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A/X Armani Exchange debuts SMS campaign

By [Giselle Abramovich](#)

August 20, 2008



Wielding a mobile A/X

Luxury retailer A/X Armani Exchange is doing a text-to-win promotion to compile a database of names for future SMS marketing.

The "A/X \$1,000 Shopping Spree Sweepstakes" call to action can be found on the retailer's shopping bag. It asks customers to text the keyword AX to short code 276264 for a chance to win a \$1,000 shopping spree.

"For retailers, mobile adds the notion of accountability and gives retailers a CRM spine," said Conrad Lisco, creative director at [5th Finger](#), New York. "The channel can help retailers create a means for unique interaction outside the store."

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5th Finger does not handle the A/X Armani Exchange effort.

Once consumers text in, they receive this message: "Welcome to TEXT AX! Msgs up to 3x/mo. Std. carrier rates may apply. To opt in, reply w/Zip Code. To opt out, text STOP. For more info, text HELP."



More money for Armani

Once consumers reply with their ZIP code to opt in, they are entered into the sweepstakes.

After they have entered, the double opt-in comes into play.

Participants are asked to reply WIN to further confirm their interest in the sweepstakes.

The confirmation text tells participants to visit the [sweepstakes' dedicated microsite](#) for more information.

The winner will be drawn randomly Oct. 30.

Opted-in consumers are also added to a database of names and sent special SMS promotions up to three times a month.

"I applaud brands that are now getting into mobile because they are

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truly paving the way for other retailers to jump onto the bandwagon," Mr. Lisco said. "Most brands know mobile is going to be big, but they are looking for examples of the channel in use to better understand.

"Education and better understanding of the channel will break the barriers and pull more retailers in," he said.

A|X Armani Exchange did not return calls to confirm who is powering this text initiative.

[Armani Exchange](#) is the youthful label created by Italian designer and entrepreneur Giorgio Armani.

With Armani Exchange, Mr. Armani created a casual, yet sophisticated collection for the young, urban and sexy.

The brand designs, manufactures, distributes and retails fashion and lifestyle products, including apparel, accessories, eyewear, watches, jewelry and music.

"Mobile is helping retailers connect with consumers through an interactive brand-building experience and by offering information at different points in the purchasing process," said Lars Albright, vice president of business development with [Quattro Wireless](#), Waltham, MA.

"For example, some retailers offer detailed product reviews that can be used in-store during the shopping process for access to instant information," he said.

"Other retailers are promoting SMS text clubs and sweepstakes through mobile to help further deepen the relationship between the consumer and the brand."

Armani Exchange is not the first luxury retail brand to go mobile.

Polo not solo

Just last week, [Polo Ralph Lauren Corp.](#) launched a mobile commerce service to let consumers buy products through their handsets.

Ralph Lauren claims to be one of the first luxury retailers nationwide to launch a mobile commerce site and incorporate Quick Response codes in advertisements ([see story](#)).

Also, leading luxury brand [Dolce & Gabbana](#) has proved that mobile advertising is effective as well as fashionable by running a mobile campaign on the Nokia Media Network.

The D&G mobile effort demonstrates that brands that have relied on traditional forms of media are now benefiting from the targeting and high response rates that mobile offers.

The D&G campaign promoted the brand's teen-focused fashion catalog, while increasing awareness during the Men's Fashion Show in Milan, Italy in June.

The banners led consumers to a D&G mobile Internet site where they could download a branded game to their handset, as well as view a catalog and download branded wallpaper.

D&G's mobile campaign received an average click-through rate of almost 10 percent ([see story](#)).

"Generally, retailers are finding that mobile advertising is an effective new medium to help them reach new consumers and build their brand," Quattro's Mr. Albright said.

Retail is an industry that probably has the most to gain from mobile marketing, said Michael Foschetti, managing director of mobile marketing firm [mobisix](#), Charlotte, NC.



This advertisement for AmeriBase has a blue background. A white speech bubble contains the contact information for Steve McFadden: 'Steve McFadden', '954.489.3008 x511', and 'Steve@AmeriBase.com'. Below the speech bubble, the text reads 'Use mobile marketing for better results!'. In the bottom left corner, there is a small illustration of Uncle Sam pointing, and the AmeriBase logo is in the bottom right.

This advertisement for hipcricket has an orange background. At the top, a white speech bubble says 'Reach consmrs NEme NEwhere'. Below it, a green cricket ball icon is shown. The main text reads 'Connect your brand to your target audience with mobile marketing.' At the bottom, the hipcricket logo is displayed.

This advertisement for Mobile Marketer Daily has a red background. At the top, it says 'SIGN UP NOW' in white. Below that, the title 'Mobile Marketer Daily' is written in a stylized font. Underneath, it reads 'The premier mobile marketing publication'. At the bottom, the word 'FREE' is written in large white letters, with 'MobileMarketer.com' in smaller text below it.

Mobile has the power to deliver exclusive offers to opt-in consumers and drive in-store traffic as well.

Still, most retail brands have been slow to adopt mobile.

"Messaging offers the greatest opportunity today for delivering messages from retail brands to opt-in subscribers," Mr. Foschetti said. "It's simple, ubiquitous and measurable."

He also said that SMS adoption across all demographic groups creates scale.

More than half of all text messages are sent by people over 35.

"Armani's entrance into the mobile space underscores that top retail brands across segments should consider mobile, not just brands catering to teen audiences," Mr. Foschetti said.

"Retail brands, or other stakeholders in the space, should focus their mobile strategies on what would create the most value for all stakeholders - sales," he said.

Associate Editor Giselle Abramovich covers ad networks, advertising, content, email, media, messaging, legal/privacy, search, social networks, television and video. Reach her at giselle@mobilemarketer.com.

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