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Mogreet and American Greetings partner for video mobile e-cards

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E-cards have become an attractive way of sending cards versus traditional print cards. Through customization and animation features, e-cards are a quick and easy way to avoid the the Hallmark aisle and postage, but still let that someone know you care. However, the ability to send a customized animated e-card to someone's mobile device remains limited.

Until today when American Greetings, the popular online greeting card store, announced a partnership with mobile video marketing platform Mogreet giving users the ability to send customized full-motion video greeting cards to close to 2,500 different mobile devices in the U.S. across a host of carriers, including Verizon, AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile and others. And yes, it will work on the iPhone.

Using Mogreet's MMS platform, video e-cards can be sent via MMS (multimedia messaging service) from the American Greetings website to a variety of mobile devices. Each e-card will include full-motion video, with synchronized sound and music, and a personalized message from the sender.

According to James Citron, chief executive of Mogreet, there were several limitations to sending mobile e-cards successfully. Since the majority of e-card senders are traditionally older, female and not technology adopters, the need to make the process quick and easy was essential. By using MMS, e-cards are received in the text message inbox and only requires the user to click "play" to view. Citron notes that the only other way to do so would be through an application, which is not only more difficult to understand and download, but limits your consumer audience to those who have access to apps.

Which leads Citron to the next limitation, which was reach. Only 17 percent of consumers have smartphones or data plans, so by utilizing MMS users, only need a text messaging plan and a video player to receive a mobile e-card. Using Mogreet, American Greetings can deliver its mobile e-cards to 200 million consumers in the United States, which is at least three to five times larger audience than any other company in the country, according to Citron.

The final limitation is content. Flash is the main ingredient to e-cards and the majority of phones don't support it (although that's changing). Working outside of Flash, Mogreet developed a unique transcoding system, which converts American Greeting's e-cards into mobile videos. The system then detects the type of phone for a recipient of a mobile e-card and delivers an optimized video specific to that device.

To use American Greeting's new MMS e-cards, you can either pay for each card you send, or you need to become a premium subscriber at \$15.99 for 1 year. That's about \$1.50 per month and well under what you'd pay for a traditional card in stores. There are about 500 different e-cards available and mobile ready, 50 of which are Valentine's Day specific (good timing). American greetings notes that "thousands" more will be available in the coming months.

Mogreet specializes in helping the advertising industry leverage video through text messaging campaigns. According the the company website, Mogreet does all the heavy lifting including compressing, transcoding, hosting, delivery, reporting and database management for customers.

In the past, Mogreet has partnered with several production companies like Fox Searchlight and Paramount Films to give users the ability to send MMS promotion movie clips and popular movie phrases. Founded in 2006, Mogreet, based in Venice, Calif., has raised \$7 million in venture capital from Ascend Venture Group, Black Diamond Ventures, DFJ Frontier and Spyglass Ventures.



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