

'Psst! Hey, fella, try the Navy Reserves'

Recruitment effort sends a Bluetooth signal

By Diego Vasquez

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In the field, the Navy uses some of the most advanced technology to track perceived enemies, so it only makes sense for it to turn to technology to lure new recruits.

Since November the U.S. Navy Reserve has been using a high-tech method to draw potential part-time sailors. Phone kiosk ads on Navy bases California, Virginia and Florida are outfitted with Bluetooth technology to send a short two-minute recruitment video to cell phones or PDAs of passersby.

The poster on the kiosk reads “Make a Difference a Few Days at a Time” but folks with Bluetooth-enabled cell phones or PDAs can download a video that expands on the theme, prompted by an alert sent out from the kiosk.

The Navy Reserves clip features reservists speaking about their experiences and the benefits of serving in the Reserves.

The campaign is the creation of Prime Point Media of Norcross, Ga., a division of OutdoorPartner Media that specializes in phone kiosk ads. The company says the Bluetooth technology, which it calls PrimeCasting, is able to offer MP3 audio tracks, ring tones, games and JPEG photo images in addition to video.

The ads made sense for the Navy on two counts.

There's the technology tie-in; both the Navy and Air Force promote the schooling they offer in a wide range of technologies.

But the campaign also aims to connect with a young crowd, which is more likely to own a gadget with Bluetooth capabilities.

“The Navy’s natural audience is young people, and they probably hate this, but my dad would never know how to use this,” says Scott Cohen, director of marketing for Prime Point Media. “But my younger brother would. It’s sort of a generation thing.”



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