World-Class Business School Goes Global with Data-Driven Marketing

By Cyndi W. Greenglass, Senior V.P. of Strategic Solutions

For direct marketers in virtually every industry, it’s always been about the data. But these days, data means more than just developing a mailing list or personalizing a letter salutation. The best data-driven solutions leverage knowledge about the behavior and preferences of customers and prospects to create highly personalized – and very effective – one-to-one communications.

Let me share with you a case study that illustrates the impact of global, data-driven, multi-channel communications.

One of the world’s leading business schools offers numerous Executive Education programs that attract senior business leaders from around the globe to its campus. During these programs, participants sharpen their leadership skills and acquire leading-edge knowledge across a wide range of current business issues.

With a mission to build its brand outside the United States and network with its alumni worldwide, the school turned to Diamond Marketing Solutions to help develop leads of potential participants from around the world for its Executive Education programs.

This business school has expanded its global outreach by presenting one-day events and multi-day educational programs in Asia, Africa, and Australia, along with a series of faculty-led webinars offered worldwide. To promote these events, DMS created integrated, multi-channel, highly personalized communications to establish a global brand and drive registrations to specific events, programs, and webinars – with the ultimate goal of acquiring senior-level executive participation for the school’s landmark Executive Education programs in the U.S.

TARGET MARKET IDENTIFICATION

Utilizing direct mail, email, and banner ads, DMS has been able to target executives in very specific local geographies, both in the U.S. and around the world. Through a multi-touch, multi-channel
Dear Colleague,

When I began my career in the print and mail business in 1980, the ominous signs of market maturity were everywhere. The paperless office, the paperless society, the emergence of the personal PC, and massive data collectors and processors (mainframe computers) were upon us. Fast-forward 30-plus years, and while some things have remained the same, the business landscape is definitely different. Although we are using even more paper than ever before, mainframe computing has evolved into light-speed applications in “the cloud.” And while face-to-face selling is still important, companies now rely heavily on personal-preference and buying-behavior data to sell their products and services.

Indeed, many things have changed over the last three decades, but the desire to understand our clients’ needs is still the key to our business success. How we go about meeting those needs defines who we are today and is paramount to our future and that of every company.

Regardless of the channel or media – whether ink on paper, email, or personalized URLs – there is a wealth of valuable information that can be used to create highly relevant, data-driven messages, including:

• Marketing communications for customer acquisition and retention
• Statement communications for loyalty program members, insurance policyholders, and other relationship-based programs that use historical customer experiences and purchases to provide relevant offers, upsell messages, and important information
• E-commerce storefronts that allow customers and prospects to select specific information, samples, or gift cards based on where they shop, who they are, or what they like
• Personal dynamic web landing pages and microsites that serve up custom content based on a customer’s experience and interaction with the company

Over the last year, Diamond Marketing Solutions has invested millions in new software and hardware technology so that we can be an integrated resource for our clients who need to communicate to their current and prospective customers through increasingly multiple media channels, such as:

• Email
• Mobile marketing
• Banner/display marketing

• Social media
• Pay per click
• Direct mail

Whether you call it an “onsert,” a “transpromotional” message, or “one-to-one marketing,” in the end, it is data that drives relevant communication – and that is the key to a successful program that will retain and grow your business base. Here at DMS, we look forward to understanding your needs and implementing the strategies and new technologies that will provide you with the best data-driven communication solutions available in the market today.

I hope you find this fall’s Frontrunner of interest as we share our experiences and ideas for your business.

Sincerely,

Mark D. Peterson
President and Chief Executive Officer
Diamond Marketing Solutions
Have you ever been challenged with a task that you weren’t quite sure how to get done? Then, once you had finally created a plan, the requirements changed and you needed to adapt? In today’s fast-paced business world, where making constant changes is standard operating procedure, it is more important than ever to have a partner that can adapt to these changes. Here is an example of how we helped one of our clients react to its changing environment on the fly.

- DMS was challenged with providing warehouse services and building/hosting a website all in one location for the orders of 600+ stores.
- We created a website through DiamondView™ Fulfillment where the client group could place orders for the stores. This process was in place for about six months.
- It was then decided that the ordering would be done by the stores themselves – both corporate and franchise stores. The challenge was allowing the “corp stores” to be billed through the corporate office (via PO#) while the franchise stores would be set up to pay by credit card only. We created a merchant account for our client, which allowed for the credit card purchases.
- Six months later, more changes came:
  - DMs had to approve all corp store orders before they could be processed.
  - Franchise stores could order whatever and whenever.
  - Nobody was allowed to see the pending approval orders with the exception of the assigned corp store DM.
  - The new web store is currently in testing mode with 12 corp stores. All franchise stores now have access as well. We should be live in a couple of weeks, once the test period is completed and our client is ready to go live with all stores.

The task may seem simple: build a webstore and provide warehouse services to fulfill orders. But changes happen as improvements to the process are conceived and implemented. When you improve the process, you can maximize production, manage inventory levels, and create a customer experience that will satisfy the needs of multiple departments for your client and its customers.
Precision Communications
Making Dynamic Communications Relevant
By Greg Waite, Chief Operating Officer

Did you notice the personalized insert inside this month’s *Frontrunner*? It was designed and created especially for you, and we hope that it gives you ideas on how you can use your data to develop dynamic messaging. While true variable graphics and copy are proven to increase customer retention and loyalty, the technology for precision communications has taken longer to be adopted – until now!

Whether you are trying to acquire or engage customers/donors/members, reduce customer churn, or improve loyalty, you can be using the rich data you already have to create truly personalized engagement messages and communications. From your statements to your marketing messages, Diamond Marketing Solutions wants to show you how you can be building personalized and dynamic messages that increase your results and improve your measureable ROI.

By providing a sample of a consumer grocery application, the insert is meant to get your creative juices flowing and show you that the sky’s the limit on flexible personalization. Some of the dynamic messaging we are highlighting includes:

- The ability to drop in customized maps based on proximity to your locations
- Completely personalized offers by customer based on transaction behavior
- Variable copy and graphics for every customer or prospect based on your data or your strategy
- Name or company personalization throughout – wherever you want it to engage your audience
- Variable logos for franchisees, agents, or partners
- Loyalty messaging that allows you to reference point balances or redemption levels
- Ability to write a completely personalized and unique message to each contact, highlighting a different product, service, or call to action

Take a few minutes to check out your insert, and then call your account executive to learn more about the technology and processes used to make it for you. We welcome the opportunity to brainstorm about how we can apply these techniques to your communications in the future.

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DID YOU KNOW?

- 54% of customers ended a brand relationship as a result of poor communication.
- 30% say that they’re inspired to do business with one company over another if they receive a personalized communication.

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1 Ricoh InfoPrint Solutions
2 InfoTrends, 2007
Quick Tip:
Linking the Offline and Online Worlds with QR Codes
By Cecylia Cackowski, Director of Digital Solutions

As smartphone ownership levels continue to rise, marketers aim to connect traditional media with the digital world to reach consumers who’ve become increasingly mobile and good at ignoring marketing messages. Quick Response codes, or simply QR codes, are the technology being talked about the most as a way of catching up with that hard-to-reach, on-the-go audience. According to Nielsen’s May 2011 report, 38% of U.S. mobile consumers own smartphones, and smartphone sales surged 21% from last year. It’s no wonder that the marketing community is buzzing about these 2D barcodes as a way to optimize the offline-online experience. It’s a multi-channel world, and a decent percentage of the target audience may want to access information on their smartphones.

At Diamond Marketing Solutions, we’ve seen firsthand how incorporating QR codes into direct mail brings together the effectiveness of smartphone technology and print advertising for improved conversion rates and higher ROI. With the help of the QR codes, the University of Iowa’s young alumni were able to interact with a video of a student talking about the positive impact of making a donation, obtain more information on how to give, and make a donation themselves – all through an enriched mobile experience. The Peavey Corporation was also pleased with the results of its integrated QR code direct mail campaign, discovering that 38% of all traffic to its direct mail landing pages was generated by mobile. Its customers not only received instant information, but they were engaged in a new and interactive way. Now that’s linking the offline and online worlds!

Here are some additional fun facts to consider:

• U.S. mobile barcode scans grew 182% from Q4 2010 to Q1 2011 and 630% year over year. (3GVision, April 2011)

• 80% of U.S. consumers expressed interest in scanning mobile barcodes, and 69% indicated that they would scan to receive coupons and discounts. (MGH, February 2011)

• The majority of QR scanning (30%) is coming from individuals between the ages of 35 and 44, followed by the 25–34 (25%) and 45–54 (24%) age groups. (ScanLife, 2011)

If you haven’t explored using QR codes, now is the time to add it to your 2012 communication plan. Call your account executive or account manager to learn how to get started.
approach, we can test messaging and media
to determine the best way to reach executives,
whether online (with email and banners) or
via physical mail, for programs and brand
building. This requires identifying in-country
business executive lists that target companies
by size, industry, and location, as well as
based on title, seniority, media channel,
and previous interactions with the Executive
Education programs.

Our lead-generation efforts
and brand outreach have been
extraordinarily successful,
with all global educational
events selling out…

MULTI-CHANNEL, MULTICULTURAL CAMPAIGNS
Using this data, DMS developed in-country
direct mail and email to target executives
with top companies in selected geographies
where education and other engagement
opportunities existed, as well as geography-
based banner advertising and appointment
setting. These solicitations included registration
for the school’s local educational events, global
webinars, and Executive Education programs
in the U.S. Campaigns recognized different
language needs; for example, communications
were versioned in Mandarin and English for
the China outreach. For direct mail, we had
our international business partners produce
and mail packages from Hong Kong and
India for location insertion into specific
international markets.

TRACKING, MEASUREMENT...AND BLOCKBUSTER RESULTS
Advanced tracking mechanisms were put in
place to track email open rates, click-throughs,
conversions, and sales. In addition, tracking is in
place to identify response rates and conversion
of online versus offline, as well as conversion
through the sales funnel. Database matchbacks
provide ROI and marketing direction on the
most successful tactics for future marketing
efforts. The prospects’ interaction beyond
the initial touch determines the next level
of engagement, and the subsequent media,
channel, and messaging are all dictated by a
combination of data-driven factors.

So far, our lead-generation efforts and brand
outreach have been extraordinarily successful,
with all global educational events selling out
(and generating waiting lists that will be mined
for leads). Many of the webinars are attracting
1,000+ attendees. In addition to gaining leads
on new participants for their general Executive
Education programs, opportunities to develop
custom Executive Education programs within
specific targeted firms were also uncovered.

TESTING OUR WAY TO THE FUTURE
For 2012, more educational programs are
currently in development, including a return to
Asia and the launching of programs in South
America, and Europe, along with a full slate
of faculty webinars. Each event represents
a new lead-generation opportunity, as well
as another chance to test and fine-tune our
communications.

We are currently A/B testing multiple
messages and lists online to determine the best
combination of contact and messaging strategy
to get the highest level of engagement. This has
been implemented through creating tracking
codes in our emails and by employing PointRoll
to measure user engagement with our banner
ads. Going forward, we will be expanding our
testing to include subject lines with positioning
messages, allowing us to read results quickly and
use the most compelling positioning across all
channels in print and online.

Working together, this prestigious academic
institution and DMS have tackled the complex
challenges of global lead generation across
cultures, time zones, and language barriers to
deliver outstanding results. ◊
Postal Update: Toward a 21st-Century Postal Service
By Don Harle, Vice President of Postal Affairs

The United States Postal Service is often viewed as a 220-year-old government institution that sits idly by while electronic communication techniques eat away at its volume. Actually, nothing could be further from the truth. The USPS has a bright, aggressive team of marketing and product development professionals who have the full support of Postmaster General Pat Donahoe.

Here are some of the things that are being done to open new markets and expand traditional services:

1. **Mobile Barcode Promotion**: To prove that mail has value in a multi-channel marketing program, the USPS offered a 3% postage discount this past July and August for mail pieces that bore a QR code, a two-dimensional barcode that can be read by a smartphone. The QR code had to connect to a marketing message. It’s too early to tell how successful the test was, but the USPS is establishing systems to expand the concept.

2. **“If It Fits, It Ships”**: This has been an extremely successful television campaign for the Priority Mail product. Volume is way up, and the offerings continue to be expanded.

3. **“Value of Mail” Advertising Campaign**: As Frontrunner goes to press, the USPS is starting a major media campaign stressing the “Value of Mail” and that “Mail Means Business.” Look for the ads on TV and in your mailbox.

4. **Expanded Retail Access**: Going to the local post office to buy stamps or mail a package has not always been the most pleasant experience for the American public. The USPS wants to expand its reach into malls and big-box stores to offer 24/7 availability where the consumer already shops. (This effort is drawing resistance from unions and some legislators.)

5. **Direct Mail Guaranteed**: In a bold step, the USPS is negotiating with 16 very large companies that currently have virtually no direct mail budget to establish a mutual set of expectations for a large direct mail test. Postage will be refunded if these companies don’t realize the agreed-upon rate of return.

THE NEXT POSTAGE INCREASE WILL BE JANUARY 22, 2012
The USPS has announced that the next price change for all products will be on January 22, 2012, barely nine months removed from the April 2011 increase. If current CPI trends continue, the cap for First Class Mail, Standard Mail, and periodicals will be about 2%. Look for the actual rate announcement on or about October 24. Your DMS account team will send you the numbers as soon as they are available.

SAVE THESE DATES!

By popular demand, we are bringing back our customer webinar series and will be addressing these hot topics in data-driven communications:

**October 11, 2011 – 1 p.m. CST**
**Transpromo in Action**: Transforming transactional documents into revenue generating communications

In a recent study, 63% of people surveyed prefer personalized statements with graphics and relevant offers.¹ Learn firsthand from the experts how to marry the art of messaging with the science of data for impressive results.

**November 2011**
**Fast-Forward on Fulfillment**: The latest techniques and best practices

**January 2012**
**Multichannel, Multimedia Direct Marketing**: Success stories from the front

**March 2012**
**Communications and Compliance**: Bringing together effective communications in a regulated environment

¹InfoTrends, Future of Mail
Bonus Personalized Insert Enclosed

Enjoy this issue full of new precision communication ideas for you.