

Best Practices Help Increase Opt-Ins 300%

Background:

Max & Erma's began as a single location business that has grown into 107 locations in 12 states. Known for hamburgers, tortilla soup, and a sundae bar placed in a bathtub, customers flock to the restaurant that is known for high quality, delicious food served in a fun atmosphere.

To encourage brand loyalty and increase repeat sales, Max & Erma's has created the Good Neighbors Reward Program where customers can sign up to receive special offers through email. Megan Rockey, Senior Marketing Manager, Franchise & Technology heads up Max & Erma's Good Neighbors Program, which is used to communicate with regular customers.

Challenges:

A slew of deliverability and list management issues left Max & Erma's with the fear of being blacklisted. "Our biggest challenges were that our unsubscribes weren't automatically updated and we had no reporting. I had to manually update preferences for those who wanted to unsubscribe and didn't have any insight into the success of our campaigns," said Megan.

With no reporting and no automation, Max & Erma's had to make a change in their email marketing provider. In order to deliver a weekly email to their Good Neighbor Rewards members, they had to improve their deliverability to ensure that their messages were being delivered to members as promised.

Solutions:

Max & Erma's found Bronto as the solution that not only automated their unsubscribe process but also helped with best practices advice to help improve their deliverability.

Beyond improved list management practices, improvements to their message were made. From reinforcing the Max & Erma's brand, to always including a clear Call-to-Action (CTA), and a sense of urgency (coupon redemption expires in one week), their emails clearly conveyed the brand of Max & Erma's and the free meal item of the week. "By sending an appealing email to our loyalty customers, we knew that our deliverability would improve. Once customers saw the value of receiving a free menu item every week, it draws them into opening the message but then ultimately come to Max & Erma's," said Megan.

Concurrently, Max & Erma's grew their opt-in list for their Good Neighbors rewards program. "Through advice from Bronto, we implemented a summer rewards program, which encouraged our wait staff to promote our Good Neighbors reward program to customers. Every week we gave away a prize to the wait staffer who collected the most opt-ins that week." Rockey continued, "In addition to the internal contest, we are also promoting that customers who opt-in at the restaurant will receive a free menu item to redeem that day."

Results:

"The results from our Summer Rewards Program were phenomenal. We increased opt-ins 300% from last year, from 22,000 opt-ins in 9 weeks to 65,000 in 6 weeks" said Megan.

While their increase in opt-ins is impressive, their high conversion rate is equally as amazing. Through integration of sales and email marketing data, Megan can determine the rate of redemption from the emails they sent to the Good Neighbor Rewards' members. On average, they see a 32% redemption rate of coupons for free meal items.

Megan sums up her experience with Bronto and email marketing, "email is the most cost efficient and effective marketing channel of all our marketing channels, and we have Bronto to thank for all of our improved success through best practices and advice."

Bronto offers the software and service solutions necessary for your email marketing success. Contact us at 1-888-BRONTO1 for a demonstration or to discuss your specific email marketing objectives.

To read more case studies visit <http://bronto.com/success/>.