



gaydar**mobile**

what you want, where you want

GaydarMobile Case Study

Gaydar on the go





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Background

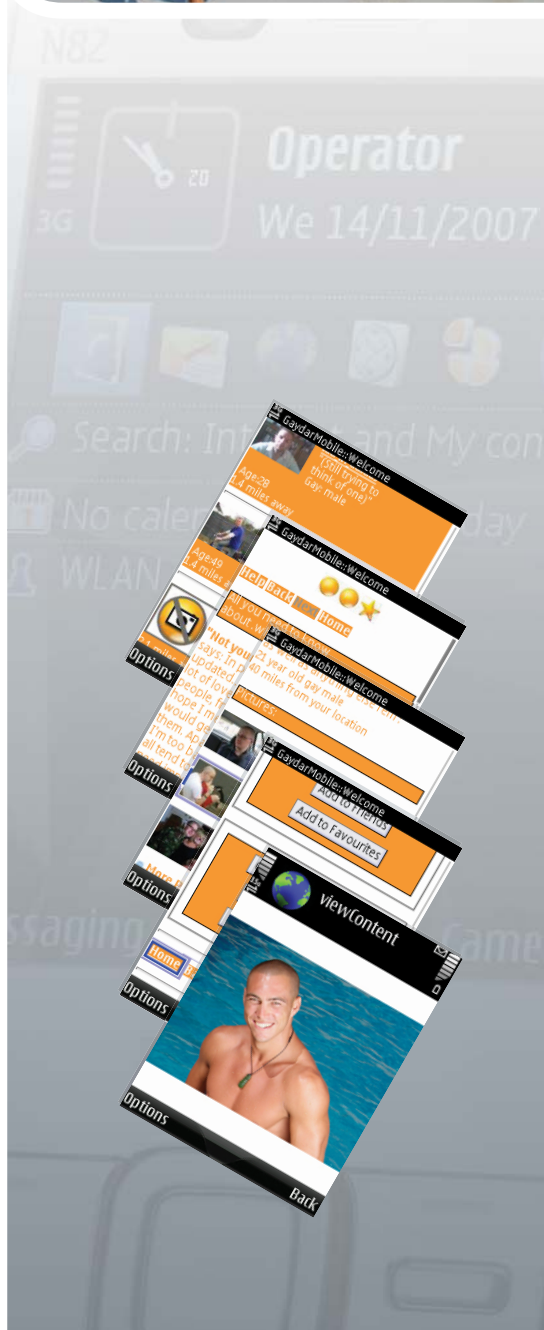
QSoft Consulting Ltd is the company behind gaydar.co.uk - the UK's largest gay and lesbian dating website and part of a growing network of media brands that also includes GaydarRadio, the largest independently owned radio station in the UK which has over 2 million unique listeners every month.

Gaydar was launched in 1999 and has grown into one of the biggest and most recognised brands in the global gay marketplace. Membership in the UK has now grown to over 1.1 million members and to over 3.6 million globally.

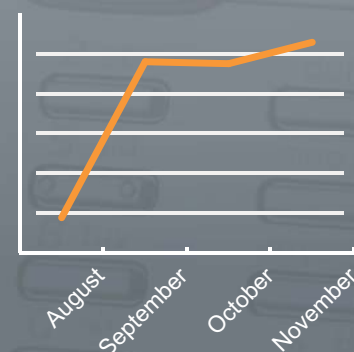
The Potential for Mobile

In 2003 QSoft began to recognise the potential of the mobile phone as an alternative channel for accessing Gaydar and they put together an initial definition of what a mobile service should provide. Some of the key criteria were:-

- To complement and enhance the existing web service with an addictive, fun & compelling mobile experience
- To target a younger demographic (i.e. 18 - 24 year olds)
- To increase profit per member
- To increase market share and to reduce churn



Profile views



Build or Buy?

The next decision that had to be made was whether to develop a mobile service in-house or whether to identify a suitable partner who could provide a ready-made mobile solution. The in-house development route was considered but finally rejected for a number of reasons including:-

- Expertise in mobile development scarce
- Steep learning curve
- Complex and diverse regulatory requirements in each territory
- Potentially high support costs

QSoft therefore decided to embark on a search to find a suitable partner but became increasingly frustrated after a number of false starts and broken promises from a variety of organisations in both the UK and Germany. After a period of nearly two years they finally met Mobestar who were able to demonstrate a deep understanding of the mobile community sector and who, uniquely, were able to show them a fully functioning mobile dating application on a mobile handset.

Why Mobestar?

QSoft then conducted a thorough evaluation of Mobestar and their mobile dating solution – mDate. It was critical for QSoft that the partner they chose provided a technical solution which could be tightly integrated with their existing web infrastructure and that they could offer a flexible commercial framework which would allow both organisations to benefit from the incremental revenue generated by new mobile services. Trevor Martin, QSoft's Sales and Marketing Director commented "We identified mobile as an important technology for our future, especially for younger users. After a frustrating two year search to find a partner we were introduced to Mobestar by 3, the operator in the UK, and 3 were confident that in mDate™ Mobestar had come up with the first mobile application that could truly be referred to as a killer application".

QSoft were impressed with both the flexible nature of the mDate platform and Mobestar's approach so decided to form a partnership to develop and launch GaydarMobile. Some of the key reasons behind this decision were:-

- The core mDate platform: a feature rich, safe and secure white labeled solution
- mDate designed for integration with existing online dating services
- Flexible billing options e.g. subscription or Pay-As-You-Go
- Automatic handset device management
- A unique anonymous voice & video calling capability
- PhonepayPlus (ICSTIS) approved in the UK
- Shared risk, revenue sharing model with low-initial costs
- A fully hosted, fully managed service
- Rapid global rollout capability



GaydarMobile goes live...

Because GaydarMobile represents a first in the marketplace both QSoft and Mobestar were absolutely committed to getting it right and providing Gaydar members with a service that was relevant, fun and compelling. An extended soft-launch period was conducted to gauge user feedback and to ensure that the service was able to deliver everything that had been envisaged. After this trial period during which many of Gaydar's most valued members were given exclusive access to the new service GaydarMobile was launched commercially at the end of August 2007. The initial feedback from Gaydar users has been very positive and use of the service is now growing steadily month on month.

Getting the message out

To support the launch of GaydarMobile QSoft ran a coordinated marketing campaign across various channels including Gaydar.co.uk, GaydarRadio, GaydarNation.com and at social environments such as Profile Soho (QSoft's Gaydar branded bar in London's West End).

One exciting innovation was the introduction of Bluetooth technology at the bar during Soho Pride and on the main stage at Manchester Pride. This tactic was specifically designed to generate brand awareness among the student (18+) audience and to encourage peer-to-peer sharing of free mobile content such as wallpapers. The initial 'buzz' around the launch of GaydarMobile and the use of Bluetooth created a real 'wow factor' with consumers and gay bars in London.

Other highlights included a national print campaign and online executions across Gaydar and GaydarNation.com to reinforce the message. GaydarRadio supported the 'On the go' message with a series of radio adverts at premium times of the day.

Public relations, email marketing and flyers in venues across London with selected partners also supported the campaign. Simon Johnson, Marketing Manager at QSoft Consulting Ltd said "Mobile is still an emerging technology – the campaign was simple and effective, mixing education on how to use GaydarMobile while engaging with different audiences at different times of day to show them when GaydarMobile might come in handy. The strap line 'never leave your favourite bar or venue empty handed' sums up for the vast majority of our audience where the value of GaydarMobile lies."

What's Next?

The service is already being enhanced - features such as "Online Friends & Favourites" and "View Tracks" have been added and other new features will continue to be added over time to keep the service fresh and to stimulate continued uptake. The service is now being rolled out globally and has just been launched in Australia, Gaydar's 2nd largest market. Soon to follow will be Spain, Germany, Italy, France and South Africa.



Messages sent

