

# Look Smart, Be Smart:



## Create a Smartphone QR Code for Mobile Wireless Marketing Integration of Web and Print Sales Promotions

By David H. Martin

What's on your business card? Name, address, phone numbers, email address, website address, company logo? What's missing? A QR code. Today, with one out of three cell phone users carrying smartphones with integral cameras, you may soon want to tap into the world of mobile marketing with a smart-looking QR code of your own. Smartphones are camera phones offering thousands of applications. Whatever you want to do, there's probably an app for it. One of the most popular apps among camera-phone users is the barcode scanning application that reads QR codes.

QR stands for 'Quick Response' and is simply a bar code that holds up to 7,000 characters. Scanning is as easy as snapping a picture on your smartphone. Once the phone reads the URL (Internet address) hidden inside, it takes you directly to a mobile-friendly landing page where you can get additional info on the company, products, services and business location. That's a whole lot of information to try to cram onto a business card!

You have certainly noticed the ubiquity of QR codes wherever you look—on billboards, in magazine and newspaper ads, in product literature and direct mail pieces, on in-store and outdoor displays—as well as on the business cards of progressive marketers. When you take your QR-business card to a trade show, home show or other networking event, contacts you meet can immediately scan your card to add your contact information to their phone database. Or, if they take your card with them, they can scan it later.

Just like Facebook replaced the need for a traditional email address, name brands have started replacing their expensive billboards in big cities with QR codes, allowing commuters to scan the code from a train, car or bus, and go right to the website to view product offers. More and more, QRs are showing up on price cards in stores. Read on to see how easy it is to get your own QR code for very little, or free.

### **Not just for retailers or national advertisers**

Can typical water treatment dealers, who sell primarily in-home, engage in mobile marketing to iPhone® and Android® phone users? Absolutely. There are many opportunities for smartphone users to access your story wherever they may be at the moment. That's the beauty of mobile-phone marketing. Here are some mobile-dealer marketing applications to consider:

- All printed materials including literature, direct mail

and stationery should include QR codes linked to your company websites.

- Every page of your company website should feature QR codes that link to more information on that page's content.
- Local newspaper ads should carry the dealer QR code in the signature area.
- Feature it on home show displays, giveaway refrigerator magnets, note pads, bumper stickers and promotional restaurant menus.
- Outdoor advertising (billboard) signs should feature a large QR image.
- Even dealer TV spots should feature the QR code because it reinforces the coveted image of a progressive company.
- Dealers can feature a large-format, custom QR code on the sides and backs of all service vehicles.
- And don't forget to include it on the front of your place of business. Make it a prominent part of your image.

Smartphones seem to be everywhere, and for good reason. Research predicts that by 2015, some 48 billion applications will have been downloaded to people's phones, and approximately 45 percent of all phone users will use smartphones. Whatever it is you want to do, there's probably an app for it.

### **QR code examples**



#### **Tap into cleaner water and greener living**

Leslie WaterWorks® guarantees the purest, best-tasting drinking water imaginable. With two purification processes—sub-micron filtration and UV technology—along with its proven anti-microbial BioCote® protection that removes over 95 percent of bacteria, Leslie WaterWorks purification systems are the trusted, environment-friendly source for your drinking water needs. With no more bottles and no more waste, Leslie WaterWorks is the future of commercial drinking water. Scan the QR code (top code) and visit us later!



**QR Code for Multi-Pure International**  
(bottom code)

## How to acquire your own QR code

How can you make a customer QR code that can scanned by an iPhone, Android or other smartphone with a camera? It's actually pretty easy. A popular URL generator called Bitly automatically creates QR codes for every website address. In order to see your new QR code, simply add .qr at the end of your URL code. Google's own URL generator, goo.gl, can also do the job. You can see the code created for any URL on the statistics page for any particular website. Google allows anyone to easily embed a QR code on a webpage. Simply load this code (with <img> tag) on your webpage: <http://chart.apis.google.com/chart?cht=qr&chs=100x100&choe=UTF-8&chld=H/0@chl=http://intomobile.com>

If you Google 'QR code generator' you'll find others. The Google URL Shortener will also create a QR code file from a shortened link—just click Details to see the image file. To find a scanner application, Google 'QR Reader' and the model of your phone.

## One dealer's take on QR code marketing

Jeff Schloss is the owner of Leslie WaterWorks, a Hicksville, NY dealer representing Innowave POU drinking water systems to the commercial/industrial market within a 100-mile radius. "We've recently added a company QR code to most pages on our website ([www.lesliewaterworks.com](http://www.lesliewaterworks.com)). Now we are planning to print the same code on stickers we will apply to Innowave units we have in commercial offices and hospital waiting rooms. People who scan them," explains Schloss, "can click them into their smartphones, which will take them to the Leslie WaterWorks website for product and service information.

"We also are looking at including our QR code in literature, mailings and on our business cards," adds Schloss, "to better integrate our website messages with traditional promotion materials. We foresee the day when customers will order replacement filters from their smartphones—and immediately. We hope the presence of our QR code in marketing helps project a more progressive company image to prospects and customers."

## QR codes for water-cause marketing

The National Association of Water Companies (NAWC) used a QR code for Water For People, the global organization improving quality of life in developing countries by supporting the development of locally sustainable drinking water resources, sanitation facilities and hygiene education programs. For every NAWC code scanned before October 24, 2011, NAWC donated \$1 to Water For People.



For some time now, the Levi's® brand has been raising awareness about vital water issues. Now, in partnership with Water.org (a non-profit co-founded by Matt Damon and Gary White), the company seeks to bring clean drinking water to people around the world. In January, Levi's Water<Less™ jeans hit the shelves; a collection of denim made by using less water during the finishing process, which has already saved millions of liters of water. Now, Levi's has launched an interactive WaterTank game on Facebook, incorporating in-store QR codes. The game is intended to inspire consumers to participate in online water-saving challenges. Each challenge completed will 'unlock' water from the Levi's WaterTank and ultimately support Water.org's life-saving clean water projects worldwide. Through this initiative, the Levi's brand will donate \$250,000 to Water.org to fund sustainable water programs that will provide at least 200 million liters (52.8 million gallons) of water to communities in need of reliable access to this most basic necessity.

## About the author

◆ David H. Martin is President of Lenzi Martin Marketing, Oak Park, IL, a firm specializing in water improvement and environmental marketing that integrates old and new media. He can be reached at (708) 848-8404 or by email at [dmartin@lenzimartin.com](mailto:dmartin@lenzimartin.com).

