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Last month, our look at the work Japanese company Eitarosoft is doing with Android made it pretty obvious a closer inspection was in order. So, earlier last week we popped into the firm's Tokyo office for a chat with founder and CEO Eitaro Nishijima and to take a look at what goes on in a modern software developer. Eitarosoft made its name as a provider of rich, 3D games with a strong emphasis on its Java expertise. Aside from that, it also worked closely with Sun Microsystems to develop the 3D engine that powers Project Looking Glass, a notoriously popular (and geeky) cross-platform interface for desktops. After that came a proof-of-concept demo of a handheld version of the same interface for mobile phones, which was a hit at the 2005 JavaOne conference, and a US patent application covering the same technology. Mobile focus Since 2006, the star in the company's firmament has been a mobile SNS called Mobage-Town it created for web specialist DeNA, in which users get to interact, create profiles and play various simple games with each other. Nothing special there, but take a look at the numbers - 10 million active users and upwards of 500 million page views per day. As the company's Eri Tokita explained, "that's more than Yahoo's social networking sites combined," and it tops plenty of the famous heavy hitters in the West. However, the two-dimensional world of cartoon avatars and the like was only the beginning - the next stage involves lashings of AJAX and an online virtual world called Lamity Business first. For now, Lamity is a Java application that has to be downloaded to a handset before it can be used, but the just-announced 906i series of phones from NTT DoCoMo come with the app pre-installed after Eitarosoft concluded a deal with makers Sony, Sharp and NEC to load it up at the factory. With Fujitsu set to jump onboard too in the near future, it's clear that Lamity will bring its developer bundles of both kudos and cash - each handset maker pays a licence fee to use the software - but what's the draw when cool stuff like Mobage-Town already has such a hold? In an attempt to answer that, we took Lamity for a spin with the added frisson of doing so on a new closed-doors version running on the Open Handset Alliance's Android OS. Whereas Second Life will seize up a PC when it has to handle something under 100 users at once, Lamity has no problem at all getting to 400 simultaneous digital bods thanks to AJAX that shifts the processing load from the device to the game server. Tokita explains: "The server does all the hard work and provides the final images to the user's phone, which only has to read and display them, with nothing to calculate." Cash still king In use, the virtual world is much like anything PC-based, but the emphasis on in-game marketing could be disconcerting for some. The Shibuya arena included a Sapporo building filled with beer-related promotions and campaign 'staff' to talk with. We managed not to take them up on the offer of a free case of beer in return for a little personal data for marketing purposes (insidious, isn't it?). Fortunately, there's an age check built-in, although it's not clear how effective this will be in practice. Future plans include plenty of 3D games to put the avatars through - we got invited to a networked game of golf - and lots more online shops, where users can spend the Lamity virtual currency, City Coins. Google glue too After that, Eitarosoft plans to link up as many social sites as possible with Lamity using Google's OpenSocial, so the implications for an immersive 3D mobile blanket over everything from MySpace to, possibly, Facebook are obvious. As CEO Nishijima pointed out, "Your phone's always with you, after all." Lastly, whether deliberately or not, Tokita also let slip that showing Lamity at a Tokyo trade fair last week drew the attention of some seriously major-league players, including IBM. As we already know, T-Mobile is going to be feeding the software to its customers on real Android phones later this year. Will programs like this be the next big thing on your phone? Looks like you will be able to find out for yourself, soon. Opinions expressed by Entrepreneur contributors are their own. There is no astonishment as to how meaningful push notifications have become for mobile. We all understand that a significant amount of a company's success hinges on their presence in the mobile world. This means that a plausible portion of your business strategy should be based around mobile marketing, while push notifications should be a front runner within that section. What I learned while managing push notifications at Facebook is that there are a few things to consider when trying to create a mobile presence through push notifications. You should be able to measure it, increase the impact of your program once established and also determine what other channels you should utilize. Shutterstock The question many have is what metric should you use as your KPI to measure the success of your push notifications? The open rate of your notification is the biggest performance indicator when utilizing push. In other words, what percentage of push notifications were opened by users? The higher the better. Of course, it's inevitable to not lose users as they go down the funnel. However, getting users to open your notification to begin with at least brings them into the funnel. Push notifications are more effective when going down a funnel anyway. Therefore, open rate is the metric that is crucial for you to examine, and optimize accordingly. Open rate does, however, depend on the platform they're getting delivered to. Android Vs. IOS When deciding which platform works best for push notifications on mobile, we can analyze data from Android and IOS. Leanplum.com shows that the open rate for push notifications is roughly 1.77 percent for iPhones, and 3.48 percent for Androids. Meaning, delivering your push notifications to Android Users will create more engagement with your brand and/or app by placing them in your funnel. This statistic is due to user experience, another important part of making push notifications successful on mobile. Android and IOS notifications function in different ways. With IOS, as soon as a user unlocks their phone, the notification is out of sight. While Android users have no other option but to acknowledge the notification eventually since it sticks in their notification section. Related: 3 Push Notification Strategies to Increase App Engagement Shutterstock Personalize When increasing the impact that your push notification program has, your first objective should be to educate users on the benefits of receiving these notifications. This allows them to think about whether or not they want to opt out of receiving these. Your second objective should be looking at how many people you currently send them to. While there's no right or wrong push frequency, you need to experiment and see what frequency works best for your particular platform. If you notice that users are opting out, then maybe you're being too spammy and need to lower how many you send. If not, you should increase the number you send out. However, my recommendation to guarantee a much more prodigious impact is personalizing your notifications. It has been discovered that brands who personalize their push notifications leads to an increase of open rates to roughly 800 percent. Related: Mobile Marketing and the Magic of Push Notifications (Infographic) Storyblocks Leverage all channels After you've developed an app for your brand, you begin sending push notifications and utilizing techniques to increase the impact of your program. Now what? Do you stick to this method of bringing individuals into your funnel or do you utilize other channels as well? Many companies are wondering whether or not they should send an email, after they've already sent a push notification. The fact is that you should be utilizing multiple channels besides push. You want to send these notifications to every channel possible to maximize reach. What other channel can you use? As I mentioned above, email notifications are one, along with SMS and in-app notifications. Email notifications is second to welcome emails when it comes to open rates as well. A push notification coming to a user's phone is fine and all, but how about also sending it to their inbox, a tool many Americans check every day. By doing so, you maximize deliverability as well. But what if you're scared that you may annoy users by sending to multiple channels? It would be worse if a user missed a piece of information than if they got it twice. Ultimately, you should think about your notification channels (email, push, in-app, SMS) holistically as a "universal inbox." Related: Push Notifications - Finally a Non Annoying Way to Promote Your App Push notifications are influential drivers to maximizing mobile presence. Measuring the open rate, utilizing multiple channels to reach your users, and personalizing your notifications are surefire ways to receive the full benefit of push notifications. Push notification is the new big boy in town! You might already know the basics of how to use them, but crafting push notifications that users actually want to receive is a true art form. Let's quickly go over the essentials: Creating the perfect push notification starts with understanding how customers interact with your app. The more you know about your users, the more personalized you can make your push notifications. These messages should enhance the customer experience, not harm it. So with every new push notification, users should feel satisfied and happy about your brand. AleksandarNakic | Getty Images But knowing all this information doesn't necessarily mean that you know how to write the actual push notification. These hacks will help you create killer copy for every single push notification you send out. 1. Be authentic The number one thing customers want from brands is honesty. And this holds true for push notifications as well. Customers can spot an inauthentic brand from a mile away, so don't try too hard or force yourself onto customers. Be consistent when it comes to writing your push notifications, staying true to your brand voice and making sure it aligns with your web and email communication. According to Peopledesign, "authenticity speaks volumes. Brands that tell a genuine, honest story resonate with people. People believe in honest brands." iShare combines honesty and transparency with a little bit of sass in their push notification. Action step: When you have written out a push notification, take a moment to reflect on the voice and tone it conveys. Does it match your brand identity? Will it make sense to customers as part of your larger brand narrative? 2. Be valuable If anything, your push notifications should add value to your customers' daily life. Be helpful and engaging, instead of annoying. Over 50 percent of app users find push notifications annoying. The other half finds them useful, but only if the content includes valuable information. You exist in the lives of your customers for one ultimate purpose: to help them accomplish something. So make sure you deliver on this! The goal is for users to look forward to your messages. Uber, for example, helps its users save money by notifying them of dropping rates in the area. Action step: No matter what type of company you are, you have promised to make some part of their life easier, better, more beautiful or more fun. Dig into this notion to guide your push notifications. Why are you useful, or even indispensable? 3. Be funny To summarize millennials: "They want funny. Funny lets them know you see the world through their eyes. Funny lets them reinforce their own online presence with content they can share with everyone on their list", says Axiom Marketing. For brands, it's about not taking themselves too seriously and being brave enough to share it with their audience. Simon Circles, a mobile game, knows how to get a laugh on demand. Action step: Follow comedians on Twitter, collect viral memes and find companies that you think do humor right. Create a folder with all these pieces, so you can draw inspiration from it whenever you're not feeling funny. 4. Be to-the-point It's all about brevity these days. Push notifications are the perfect way to counter our shorter attention spans. Push notifications, by design, are brief. So don't abuse this format by trying to cram too much in. Remember, the best performing push messages are under 25 characters. It's not only about being being brief, it's also being clear. If you are struggling to convey the message (as you are trying to be authentic, funny and to-the-point), just come out and say it. Sometimes the simplest messages get the job done. Netflix's knows how to delight their customers with short and personalized messages based their watching habits. Action step: Write two different versions of the same push notification and then A/B test them. You will start discovering your own patterns of what works and what doesn't, as well as the perfect balance between eloquent and straightforward. 5. Be empathic Empathy is "the ability to step into the shoes of another person, aiming to understand their feelings and perspectives and to use that understanding to guide our actions." This might be a lot to ask of a company's push notifications, but it can be done! Let your users know that you feel their struggle, pain, happiness or excitement. Try to understand where they are coming from, as this will help you to create the perfect and personalised push notification - just like the app Sunshine did. Action step: Social media is a powerful tool at your disposal. Use your Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest profiles to become more empathic. Look for the comments and questions to uncover your customer's hopes, dreams and challenges and how they intersect with your brand. 6. Be in the know! It's common advice in marketing to "ride the wave" of current events. Push notifications are a great way to join the discussion of current events and trends. Whether it's a football game or the season finale of The Big Bang Theory, here's your chance to be creative and let your brand's personality shine through. Minibar, a liquor delivery company, found a great way to insert themselves in the U.S. Election conversation. Action step: Download a holiday calendar - preferable one that includes national days like "Find a Rainbow Day" - and keep it at handy when you are creating push notifications. Almost every day the internet is celebrating something, making it a marketing gold mine! Combine basic best practices with these copywriting tips, and you'll master the art of writing push notifications that users actually want to receive.

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