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CASE STUDY

Travelbag: Test and Learn Programme

TRAVELBAGTM.co.uk

Since 1979 Travelbag have been specialising in creating tailor-made package holidays to a range of worldwide destinations. From round the world trips to city breaks, beach holidays to adventure tours.

The Challenge

Travelbag have seen success in building their brand and driving bookings through traditional channels such as direct mail, advertising in national newspapers and in-branch.

Travelbag wanted to increase both customer engagement and booking enquiries through their marketing communications. The newsletter was performing at a reasonable level and provided customers with the latest holiday offers. However the e-newsletter was the only email communication being sent each week and was not making use of the data available to ensure the messages were more targeted and relevant. Travelbag also wanted to develop new ways to combine their online and offline marketing communications.

The initial test was to see the impact of channel combination and reinforced messaging and from there, develop a more complex test and learn programme which could be used to inform future marketing activity.

The Solution

dbg and Travelbag worked together to build some simple test and learn activities into existing marketing plans.

After discussion it was decided Travelbag should use their data more intelligently to increase relevance and test the combination of channels to see how this would impact on the results of the newsletter.

The 'Deal of the week' was promoting Dubai so Travelbag split their customer data into 2 segments for the broadcast. Extracts were taken from Travelbag's Knowledge Studio (marketing database); one for a control segment and another for a more targeted segment consisting of individuals that had previously enquired about holidays to Dubai. Once extracted the data was cleansed using dbg's verify data hygiene tool.

One broadcast was sent to the previous Dubai enquirers and one to the control segment. After five days a follow up email or SMS was sent to the Dubai enquirers.



The second part of Travelbag's test and learn programme was to look at how combining online and offline channels in a joined up fashion impacted on email marketing metrics and ultimately booking enquiries. The focus of this was Travelbag's latest DM pack which promoted deals to Hong Kong in conjunction with their airline partner Cathay Pacific. The key messaging and content from the DM pack was taken and used to formulate the design and content of an email. The strategy then involved splitting the target audience into three segments;

1. Would receive the email only
2. Would receive the DM pack only
3. Would initially receive the DM pack and then the email as a follow up.



The channel combination test was carried out by cleansing and validating the email and postal address data. The data was then formatted for direct mail purpose and sent to Travelbag's print partner for fulfillment. The DM pack was posted on the same day as the email was broadcast to ensure all three segments received the communication within a similar time period. Five days after the DM landed the follow up email was sent to the relevant test segment.

As well as tracking responses across these tests, dbg employed cutting edge email technology to measure and track engagement.

The Outcome

The strategy implemented was extremely successful and provided conclusive evidence that an integrated marketing approach with channels working together can make a far greater impact than channels working in silos.

"The results from carrying out a relatively simple test and learn programme have been fantastic. Not only have our email metrics improved considerably but enquiries and bookings generated have increased too – which is ultimately the key objective of our marketing campaigns. "

Paul Hopkinson, Marketing Director, Travelbag

For the newsletter data segment test Travelbag saw open rates double and click throughs improve three fold compared to control segment. This was a clear example of the better targeted the message, the greater the results generated. The follow up email also produced an increase in open rate of 59% compared to the newsletter control segment. However, it was interesting to find that SMS did not perform as well when compared to email as a follow up.

The channel combination also produced impressive results. When the DM was followed up by an email communication there was an increase in click throughs of over 110% versus email alone. Most importantly telephone enquiries for the campaign increased by over 100%.

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