

## TREATS FOR TWEETS! SQUIDZ APP NOW LAUNCHED

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Glasgow digital production company Hot Tap Media has launched an innovative social media rewards iPhone app. Squidz works like a consumer loyalty card for consumers, and provides a potentially more effective alternative to social media advertising for brands.

The app is the brainchild of digital marketing innovator Rebecca Thompson, who was inspired to create Squidz through a Design in Action Chiasma event that explored alternative currencies. The idea attracted top development talent Tom Halfpenny and Crawford Tait, and was awarded £19860 by Design in Action to fund the prototype development.

Participating brands purchase Squidz which they then offer through the app in return for social media reach. Brands can allocate their Squidz against specific campaigns, to promote a particular product, event or hashtag. These campaigns can be accessed by fans, who tweet directly from the app to generate social media reach around that campaign.

Squidz aims to disrupt social media marketing by giving brands the option to invest in 'pull marketing' created directly by fans, instead of paying for increasingly-ineffective 'push marketing'. The Squidz team has developed a unique algorithm for slicing social media reach with sentiment of posts to reward high quality, positive-sentiment content. The more authentic and interesting their tweet, the more likely it is to attract likes and retweets, and the more Squidz they will earn. The Squidz can then be redeemed for vouchers and other rewards in the Squidz store.

It's good news for brands. Inbound marketing is now the key marketing aim and has been shown to generate 54% more leads than outbound marketing. Brands are spending more and more of their marketing budget on social media marketing, and the social media marketing industry is predicted to reach \$9.8 billion this year. Squidz gives brands the option to pay this money directly to the fans, effectively cutting out the middleman.

Squidz offers real value to fans who choose to follow their favourite brands through Twitter. 33% of millennials identify social media as one of their preferred channels for communicating with businesses.

Rebecca Thompson, Squidz Creator, said:

"Squidz is designed as a way to optimise social media marketing spend for brands, and give their fans a richer experience and more direct connection. By diverting the traditional social media marketing formula, we have been able to design a process that is optimised for high quality, effective inbound marketing. Additionally, by integrating a skew for positive sentiment into our reach measurement, we have produced a product that provides the brand with a more authentic, positive reach."

The Squidz app is currently in the UK App Store as a live prototype, working with a single social media network - Twitter - and four brands. The participating brands reflect the range of different types of companies that could benefit from the app, and include Isle of Skye Brewing Company, Glasgow Film Theatre, La La Land and the charitable project somewhereto\_. The Squidz team plans to seek investment to fund the further development of the app including Android development and deployment across multiple social platforms.

Squidz can now be downloaded from the app store. Interested brands should contact Squidz directly for opening offers and discounts on the BETA release.

[www.hottapmedia.com/squidz](http://www.hottapmedia.com/squidz)

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References:

Inbound marketing is now the key aim of brands as it's perceived as being more authentic and has been shown to generate 54% more leads than outbound marketing. ([Carmelon Digital](#))

Social media advertising revenue will reach \$9.8 billion in 2016. (

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