

E-mail marketing without the thorns

CASE STUDY



Key e-mailing statistics 3rd Quarter 2004:

70,000 unique visitors
per months

Database of 85,000
subscribers
to the Gazette Delbard

More than 350,000 emails
sent per month

1 weekly e-mail campaign
17% of distance selling
business generated
by Internet and e-mail
www.delbard.com



Exemple de Delbard
e-mail campaign

For some, it is hard to imagine that a business as down-to-earth as the sale of plants and roses can profit from the boom in e-commerce? The answer is simple, and there are a number of reasons for this: on the one hand, the customer base targeted by one of France's biggest nurseries is generally rural and retired, a population which is now well equipped in terms of Internet access, and on the other, this population includes a great many gardening fans, who are likely to respond to e-mail that is focused on its centres of interest and which is adapted to the seasonal nature of gardening.

Delbard, a budding Ecommerce Site

Retail sales account for more than 80% of the firm's turnover and the proportion of ecommerce revenue is growing considerably.

The www.delbard.com site includes all kinds of information that every gardener, whether a part-timer or a pro, needs, in terms of seasonal advice and product selection. Over the last three years, the number of visitors to the web site has never ceased to grow, reaching the impressive total now of 70,000 unique visitors a month.

As soon as the site was launched, special offers and advice sheets were sent out to the customers who had subscribed by e-mail. However, the e-mail systems that were built in-house did not enable response rate tracking and were cumbersome for the marketing team to use.

The e-mail marketing seed had been sown, but it needed nurturing.

In 2003, Delbard launched an invitation to tender for a professional e-mail marketing technology solution. The choice was the Campaign Commander™ solution by Emailvision, for the numerous advantages it offered. The first advantage quoted by Michel Haddad, E-commerce Manager at Delbard, is its "user-friendliness". As an illustration, he goes on to say that "after only two hours of training with the Emailvision teams, I was able to set up my first e-mail campaign without any further assistance, and on my own."

The other points highlighted are the wealth of features for tracking and behavioural analysis, and the low price of the solution in ASP mode.

With Campaign Commander™, the Delbard marketing teams did not have to install any software nor set up any technical infrastructure, since the application and the databases are securely hosted in the Emailvision data centers. In addition, each customer has the direct benefit of quarterly upgrades on the technology platform.

An 8-day week

After a qualitative e-mail recruitment campaign, which took place over the first six months, supported by the firm's catalogues and web site the opt-in e-mail address list already includes 80,000 garden lovers.

Every Friday, they receive the "Gazette Delbard", which includes seasonal advice from the Delbard specialists, together with news on new products and special offers. Following this weekly e-mail, 80% of the sales are made during the weekend and the other 20% during the week. The sales that result from this e-mail channel now make up the equivalent of one day's turnover from the Internet site. E-mail is now the Delbard group's most profitable direct marketing channel.

Precision, a real-time response tracking & reporting

As soon as the e-mail campaign is sent out, the Delbard teams can monitor campaign response in real time: number of messages sent, bounce rate, open rate, click-through and conversion rates. "With Campaign Commander™, we have reliable and precise data to go on. We can calculate the return on investment for each campaign, but we can also test the behaviour of our customers with respect to new products or special offers. Depending on how successful they are, we can decide whether or not to put them into our paper catalogue," says Michel Haddad.

A communication relay for the garden centres.

How can information be provided about a workshop being organised by a garden centre, or about a new retail outlet being opened? Through e-mail marketing, of course. In this case, the targeting and geomarketing tools provided by Campaign Commander™ can be used to select the customers who are most likely to be interested in this information.

Advice Gardening via the Web

The reputation of the Delbard nurseries has been built up over the years on the basis of the quality of the advice given by the specialists in the shops. Dedicated teams now offer precisely the same service over the Web. This permanent and personalised dialogue is essential in securing the loyalty of web customers, who spend on average 20% more than the traditional Delbard catalogue customers.

A measurement tool for the marketing strategy

Delbard has also used Campaign Commander™ to launch customer acquisition campaigns on outside list rental files. The results for campaigns of this kind (message open, click through and conversion rates) produced by the Campaign Commander™ system enable the marketing teams to calculate new customer acquisition cost.

Projects realised in 2004

A list qualification campaign conducted on the Delbard email list gave the Delbard marketing team more precise details on the interests of its customers, in order to be able to send them information that is ever more personalised. The Campaign Commander™ solution is able to send out entirely personalised e-mails, automatically, on the basis of the interests selected in the customer profile and based on the behaviour of the individual customer in previous campaigns.

Conclusion

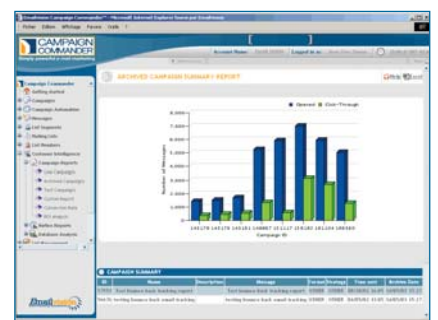
After having used Campaign Commander™ on a daily basis for a number of months, the Delbard e-commerce teams are fully satisfied with the features provided by the solution, and are planning to make the most of Emailvision being established throughout Europe in order to duplicate its campaigns outside France.



Exemple of Delbard e-mail campaign



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Exemple of Campaign Commander™ e-mail campaign report

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