Gamification Marketing For dummies®

GO!

Apply game concepts to a marketing plan

Develop and launch your first gamification campaign

Analyze your data to build marketing strategies

Zarrar Chishti

Gamification Marketing

by Zarrar Chishti

for dummies®
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Gamification Marketing For Dummies®

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Introduction

What is gamification marketing? After we had run a successful campaign, one of my clients put it simply: "I cannot believe we just gave our customers the *experience* of a game in a campaign that had nothing to do with games."

Gamification is when you apply techniques and concepts from games to any marketing campaign. Today, gamification is everywhere — for instance, companies rewarding their employees, teachers encouraging their pupils to compete for higher marks, and even parents rewarding their kids for washing the dishes.

It's no wonder gamification has worked well for marketing campaigns, too. When any company, large or small, implements gamification properly, the campaign will meet the company's marketing objectives. Why? Because humans have an innate desire to play and compete.

Gamification marketing can have the following end goals:

» To build brand awareness

» To increase engagement

» To drive conversions

» To boost customer loyalty

» To encourage brand advocacy

About This Book

This book is for marketers, not developers.

Most books, blogs, and articles on gamification are written for developers. So, I wanted to write this book for people like my clients — people like you! Reading this book should feel like I'm sitting with you in our conference room discussing how you can implement gamification marketing in your next campaign.

This book covers all aspects of developing, launching, and analyzing a gamification marketing campaign. You don't have to read the book from beginning to end. You can use the table of contents and index to find the subject you want more information on. You don't have to remember what you're reading — there won't be a test on Friday, and you can always return to the book to find what you need.

If you're short on time, you can skip anything marked with the Technical Stuff icon, as well as text in gray boxes (called *sidebars*). This information is interesting (some might say fascinating!), but it's not essential to your understanding of the subject at hand.

Within this book, you may note that some web addresses break across two lines of text. If you're reading this book in print and want to visit one of these web pages, simply key in the web address exactly as it's noted in the text, pretending as though the line break doesn't exist. If you're reading this as an e-book, you've got it easy — just click the web address to be taken directly to the web page.

Finally, within this book, you'll find many examples of gamification marketing campaigns from companies around the world. Some of these campaigns will have ended by the time you read this book; others will still be running. For the ones that are still running, I encourage you to sign up and start engaging with them. Experience

what they have to offer and try to relate how each gamification element will work with your own campaign.

Foolish Assumptions

This book is for people who work in marketing or are responsible for their company's marketing. Therefore, I do *not* assume that you are knowledgeable in game design or game development. However, I do assume the following:

» You'll be running a campaign for your company.

» You know the basics of marketing.

» You're aware of and have experience in playing online games.

» You have access to your company's analytics program.

» You have an in-house team or can hire a team of developers and designers.

Icons Used in This Book

Like other books in the *For Dummies* series, this book uses icons, or little pictures in the margin, to draw your attention to certain kinds of material. Here are the icons that I use:

TIP   Whenever you see the Tip icon, you can be sure to find something that'll save you time or money or just make your life easier (at least when it comes to your campaign).

REMEMBER You don't have to memorize this book, but when I tell you something so important that you really *should* remember it, I mark it with the Remember icon.

WARNING I've run loads of gamification marketing campaigns, and I've learned a thing or two along the way. If I can save you from the pitfalls I know are out there, I will! Whenever I warn you about something that could cause a real headache for you and your team, I use the Warning icon.

TECHNICAL STUFF Occasionally, I dig into some information that's a wee bit technical. If that sounds like your cup of tea, look for the Technical Stuff icon. If you'd rather stick to only the things you *need* to know, you can safely skip these tidbits.

Beyond the Book

In addition to the material in the print or e-book you're reading right now, this product also comes some free access-anywhere goodies on the web. Check out the free Cheat Sheet for information on how games can change your marketing forever, tips on how gamification campaigns differ, and advice on data security for your gamification campaign. To access the Cheat Sheet, go to www.dummies.com and type **Gamification Marketing For Dummies Cheat Sheet** in the Search box.

Where to Go from Here

If you aren't familiar with gamification at all, start with Chapter 1 — a very good place to start. If you already have a good understanding of gamification and you're familiar with the basics, you can probably skip ahead to Chapter 3 and start learning how to kickstart your first gamification marketing campaign. If you're all about the data, head to Part 4. And if you just want some inspiration, check out Chapter 15.

Wherever you start, you'll find information you can use on your next gamification marketing campaign!

Part 1
Introducing Gamification Marketing

IN THIS PART ...

Find out what gamification marketing can do for you and how campaigns can fit with your goals.

Explore the various types of gamification marketing models.

Chapter 1

Gamifying Your Marketing Strategy

IN THIS CHAPTER

» **Seeing how gamification works in marketing**

» **Identifying what sets gamification apart**

» **Determining which gamification elements will work for you**

Thanks to the rise of gamification, marketing campaigns around the world have become increasingly more engaging. Gamification marketing campaigns offer your audience an *experience,* not just content.

Building gamification elements into your marketing will give your next campaign a serious advantage. Gamification enhances user experience and increases your audience's engagement. Another advantage of gamification is that your audience will be more inclined to interact with and share your campaign.

The application of gamification elements in business is catching on fast. Gartner research projects that more than 70 percent of Forbes Global organizations will have at least one game-based application, and that half of all companies that manage innovation processes will have "gamified" them. This opens a wonderful opportunity for you and your team to drive specific behaviors and motivate audiences to perform tasks that would require a lot of effort and time in a non-gamified campaign.

In this chapter, I look at how gamification can help with your marketing and then explore how it gives your campaign an advantage over traditional forms of marketing.

Seeing What Gamification Can Do in Marketing

Using gaming elements in your marketing campaign may sound strange at first. But in my 15 years of gamification and marketing experience, I've found that gamification is a highly effective marketing strategy, no matter which industry a brand is in.

When you gamify your campaign, your audience will have fun interacting with your brand, which means your company will increase its overall engagement. It's a win-win situation!

TIP   The ultimate goal for gamification is to drive your marketing objective to collect big data. I explore this subject in great depth in Chapter 11. But for now, just now that you can analyze big data to glean insights that can lead to better decisions and strategic business moves for your company. So, it's not just about giving your audience a fun experience — it's about gathering data about your audience while they're having fun.

In the following sections, I explain what exactly gamification is, tell you how you can gamify your marketing, and share some examples of successful gamification marketing campaigns.

Understanding gamification

Gamification is simply the process of applying techniques and concepts usually found in games to something outside of games — in this case, your marketing campaign. Chances are, even if you've never heard of gamification marketing before, you've experienced a gamification marketing campaign, whether you realized it or not.

REMEMBER Gamification can be as simple as incorporating badges or achievement elements (you can find this in the Starbucks Rewards campaign; see Chapter 15). On the other end of the spectrum, you can develop a fully integrated gamification campaign, as when McDonald's and Hasbro teamed up to create the McDonald's Monopoly game.

Adding gamification elements even to a negative situation can make things a little better. For instance, when Google's Chrome web browser can't load a page for some reason, it presents the user with a simple yet highly engaging minigame, as shown in Figure 1-1.
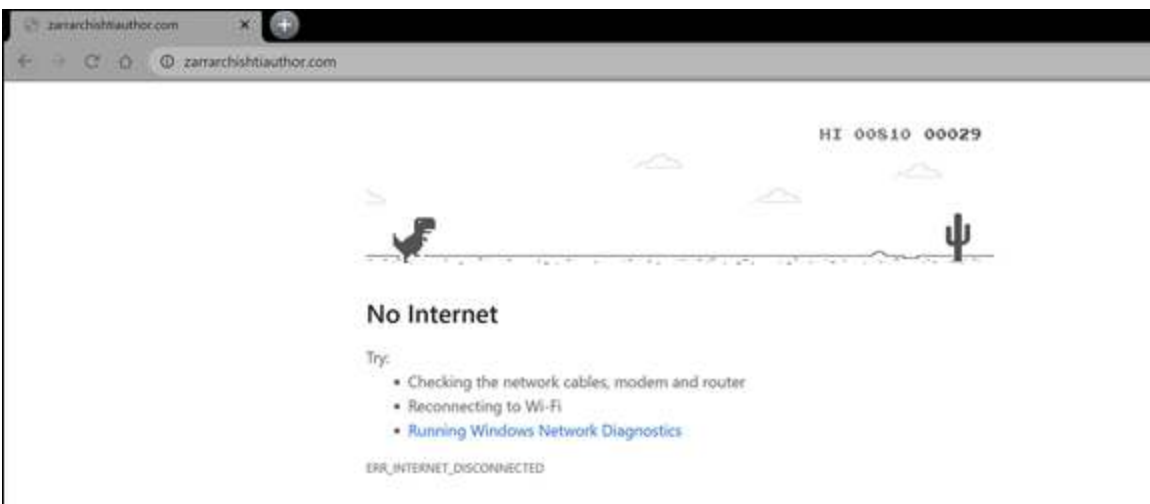
Gamifying your marketing

Gamification elements can be based off a number of game types that have their own gamification elements, such as trophies, badges, or rewards (see Chapter 2).

In my experience, when marketing content incorporates gamification elements, audience engagement increases. This increase in engagement means that your audience will not only remember your campaign, but also share it with their friends and family on social media. This means you have a bigger potential to increase your brand's awareness to a far larger audience.

When you expose a gamification marketing campaign to your audience, they'll start to think more about your brand, which can lead to a huge increase in newsletter subscriptions and can even lead to purchases of one or more products or services related to the campaign.

The most effective result of gamification marketing is that your conversion rates will spike as audiences become motivated to complete tasks for rewards.

Looking at some examples of gamification

Chapter 15 is all about real-life case studies of gamification marketing campaigns. Let me whet your appetite with just a couple additional examples from brands you've probably heard of:

» **Verizon Wireless:** Verizon enjoyed a 30 percent increase in login rates due to its gamification campaign. The company did this by adding leaderboards, badges, and social media integration,

among other gamification elements, to its website. With this campaign, Verizon managed to engage with its customers on a much closer level.

More than 50 percent of the site's users participated in the new gamification features. And users who took advantage of the social integration spent 30 percent more time on the site and generated 15 percent more page views than users who used the traditional login method.

» **Volkswagen Group:** Volkswagen invited its consumers in China, one of its largest and most important markets, to help the company develop new versions of the "people's car." Participants were given gamification tools to help them easily design their new vehicle, and they were able to post their designs online. The designs were then open for others to view and rate.

The results were tracked on leaderboards so that contestants and the general public could see how the competing designs were faring. Within ten weeks, the online crowd-sourcing campaign had received more than 50,000 ideas! By the end of the campaign's first year, at least 33 million people had visited the site, and the general public had chosen three winning concepts.

This campaign owes its success to the fact that Volkswagen recognized that participation in a popular business initiative needs to be not only enticing and rewarding but also engaging and fun. Because Volkswagen's marketing team using gamification, the campaign went viral in China.

Understanding How Gamification Differs from Other Online Marketing Tactics

When I first started consulting on gamification marketing, traditional marketers viewed gamification as just a temporary fad that wouldn't last. Today, gamification is one of the most profitable forms of marketing worldwide, with engagement from millions of audience members.

Gamification marketing can be very profitable and lucrative for your company. Over the years, I've helped and witnessed companies from all industries successfully implement gamification elements into their campaigns.

In the following sections, I walk you through the advantages of gamification and show you how you can take your user experience to the next level.

Looking at the advantages of gamification

Gamification provides the answer to problems inherent in traditional marketing. Gamification taps into the basic instinct humans have of wanting to play and compete. It also provides a way for all marketing campaigns to provide real value to their audience and a positive digital experience.

When you use gamification techniques, you'll build brand awareness, drive engagement to your brand, and develop a long-lasting loyalty program.

Here are some of the advantages gamification has over traditional marketing:

» **It enables you to put some fun into your brand or message.** Gamification incorporates elements of fun and competition in any marketing strategy. This is good news for your brand, because your gamification marketing campaign will actively draw people who want to participate, follow, and share your brand's message.

» **It enables you to get better and more meaningful feedback.** Sadly, we're all inundated with requests for feedback from websites these days. Because of this, generating meaningful customer feedback for a traditional marketing campaign is rare. If you rely on traditional marketing techniques, you'll likely have no clear picture of how your audience feels about your company, brand, and campaign.

Gamification helps make the process simple by offering a more engaging and fun campaign that increases response rates. It generates an emotional and immediate response from your audience because they respond without thinking about their answer. So, as your audience is being bombarded with requests for feedback, gamification helps your campaign stand out by making the process simple, seamless, and fun.

» **It generates loyalty.** Your audience is inundated with all forms of noise — special deals, offers, and advertising messages everywhere they look. In order for your marketing campaign to be successful, it needs to engage customers, retain their interest, and develop loyalty. With so many options aggressively competing for your audience's attention, this task is becoming more and more difficult.

Gamification can power effective customer loyalty programs, creating a more valuable and sustaining customer relationship. When done well, gamification loyalty programs have an impressive impact.

» **It personalizes your audience's experience of your brand.** Gamification marketing can create a more personal experience for your audiences during the campaign. Segmentation and personalization are critical to driving conversion, developing trust, and building customer loyalty (see Chapter 9). The more you tailor your marketing to your target group, the more effective your campaigns will be.

You can create custom game experiences targeted to specific audience segments and then develop these game experiences to your brand values. By doing this, your marketing campaign will connect with your audience on a deeper level.

» **It gives you big data.** *Big data* offers insights from all kinds of structured and unstructured data sources to help improve how companies operate and interact with consumers. Gamification, which allows you to connect with your audience in a more interactive and intimate way, gathers valuable data that can be turned into new insights to create detailed market segments for future campaigns.

Gamification creates a lot of data that your company can analyze, especially when users are asked to sign in via social networks where a lot of your audience's public data can be captured. More interestingly, this data can be integrated to provide context with all the other gamification data you're storing.

I look into big data techniques in greater detail in Chapter 11.

» It enables you to influence customer behavior.
Gamification has a major advantage over traditional marketing campaigns when it comes to influencing customer behavior. A gamification marketing campaign engages universal experiences, such as stimulation and motivation.

Influencing audiences to make the decisions you want them to make is the holy grail of marketing. In [Chapter 15](#), I explain how Nissan's use of gamification influenced drivers to use better driving habits, which is exactly the message Nissan wanted to align itself with.

» It drives engagement. If your marketing campaign is engaging, it'll be worth sharing. Gamification can help drive engagement by getting your audience to share your campaign with their family and friends.

Gamification plays on the psychology that drives human engagement — the human desire to compete and improve, as well as wanting to get instantly rewarded. The technology is merely the means to put that psychology to work in the business sphere.

» It appeals to a younger audience. By promising a fun and engaging experience, your campaign will grab a younger audience's attention instantly. Younger audiences have been quick to adopt the newer digital and social technology revolutions. This makes gamification an even more important method of marketing if your campaign wants to appeal to young people. Gamification forces your marketing to practice creativity, which is bound to draw younger audiences.

» It increases reach. No matter what kind of campaign you run, one of the main objectives will always be to gain new customers. It doesn't matter what market segments you're targeting or which

sector your company works in, increasing your consumer reach will always be a fundamental part of your marketing.

The brilliance of gamification marketing campaigns, in which everyday situations are turned into games, is that they're layered and multifunctional, naturally improving both audience engagement and brand reach.

» **It builds better brand awareness.** By using gamification, you can attract new customers when they notice your branding as part of an innovative and fun campaign. Your audience, old and new, will experience your marketing campaign in a fun and interactive way — an experience that will leave your audience more aware of your company and branding.

By exploiting rewards, points, ranks, leaderboards, and competition, all of which I cover in depth in Chapter 4, you can encourage your audience to follow, share, and like your brand on social media. This way, you can increase your reach and, ultimately, your brand awareness.

Taking your current user experience to the next level

A gamification marketing campaign will trigger emotions that are linked to positive user experience. These emotions can play a very important role in the way you engage with your audience overall.

Here are some ways using gamification elements can affect your audience:

» **Giving the user control:** Leading your audience toward your desired marketing goals becomes part of the user journey. Nobody likes to be forced to a