



Best Practices for E-mail and Multichannel Marketing



10 Best Practices to Achieve Success: The Lifecycle for the E-mail Marketer

- 1 Global Preference Center** — Gather and deploy against implied or specified preferences from customers, sync with mobile device delivery
- 2 Real Time E-mail Deployment** — Respond immediately to customer initiated interaction with relevant and immediate e-mail offers to enhance loyalty and customer relationships
- 3 Personalized Messaging** — Customize content and delivery to individuals, or highly targeted audience segments based on customer lifecycle and purchases, as well as demographics
- 4 Consolidated Resources** — Share campaigns and contact strategy across departments for efficient use of time and budgets, all within one e-mail service provider platform
- 5 E-mail Marketing Lifecycle** — Plan campaign deployment within and across business units to make the system work more efficiently, reduce duplication of effort and coordinate campaigns
- 6 Global Reach and Sharing** — Adopt U.S. campaigns from other regions for quick deployment of successful strategies using shared assets, best practices and enhanced collaboration
- 7 Metrics Driven Execution** — Measure successes beyond opens and click through, to cross channels and campaigns, and include lifetime value
- 8 Tested Results** — Understand audiences, refine and improve results by testing all aspects of campaigns – including subject lines, offers, format, creative and personalization
- 9 Deliverability Monitoring** — Evaluate deliverability data to ensure e-mail campaigns are reaching inboxes and take proactive steps to reduce delivery failures
- 10 Organic List Growth** — Take advantage of high traffic events or seasons to improve sign up forms, increase call to action frequency and add incentive offers for e-mail opt in

Look for the numbered callouts on the following pages to see how these best practices helped on the road to success.



Subscriber Opt-in Strategy Nets 36% Incremental List Growth — Organically

Signups increase 14 times more than average in a single quarter

Customer

Dell

Campaign

During the 2009 U.S. holiday season, Dell and Acxiom implemented a number of changes designed to take advantage of higher website traffic and boost e-mail signups organically.

Results

- 36% incremental organic list growth
- Gained thousands of new subscribers in a single week
- Grew organic opt-in rates by 16% overall
- Reduced bounce rates by 24% with a 2-page signup format

Acxiom Client

Personal computer maker Dell creates innovative solutions that deliver reliable, long-term value for personal and business customers. For 10 consecutive years, Dell has been the No. 1 PC supplier to small and medium businesses in the United States. Plus, nearly every *Fortune* 100 company does business with Dell. On average, the company ships about 140,000 systems per day — more than one every second.

Challenge

At Dell's small to medium business (SMB) division, selling products is the top goal, with customer e-mail signup a close second. In fact, for the SMB group, a large number of all new global marketing deliverables in 2009 were e-mail communications. The group continuously works to increase the number of prospects and customers signing up for Dell e-mails, and prefers to do so organically rather than through third-party lists.

Solution

Dell leverages Acxiom's technology and expertise to help build its subscriber base and improve delivery. The Acxiom Impact-X™ E-mail platform maintains all subscriber contact information and is setup to automatically execute targeted communications and track the results. Additionally, Acxiom recommends strategies to help optimize the preference center and make it easier for customers to sign up.

Approach

During the 2009 U.S. winter holiday season, Dell and Acxiom tested a number of changes designed to take advantage of higher website traffic and boost e-mail signups among those already familiar with the brand. First, they changed the signup form in the e-mail preference center from one long page to two shorter pages. With benefit-driven copy and simpler layout,

the first page gathers name, e-mail and annual spend, and the second page collects company, location and topics of interest. If customers fail to fill out the second page, Dell still captures the e-mail.

Product pages featured a call to action to sign up, set high up on the page in the path of web traffic. In particular, adding an incentive offer for subscribing to e-mail updates resulted in opt-in rates 14 times higher than average during that period. Dell also added an "E-mail Updates" button within the site navigation on every page above the fold.

Impact-X then deploys relevant messages based what's known about the customer, such as size of the business and even if the person is already a Dell customer. That customer data is intended to drive all subsequent communications. Ongoing, Acxiom closely tracks list health and delivers regular reports to Dell on total subscribers, opt-outs, and acquisition results.

Results

After the winter holiday trial, Dell adopted the successful organic list growth strategies going forward. The results spoke for themselves. Locating the call to action on the upper right of the page helped drive 36 percent incremental organic list growth. A specific savings offer bumped responses even higher. In a single week, Dell added thousands of new subscribers. And the company went from 70 percent abandonment of the signup form to reduce bounce rates by 24 percent.

"We're continuously simplifying the user experience for customers with a true organic list growth strategy," said Adrian Xavier Olvera, senior marketing consultant, Dell. *"With the Acxiom platform, we're also exploring the world beyond subscriber preferences to include behavioral data that will help deliver a more relevant experience to our customers."*

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FedEx Builds Small Business Loyalty with “Think FedEx First”

Open rates average nearly 19 percent

Customer

FedEx

Campaign

FedEx builds loyalty program signups with very targeted e-mail tracks, executed by Acxiom’s Impact-X E-mail platform.

Results

- The campaign consistently beats industry averages with an overall open rate of 18.95 percent.
- Click-through rates (CTR) average 1.88 percent.
- An e-mail to initial non-responders hit a 2.66 percent CTR.

Acxiom Client

FedEx Corp. (NYSE: FDX) provides a broad portfolio of transportation, e-commerce and business services to customers and businesses worldwide. With annual revenues of \$33 billion and 275,000 team members, the company consistently ranks among the world’s most admired and trusted employers.

Challenge

Through campaigns like “Think FedEx First,” FedEx reinforces customer relationships. The campaign aims to attract new customers and increase sales from current customers by establishing FedEx as the first option for all their shipping needs.

FedEx sought to drive revenue by increasing signups for savings and rewards programs. Once customers respond, FedEx must dynamically reply with personalized messages based on what action a customer took.

Solution

- 3 FedEx teamed with Acxiom to execute the e-mail campaign, and with Robinson & Maites for the creative. The Acxiom Impact-X™ E-mail platform enabled very focused, personalized targeting, automated follow-ups, and in-depth campaign reporting. Additionally, Acxiom’s FedEx team provided some strategic direction regarding segmenting the audience.

Approach

FedEx organized the audience into eight different profile groups, with different offers and messaging tracks for each. Offers included joining My FedEx Rewards, signing up for discounts and participating in the shipping threshold program. As customers moved through various loyalty programs, Impact-X automatically sent e-mails with updates on rewards points, shipping levels, thresholds and eligibility for prizes or discounts. The platform is designed to execute responses to the right people at the right time with minimal FedEx or Acxiom hands-on involvement.

4 Additionally, Impact-X serves as the centralized platform for all FedEx e-mail campaigns — maintaining subscriptions, user profiles and a rich database of data. With each campaign, Acxiom has rich details on responses, allowing FedEx to build more complete customer views.

Results

10 The Think FedEx First campaign consistently beats industry averages with an overall open rate of 18.95 percent (compared to a 15.82 industry benchmark) and click-through rate (CTR) of 1.88 percent. Persistence can pay off when compelling offers engage previous non-responders, with one hitting a 2.66 percent CTR.

As FedEx continues to create positive customer experiences, engagement in these loyalty programs contributes significantly by targeting customers precisely.

“FedEx is a champion in customer relationship management. They’re progressive in many of the things that they’re doing,” said Trey Peden, FedEx account director with Acxiom. *“They can leverage this campaign to find their best customers and turn them into evangelists for the FedEx brand.”*

Exclusive Offers Help Deepen Relationships with Customers

Open rates triple industry benchmarks

Customer

FedEx

Campaign

FedEx sends targeted, exclusive offers to customers based on interactions with customer service, and dynamically communicates with those customers as a result of responses to those offers.

Results

- Open rates across all e-mails range from an impressive 42 to 47 percent — triple the industry benchmarks.
- Clickthrough rates (CTR) are 16 to 20 percent.
- Exclusive offers to save up to 20 percent netted a CTR topping 23 percent.

Acxiom Client

FedEx Corp. (NYSE: FDX) provides a broad portfolio of transportation, e-commerce and business services to customers and businesses worldwide. With annual revenues of \$33 billion, the company offers integrated business applications through operating companies under the respected FedEx brand. Consistently ranked among the world's most admired and trusted employers, FedEx employs more than 275,000 team members.

Challenge

Recognizing an opportunity to build better customer relationships, FedEx started its Customer Service Innovation (CSI) program in 2007. When customers contact customer service, FedEx representatives assist with their questions or concerns, and then follow up with a special offer just for that customer. FedEx needed a way to respond dynamically to customers based on the type of customer and interaction.

Solution

Acxiom maintains a centralized e-mail database for all FedEx e-mail communications. With the Acxiom Impact-X™ E-mail platform, FedEx can communicate with customers throughout the relationship. After a service call, FedEx follows up each touch with customized offers via e-mail. The Analytics Workstation feature of the platform then tracks behavior such as open and click through rates to help FedEx further target its customer base.

Approach

FedEx teamed with Tank Design to create eight different unique e-mails for the CSI program. Offers following service calls include bonus points in the loyalty program, Amazon gift cards if customers ship with FedEx, and other discounts for FedEx services.

As customer service representatives assist customers and key in information, they let customers know that an exclusive offer is coming their way. Following FedEx input of that information into the platform, the Impact-X application programming interface (API) is set up to immediately send the personalized e-mail with that customer's offer. As customers take action on those e-mails, Impact-X receives clicks on individual hyperlinks, relays the action to its destination and launches follow-up e-mails based on those customer click through activities.

Results

FedEx takes steps to improve satisfaction and deepen relationships with customers through highly targeted offers. The CSI e-mail messages typically outperform other FedEx messages, which are already higher than industry average.

Open rates across all e-mails range from an impressive 42 to 47 percent. Additionally, clickthrough rates (CTR) are 16 to 20 percent. Exclusive offers to save up to 20 percent netted a CTR topping 23 percent.

FedEx clearly gets customers' attention, helping to advance the relationship further. Moreover, they produce rich information through which FedEx can better understand their customers and target offers.

"They now have a unified e-mail platform for segmented promotions in order to aggregate marketing campaign responses as customers go through the lifecycle as a FedEx customer," said Trey Peden, account director at Acxiom.

Sprint Nextel Grows E-mail Volume 30% in 2009 — and Maintains High Performance

2009 open rates 32% higher than industry average

Customer

Sprint Nextel

Campaign

The Acxiom Impact-X E-mail platform is designed to automate the delivery of personalized communications throughout the complete 2-year subscriber lifecycle.

Results

- 30% year-over-year increase in e-mail volume while maintaining high performance
- 2009 open rates are 32% higher than industry average
- Clickthrough rates (CTR) also come in 57% higher than industry average

Acxiom Client

Sprint Nextel offers a comprehensive range of wireless and wireline communications services to consumer and business users. The company's innovative technologies include two wireless networks serving more than 48 million customers, the first 4G service from a national carrier in the United States, industry-leading mobile data services, instant national and international push-to-talk capabilities, and a global Tier 1 Internet backbone.

Challenge

Over the course of a two-year wireless contract, Sprint focuses on building loyalty throughout the lifecycle, from helping customers understand a new phone to taking advantage of device capabilities to preparing for the next upgrade. Sprint looks to deliver the right messages to the right subscribers at the right time in order to maximize the customer's experience.

Solution

4 Acxiom executes all e-mail communications for Sprint Nextel — over 150 million e-mails per year — from contract start to close. The Acxiom Impact-X™ E-mail platform is designed to automate highly personalized delivery and provide advanced backend analytics to support ongoing improvement.

With Impact-X, Sprint Nextel can deliver messages customized by the point in the lifecycle, type of device and plan, age, preferences and other factors. Based on customer actions, the e-mail platform can dynamically generate relevant follow-on communications to address subscribers' needs.

Approach

Sprint Nextel delivers a mix of educational, informational and promotional content across three distinct lifecycle phases:

- **Early** — E-mails intended to educate subscribers about how to use their new devices and read their bills. **5**
- **Midlife** — Information is meant to stimulate usage by making subscribers aware of applications and features.
- **Late** — Sprint recommends devices based on predictions of current usage and a sophisticated handset upgrade path.

To help customize messages, Acxiom creates registration and survey pages to gather e-mail preferences directly from subscribers. Additionally, actual subscriber e-mail response behavior — such as e-mail opens and clickthroughs — can be used to trigger subsequent messages. Continuously updated, the rich data entered and stored in Impact-X allows for two BlackBerry users starting the same month to receive different versions of e-mails as appropriate. **1**

Acxiom and Sprint Nextel evaluate detailed analytics daily and monthly, and perform frequent testing, to identify opportunities to refine message paths, formats and creative. **8**

Results

In 2009, Sprint Nextel grew its e-mail volume 30 percent and expects to do so again in 2010 with the help of the Impact-X E-mail platform. As the database of subscribers and volume expanded, the company maintained high delivery rates, which Sprint Nextel attributes largely to Acxiom.

"From an industry standpoint, our numbers are high across the full lifecycle," said Roshni Cox, group manager, E-mail and Mobile Marketing, Sprint Nextel. *"Reporting tells us the engagement level is there. To be able to engage the customer and ensure they're getting the right information at the right time, we deem that a success."*



Sprint Nextel Ups Subscriber Engagement with Better E-mail Personalization

Deliverability rates beat industry average by 2.6 percent

Customer

Sprint Nextel

Campaign

The Acxiom Impact-X platform delivers e-mail communications to Sprint Nextel subscribers. It also empowers Sprint Nextel to analyze subscribers, measure results, and continuously refine its advanced segmentation to help optimize e-mail performance.

Results

- Personalization and close monitoring contribute to deliverability of 2.6% over industry average.
- Click-to-open (CTO) rates also beat industry averages, largely due to the power of personalization.

Acxiom Client

Sprint Nextel offers a comprehensive range of wireless and wireline communications services to consumer and business users. The company's innovative technologies include two wireless networks serving more than 48 million customers, the first 4G service from a national carrier in the United States, industry-leading mobile data services, instant national and international push-to-talk capabilities, and a global Tier 1 Internet backbone.

Challenge

When Sprint Nextel set out to deepen subscriber relationships over the standard two-year contract cycle, the company recognized the connection between personalization and loyalty. The more tailored the e-mail, the more likely the subscriber will respond. Sprint Nextel wanted to increase personalization – down to device and plan type — while maintaining accuracy.

“People may be willing to let you mess up their name but not their handset name,” said Roshni Cox, group manager, E-mail and Mobile Marketing, Sprint Nextel.

Solution

The Acxiom Impact-X™ E-mail platform serves as the single platform for delivering direct e-mail communications to Sprint Nextel subscribers. With Analytics Workstation in **7** Impact-X, Sprint Nextel can analyze subscribers, measure results, and continuously refine its advanced segmentation to help optimize e-mail performance.

Approach

The Impact-X solution is designed to execute e-mails that are personalized by name, point in the lifecycle, and device and plan type. From the first welcome e-mail, subscribers are

presented with dynamic content. Further into the subscriber lifecycle, e-mails may recommend upgrade devices based on current usage and subscriber responses to e-mails. Impact-X can be used to draw on a rich content library of messages and set up to fill in the correct fields with custom information, ensuring maximum personalization. **3**

Sprint Nextel frequently tests all aspects of its e-mails — subject lines, offers, format, creative and personalization — to refine and improve results. A monthly newsletter even personalizes content by geographic area, providing customers with the opportunity to know if coverage has changed for them. **8**

Acxiom assisted in several major Sprint Nextel device launches with personalized pre- and post-launch communications. Current and potential customers could sign up to receive updates about launches, and indicate e-mail preferences, which contributed to dynamic content and significant database growth.

Results

A personal touch, and keeping a close eye on inbox placement, contributes to deliverability rates of 2.6 percent over industry average. Testing and reporting indicate that the more personalized Sprint Nextel e-mails have become, the more customers are engaged. In fact, click-to-open (CTO) rates beat industry averages. Moreover, the Impact-X solution helps provide a level of precision that reduces the risk of incorrect delivery. **9**

“With the amount of devices and the potential fields we have, it’s very complex,” Cox said. “It gives customers a sense of ‘we know who you are.’ The measures we’ve started to implement with Acxiom have helped sustain those numbers.”



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