

paperSTYLE

Overview

The challenge

Lack of segmentation and inability to provide customers with relevant products based on their stage of the purchase lifecycle

The solution

Customer worked with their agency to look through past purchase history to identify actionable customer behaviors and key segments for targeting and then teamed with IBM to develop an innovative email campaign, built using IBM® Marketing Cloud's Programs functionality, to guide customers through the wedding timeline

The benefits

The creation of two wedding nurture programs based on past purchase history for brides and bridesmaids led to a 244 percent open rate increase, 161 percent click rate increase, and 330 percent revenue per mailing increase

Paper Style

Online retailer implements wedding campaign resulting in a 330 percent increase in revenue per email

Founded in 1999, Paper Style sells customer invitations and stationery online in an effort to reach folks across the country. Having extensive retail and printing experience, Paper Style has grown to be one of the best in class, by providing the very best quality invitations and stationery delivered quickly and at a reasonable price.

Lack of individualized messaging

PaperStyle.com sells custom invitations online. Like many companies, they were accustomed to sending the same message at the same time to their entire email database, regardless of demographic or interest. Eventually, their open and click-through rates started suffering.

Pinpointing key nurturing segments leads to innovative email campaign

In order to increase effectiveness, Paper Style worked with their agency Whereoware to look through past purchase history and Google Analytics data in order to identify actionable customer behaviors. Using this information, they were able to pinpoint a key segment for nurturing: brides and/or bride's friends.

Whereoware then developed an innovative campaign focused on promoting Paper Style's wedding offerings. The campaign was comprised of a series of emails using IBM Marketing Cloud's Programs functionality that followed a bride and/or her friends through wedding events, offering Paper Style products to match their needs along the way.

“Silverpop has allowed us to combine our customer behavioral and purchase data in order to tailor our messages, giving us a leg up on our competition and becoming more relevant to our customers.” – David Grocer, President, Paper Style.



Solution components

Software

- IBM® Marketing Cloud
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Whereaware analyzed several wedding help resources, and combined this research with Paper Style's firsthand knowledge of wedding purchase behavior in order to come up with a wedding "timeline" for bridal shoppers to follow. For example, the timeline assumes that a bride might buy wedding favors (given at the wedding) before thank you cards (usually sent after the wedding). The campaign was laid out following this logic.

Completing any of the actions below triggers a series of targeted emails guiding customers through the wedding timeline. Each email offers product suggestions in keeping with their current stage of wedding planning. Customers are entered into the campaign by:

- Clicking on a wedding link in any Paper Style email
- Purchasing wedding or bridal shower products
- Visiting a wedding-related page on the PaperStyle.com website

Once a customer is brought into the IBM Marketing Cloud Program, the first email sent asks if customers are shopping for themselves or for a friend. Depending on which option is selected, they are assigned to one of the two different tracks: "Your Wedding" or "Your Friend's Wedding". The two tracks send five emails each, broken down as follows:

- **Nurture track: Your Wedding:** Customers are routed to the "Your Wedding" track either by purchasing a wedding product or clicking on the "Your Wedding" link in the original "What are you planning for?" email. Customers targeted for the Wedding nurturing track are sent a series of emails recommending bride-related products like favors, bridal party gifts, and thank you cards. The time lapse of 7 days to 6 weeks (depending on the email) between each send helps ensure that emails are sent not only in a timely manner, but also at a point in time when brides are most likely to be looking for the products in question. This timeline was drawn up based on wedding research and analytics data.
- **Nurture track: Friend's Wedding:** Customers are routed to the "Friend's Wedding" track in one of two ways: by purchasing bridal shower products, or by clicking on the "Friend or Relative's Wedding" link in the original "What are you planning for?" email. Customers targeted for the Friend's Wedding nurturing track are assumed to be helping plan the wedding events. For this reason, targeted emails in this track offer suggestions of products for bridal showers, bachelorette parties, and more, rather than things like thank you notes, which are generally the responsibility of the bride herself.

Using IBM Marketing Cloud allowed Whereoware to put safeguards in place to make sure that customers are not shown items they have already purchased. For example, if a visitor purchases bachelorette invitations, they will not be sent bridal shower information, since that event date has likely already passed. Instead, they will skip over the Bachelorette Invites email, and the first communication they receive will be Bachelorette Tableware, the next email in the Friend's Wedding track. In this way, visitors see products targeted to their current interests, rather than to dates or events that may already have passed.

Triggered, targeted email campaigns drive customer engagement

Paper Style has driven significant engagement as a result of these nurture programs. Combined, these targeted emails have resulted in:

- Open rate: 244 percent increase over average email sent
- Click rate: 161 percent increase
- Revenue per mailing: 330 percent increase

These numbers highlight the relevance of the Paper Style wedding campaign. By breaking out one segment of their customer base and showing them relevant products, Paper Style was able to increase both conversions and interaction statistics exponentially. The fact that this one segment (customers interested in wedding products) was further split into two different tracks/demographics (brides/friends of the bride) only served to drive these numbers higher.

The success of Paper Style's wedding campaign makes one thing clear: no matter the product or industry in question, utilizing audience targeting plus triggered mailing campaigns is one of the best ways to go.

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About IBM Marketing Cloud

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