



Patrons emerge from a Dunkin' Donuts in New York City with free ice teas and ice coffees. JACK PHILLIPS/THE EPOCH TIMES

# US Coffee wars: Dunkin' Donuts versus Starbucks

By SHAHRZAD NOORBALOOCHI  
Epoch Times Staff

With its Free Iced Coffee Day promotion Tuesday, Dunkin' Donuts appears to be taking on Starbucks' "happy hour" Frappuccino promotional drive.

As summer rolls around the corner, coffee shops around the country have ramped up their promotional efforts, offering consumers luring deals on discounted coffee drinks. With coffee shops plastered on every street corner and down every valley, competing brands such as Dunkin' Donuts and Starbucks are coming on strong in a battle to win over the loyalties of consumers across the nation.

Dunkin' Donuts is partaking in Dunkin' Donuts' Free Iced Coffee Day celebrations in which it gives away free iced coffee to customers between the hours of 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. (two hours left to go at the time of writing). Don't get too excited, though, because if you don't live in one of 14 locations in which the promotion is offered and aren't in the mood for iced coffee on May 11, you aren't getting free coffee.

It seems that some may have mistakenly thought that Dunkin' Donuts' Free Iced Coffee Day is happening nationally, only to have their hopes shattered when they realized that iced coffee from Dunkin' will be free only in 14 participating locations in Arizona, Maryland, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. On the company's Facebook page, donut dunkers around the country are expressing their anger for not being able to get their yearly dose of free iced coffee.

Starbucks, in a calculated move, has been offering discounted frappuccinos at most locations from May 7 through May 16. Between the hours of 3 pm and 5 pm, participating locations will be offering a 50 percent discount on their frappuccinos, or 50% off \$4.75 on a large or "venti" size.

Consumers around the country were thus faced the difficult question as they came off of work: to pay \$2.50 for a tasty frappuccino or pay nothing for a perhaps-less-tasty but always classic cup of iced coffee - should you be lucky enough to be in the vicinity of a participating location.

# Android outsells iPhone in first quarter

By SHAHRZAD NOORBALOOCHI  
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A report released this week by the NPD group revealed that Google's Android operating system (OS) has surpassed Apple's iPhone OS in unit sales in the first quarter of 2010.

The report shows that based on unit sales to consumers, Android now sits at second place with 28 percent, coming in behind Research In Motion's (RIM) OS, used by BlackBerry smart phones, at 36 percent. Apple now comes in third with 21 percent.

According to NPD, Google's ability to surpass iPhone is partly due to the widespread availability of Android OS on various wireless service providers and devices. While iPhone is available only through AT&T Wireless in the United States, smart phones operating on Android can be bought through Verizon Wireless, Sprint, AT&T, and T-Mobile. According to Ross Rubin, executive director of NPD industry analysis, "As in the past, carrier distribution and promotion have played a crucial role in determining smart phone market share."

Wireless sales representative Ryan Stephens also expressed his opinion on the topic, saying, "I think it's inevitable that Android will surpass iPhone simply because it's not proprietary and many, many manufacturers will use this platform to create desirable products and try to stay afloat; Motorola being a good example. They were in hot water and relied on Android to basically bail them out and get them a desirable product, whereas iPhone is Apple only, and in the U.S., AT&T only."

Android sales have also been boosted by the accompanying deals offered by the numerous carriers operating on Android OS. For example, Rubin says, "Verizon Wireless has expanded its buy-one-get-one offer beyond RIM devices to now include all of their smart phones," contributing to the increase in Android sales.

Verizon Wireless has been keeping up with AT&T with a high number of Droid, Droid Eris, and BlackBerry Curve sales in the first quarter of 2010. Smartphone sales at AT&T comprised 32 percent of the smartphone market, Verizon Wireless comprised 30 percent, T-Mobile comprised 17 percent, and Sprint comprised 15 percent.

The lower prices of the Android phones don't hurt matters either. With higher prices and less availability, it is not difficult to imagine how Apple may be struggling to stack up against Android, which is supported by a number of manufacturers including HTC, Samsung, Motorola, and Sony Ericsson.

But NPD's findings don't necessarily mean that Apple's iPhone is going to be blown out of the water. With Apple's ingenious marketing plus the expected release of an updated iPhone in the summer, Apple fans are sure to be a difficult crowd to win over.



DROID SURPASSES: The Motorola DROID smartphone  
COURTESY OF MOTOROLA, INC.

## THE MARKETING CORNER

# E-commerce strategy for small businesses

By ADELE LASSERE

It's no wonder that e-commerce has seen steady growth in 2010 versus a year ago, given shifts in channel tactics and slow economic recovery.

E-commerce offers very favourable tools for optimization of marketing activities. Many companies utilizing an e-commerce strategy are seeing performance above expected goals. As such, experienced sellers, especially in retail, are now readying themselves for growth when the economy rebounds by improving their e-commerce tactics. This is really a smart move since one can test tactics and see what works and make improvements along the way.

One key ingredient that contributes to the success is targeting the right customer. Getting and retaining customers is important to delivering the bottom line. There are several key approaches to maintaining customers via e-commerce.

First and foremost, a favourable driver is to offer free shipping and private sale offers to returning customers, and ensure ease of navigation on your e-commerce site as well as offering mobile-enabled e-commerce. Having an assortment of items in stock helps keep customers on one Webpage. Be sure that your site is easily searchable and is relevant to the customers you seek.

Lastly, it doesn't hurt to send out an e-newsletter or e-mail with some frequency to alert customers of sale items, new items, special offers, and upcoming events, or promotions your company is holding.

Other key ingredients have to do with improving e-commerce site performance. This is achieved by:

- Strong strategic decisions about merchandising
- Provide customization wherever possible within the site
- Invest in web analytics to assist in decision making
- Improve/enhance customer service
- Consider social media as a platform for continued dialogue with your customer base
- Ensure your e-commerce site can be accessed via portable devices
- Be nimble! Ensure you are able to adapt and make changes on the fly as needed

With clear direction and execution of the aforementioned approaches, you should be well on your way to generating growth and ROI.

Adele Lassere is a marketing/advertising consultant with 20+ years experience, freelance writer and soon to be published author of "Elements of Buying: An Advertising Reference Guide for Business Owners." Contact: lassere@bellsouth.net.

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