



## Resort Connects with Ski Customers via Mobile Phones, Offering Snow Condition Reports and Bar-Coded Discount Coupons

### BACKGROUND

One of the United States' largest and most-visited ski resorts, Mt. Bachelor in Bend, Oregon, operates a free text messaging service that updates ski and snowboard customers with wind, temperature, and snow conditions. Adding further value, the resort has begun offering discount "coupons" on the bottom of the text messages. Respondents are sent a barcode which can be read directly from the phone screen by standard optical scanners. Beyond the creative marketing opportunities of these mobile coupons, this new, highly cost-effective system also supports Mt. Bachelor's environmentally conscious mission.

"Text messaging is really working for us by trimming our call volumes and the innovative discount coupons have turned out to be a great addition to our marketing program."

CARLY CARMICHAEL | Director of Marketing | Mt. Bachelor Ski Resort

### CHALLENGE

Half a million people come to Mt. Bachelor's 3,700 acres of terrain every year to enjoy outdoor recreation, and each visitor hopes for the best day of the season. Finding out current snow and weather conditions usually means going to Mt. Bachelor's website, or else calling ahead — which customers do — dialing an 800-number up to 140,000 times per month. This can get costly for the resort. And reaching customers with advertising and promotional offers can be expensive as well. Moreover, Mt. Bachelor's strong environmental program encourages the resort to reduce and minimize the impact of operational and promotional activities.

The overall goal was to create an enhanced information system, which would not only cut costs but would also be environmentally-friendly and improve communications with the resort's customers.

## SOLUTION

Working with RocketBux, Inc., Mt. Bachelor quickly established a weather and snow conditions alert system that was delivered as an SMS text message. Signing up via the website or by texting "mtbalerts" to 20123, subscribers are sent an SMS of weather and snow conditions at 7 a.m. daily – bringing the mountain to their customers. Traveling over mBlox's efficient text messaging network, this approach saves customers time and reduces Mt. Bachelor's call volumes and 800-number costs.

Even more promising is the way Mt. Bachelor also uses this same delivery technology to offer promotional discounts to their well-targeted and captive mobile subscriber audience. In one of the resort's first initiatives, a lift ticket discount "coupon" was offered to interested customers via a link appended to the end of the daily ski conditions message. Clicking on the link created a barcode viewable on virtually any mobile phone, thanks to RocketBux technology. These barcodes can be read directly from mobile screens by standard 1D or 2D scanners at cash registers, functioning just like paper coupons. No software or equipment changes need to be made either to the phones or the scanners.

**“Consumers get convenient, easy-to-use discount coupons that they actually want to use, without adding any special software to their phones.”**

FRED BOOS | President | RocketBux, Inc.

## BENEFITS

Both Mt. Bachelor and its customers are enjoying a host of benefits from the innovative use of text messaging made possible by RocketBux and mBlox technology.

**Convenient, updating of ski conditions.** A reminder that every day is a great day for skiing. Also, only relevant customers (those already signed up for the alerts) receive promotional offers in an unobtrusive way through an existing communication.

**800-number expense reduction.** By delivering ski condition reports via text messaging, Mt. Bachelor has reduced 800-number call volumes by up to 15 percent saving charges on more than 20,000 calls per month.

**Cost-effective promotional programs.** Only three months after Mt. Bachelor's text alert system went live, more than 1,000 people had signed up for the service. At no additional marketing cost, a time-limited lift ticket discount coupon — redeemable within only 24 hours — garnered a respectable 2% redemption.

**Underscoring of environmental mission.** No paper is used or transported and little energy is consumed by either the snow conditions alert system or the discount couponing. This environmental economy promotes Mt. Bachelor in its mission to preserve the quality of the environment.

**Adding extra value.** Showing the leverage of viral marketing, some subscribers forwarded the barcoded coupons to their friends, who redeemed them. This viral marketing also resulted in more people signing up for the service.

## FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES

RocketBux management reports that other resorts have now joined Mt. Bachelor in creating similar ski condition reporting systems. As for the barcoded coupons, Mt. Bachelor is now designing marketing campaigns for apparel, food, and other purchases on the mountain, and is also discussing joint promotions with other local merchants.

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