

AirG drives youths to mobile for free ride

By Dianna Dilworth

March 15th, 2007

Urban car shop West Coast Customs, former star of MTV's "Pimp My Ride" reality series, pre-pay mobile phone network Boost Mobile and mobile marketing platform AirG recently partnered for a mobile marketing campaign that drove more than 1.5 million entries from mobile phones.

The "Get Hookt Up With a New Ride" campaign, which ran from Oct. 15, 2006 through Jan. 15, 2007, targeted urban youths. It asked them to use their pay-per-use cell phones to enter a contest to win a new, fully customized Dodge Charger.

"It was a multichannel-type approach that was pushed through the mobile phone, national radio campaigns, Web sites and MySpace," said Frederick Ghahramani, director at AirG, Vancouver, Canada. "A brand as strong as West Coast Customs actually got a lot of interactivity from customers on their mobile phones."

The campaign was promoted through multiple online and offline channels including the mobile phone through Boost Hookt, a mobile community at www.boostmobile.com, retail mail-in, a radio campaign, an online sign-up promoted through MySpace viral referrals, and online sign-ups through the West Coast Customs and Boost Mobile Web sites.

Interested parties who own Boost Mobile phones could text in to sign up for the promotion. More than 98 percent of the 1.5 million entries were received through mobile phones via the Boost Hookt mobile community.

"The key to a mobile contest is to have the least amount of clicks, so that users can sign up easily," said Craig Thole, director of Value-Added Services at Boost Mobile, Irvine, CA.

The winner of the contest was James Fauntleroy of Burlington, New Jersey, one of 10 children. He works at a gas station and has never owned a car before. He was flown to Los Angeles to meet the staff of West Coast Customs and presented with his car.

AirG recently conducted a series of surveys in its community. It found that 65.6 percent of users surveyed said texting was their favorite cell phone activity. Seventy-five percent prefer chatting on the phone to watching television and 59 percent do not own a personal computer.

"The key trend that we are seeing in the mobile space is that when it comes to a marketing message with a strong call to action and interactivity, mobile phones let consumers react instantaneously no matter where they are by using their mobile phone as a remote control," Mr. Ghahramani said.

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