

Why Location Is About More Than The Check-In

Contributed by eMarketer
Tuesday, 25 January 2011

The marketing opportunity in location-based services

The check-in got a lot of press in 2010 although it was still an activity limited to early adopters, with the Pew Internet & American Life project reporting in November that just 4% of US internet users participated in location-sharing services.

Like social networking on mobile devices, location-based services are still in their infancy. eMarketer projects the number of mobile social network users will more than double between 2010 and 2015, and adoption of location-based services will rise with it.

“Savvy marketers know there is more to geolocation than just the check-in and immediate proximity to the consumer,” said Noah Elkin, eMarketer principal analyst and author of the new report, “Beyond the Check-In: Best Practices for Location-Based Marketing.” “Location services enable marketers to deliver a compelling offer when consumers are near the point of decision, yet they also help marketers understand the context of their target audience—their intent and state of mind.”

Explosive growth in usage of location-based services in 2010 suggests that checking in is ready to move into the mainstream.

According to SNL Kagan, the number of location-based services users nearly tripled in 2010, reaching 33.2 million (including users of family tracking and navigation services provided by wireless carriers).

Having Facebook in the mix will only help to familiarize people with the check-in and push it toward mass adoption.

“Checking in to take advantage of an offer will be the direct-response end point of a larger user location-based campaign that starts with branding and awareness-building,” said Elkin. “Proximity data will help guide marketer messaging at each stage of the purchase funnel, starting with building awareness about the location of a store or product, and becoming progressively more specific to include promotions or offers as a consumer gets physically closer. Success will come from the combined power of reach, relevancy and the ability to drive offer redemption.”

The full report, “Beyond the Check-In: Best Practices for Location-Based Marketing,” also answers these key questions:

- * What is the value of the check-in? How can marketers tie into the power of location?
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- * How has Facebook changed the location game?
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- * What is the outlook for other location-based networks such as foursquare and Gowalla?
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- * What is the consumer perspective on check-ins and location-based offers?
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- * What companies have successfully tapped into location and what factors contributed to that success?
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- * How will location evolve as a marketing tool?

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