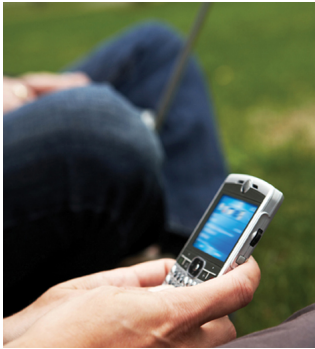


Text Time

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Saturday, 31 January 2009 17:00 - Last Updated Friday, 27 February 2009 19:57

Texting on the course? Tisk, tisk—until now...



While using a cell phone on the course is an easy way to get kicked out of your favorite foursome, text messaging from the tee could soon become an invited activity.

MobiMark, a Mesa-based text message marketing company aims to do just that. Established in mid 2007, MobiMark, the brainchild of childhood friends Spencer Brannan, 34, and Levi McClendon, 35, offers a plethora of mobile telephone marketing agendas including a division to please those who frequent the fairways.

"MobiMark allows people to connect utilizing text messaging," McClendon says. "We enable businesses to connect with existing clients as well as future clients by getting information in people's pockets."

Basing their business model off of mainstream giants like American Idol and ESPN—who allow viewers the opportunity to vote or voice opinions by texting in—MobiMark utilizes a short text code and an appropriate keyword to transmit information to users. A sector of the company entitled Yardage Pro could potentially relieve insecurity and doubt plaguing golfers who are unsure of how to execute a particular golf hole.

"What Yardage Pro does, is let's say that you've never played a course and you want a tip on how to play a specific hole," McClendon says. "You can text in and immediately get a response to your cell phone with a tip from the [course's] pro that tells you how to play that hole."

"It's also a great way for golfers to capitalize: for instance, at Bear Creek Golf Club [in Chandler, Ariz.], there is a sign that advertises 'For a free bucket of range balls, text in to 411247.' The customer can redeem the offer by showing the text to the person behind the counter."

Another way that Bear Creek Golf Club employs the texting technology is to fill slots on its daily tee sheet.

"What Bear Creek is using it for, is maybe they have a threesome and they want to get a single in that group too, they can easily send out a text blast that says 'We are looking for a single golfer to join an 11 o'clock tee time for 50 percent off greens fees,'" McClendon says. "That is just one instance of how the club is able to increase their rounds of golf that day."

McClendon says the success of MobiMark is likely a reflection of the public's affinity toward new age communication devices in an era when 95 percent of cell phones come equipped with a text messaging function and more than 92.5 million consumers actively text message.

"When people leave their homes, what do they take? Their keys, wallet and cell phone," McClendon says. "So, if you can get a message out to a golfer on a discounted tee time, the message is delivered to their pocket right now."

The technology also increases a ready-golf mentality by updating golfers about potential delays on the day of play. "Clubs can use it to announce frost delays or when they overseed; they can let people know what is going on with the course virtually instantaneously," McClendon says. The bottom line is simple—more knowledge about a course's condition equals less time waiting around and extra time to read that birdie putt on eighteen.