

OUR THOUGHTS ON EFFECTIVE  
e-MAIL MARKETING



MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

Going Green In your Marketing:  
take e-mail the next level.

There will always be a place for direct mail. However, if you look closely at the type and frequency of your printed pieces that you are sending, organizations can easily identify those items that would be a good fit in the email realm.

Many large travel, banking, and other service providers were the first to jump on the email bandwagon for regularly scheduled statements, newsletters, and other already-existing direct mail advertisements.

Properly executed, consumers find many advantages in receiving these types of communications via email.

#### Advantages for Consumers

- Review, retrieve, and save electronic pieces for easy reference and reduced clutter.
- Immediately respond to offers or call-to-actions with clicks, not postage.
- Share information electronically by forwarding to a friend or business associate.

#### Advantages for Advertisers

- Reduce cost associated with direct mail pieces.
- Shorten the amount of time and reduce the resources needed from "concept to distribution."
- Customize electronic pieces with more personalized content to increase relevancy for each recipient.
- Decrease the amount of time to provide customers with information that they have requested by using "triggered" or "recurring" messages to send electronic collateral or links.
- Track success of email campaigns through electronic reporting within minutes/hours, not days/weeks.
- Collect other customer information that can be used to tailor unique and customized campaigns based on subscription-collection pages as well as by tracking user activity via visited links.

### Identifying the Opportunities and Making the Move

Moving direct mail pieces to an electronic format doesn't happen overnight. Also, not all direct mail pieces are a perfect fit for the email world.

Email-design constraints, along with best practices, need to be fully fleshed out to ensure that you are providing a message that is visually pleasing and relevant, and renders properly in the email inbox.

### Steps and Considerations for Print-to-Email Shift

One of the biggest obstacles when moving from a printed direct mail piece to email is not having an email address, or having an email address that is not opted-in to receive your messages.

The best place to start in building your e-mail list is your Web Site--you can opt-in prospects to receive information (often times a prospect is more willing to receive information in this way--rather than the giving more personal information for fear of a sales person contacting them. Also, trade shows and other industry events offer a great opportunity to gain e-mails from targeted prospects. Likewise, more and more industry publications and associations are selling e-mail contacts.

### Direct mail itself has an integral role in converting direct mail customers to email customers:

- Include a "unique" URL in every direct mail piece you send--pointing respondents to a customized web page with a variety of electronic fulfillment pieces that can be accessed after providing an e-mail address and other contact info.
- Web Seminars have proven to be a great way to stimulate a dialogue with prospects --invite prospects via mail, then direct them to go on-line to register for an event.

### A few more tips to consider...

Offer incentive for the customer to start receiving your message electronically: a discount on a future purchase, advance notice of upcoming company sponsored events, access to electronic newsletters, customer case studies, and specialize industry related "news" feeds, or special or unique offers tailored exclusively for you email-recipient customers.

Collect email information the correct way: Require prospects to provide information beyond only their e-mail address--title, company size, and other unique qualifiers, will allow you in the future to provide these individuals with e-mail offers that are specific to their interests. You'll need a back-end database that lets you capture this information, and in the future easily sort data for future broadcasts.

Use two email fields that require the customer to enter his/her email address, and verify that both fields entered match. Use a double-opt-in email communication plan that will generate a message confirming the email subscription selections to further ensure a correct email address.

Ensure that your Web site has an "Sign Up Today" link on every page to capture new customers...and direct customers to a special opt-in page that lets them select a variety of offers that they wish to receive on a regular basis--newsletters, web seminar invitations, etc.

If you require a "Customer ID" or other type of "Membership ID" to access your Web site, create reminders that ask for their email and subscription authorization.

Taking the steps today to create a road map to a "greener" marketing program can result in significant cost savings in the direct mail channel; doing so will also show your customers that you are a responsible marketer, playing in an ever-growing field with businesses that are trying to make the world just a little better.

The ability to track ROI and campaign success with email can also help drive sales and provide for a more unique and customized user experience that will help strengthen your brand.