

How NFC communicates with consumers

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Building lasting relationships with consumers and earning their loyalty has never been more important for brand owners than it is in today's increasingly competitive retail environment. Thankfully, technological innovation offers increasingly more sophisticated methods of communicating with consumers, one of which is near field communication (NFC) technology.



What is NFC technology?

NFC is a wireless technology that's embedded into most smartphones. It has an array of applications from mobile payments to NFC tags embedded into products, labels and promotional material. The beauty of these tags is that they interact with consumers' smartphones using a radio signal. And, unlike Bluetooth, you don't have to manually pair two NFC devices. They also use a fraction of the battery power used by Bluetooth and Wi-Fi.

NFC tags can store a variety of information, including short lines of text, such as a web address or contact details, as well as links to apps in the Google Play Store.

NFC tags are passive devices. They can't process on their own and they rely on an active device (smartphone) to come into range before they activate, using a magnetic field. Generally, they only operate within a field of less than a few centimetres.

What are the benefits of NFC technology?

Because NFC tags contain unique identifiers by item, not just product type, their content can be targeted and dynamic. And, because of their small size, they can be integrated into packaging without impacting on a brand's identity. What's more, the tag's unique ID prevents counterfeiting, makes customisation possible and enables authentication.

NFC devices create a direct link for brand owners to engage with consumers by offering usage instructions, coupons, cross-selling initiatives and loyalty programmes, as well as product authentication.

How to use NFC in marketing campaigns

NFC delivers information to devices in its proximity. So, all that's needed is to embed the NFC hardware within your advert, packaging, product labels or merchandising display. Consumers then have access to more information about products via a landing page that provides detailed information and helps them to learn more about the product's benefits. This is an excellent opportunity for building brand awareness, highlighting promotions, and providing competition information.

Fix-a-Form® booklet labels, available from Pyrotec PackMedia, already increase brand awareness with their enhanced graphics and ability to communicate and appeal to consumers in several languages simultaneously. They are ideal for sharing value-adds, such as recipes, inserts, coupons, collectables and cross-promotions, and they also make a great vehicle for carrying an NFC tag to enhance communication and attract shoppers.

About Pyrotec

Pyrotec is a privately-owned South African company that specialises in providing innovative, top-quality product identification solutions. The company's extensive service offering includes on-pack product identification solutions – including self-adhesive label systems, coding and labelling equipment – as well as financing, and cloud-based brand protection, track and trace and consumer engagement services. Founded on a dedication to quality, operational reliability and excellent service, the Cape Town-based company has a national footprint with centres in major cities across the country. With more than 50 years' experience, Pyrotec has two brands operating under its ambit: Pyrotec PackMedia, which includes Pyrotec PackVerifi; and Pyrotec PackMark, including Pyrotec Finance. This proudly independent company is headed up by managing director, Rowan Beattie. For more information, visit www.pyrotec.za.

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