



From You Flowers: Email Marketing Becomes Top Producing Order Channel

From You Flowers entered the online flower market in 2002, and have quickly have become one of the largest flower companies in the country. Operating out of a call center in Connecticut with approximately 150 full time employees, they work with a network of florists around the country.

Their incredible growth can be attributed to the use of over 900 order channels. From paid search, SEO, corporate accounts, online yellow pages, and email marketing; From You Flowers utilized these channels to generate profitable sales.

However, in order to keep up with their fast-paced growth, they needed to re-evaluate to maximize high performing channels and minimize or remove under performing channels.

Challenges:

With the benefits of a growing customer base, there also came challenges. "We are adamant that we should do our best to collect customer data from every order. As our business grew by leaps and bounds, so did our customer contact list," remarked Mike Chapin, President/COO of From You Flowers. Early on, From You Flowers invested in email marketing, starting with an in-house solution. "Our in-house solution met our needs at first, but we soon had issues with list management, tracking, and segmentation," said Chapin.

In addition to their problems with email marketing, customer retention was also an issue. From You Flowers uses many channels to acquire new customers, but their SEO ranks at the top of the list. However, SEO can be a costly venture, "Our goal is to obtain a customer's first order profitably, but sometimes that is tough, so we work to attain a more profitable second order, third order, and so on. We aim to have 50% of our daily business come from previous customers, as it's a way to make our original investment in SEO pay off," remarked Chapin. Even with improvements to their SEO, which helped improve the cost effectiveness, there still remained the challenge of customer retention.

Solution:

From You Flowers soon found Bronto Software as a provider who would meet their growing needs. Previously From You Flowers had to manually maintain their outbound list and bounces, as well as manually remove unsubscribes. With Bronto, all list management processes became automated, allowing users to easily unsubscribe. In addition to added functionality, the design and format of From You Flowers' email campaigns improved. "In order to reach all of our customers, we redesigned our email format and included more text than graphics," remarked Chapin.

Michael Chapin soon realized the benefits of outsourcing their email marketing, "with the user data that we were now able to collect through email marketing we segmented out customers who purchased flowers through an email campaign and who had not purchased." This segmentation data became very useful, as From You Flowers quickly utilized the practice of re-mailing in an effort to increase sales.

"Our Bronto account representative, really brought home the idea of bac'n, email you want but not right now. We typically send out our email campaigns on Monday, but with segmentation we can re-mail to those who did not open up the email on Monday by resending on Wednesday," said Chapin. By changing the subject line, text within the email, and varying the send time, re-mailing became a profitable venture to maximize their email campaigns. "The first email maybe a full graphic email, but the re-mail will include more text at the top, a graphic in the center, text at the bottom, or even full text," said Chapin. This change in design is



imperative to the success of an email campaign. Rather than resending the same message, From You Flowers has found success in redesigning their creative to peak the interest of their customers.

An additional advantage of segmentation is the ability to increase the frequency of email sends during peak seasons. "Around Valentine's Day or Mother's Day we may send an email once or twice a day. These campaigns are very profitable, but they also come with risks, such as unsubscribes. When we increase our sending frequency, I closely monitor our unsubscribe rate," mentioned Chapin. By segmenting out those who have opened the email or those who have purchased, From You Flowers has more flexibility to increase their sending frequency without greatly increasing their risk of unsubscribes.

Results:

From You Flowers generates on average 50% of their revenue of an email campaign through remarketing. Typically their click to conversion rates are nearly as high as their first email send. These results confirm the benefits of remarketing with the use of educated segmentation, as a way to increase customer retention through repeat sales.

From You Flowers' most amazing result was to see a 3000% email marketing ROI. Email marketing has grown to become their top producing and most effective order channel, surpassing all paid and organic search, online yellow pages, and SEO.

In analyzing the success of email marketing compared with other channels, From You Flowers eliminated their catalog channel. "In the end there was no way to track orders from the catalog, and it was an expensive channel considering the printing and postage. When compared with email marketing, which is an inexpensive and trackable, it made sense for us to invest more in email marketing and eliminate the catalog altogether," remarked Chapin.

Email marketing not only helped From You Flowers refine their email marketing program, it also helped increase sales. From open rates to conversions, From You Flowers saw their numbers increase dramatically.

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