SYNERGY

Quality In Customer Analytics

We Share Our Knowledge

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6 Rules for Email Use

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1. Background

In the past few years, the marketing world has been transformed.

Previously, mass marketing was the only way for companies to reach their customers, but in the past few years, marketing activities transformed into One-To-One marketing, i.e. using information (both personal and behavioral) gathered about the customers, to construct personalized marketing messages.

Large as well as small companies began using each and all communication channels available to them: SMS, MMS, IVR, email, web, etc. At the same time, they also improved and enhanced their databases so they could sustain these customer-focused activities.

Despite those activities, many organizations, local and international, wonder why, after using all these advanced tools in order to segment their campaign target markets, and continuing to use data mining models and message personalization processes, they still can't generate the expected revenues.

This situation created a new need: referring the organization's attention not just to getting to know the customer and personalizing the message accordingly, but also to the manner in which the message is managed and transferred to the customer. In other words, we have constructed the best message for this customer. Now what?

2. Objectives

This is the first article in a series of articles dealing with marketing channels.

This article will analyze the email channel, and present a few basic rules for effectively managing this channel and the ways of transferring marketing messages through it.

A proper transfer of email messages can reduce operation costs and significantly improve customer response rates.

3. Current status

In the past few years, spam emails have caused considerable damage to the perception of emailing as a direct marketing channel. Nevertheless, this channel has quite a few advantages compared to other channels. Once properly used, this is undoubtedly one of the most profitable marketing channels available today.

4. The Rules Marketing Managers Know (But Forget)

1. Gather information during registration
2. Obtain customer's consent to receiving messages
3. The origin of the address list
4. Continuously update the data gathered
5. Message structure:
    a. Personal referral
    b. Use the subject line and the sender's address
    c. Use the preview panel
    d. Format and message visibility
    e. Timing and frequency.
6. Evaluation for the purpose of improvement.

5. Marketing Rules in Detail

4. 1 Gather information during registration

While the customer is registering, request only the information required to transfer the message, and don't pester the customer with unnecessary questions.

4. 2 Obtain customer's consent to receiving messages

Make sure that the customer has unmistakably agreed to accept messages from you. Studies show that as many as 61% of customers who have actively agreed to accept marketing emails, do, in fact, open it. The "double consent" method ascertains that the initial registration does not suffice as an active consent to receiving emails. Another email should be sent to the customer, requesting additional approval of his consent. This way, not only will we have his absolute consent, but we will also increase the probability of him opening the next emails we send. This is also an opportunity for the customer to remove himself from the email distribution list by clicking the provided link (which will be included in every email we send to the customer from now on).

4. 3 The origin of the address list

Try not to acquire mailing lists from another party, but rather use the information registered in your own database. Studies show that mailing lists based on internal information gathered by the organization produce much better results than acquired lists. The reason for that is that customers registered in the organization's internal database are those that already have some sort of contact with the organization, or those who showed some interest in a product/service in the past, and have registered personal information into the system, thus enabling and allowing the organization to address them in person.

4. 4 Continuously update the data gathered

Frequent changes in the customers' lives do not allow the organization to sit still. The organization must constantly update and refresh its mailing lists. The most common way of doing so is deleting addresses that return the sent emails. Another way is deleting addresses for which the recipient does not seem to open any emails sent by the organization.

1. <u>Message structure:</u>

   a. **Personal referral**
   Using the customer's first and last names at the beginning of the message will personalize it, thus presenting an appearance of individual referral to this customer.

   b. **Use the subject line and the sender's address**
   Make sure that the customer recognizes your address from the sender's line, and that the subject line contains a short summary of the email contents, without the "Re" or "Fw" preambles, which indicate that the email is not original.

   c. **Use the preview panel**
   This is the first section of the email the customer sees, before even opening the message itself. Therefore, make sure you use the company logo or short and concise sentences, in order to attract the customer's attention.

   d. **Format and message visibility**
   Make the message interesting. If you are using text messages, use eye-catching colors and fonts. If you are using HTML pages, you can use a wider variety of graphics, such as animation and images. Consequently, HTML messages are much more effective and impressive.

e. **Timing and frequency**
   Email timing should be in correlation with the message conveyed. For instance, invitations to events should be sent on Thursdays, whereas messages having to do with daily routines, e.g. loan offers, should be sent at the beginning of the week.
   Email frequency must also correspond with the content. The customer will not complain about receiving a daily newsletter if he actually subscribed for it, but he will prefer receiving updates on new products in lower incidence (at a lower frequency).

4. 5 Evaluation for the purpose of improvement

Hardly any marketing managers actually evaluate the success of their marketing activities, though it is common knowledge that 90% of customer responses arrive within 48 hours of email delivery. Below are 3 stages that make the evaluation process simple and easy:

a. Outline in detail the objectives for sending your message (increasing sales, informing customers about new products, motivating customers to use a certain service, etc.).

b. Identify the method of information gathering per each objective (e.g., for motivating customers to use one service over others, the number of subscriptions for the new service will be reviewed).

c. Know where your strengths lie, and use them in the future.

Remember! Your customer's inbox is overflowing these days, and by using at least some of the rules detailed above, the probability of your message getting through grows.

About Synergy

Synergy is an international consulting company, specializing in Analytical CRM solutions.

Synergy offers marketing oriented business ventures, formed by a team of leading local and international industry experts.

Synergy aims to provide its customers with the ability of acquiring commercial advantages by informative analysis of their customers' shopping data.

Synergy has vast experience in working with leading commercial organizations, both locally and internationally, and its clientele includes foremost industry leaders in the communications, financial and retail fields.

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