Email is one of the world's most powerful communications mediums. Not surprisingly, it can also be one of the most entertaining. Metamail, a leading email technology company, set out to prove this by creating a unique, email based entertainment program dubbed the *The Dark Nile* – a story told entirely through a series of daily emails that you were never intended to see. In cooperation with **AOL Moviefone, NBC Studio Pass**, and **MGI Software** (now **Roxio**), Metamail launched the show to rave reviews.

The story's plot is simple. It's the year 2005 and a new and frightening threat faces America, one that could devastate the country's energy reserves and kill millions. Subscribers join in a thrilling month long adventure as a brilliant and dashing scientist teams up with a beautiful CIA agent to foil a terrorist attack.

Written and produced by AOL's Editorial Director, award winning journalist, and screenwriter Jesse Kornbluth, *The Dark Nile* attracted over 200,000 subscribers and enjoyed a six month online run. A total of 7,500,000 messages were received complete with advertorial product placements and banner advertising. Each daily episode was produced in both HTML and Metamail message formats.

In an advertising medium that has experienced a significant decrease in online click-thru rates, Metamail presented an exciting alternative to traditional HTML based messaging formats. Metamail messages are designed to look and feel like real mail. As a result, Metamail dramatically outperformed HTML formatted messages containing identical content and graphics.

Metamail's unique XML-based software architecture and patented multimedia messaging technology allows innovative online marketing programs such as the *Dark Nile* to deliver unparalleled results.

Metamail-formatted communiqué
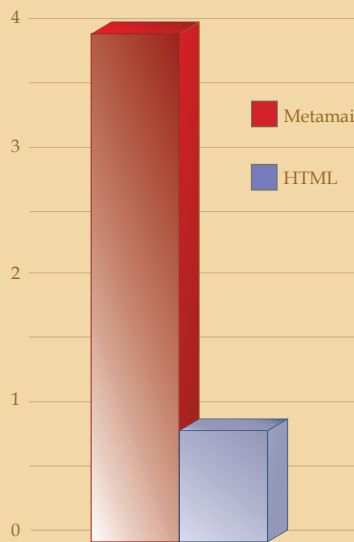
Indexed Response Rate

Click-thru rate comparisons were evaluated by email type with Metamail messages resulting in a **500% * increase in advertorial click-thru rates** over HTML. MetaCard banner advertisement click-thru rates **exceed HTML by a factor of 4:1**.

* Darknile Campaign Data