



CASE STUDY



## Virgin Mobile Canada

Virgin Mobile Canada Implements VeriSign® Content Portal Services to Deliver Innovative Features and a Compelling Customer Experience



## Virgin Mobile Canada

### SOLUTION SUMMARY

Virgin Mobile Canada uses VeriSign Content Portal Services and VeriSign Mobile Alerts to deliver a wide range of digital content to Canada's mobile phone customers—utilizing high-relevance, high-appeal multimedia downloads to maximize customer satisfaction.

#### Industry

- Telecommunications

#### Challenges

- Virgin Mobile Canada wanted to create a robust, reliable, and adaptable delivery platform to support storefront operations, including financial, delivery, merchandizing, and management functions.
- It aimed to deploy a proven out-sourced solution rather than developing a solution in-house.
- The company wanted to collaborate with a nimble partner that could effectively add value under the pressures of a highly competitive mobile phone marketplace.
- Virgin Mobile Canada wanted to supplement in-house resources to optimize innovation, time-to-market, and service effectiveness.

#### Solution

- VeriSign® Content Portal Services
- VeriSign® Mobile Alerts

#### Results

- Virgin Mobile Canada's new integrated platform allows delivery of a consistent customer experience, and provides a highly efficient foundation for future growth and continued customer satisfaction.
- It has become renowned for its ability to rapidly leverage opportunities and deliver innovative services in the very dynamic mobile communications marketplace.
- The company now has focused marketing strategies, made possible by customer-level reporting capabilities that have facilitated many high-impact initiatives.

With one of the most recognizable names in the business world, the Virgin™ group of companies, and its high-profile chairman, Sir Richard Branson, have become synonymous with style, innovation, and giving the consumer what they want. Virgin's interests embrace planes, trains, finance, soft drinks, music, mobile communications, vacations, cars, wines, publishing, and even bridal wear. With a workforce of over 25,000, the Virgin Group comprises more than 200 companies worldwide.

#### + Striving for Simplicity

As a relative newcomer to Branson's Virgin empire, Virgin Mobile Canada is striving to revolutionize the mobile phone marketplace. In an industry notorious for unintelligible monthly statements and overuse of technical jargon, Virgin Mobile Canada seeks to differentiate itself by removing this complexity for the benefit of the consumer. Using a combination of easy to understand airtime pricing policies, options for no monthly bills, no hidden fees, and a sense of irreverence and fun, the company has enjoyed impressive growth since being founded in 1999.

As a key contributor to Virgin Mobile Canada's global telecommunications presence, Virgin Mobile Canada does not maintain its own network, preferring instead to utilize existing capacities of other providers. In fact, the strategy of leveraging proven components whenever appropriate is a core tenet of daily business operations.

#### + Partnering for Success

When the Canadian company began researching options for a content delivery platform it immediately turned to leading infrastructure vendors for support. Stephen Warr, Virgin Mobile Canada's Director VAS & SMS, elaborated: "When outsourcing strengthens our customer experience we always consider it. In this instance it made sense to search for a partner to address this critical piece of our infrastructure—we quickly sent out a request for proposal (RFP) and evaluated a number of the primary players."

On receiving the RFP responses, the Virgin Mobile Canada team rapidly reached consensus. Although not a participant in the original selection process, Warr recalled the accounts of his colleagues, "The VeriSign solution was definitely perceived as being the most robust, and it was already proven to be delivering exactly what we needed." VeriSign operates digital infrastructure that enables and protects billions of interactions every day across the world's voice, video, and data networks.

Virgin Mobile Canada selected VeriSign® Content Portal Services, which handles the complex operations of managing, deploying, and delivering rich content across multiple networks, providing flexible billing, and enabling a compelling customer experience. VeriSign offers smart, dynamic, and full digital rights management storefront capabilities as well as personalized content discovery and interactive cross-selling tools to maximize mobile revenues. The solution includes reliable and advanced merchandising, promotional, and reporting tools. For Virgin Mobile Canada, VeriSign delivered a fully managed, customized mobile content, music, video, and alerts portal to substantially improve the bottom line.

*“We continue to partner with VeriSign as it has demonstrated a consistent ability to help us rapidly deliver the new services that our customers want. It has proven to be a great overall strategy to have forged this partnership, and the results are why VeriSign wins more and more of our business.”*

Stephen Warr  
Director VAS & SMS  
Virgin Mobile Canada

Virgin Mobile Canada also chose to leverage VeriSign® Mobile Alerts, which offers both subscription and dynamic delivery of mobile content to wireless customers that can include entertainment—video and audio broadcast—multimedia messaging service (MMS) and streaming of programming such as weather, news, sports, stock quotes, traffic, ringtones, screen savers, games, and more.

#### **+ Marketing to the Masses, One Customer at a Time**

Commenting on Virgin Mobile Canada’s extensive deployment, Warr said, “VeriSign provides our entire download storefront—from ringtones, downloadable images, to video clips, and games. It also manages one of our most innovative platforms, named ‘Studio V,’ which allows customers to submit home-made content such as ringtones and wallpapers, for other customers to access online. We can execute interactive SMS programs and it allows us to do focused texting of our installed base, so we can alert them to special offers and promotions.”

Using the VeriSign Content Portal Services platform, Virgin Mobile Canada is able to monitor on an individual basis, each customer’s download lifecycle—so if a reduction in download usage is observed, highly tailored messages can be sent to incent and motivate the customer to increase interactions.

Having visibility down to individual subscriber-level usage patterns has proven to be extremely effective for Virgin Mobile Canada. In cases where revenue is not meeting anticipated targets, the VeriSign account team proposes revenue initiatives to address the situation. “This is really helpful,” Warr said, “because as a small team, we don’t always have the time to construct an optimal strategy within, what is typically, a very short window of time. The relationship that we have with VeriSign involves revenue sharing from each download, so we are both motivated to get it right.”

The platform’s analytics showed that there is typically a usage drop in the third month of most new subscribers. A program was constructed to analyze the profile of ringtones that an individual had previously downloaded, and then highlight tones from the same genre that might have similar appeal. Recounting the results, Warr said, “Without using discounts or incentives we saw a 70 percent increase in downloads by customers that was directly attributable to the highly focused marketing message delivered using just a standard WAP (Wireless Application Protocol) push.” This level of reporting allows Virgin Mobile Canada to accurately tailor messages to meet the profile of each specific subscriber, and to present them with content that is known to have high levels of relevance and appeal.

#### **+ Partnering for Success**

Warr is a big fan of the VeriSign account team. “Our team is great,” he stated. “We hold weekly meetings, but interact with them every day. As we rely on VeriSign for core elements of our infrastructure, good communication is critical and the quality of these interactions is key to our success. We are a nimble company, and have been able to react quickly to leverage opportunities and launch new services in this very dynamic market. We couldn’t do it without a nimble and trustworthy partner—VeriSign gives us all of this.”

VeriSign and Virgin Mobile Canada work closely together to coordinate major projects. In 2006, circumstances dictated a significant change to the storefront platform infrastructure—a substantial and complicated undertaking given the criticality of the function for service delivery and revenue generation. “Once we had established our objectives and desired delivery date,” Warr recalled, “we executed the plan together, and met all of the goals—I can’t over-stress how important this was to us because we had large numbers of resources involved with the project and the whole company depending on the team to hit the deadline.”

### + Bringing it all Together

One of the strengths of VeriSign’s comprehensive portfolio of solutions is that the level of integration already performed makes it unnecessary for clients to have to pull all of the constituent components of their infrastructure together themselves. As Warr explained, “VeriSign has supplemented its own growth with the acquisition of many best in class companies, and it has successfully integrated all of the individual pieces. This gives us the benefits of cross-platform functionality without the overhead traditionally associated with selecting discrete, best-of-breed components.”

“We are able to offer our customers a single unified experience across all of our product lines,” Warr continued. “The VeriSign Content Portal Services platform also provides us with the ability to cross-merchandise between different types of content. Both of these capabilities are extremely challenging to achieve effectively with multiple platforms, and we will shortly be announcing several new programs which leverage these abilities. Without the current levels of integration, these would have been significantly more complex and time-consuming to implement.”

Warr summarized the company’s partnership with VeriSign by saying, “The mobile communications marketplace is very dynamic and we are always adding to our infrastructure to leverage opportunities. We continue to partner with VeriSign as it has demonstrated a consistent ability to help us rapidly deliver the new services that our customers want. It has proven to be a great overall strategy to have forged this partnership, and the results are why VeriSign wins more and more of our business.”

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