

4 Ways to Put "Pokémon Go" to Work for Your Small Business

By Adam C. Uzialko, Business News Daily Staff Writer July 12, 2016 11:11 am EST
- See more at: <http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/9228-pokemon-go-business-strategy.html#sthash.rr7b2d7O.dpuf>



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By now, you've probably heard of the augmented-reality mobile game "Pokémon Go," in which players move throughout the real world to hunt for and capture digital Pokémon. It might seem trivial or irrelevant to your business at first glance, but since the game is geographically based, there are a number of ways you can use it to attract local players to your location and, hopefully, convert them into paying customers.

There are two types of fixed locations in the game that are important to most of these strategies. The first are known as PokéStops, which are buildings or places of note around a city where players swing by to grab some extra Poké Balls and potions. Many of these stops are businesses, but even if yours isn't one a PokéStop is still likely nearby.



Credit: Adam Uzialko

The other type of fixture is called a "gym," where players battle their Pokémon in a bid to gain control of the location for their team. Both of these locations regularly attract players multiple times a day and can be leveraged into generating more patronage for your business. After extensive, tireless weekend research into "Pokémon Go," Business News Daily has worked out a few ways to capitalize on the craze.

1. Host a lure party

One item that can be placed on PokéStops is called a "lure module." Once activated, lure modules will attract wild Pokémon (and, more important, players) to that location. Consider buying a package of lure modules and advertising a night as "'Pokémon Go' Lure Party!" If your business is on or near a PokéStop, hosting a lure party could be a great way to bring players to your establishment. It's a cheap and easy form of marketing; create a "Pokémon Go" account by downloading it for free from the Google Play or App stores, buy a package of lure modules with [a few dollars of real-world cash](#), and then just set them up at your nearest PokéStop. Each lure is active for 30 minutes, so you can use them in succession to create a lure party that lasts as long as you'd like. Coupling a lure party with some special deals could be a great way to bring in some extra money.



Credit: Adam Uzialko

2. Gym battle tournaments

Maybe your business is closer to a Pokémon Gym than a PokéStop. In that event, there's another way you can incentivize players to come patronize your business. Advertise that you'll be hosting a tournament in advance, perhaps even offering discounts to gym battle winners. Then, on game day, [players who successfully become gym leaders](#) (with proof of gamer ID) will be entitled to that discount. Not only is it a great way to harness those intense "Pokémon Go" rivalries for your business, but to hold gyms teams need multiple members to defend it. So, while you're giving discounts to the gym leaders, their teammates will be there alongside them as well, most likely as full-paying customers.

3. Host a Poké-hunt

Hosting a communitywide "Pokémon Go" hunt that starts and ends at your business's doorstep is a strategy that's not contingent on the proximity of gyms or PokéStops. All you have to do is advertise the date and time of your family-friendly Poké-hunt, wait for players to gather, and then depart together for a stroll around your neighborhood. Your staff might even join the hunters in branded shirts to make sure your business is visible through the entire event. Of course, as it is with any good Poké-hunt, there's an after-party. Invite the hunters back to your establishment for some trainer talk and to compare their hauls. This is an especially effective tactic for restaurants.



Credit: Adam Uzialko

4. "Pokémon Go" social media deals

You can even use "Pokémon Go" to increase your visibility on social media. Offer customers a few dollars off to take a screenshot of a Pokémon in your store or restaurant and then post it on social media with a tag to your business. While it might just be a few dollars off for them, it spreads your brand online. It also shows other nearby players how many rare and exotic Pokémon are crawling around your establishment, and it might encourage them to come visit and maybe spend a few dollars of their own.

The future of "Pokémon Go"

The rumor mill is swirling with talk of future "Pokémon Go" updates that will [allow trainers to trade Pokémon and items](#). If and when these updates come, these new features will open new doors for businesses to harness the immense appeal of this augmented-reality phenomenon. And if more AR games prove to be as popular as "Pokémon Go," businesses might have an entirely new marketing strategy at their disposal; luckily, these strategies cost virtually nothing to employ.

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