Recently, we had a chance to catch up with Jennifer Conover, Marketing Operations Manager at MetLife in Group Voluntary & Worksite Benefits, and a client of Diamond Marketing Solutions. Jennifer is part of a team that is responsible for marketing as many as 15 individual products at MetLife—everything from developing marketing materials for existing products, to research and targeting for new products. And that’s just part of what they tackle every day.

Choosing a Nimble Partner

The MetLife team is also the one doing the deep dives on market research to figure out if consumers are in need of a particular product. If they are, then the team needs a plan to make customers aware of that new product. Ultimately, this means they will need to drive enrollment/participation for their group benefit plans.

It’s a lot to balance, and it was clear to MetLife that today’s consumers were increasingly demanding more and more responsiveness from companies. If they wanted to stay ahead of the competition, she thought they needed to put a nimble, multi-channel targeted marketing program in place.

As she recalls, “We knew what we wanted to accomplish, and part of that meant we needed to find a partner who could focus on building and maintaining marketing materials in tandem with our team—we needed the best tools out there to target the employees of our group customers better than ever.”

This was no small task, but MetLife was determined to find the right partner so that their customers were getting the best that MetLife had to offer. After doing extensive due diligence and review with their vendor sourcing counterparts, MetLife selected Diamond Marketing Solutions.

“Multichannel has become more and more essential to the dialogue we have with our customers.” – Jennifer Conover - MetLife

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“We chose DMS for the MetLife Defender PURL/GURL campaigns for a number of reasons,” she told us over coffee. “There are a lot of moving parts on these programs, so we needed someone with a sound reputation—not just in general, mind you. It had to be someone who had specific experience in building multichannel campaigns utilizing offline, online and digital communications. They also needed to have the strength to create great creative and really become a seamless part of our team.”

After a moment, she adds, smiling, “It helped that DMS had a solid reputation working with other divisions in MetLife, too.”
Dear Colleague,

Welcome to the fall edition of *Frontrunner*. I hope that you had a great summer and that the rest of this year brings you success in every aspect of your business.

It’s no secret that much of that success now hinges on multichannel opportunities—and how you make the most of them. In our cover story, Jennifer Conover from MetLife says multichannel is “essential” to her company’s success. She’s right. In today’s fast-paced, always-connected world, consumers are demanding more from companies. They are essentially in control of where, when, and how you speak to them.

That’s because consumers aren’t one dimensional; they have multiple ways to seek out what they want. Without a doubt, much of that process begins online, where the influence is probably strongest. But it would be a mistake to ignore the role that methods like direct mail still have in the decision matrix. So as communicators, it’s up to us to orchestrate the right infrastructure when it comes to connecting with our customers so we deliver the most relevant impact at the most relevant time. That might mean a printed invitation that drives traffic to a personalized URL (PURL), which then triggers customized emails and text messages with it, all resulting in the consumer taking action.

When it’s done right, the results more than speak for themselves.

Multichannel campaigns can get complicated—that’s for sure. But I am a firm believer that they don’t need to be overbearing. That’s why we have enhanced our web-based project management and reporting tool, DiamondView™.

With DiamondView, you can view and collaborate on any part of a project in real time, online, from the start. Gone are the days of multiple platforms and methods for managing your workflow. DiamondView puts it all in one place, and it is simply terrific. Find out more about what it can do on page 5.

All of the multichannel opportunities out there—and the solutions I see us delivering every day—tell me that things are looking up for consumers and marketers as we head into 2016 and beyond. That includes Diamond Marketing Solutions too—we recently learned that we have moved up almost 1,000 places on *Inc.* magazine’s 2015 ranking of the fastest-growing private companies in America. I’m extremely proud of the recognition, and I promise that we will continue to strive to gain even more ground.

Sincerely,

Mark D. Peterson
President and Chief Executive Officer
Diamond Marketing Solutions
Putting Our Expertise to Work

Once DMS was on board, it was time to put our multi-channel partner experience to work for MetLife. Right away, we were able to develop campaigns that were integrated into the overall MetLife approach—seamlessly delivering targeted messaging to their customers.

Unlike some of her competitors, Jennifer recognizes that the marketplace and consumers are constantly evolving. That matches up nicely with how we see things, too. And when MetLife sees opportunities that can take MetLife to another level, they jump on them right away.

What does Jennifer think is the biggest opportunity for marketers who want to stand out in the crowded field? Without missing a beat, she says “Multichannel. It has become more and more essential to the dialogue we have with our customers. They're looking for a comprehensive strategy and the flexibility to customize campaigns based on the channels that suit their corporate culture and work best for their employee population. That we're able to give them this...maybe even above and beyond what they expected...is a huge win for us.”

Never Settle

Jennifer continues, “All of that means nothing, of course, without effective tracking. Having an accurate, real-time analysis of campaign performance is essential—it gives us the opportunity to evaluate our results and to maximize campaign performance and value. And that’s something we knew DMS could deliver on right from the start.”

One of the greatest things that DMS appreciates in their MetLife relationship is their vision for the future; they are not willing to settle for “good enough” and every team member is constantly looking for ways to elevate the way MetLife approaches their marketing.

“We’re always looking to improve,” says Jennifer. “We’re setting out to create a larger digital inventory and doing more campaign testing than ever before. And we’re putting even more consideration into the end-to-end customer experience—We believe marketing and customer interaction doesn’t stop post-enrollment.”

All of this can be seen as the logical next step in the evolution of multi-channel marketing; companies will have to be more responsive than ever—and work with partners who can deliver day in and out.

Growing Trust

“I think about all of the advantages of working with you (DMS) and feel very confident that they can rely on you to deliver. The extensive (end-to-end) marketing capabilities...knowing the MetLife brand and its nuances...the marketing expertise with training/advisory capabilities are a definite plus.”

Continued on next page
Dear Colleague,

I hope that you enjoy this issue of *Frontrunner*, which shares ideas on how to incorporate multi-channel communications into your future efforts. Please make note of the address of our new corporate headquarters.

Michael Nevolo

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Looking down the road, MetLife already has plans for new products to introduce to the group market. They want to build more new marketing materials and integrate them deeper into multi-product campaigns. This is on top of the ongoing product enhancements and new campaign development the MetLife team already has in the works. It promises to be a busy year for MetLife, but Jennifer’s confident and looking forward to the challenge. And it helps that she knows she can rely on DMS every step of the way.

“The day-to-day management of our account has been wonderful. The high levels of responsiveness and partnership have made it a pleasure to work with DMS, and I rely on that to keep things moving smoothly.”

Beyond our day-to-day relationship with Jennifer and her team, DMS is honored to have a longstanding relationship with the Vendor Management Team at MetLife to support various benefit products including: accidental death, whole life insurance, and identity theft protection. By working in and utilizing multi-disciplined teams, DMS develops, executes, and manages multichannel campaigns that help acquire, retain, and engage their customers in both a B2B and B2C environment.
Revealing Our Enhanced DiamondView™ System

DMS believes that your processes and our production should never be a mystery. That is why we created DiamondView™, a web-based project management and reporting tool that allows our clients to view and collaborate on their projects at any time.

Too often, project and marketing coordinators are forced to use multiple methods to manage their projects, and the methods are frequently a combination of online and offline processes.

With DiamondView, users have one online platform that supports their program initiatives from start to finish—implementation, data input, document proofing and repository, inventory, and mail tracking.

Mail Tracking and Address Change Service (ACS)
View your mail pieces as they flow through the USPS mail stream, with reporting at various levels, including entry point, state, NDC, SCF, and ZIP code. Drill-down and search capabilities at the record level enable scan detail for individual mail pieces. Estimated in-home dates provide an overview of when your pieces will arrive. Utilize the in-home reporting to manage staffing and inventory.

An optional add-on to the mail tracking module allows you to view and download updated and undeliverable record detail with USPS ACS data. Get more out of your marketing budget by updating your database and removing undeliverable records from your mailings.

Awards

Diamond Marketing Solutions has been awarded a 2015 International Communicator Award for our client work.

DMS was recently honored for innovative communications and design in the following area:

Marketing Effectiveness for Stanford Graduate School of Business Executive Education Nurture Content

The Communicator Awards is the leading international awards program recognizing big ideas in marketing and communications.

Having received over 6,000 entries from companies and agencies of all sizes, the Communicator Awards represent some of the largest awards of their kind in the world.
Viewer Attention Analysis

Diamond Marketing Solutions (DMS) doesn’t believe in intuition alone. As a data-driven company, we use the art and science of communications to help our clients design, create, and deliver the most effective online and offline messages. We combine software that is built on decades of vision research from Ph.D’s and neuroscientists with our deep understanding of successful document design to provide proven analysis of how your customers will view your communications.

How It Works
Viewer attention analysis can be used for everything from printed documents to emails, landing pages, and even your trade show booths! It is an algorithm that scans your text and graphical content to accurately predict and optimize visual impact. Essentially, it simulates a phase of human vision called pre-attentive processing.

Designing for Clarity
By designing in ways that attract attention to your key goals during pre-attentive processing, your viewers are more likely to continue viewing your communication in post-attentive processing, to read the message more thoroughly, and to ultimately act on it.

DMS combines our expertise with analysis to determine the most effective ways to present your messages both online and offline. Based on your goals, we ensure that your statements, emails, landing pages, and even direct mail are created to draw attention to your key messages. Through increased customer readability and optimal placement of content, your communications will be more likely to inspire response. With over 20 years in the business, we have helped marketers develop the most effective communications for prospects, customers, members, and account holders across a wide variety of industries.

Did You Know?
Viewer attention analysis is 92% accurate! It determines what the average human eye is drawn to in the first 3-5 seconds of viewing.

This heat map shows where your recipient’s eye will go in the first 3-5 seconds of viewing the document. Red spots have the highest density of attention.

This sequence map shows the order in which your patient/guarantor will read through your document.
Postal Changes Are Coming
– by Dawn Mellas, Vice President of Online Applications

A postal topic on everyone’s mind these days is the status of the exigent rate surcharge. Here are some of the details:

• The Court of Appeals upheld the PRC’s December 2013 approval of a temporary exigent surcharge and thereby denied the USPS’s request to make the exigent surcharge permanent.
• The Court determined that the PRC’s original method for calculating volume loss directly related to the recession was too low. The PRC must now reassess the volume loss, without the “count once” rule, and determine the recalculated postage loss related to the recession.
• The PRC suspended the requirement that the USPS must give mailers 45 days’ notice prior to lifting the surcharge.

The original calculated postage loss of $2.8 billion was expected to be collected in full around August of 2015, and mailers had hoped that would be the end of the exigent surcharge. But with the new calculation method being applied, and looking at how much the USPS has been able to recoup to date, mailers should budget based on current postage rates, with the exigent surcharge, until spring 2016.

The USPS may opt to file for a rate increase in early 2016. If it happens, the increase would be capped based on the Consumer Price Index and would likely not exceed 1%. Therefore, based on the exigent surcharge of 4.3% expiring in the spring, lower postage rates would result.

Postal Update

After more than 50 years of dedication to the mailing industry, Don Harle has retired. His commitment to the success of Diamond Marketing Solutions and to the direct mail industry as a whole has been an inspiration to all of us who have worked with him. We will truly miss Don’s generosity in sharing his wisdom and postal expertise with all of us. Congratulations, Don!

Don Harle has passed the baton of postal affairs to Vice President of Online Applications Dawn Mellas,* who has been a member of the management team since 2003. Prior to taking on this current role, Dawn held multiple positions within DMS, including vice president of client services for both our critical mail and direct mail divisions and vice president and general manager of fulfillment.

Dawn has over 30 years of experience in client services, including 20 years in critical mail, direct mail, and fulfillment, with an emphasis on USPS mail tracking.

Dawn continues to be active in the postal community today and serves as the DMS postal liaison, attending various industry forums and sharing postal news with our employees and customers.

*You can reach Dawn at dmellas@dmsolutions.com.
We hope that you enjoy this issue of *Frontrunner*, which is chock full of multi-channel communications solutions.