

## Mobile Tags: Just Snap Away

Diana Stepner, September 2009

Consumers live in a non-linear world. They switch between digital devices, access the web from their mobiles while on the go or multi-task while watching TV, only to switch back to their computer when the need arises. Brands that hope to engage with these connected consumers can build credibility and trust by meeting them on their digital turf, and by providing tools that invite interaction.

But, where is the digital turf? According to the [Outdoor Advertising Association](#) people are spending an average of 53 percent more time out of home compared to 1994. In fact, over 40 percent of the UK population is outside their home for over 10 hours a day – giving British commuters the honour of having the longest journeys to work in Europe according to [Mintel](#). As a result, brands use digital platforms to appeal to consumers while they are out and about.

Enter the [Microsoft Tag](#). The Microsoft Tag, in a similar way as [QR codes](#), helps to bridge today's gap between the physical and digital arenas. The colourful tags [allow more information](#) (and more types of information) to be stored than other codes. They can transform physical media (print advertising, product packages, signs, in-store merchandising, or even digital images and displays) into live links for accessing information and entertainment via mobile.

To obtain the Microsoft Tag application, use the mobile Internet browser and visit <http://gettag.mobi/> or download the application from the iPhone app store. With the Microsoft Tag application, just aim a camera phone at a Tag, take a picture of it, and instantly access the corresponding content, videos, music, maps, social networks, and promotions.

Anyone can create a Microsoft Tag. They are free for personal as well as business use. The only fees are related to the normal charges one receives for accessing the Internet.

But, how do you create a Microsoft Tag?

1. Visit <http://www.microsoft.com/tag/>
2. Login to <http://tag.microsoft.com/SignIn.aspx> using your Windows Live ID
3. Select Create a Tag
4. Enter a few details about the tag (title and URL are the only required fields)
5. Click Save, and that's it.

After deciding where you want to place the tag, simply click the Render icon and choose the appropriate output format (e.g. PDF, jpeg, etc). For markets where Microsoft Tags are still a novelty, selecting the option that instructs people to 'Snap' the image (as well as where to obtain the application) is recommended. Another option is to include the instructions in the signage containing the Microsoft Tag. Remember to put the codes in a location with sufficient light as

reflections, such as from a flash or [shadows, reduce the applications ability to scan](#) and interpret the tag.

Why introduce mobile tags today?

- General media fragmentation – connect with consumers using an innovative technology
- Drive to accountability – login, view the report for each tag, and evaluate performance
- Mobile growth – capitalize on increasing use of mobile internet
- Be open and honest – promote transparency by giving access to additional information
- Promote recall – Allow consumers to snap and take away product details for later research and review

What's next? Some people believe QR Codes are the bar codes of the future, linking online and physical graphics to websites and multi-media. For example, [Amazon](#) has introduced QR codes by ScanLife on some books. Others, such as [Xsights](#), are moving towards a time when recognizable objects (e.g. text, images, etc.) will simply be understood and interpreted by our device of choice.

### About the Author



#### **Diana Stepner, Senior Strategist**

Diana's passionate about the emerging channels, and specializes in Emerging Media at Razorfish UK, including social media, mobile, digital out of home, video and gaming. She has worked with renowned brands such as Monster.com helping them break into emerging channels such as mobile and social, defining the strategy, and measuring its business effectiveness. Diana has delivered international solutions from both the client and agency perspective. Having led product strategy for EMEA brands, including the launch of consumer & eCommerce sites Diana joined Razorfish in 2008, and has worked with Microsoft, O2, Pentland, C&G and bmbaby among others.

Start a conversation with Diana on Twitter [@dianas](#).

### About Razorfish™

Razorfish is one of the largest interactive marketing and technology companies in the world. With a demonstrated commitment to innovation, Razorfish counsels its clients on how to leverage digital channels such as the Web, mobile devices, in-store technologies and other emerging media to engage people, build brand loyalty and provide excellent customer service. The company is increasingly advising marketers on Social Influence Marketing™, its approach for employing social media and social influencers to achieve the marketing and business needs of an organization. Its award-winning client teams provide solutions through their strategic counsel, digital advertising and content creation, media buying, analytics, technology and user experience. Razorfish has offices in markets across the United States, and in Australia, China, France, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom. Clients include Carnival Cruise Lines,

MillerCoors, Levi's, McDonald's and Starwood Hotels. Visit <http://www.razorfish.com> for more information, and follow us on Twitter @Razorfish.

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