeted audiences," said Crosby Noricks, Social Media Strategist for Red Door Interactive. "Not only can significant response and conversion rates ensure, but the responses, comments and discussions taking place on such outlets can also empower companies with the ability to better listen to their customers and take quick action on emerging service issues and needs. It's all about giving customers choices on how to engage with organizations." **Source Code: 20090311tib**

• • •
Creative branding agency, **ParkerWhite Inc.**, has created the position of marketing director to focus on growing the agency. Oscar Lutteroth has been hired to fill the spot, announced Cindy White, president and creative director.

Prior to joining ParkerWhite, Lutteroth was president and CEO of Nite Owl Design, serving clients such as Red Bull, Nissan, Sweet Lady Jane and Fix Malibu. For nearly 10 years, he was a Web developer, focused on usability and building interface to create successful online strategies. In his new position, Lutteroth will be tasked with marketing the agency, developing new business relationships and overseeing the agency's digital endeavors.

"Oscar brings a diverse skill set to our team and his grasp on the digital arena is a great asset for the agency," said White. **Source Code: 20090311tic**
jada.thomas@sddt.com