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Lexicon Essay

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Each day we are blasted with 100s-1000s of advertisements, whether it be on our television, computer, cellphone, in the grocery store or along the highway. Companies must now find new ways to market their products so they are not lost among the competition. One such way that companies can stand out is by reaching and grabbing their customer by the hand, through mobile marketing. The average American spends 4.7 hours on their cellphone (Chang, 2015). This paper will start by exploring the history of mobile marketing through specific case studies. Then it will explore the mobile marketing techniques of website compatibility, text to donate campaigns and text updates. Finally, it will end with how mobile marketing directly relates to the lexicon terms: accessibility, third space, PLE, convergence, virtual environment.

In 1994, the first SMS (short message service) text message was sent between two individual parties (History of Mobile Advertising, 2012). In 1997, a Finnish news station began offering free headlines to individuals through SMS (History of Mobile Advertising, 2012). In 2000, the Mobile Marketing Association was founded, which is a nonprofit professional association for all marketing companies in the mobile marketing enterprise. In the decade that followed, many mobile marketing companies began to pop up, including big names like Google and Apple who developed their own marketing apps. By the year 2011, 8 trillion text messages had been sent worldwide and mobile revenue exceeded $1 trillion (History of Mobile Advertising, 2012). In 2012, Facebook launched its Facebook app, making the website more accessible to mobile users. By 2015, 64% of Americans use a smart phone ([Smith,](http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/04/01/us-smartphone-use-in-2015/) 2015).

Before nonprofits embark on a mobile marketing plan, they need to evaluate how mobile friendly their current platforms are. They should do so by asking the following questions:

* Is our nonprofit’s website mobile friendly?
* When we email monthly newsletters, can they be viewed on a smartphone?
* Do we have a mobile friendly method that people can donate money?

All of these questions are important because 60% of donors will research your nonprofit’s website on their mobile device, before they decide if they would like to donate ([Mobile](https://www.mobilecause.com/statistics/)Cause, 2016). If a donor is unable to do this research on their mobile device, they may decide to donate to a different organization. Additionally, the highest use of smartphone users are between the ages of 25-54 years old, ages that have expendable income to donate to nonprofit organizations (Chang, 2015).

Website accessibility can be evaluated through Google’s Mobile Friendly Test (Mobile Friendly Test), which rates an individual’s website as friendly or not friendly and also outlines how many items on the website are not mobile friendly. Finally, the Google Mobile Friendly Test, offers solutions and ideas for making the website more mobile friendly. Nonprofit websites that are mobile friendly, raise 38% more donations than those that are not mobile accessible ([Mobile](https://www.mobilecause.com/statistics/)Cause, 2016). Additionally, it is vital for nonprofit’s newsletters and emails to be compatible with mobile devices because 53% of emails are now opened on smart phones (Jordan, 2015). If an individual uses their phone as their main way to read emails, ones that are not compatible may get deleted without ever being opened. If the nonprofit does the majority of their donor solicitation through email newsletters that are not mobile compatible, they may be missing out on potential funds.

There are many advantages of nonprofit organizations utilizing mobile platforms. After the nonprofit has made their media platforms mobile ready they can establish a marketing strategy such as a text to donate campaign or mobile text updates. For the next part of this paper, two different text to donate cases will be explored to demonstrate the levels of publicity these campaigns can build. The first case will be the Red Cross’ Text to Help for the Haiti earthquake relief and the second will be the Restore Baltimore crowdfund campaign, completed through the United Way of Central Maryland.

In 2010, a major earthquake struck the country of Haiti. The earthquake killed, injured or displaced over 3 million people (Gahran, 2012). To assist the people in Haiti, the Red Cross implemented a text to donate program. The program was heavily promoted by media and also by the U.S. State Department. Supporters were invited to donate via text message by texting the word “HAITI” to the number 90999, each text donated $10 (Gahran, 2012). After the campaign was completed, $43 million dollars was raised for support in Haiti (Gahran, 2012). The Pew Internet and American Life Project completed an in-depth study on the motivations behind those that gave to the Haiti text to donate program (Gahran, 2012). PEW found that 89% of donors heard about the campaign on television and 50% of the donors gave on impulse after hearing about the campaign ([Smith,](http://www.pewinternet.org/2012/01/12/real-time-charitable-giving/) 2012). Of the donors, 75% of them were first time donors via text messaging (Smith, 2012).

There are many takeaways from the Haiti text to donate campaign. For starters, many of the donors gave on impulse, therefore nonprofit marketers could use emotional cues to help initiate that impulse. Many donors saw the campaign on television partnered with the images of destruction. Also, since many people carry their mobile phones on them at all times, it is very easy for them to pull out their phone and impulse give. Mobile phones make giving highly accessible to the general population, therefore campaigns are not limited to being advertised on just television but can be marketed in a variety of locations. For example, organizations could advertise their text to give campaigns on billboards located in high traffic driving areas or downtown in high traffic walking areas. When a donor sees the campaign advertised, they can pull out their phone and text to donate in less than 30 seconds. This increased accessibility and efficiency makes the donation process very donor friendly. Another takeaway is that many small donations can add up. Each donor give $10 per text, which added up to a massive donation amount.

The second case will look at the United Way of Central Maryland’s case. In early 2015, there were mass riots, looting and violence in the city of Baltimore, MD, following a controversial police brutality death. The riots left many businesses and community spaces damaged, directly effecting the quality of life and economy of the surrounding neighborhoods. The United Way of Central Maryland organized a large crowdfunding campaign to build a “Restore Baltimore Fund.” The campaign was organized through Mobilecause.com, a platform for receiving mobile donations. People were given the opportunity to text in a donation to “MDUNITES” at 71777 or through the short link: uwcm.org/MDunites (Success Story: United Way Central Maryland). United Way Central Maryland promoted the event actively through social media, a press release, email blasts and text messages (Success Story: United Way Central Maryland). The goal of the campaign was to raise $20,000, however that goal was completely blown out of the water when they raised $570,000 (Success Story: United Way Central Maryland). As the campaign grew in popularity, it was featured on donated billboards, local news and in sports stadiums. The campaign gave 100% of the donations to restoring the community and was able to keep a consistent message across the multiple mediums that the message was broadcast (Success Story: United Way Central Maryland).

Mobile Cause gave each donor the opportunity to also be a fundraiser. Mobile Cause set up the initial platform with the text-to-donate campaigns and an online giving page. From the online giving page, individuals were able to set-up their own online giving page linked to the same cause. This way, each person could set their own fundraising goal and then invite their social network to give. A breakdown of donations shows the majority of revenue came from corporate partnerships, $452,000. However, there were 786 individuals who donated to the campaign and 40 individuals who set up their own fundraising pages for United Way of Central Maryland (Success Story: United Way Central Maryland).

From the Restore Baltimore case, there are many takeaways that can be attributed to the mobile giving process. One takeaway is message consistency. The United Way of Central Maryland worked across many different mediums: television, social media, radio, billboards, text, etc and throughout all of this they kept a consistent message. Consistency can add a sense of legitimacy to the campaign and also boost donor’s confidence in the organization. Another takeaway of this case is that it is valuable to use multiple fundraising platforms. Each platform has a different audience, so if multiple platforms are used, more donors will be reached.

The third way a nonprofit can reach its stakeholders is through a direct text. Nonprofits can text stakeholders: organizational updates, coupons and event reminders. In order to start this kind of mobile marketing, the nonprofit first needs to gather the phone numbers of interested parties. One such way would be to place a mobile subscription widget on the nonprofit’s website, a place where people can sign up to receive mobile updates on the organization (MobileCause, 2016). Organizations are then able to mass text their stakeholders, stakeholders have the choice to continue reading the text messages or to opt out of receiving them. For nonprofits having the option for mobile updates, there is a subscription success rate of 76% (MobileCause, 2016). Additionally, 90% of text messages are read within 3 minutes of the owner receiving them (MobileCause, 2016). While emails can often get shuffled and lost, text messages are read immediately.

Text updates are a great way to wrangle last minute fundraising event participants. Organizations can send out a mass text reminding their stakeholders that the event is taking place that day. Organizations can also use texting for capital campaigns and large fundraisers. People really like to donate when there the campaign is getting close to ending. When the organizations has $5,000 left of their $100,000 goal they could send a mass text message. With only 5% of the goal left, people see something that is tangible and therefore would be more apt to donating. The organization could also send progression texts as the campaign goes on to keep the momentum up.

The final portion of this paper will define the following lexicon terms: accessibility, third space, PLE, convergence, virtual environment, and then demonstrate how they relate to mobile marketing. Accessibility is the ease to which something can be obtained. By nonprofits making their websites, emails and donation methods compatible with today’s cellular world, the nonprofit is increasing accessibility. With cellphones always in hand, people can access information about nonprofits at any point in their day. No longer do people need to be restricted to their desktop computers to access a nonprofit’s website. Also, as stated earlier, mobile giving is an impulsive act, therefore we are making our nonprofits accessible to a lot more people to feed their impulses.

Making nonprofit information and campaigns more accessible to stakeholders is a positive and a negative. By opening our nonprofits up, we make them vulnerable to scrutinizing. People can log onto their social media through their phone by the touch of one button, and from there they can leave negative feedback that could potentially affect the mindset of future donors. A bad reputation is very hard to repair. If an individual gets angry, they can post something on their social media in the moment, no matter where they are.

The second term that relates to mobile marketing is third space. The internet represents an individual’s third space, with home being the first space and work being the second space. Cellular phones increase a person’s accessibility to their third space. Third spaces can now be accessed on the go, at the supermarket, waiting in traffic jams, and anywhere else an individual has cell phone service. Cell phones also make an individual’s third space larger, as it blends into their first and second space. There is no longer a separation between the spaces because people have their mobile phones on them at all times and can check-in to their third spaces at all times of the day. As mentioned earlier, the average American spends 4.7 hours a day on their cellular device (Chang, 2015), it can be assumed that a large portion of that is spent on the internet. Since mobile phones bring the third space out into public and increases accessibility, people are able to access nonprofit’s websites and donate at more ease. The increase in third space is good for mobile marketing because people can do their research on their phones before they text-to-donate.

The next term that relates to mobile marketing is the personal learning environment (PLE). A PLE is a visual representation of ones learning environment including their physical and virtual learning environment. Mobile marketing is a method of marketing that directly reaches someone through their personal learning environment. Many people use their phone to access the internet, their email, social media etc. Therefore, when the marketing goes directly to the individual’s mobile phone it is affecting the individual’s virtual personal learning environment. If the person receives a texted coupon, that text message may interrupt the individual’s learning environment.

The next term is convergence. Convergence means creating a uniform project, one such example would be creating uniformity between collateral pieces through branding and the repetition of colors and design. One aspect of convergence is keeping all messages across mediums unified. The message in the mobile marketing should match the message that is being displayed on the website and the social media. An inconsistent message could make the organization not look reliable and could also confuse donors. If the organization is doing a text to donate program like the Red Cross did, it should be consistent across all mediums what the donations are being used for, how to donate and the deadline for donating. If the campaign is advertised in multiple places the design of the campaign propaganda should also be unified with a similar design, color palate and the organization’s logo.

The final lexicon term is virtual environment. The virtual environment can also be defined as a place on the internet where people create an alternative life. For example, some people use social media as a virtual environment. In their virtual environment, they can filter and choose how they are displayed to other people. Mobile giving can be integrated into people’s social media virtual worlds. For example, if someone chooses to give through mobile giving, they could share it on their Facebook or Twitter telling friends that they chose to donate to that cause. Sharing the fact that they donated can add into their social capital causing people to perceive them as a philanthropic individual.

In conclusion, the mobile marketing strategies via mobile giving, stakeholder text updates and creating compatible platforms can engage a lot of new donors. Nonprofit organizations can use mobile marketing to reach donors on their cellular devices in a much more efficient manner than traditional marketing. Mobile marketing gives nonprofits the opportunity to make their messages more accessible to new audiences and also to reach those audiences in the palm of their hand.

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