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COOL BRANDED IPHONE APPS



ZIPCAR

With this tool, Zipcar members can do just about everything from their iPhone. When they've given permission to share their location, a map pops up to show where all the nearby, available vehicles are. Users can also map the car's home base, and get served directions. The app's most awesome feature is the virtual key fob.

STARBUCKS, MOBILE CARD

Turning the mobile phone into a wallet, the second iPhone app from Starbucks is one of the most innovative apps of the year. Customers in select test markets can now pay for their lattes with their phone. The app's other killer feature is it lets customers check their balance and load up remotely without ever involving a clerk.

PIZZA HUT

Pizza Hut's app is part utility and part entertainment, with all the bells and whistles to make ordering out fun again. You can choose the size of your pizza crust by pinching the virtual crust in or out, and drag and drop your toppings onto the dough. Perhaps the best thing about the app is that orders placed on the iPhone are discounted 20%.

NATIONWIDE MOBILE

If mobile is about convenience, then Nationwide has really nailed it. The home and auto insurer released an app this spring that was the first to let customers file claims from an accident scene, with the option to include pictures taken with their iPhone. Everything else, from a tow truck to a virtual flashlight, is a single click away.

AAMCO, IGAUGE

Sure, there are traffic and car-care apps out there, but this is as comprehensive as they come. Road-trippers will appreciate tools like traffic maps, and a mileage calculator, direct links to Aamco roadside assistance and nearby gas stations. But iGauge is more than a roadside companion; it's also a troubleshooter for car problems.

KRAFT, IFOOD ASSISTANT 2.0

By popular demand, improvements in the new iFood include a one-touch click mechanism that crosses items off shopping lists, and a beefed-up collection of budget-conscious recipes. Cooks can now also browse recipes using a "What's on Hand" filter that finds only recipes containing ingredients already in their pantry.

SHERWIN-WILLIAMS, COLORSNAP

With ColorSnap, you never have to make multiple stops to the paint store to pick up swatches. You can now play colors off each other using an app from paint-maker Sherwin-Williams. With a photo on your iPhone, tap the area with the color you're seeking a match for, and the app will present you with coordinating swatches.

BARNES & NOBLE, BOOKSTORE

As Barnes & Noble shoppers browse the store shelves, they can snap pictures of any book, CD or DVD cover and open a trove of richer details about them than what's printed on the jacket or sleeve. If the app finds a match to the photo, it will serve up a catalog of additional information ranging from reviews to interviews with the author.

CHIPOTLE

With the Chipotle app, you will never have to stand in line again to order your custom burrito. From the app, locate the nearest Chipotle, then build your burrito, taco or salad. Chipotle said since launching the app in early fall, it has seen a spike in online orders, as all iPhone orders get routed to the online order queue.

WEBER GRILL, ON THE GRILL

What Weber's app has that's shoulders above the competition is its clean and intuitive interface, plus a well-rounded suite of multimedia how-tos for the perfect barbecue. The app has a sizeable compendium of recipes and a handy reference for how long to grill everything from lobsters to bananas.