



Is Your Brand 'APP'-licable?

The evolution of brand engagement is mobile

By Suzanne Tulien, Principal, Brand Ascension

Once a month I get together with a colleague & friend of mine and over “dos” pomegranate margaritas and chips and salsa (“patatas fritas y salsa”), we collaborate on and share the latest new apps (is that an official word now?) we’ve discovered and downloaded on our iPhones. At some point I wonder if there is a ‘Apps Anonymous’ group out there supporting those addicted Apps junkies.

One of my most recent downloads is ‘Translate’ (free), an app that equips me to translate any language to any other language. My husband and I are learning Spanish through a self training DVD course and it is just the thing for me to pull up and use when we are out and about challenging each other on identifying the Spanish term for day-to-day items and phrases, and in particular, dining out at Mexican restaurants and ordering in Spanish. Gotta love it.

I am consistently amazed at the creativity app developers have in finding ways to engage the user. There are many apps that are not promoting or even representing specific brands, but there for pure functional levels to just help make our lives easier, or entertainment purposes to pass the time at an airport, or waiting in line. From horoscope apps, to homeopathic cures, to quick tip calculators, to wine paring (I could go on and on), these are becoming the new way to be efficient and productive at the same time.

Then, there are apps specifically designed to enlist, equip, and empower advocates for brands large and small, local and global. And it never ceases to amaze me how creative companies can be in ‘inventing’ reasons for customers to download their apps and connect with their brand. For example; I decided to think of random industries that at first glance, you may think – “What the heck would they have in an app for me?” Then, I researched a specific brand in the industry and collected some data on their approach to app offerings to glean the vastness of ideas that enlist, equip, and empower loyalty well beyond the brick and mortar and well into virtual 24/7.

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1. Are you tired of spending more and more on your marketing efforts with little return on your investment?
2. Do you see lost opportunities with employees who don't consistently create “Wow” experiences for your customers?
3. Are you plagued by price-sensitive customers?
4. Do you suffer from a shortage of customer referrals?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, this may be the most transformational program you will ever attend to define your unique competitive advantage for your business!

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Chick-fil-A: Mobile App/Website Engagement

1. Website: Post your story experience with their stores
2. Save a cow day – April 18th – go to any Chick-fil-A store dressed up as a cow and receive a free sandwich!
3. Find restaurant, get maps/driving directions, view menu, join text insiders for promotional offers, restaurant details (i.e. playgrounds, Wi-Fi)

Billion Acts of Green: Mobile App/Website Engagement

1. Post a pledge for an inspiring act of green
2. Read other posts by individuals or corporations
3. Share activity on Facebook
4. Watch leaderboard grow with acts of green
5. Donate to the Earth Day Network

North Face: Mobile App/Website Engagement

1. Find local hiking trails, topography maps, distance, elevations, level of difficulty, pictures of trail features.
2. Read stories of other hikers experience on this particular trail
3. Upload pictures and stories of your own experiences
4. Participate in outdoor activities sponsored by North Face all over the world, share stories, pictures, etc.

Walgreens: Mobile App/Website Engagement

1. Allows you to re-order prescriptions, print digital photos, receive and use special coupons, find nearest store locations, weekly ad promotions and coupon, product availability and pricing, flu shot locator.

Toms Shoes: Mobile App/Website Engagement

1. Mobile App: Learn about the critical aspects of shoes on children in under-developed countries, how & where Tom's gives, featured events to participate in, news, blogs, tweets, participate in spreading the word and uploading pictures, One Day Radio soundtrack player, watch video gallery from events around the world.
2. Shop merchandise; 'wear the message.'
3. 'Day Without Shoes' (April 5th, 2011) event to participate in, share stories, post pictures on One Day photo wall, and check out what others are doing.

And the grand-daddy of them all!! This is totally serious...(it really exists), and you have to pay \$1.99!

Jesus Christ; 'Confession': A Roman Catholic App

1. Perfect aid for every penitent with a personalized examination of conscience for each user.
2. Password protected profiles.
3. Prayerfully prepare and participate in the Rite of Penance.
4. Custom examination of conscience.
5. Ability to add sins not listed in standard.
6. Confession walk through including time of last confession in days, weeks, months.
7. Choose from 7 different acts of contrition.
8. Full retina display support.

Seriously. Now, that's creative!

As far as trivia in the world of apps...According to Wikipedia, as of October 2010, there are at least 300,000 third-party apps officially available on the App Store.[3] As of January 18, 2011, the App Store had over 9.9 billion downloads, which was announced via the company's "10 Billion App Countdown".[4] At 10:26 AM GMT on Saturday, January 22, 2011,[5] the 10 billionth app was downloaded from Apple App Store. The median revenue per application is estimated to be \$700, although on data no more publicly available.[6] The average price of non-free application is estimated between \$3.5 and \$4.[7][8] The distribution of price follows a power law distribution (the Zipf–Mandelbrot law): "Although prices can be freely chosen, most sellers price their application at multiple of \$5 (minus 1 cent)".

Apps are so popular there are now web sites that help companies with limited 'app-building' skill sets, like ours, compose their own via templates and best practices. The site www.appmakr.com is one of those sites recently featured in Entrepreneur Magazine, which by the way has their own app. With 'no coding required,' the site offers all kinds of 'features' to plug into your uniquely, custom branded app like image galleries, video uploads, podcast feeds, rss feeds, push alerts (coupons, specials, etc.), and so much more. I am currently in the process of building out own app. Stay tuned, I will tell you how it goes!

So, as I continue to think about the uses of apps I thought about how my entire day could become 'App'-licable. Here goes:

- **6:30 am** – I awake to the 'Sleep Machine Lite' app where I set my alarm on my iPhone to awaken me to selected music.
- **7:00 am** – I open my North Face app and choose a local trail to hike, learn about the elevation, distance and see pictures of the trail uploaded from previous hikers.
- **7:15 am** – I plug in my earphones and launch my Pandora app to my customized radio 'station' feature and begin my hike.
- **8:30 am** – I launch my horoscopes app to get a feel for what my day might bring.
- **9:00 am** – I open my CNBC app to check out what is going on in the stock market.
- **10:00 am** – head out to meet up with a friend across town at a Starbucks I have not yet been to, so I launch my Starbucks app and click on the locator feature to zero in on my destination location.
- **10:25 am** – While waiting for her to arrive, I launch my Yahoo IM! app to chat with another friend and confirm next week's lunch date.
- **11:00 am** – Over coffee and a lite snack, my friend and I are conversing about a weird symptom she has and it prompts me to launch my 'Cures A-Z' app and help her locate some natural remedies for her ailments.
- **1:30 pm** – setting up for my workshop, I realize an old colleague friend is in my audience - I want to get their contact information so I launch my 'Bump' app and we bump smartphone for an instantaneous delivery of contact information.
- **3:00 pm** - finish up facilitating a small business branding workshop and am now launching my 'SQUARE' app to accept credit cards on my iPhone for the sale of our Brand DNA book to workshop participants.
- **4:00 pm** – I open up my 'LinkedIn' and 'Facebook' apps to check in with colleagues, connections and upload thoughtful content.
- **6:00 pm** – I video Skype my husband to confirm our dinner date rendezvous at a local restaurant and let him know I am on my way.
- **6:30 pm** – 'Hello Vino' app is opened to research suggested wine pairings

with what I am ordering on the menu – I choose a beautiful Viognier to go with my shrimp scampi!

- **6:45 pm** – we chat about the latest movies that are out and I check my ‘Fandango’ app for movie trailers and times and set a weekend date to see one.
- **7:45 pm** – I hand over my ‘Quick Tip’ app to my husband to calculate the tip for our wonderful meal, it’s too late to do math!
- **8:00 pm** – as we are driving home, I open the ‘Distant Suns’ app to see what constellations are at our zenith and find out what phase the moon is in, nice discussion on the way home.
- **8:17 pm** – we are pulling up in the driveway and notice our porch lite is out so I launch me ‘Flashlight’ app and shine the way to the key hole!
- **9:30 pm** – Finally, I re-launch my ‘Sleep Machine Lite’ app, select my ‘go to sleep music’ beach#2 (slow wave action) to play for 30 minutes as I rest my head on my pillow and review my very ‘app’-licable day!

The way we live as consumers and operate and build our businesses is changing. You too can get on the ‘App’ wagon move with mobile evolution and build your own. Take some time to brainstorm what your app could possibly be used for, get creative:

1. Research other apps features and functions to get more ideas.
2. Don’t forget to ensure that every element of your app, from visual to functionality, is congruent with your Brand DNA!

Now, go make your business brand more ‘App’-licable!



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About the book:

EVERY Business Has A Brand;
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Unfortunately, most company stakeholders cannot effectively articulate the distinctive essence of their brand. So the question becomes “If you cannot express your brand concisely and consistently; how do you expect your customers to know, trust and embrace it?”

Simplified Branding. Whether you’re a startup or a seasoned entrepreneur, this step-by-step, brand-defining methodology guides you and your employee teams toward uncovering your brand’s unique genetic code; your Dimensional Nucleic Assets®, from the inside out. Once defined, your business begins its transformation as it gets highly focused and infuses your Brand DNA into your systems, leadership and culture, then through your promotional efforts. Follow Meg and her team through an entrepreneurial journey as they embark on defining and creating their Brand DNA by completing a series of thought-provoking exercises and begin to maximize their competitive advantage like never before.

This book will help you establish a brand blueprint for success by defining your distinguishing brand attributes: VALUES, STYLE, DIFFERENTIATORS and STANDARDS upon which to create competitive advantage and build your authentic brand.