Marketing Schemes through the Google [Looking] Glass

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Last June, Google announced a unique device that is supposed to incorporate their technology into your everyday life. In fact, their sights seem to be set on invading every moment your eyes are open with convenient updates, recording capabilities, and, of course, an easy-to-use search engine.

Google Glass proposes to, essentially, put a computer on your face with a sleek pair of glasses that gives you access to everything from the current time or temperature to Google Chat.

This is all well and good for those of us who aren't easily distracted by shiny objects or images flickering in our direct (or indirect) line of sight. To be honest, this technology is really cool.

So where can you buy a pair of these amazing specs? Nowhere. Google has created a contest to promote Glass, except, winning the contest means you are allowed to fork over $1,500 for the fancy eyewear. Read the AP story here [1].

This is Apple Marketing 101 on steroids. Months of teaser product videos [2] and preview pictures combined with just enough leaked news [3], lead to foaming at the mouth from geeks, gadget maniacs, and general consumers alike. Once the target audience (everyone) is lusting for the sparkling new product, drive them into a frenzy by declaring unexpected demand -- basically, a shortage of the prized product (see iPhone's initial and subsequent launch).

Now, Google is running the same scheme (whether or not the Apple fiasco was a

scheme is a moot point), except hopeful owners have to apply for a chance to even purchase one of the coveted bits of electronic paraphernalia. Better yet, Google has a dictated method to make sure you are a qualified applicant. Solicitations for Google Glass application are only accepted via Twitter and Google+, and using the hashtag #ifihadglass.

The scheme has been wrapped in a convenient feel-good-package, in which entrants are supposed to discuss what they would do with the product in 50 words or less -- probably 49 words or less, since the hashtag is most likely included. Top that off with some Google pandered butter and the entry is down to 30 words, or so. It can't be hard to see that Google will only pick winners with large Twitter followings or several Google+ circles. If you're only followed by your kids, my bet is that you won't be toasting any Glass.

I can't cite Google for any ill will here. They know this product is incredibly interesting, but adoption might be a stretch for many. Hence the need for a campaign like this. Nevertheless, I would like a pair to satisfy my gadgeteering twitch.

So, shut up Google, and take my money!

What's your take on Google's campaign? Will promoting Glass in this manner help or hurt its adoption by consumers? Will telling the company to "shut up" only lessen my chances? Email chris.fox@advantagemedia.com *[4] or comment below.*

See a promo video [2] about Glass or read Executive Editor, David Mantey's At Issue regarding the technology [3].

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