

## How Qmee Ensured its Venture across the Pond would float

Qmee is a search loyalty, cash-reward browser app that launched in the UK 18 months ago, and ventured to this side of the Atlantic via the World Wide Web just six months ago. According to the co-founder Jonathan Knight, launching in the US was not a “next step”, but rather the original vision for the company. “When you build an internet business, you have to be in the U.S... bottom line,” Knight said. “We launched in the UK and made sure we had all the kinks worked out with the site, made sure we crossed our “t’s,” dotted our “i’s,” with the legalities and then launched in the U.S.”

Typically, expanding a company into another country would require a steep marketing strategy, to make sure the product or service translates well into the new culture, the word is spread through highly visible channels, etc. Within the internet ecosystem though, there are so many digital channels to spread the word that an internet-based business transfers fairly naturally from country to country.

“Since bloggers tend to be right in our sweet spot demographic, we started by targeting U.S. bloggers in four key categories; Mommy, student, tech and money-saving/coupon bloggers,” said Amy Allen, Head of User Acquisition. “Once a few people with a decent following picked us up, word of mouth started to kick in spiking continued growth, and we also listed Qmee on as many U.S. app directories as possible.”

Interestingly the biggest challenge in breaking into the U.S. was the subtleties. With a free app paying people for regular online searches, the question is bound to come up: “What’s the catch?”

Knight and Allen explain the most important piece of their strategy was mastering their brand voice, so that Qmee would be accepted by a U.S. audience. “Many times in the UK marketing messages end up taking on a funny or quirky persona, but that doesn’t tend to come across the right way in the states,” said Knight. “We were conscious of monitoring our writers and designers from the beginning to ensure we were developing a fun, yet credible and trustworthy brand voice, knowing that we would be headed to the U.S. sooner rather than later.”

Between social media channels including Facebook and Twitter and some really awesome blog reviews, Qmee has been able to reach nearly 30,000 U.S. users in six months and is typically receiving about 150 new sign ups per day.

“Our concept is so simple, that sometimes we’ve got to take a step back to determine what the best way to explain it is,” said Allen. “Some of our best ideas for promotion of the app have come from users sharing their Qmee experience online, that have made us say ‘Wow! That’s a good way to put it!’”

The beauty of using the internet to market an internet business is that one day you could have a [young gentlemen in a zebra outfit](#) decide to randomly vouch for your company and get 9,213 YouTube hits, and the next you could have a [well-respected blogger](#) stumble upon your site and lay out every detail for his readers explaining why your service will benefit them.

The importance of not over-complicating, is just as vital as having a plan, and as has been demonstrated by Qmee, the power of “word of mouth” is tremendous, whether it’s disseminated vocally or through a keyboard and screen.