

QR codes are coming to Australia in a big way.

As you've seen with the Telstra www.QRious.com.au campaign this is the beginning of a new marketing medium for Australia.

Although this technology has been available in Asia and globally for a number of years (Japan has been using QR codes for at least 10+ years) for the first time we are seeing a name brand push into Australia with all the associated hype and marketing budget to see this take off.



This document whilst no means comprehensive is to act as a general background primer on what QR codes are and how Cognation's clients can take advantage of them.

Please discuss with me before presenting these concepts to your clients for a Cognation engagement contract.

Regards,

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QR 101

So What Are QR Codes?

QR codes are the commercial name for a type of 2-D bar code (as opposed to 1 dimensional barcodes which have lines running in vertical strips in a horizontal format like the barcode you may be familiar with on a bar of chocolate in the supermarket)

A 2-d barcode has boxes running both left to right and up and down the vertical as well. Each small 'pixel' contains information, for example the QR code below says

<http://www.cognition.net/profile/index.html>

The 3 "big boxes" in the corners simply tell the camera which way the code is orientated, so QR codes can be snapped in any direction but generally are printed with the 2 big boxes in the top and one on the left.



QR 102

Where Did QR Codes Come From?

QR codes were originally invented in Japan by Denso for industrial bar codes on packaging for warehousing and production purposes

In their wisdom they realized that this "standard" would be more beneficial if everyone could use it, so they open sourced the technology and now anyone can create, read and implement QR code technology for free with no license fees being required.

There have been several other 2D code technologies available over the years but all required some form of license fees as such they haven't been widely accepted and adoption results have been disappointing.

QR 103

How Did QR Codes End Up On My Phone?

In the 90's the use of QR codes were rapidly changed by all of the Japanese mobile carriers sitting down and agreeing to implement QR software into their mobile phones. Originally it was just a concept for delivering business card information.

For example the QR code below has a VCF card with my name, phone number, company name and email address. This is a highly efficient way to 'store' this information and by printing this 2-d image on the back of your business card allowed for very rapid deployment of information transfer into your electronic address book both on the phone and your desktop.



QR 104

So What Else Can A QR Code Do?

So for a number of years, Japanese business men were printing their QR code on business cards but of course Japanese school girls improvised their own concepts.

For example Stamkey <http://www.shachihata.co.jp/qr/stamkey>

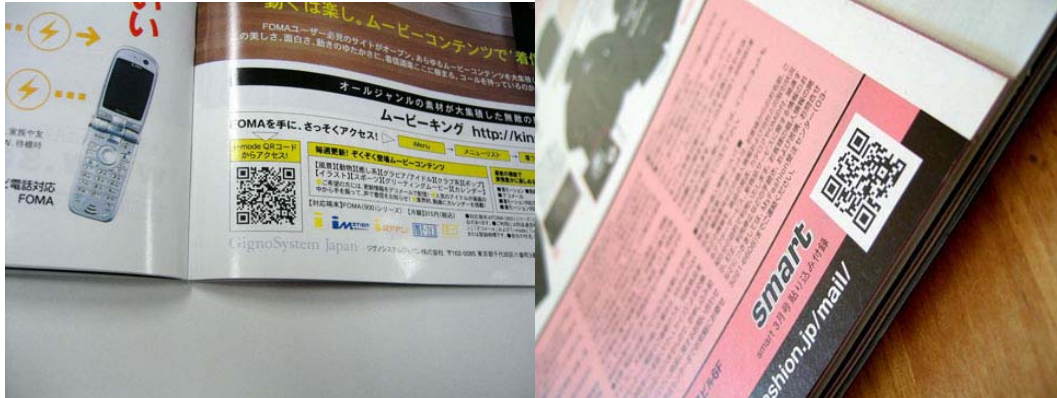


QR 105

When Did QR Codes Become Mainstream?

Next QR codes ended up being used to “market” to the mainstream consumer space. You can't open a Japanese magazine or print newspaper without examples popping out at you.

Allowing consumers to interact directly with your brand or content just by snapping a phone button allows rapid and immediate connection between you and your customers.



And not just for 'low price items' either – this advertisement below is a highly successful campaign for Mini in Japan that linked directly to video of both interior and exterior and a web form to make test drive bookings on the mini wap website.

Click through rates on test drive bookings rated through the roof.



QR 106

So What Exactly Can QR Codes Do?

QR codes can be read by almost any phone with a camera. There are a variety of QR code readers/software applications available to download from the internet for free (or in this case Telstra are installing directly onto their handsets).

Remember any QR code can be read by any reader. There are some variations on functionality but this is outside the scope of this Integration Proposal.

QR Codes can be implemented to do the following;

- **Display Text Only** – you might want to ‘push’ an address or some other form of information as text to the handset.
e.g. 40% off sale this Thursday to Sunday - our address is 255 George St.
- **Initiate Email Transaction** – QR codes can not only initiate an email but pre-populate text into the email.
e.g. Message: Dean@Cognition.net
Subject: “Please add me to your mailing list”.
- **Initiate SMS transaction** – QR codes are often used to initiate sms.
e.g. QR code on poster to sms Vote for “Danny” in this weeks American Idol
- **Initiate Browser Session** – Most QR marketing codes initiate a browsing session for the phone to a particular website landing page (which allows for great analytics tracking of advertisements success – see landing page topic below).
- **Initiate Video Stream** – Any phone that allows video to be displayed can use QR codes to initiate playing of a video stream.
e.g. “Indiana Jones and the Kingdom Of The Crystal Skull” movie poster campaign which had a QR code on the bottom right which allowed 3 minute Movie Trailer to be directly played on your mobile handset while in the cinema foyer.

QR Interaction tracking.

QR codes provide particular benefits when looking at location analytics. A desktop browser session to your company’s website is ‘nice’ but you don’t know how/where the user found you.

With multi-variant landing pages you can tell the difference between a SMH Drive Section Newspaper QR code to a Wheels Magazine QR Code.

The best part is it’s mostly invisible to your users.

QR 107

QR Codes Are Coming To Australia – So What?

In the USA last year Google ran their first QR newspaper print advertisement for “Blue Nile Jewelry”.

Even though QR codes had been implemented throughout the USA in small scale companies the QR “bump” that occurred from a major brand name like Google implementing QR codes was huge. You would have thought that something in the ‘teen’ or ‘mobile’ market would have been a better choice but I’m sure Blue Nile Jewelry didn’t care.

Thousands of articles were written about Blue Nile Jewelry and their new QR code campaign which resulted in many hundreds of thousands of web page visits.



In the UK last year an QR code billboard campaign for the dvd release of “28 Weeks Later” which is a fairly unremarkable movie.

They plastered the entire side of a building with 1 QR code and a simple url.

The resulting free press coverage was huge and totally hyped up the dvd release – this free marketing buzz is only available to early adopters – after its gone you are just another product.



<http://www.behindthebuzz.com/28-weeks-later-qr-code/>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2007/sep/05/news>

<http://www.crackunit.com/2007/08/30/why-i-like-this-qr-code-poster/>

http://www.filmstalker.co.uk/archives/2007/09/new_smart_code_advertising_for_html

<http://benayers.blogspot.com/2007/09/qr-craze-used-to-promote-dvd-release.html>

<http://www.camera-core.co.uk/05-09-2007-qr-codes-for-camera-phone-decoding-launched-in-uk.html>

<http://www.bluemedia.com/blueline/?p=160>

QR 108

QR Codes – So What's In It For You?

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So if you've read this far and think hmm lets put it in the budget for next quarter – don't bother.

But if you understand the value of free publicity, read the next page and pitch these to your clients as concepts they should consider.

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QR code - Concept No 1

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QR code - Concept No 2

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Summary

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