RESPONSE RATE REPORT
for Cross Channel Campaigns

PROVEN WAYS TO INCREASE RESPONSE AND CREATE CONVERSATIONS THAT RESULT IN SALES READY LEADS

HOT

Cool solutions in print.

PART ONE – CROSS CHANNEL CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

This section covers the nuts and bolts of a successful cross channel campaign. For a deeper and somewhat entertaining look at how to get the most from a cross channel campaign, click here.

Campaign Objectives

Consider your objectives for a cross channel campaign; response rates can vary depending on your goal. Here are five examples of campaign objectives:

- Lead generation
- Direct order (including fundraising)
- Traffic generation
- Loyalty
- Data gathering

Response Value

Consider the specific value of response. For example, one customer wants people to make appointments, because on average one in ten appointments result in a sale for them. So if they get 20 appointments, it will likely result in two sales. What is the value of two sales?

Relevant Messaging

Though personalization is important, **the critical factor is the offer itself**, specifically how relevant it is to the recipient. If the offer is something the recipient wants, and it arrives at the time they want it, they will respond.

A relevant marketing piece consists of a message about a product (or service) that the recipient needs, delivered when the recipient is ready to receive it.
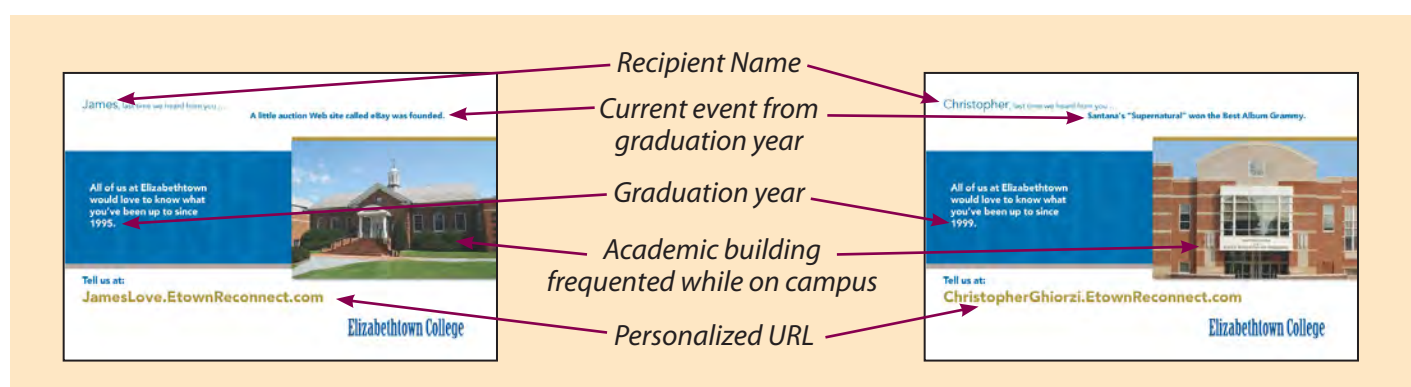
This campaign achieved astounding results for Elizabethtown College:

- **16.8%** of recipients visited their Personalized URL (PURL)
- **8.4%** response rate - alumni who provided information via an online survey and/or made a donation.

Personalized URLs as a Response Mechanism

Personalized URLs are paths to individual web landing pages created for individual direct marketing recipients. They are dynamically generated for each person on your mail list. **One key benefit of using PURLs is the ability to track behavior and responses**. The detailed information gained when using PURLs offers many interpretations of exactly what a "response" is; Caslon defines a response this way:

A response is when a prospect provides information that signals acceptance
of an offer or interest in having further contact with a marketer.

One thing to remember: a PURL alone cannot provide improved results. Other factors associated with a cross channel campaign work together with the Personalized URL to achieve improved response rates.

Mobile Barcodes as a Response Mechanism

QR codes are certainly the most popular and well-known type of mobile barcode, although other formats are also used and becoming more well-known every day. A mobile barcode offers your recipient another way to respond by instantly taking him/her to an online site for more information, a special offer or other content of value to the recipient. The United States Postal Service has offered (and continues to offer) incentives to use mobile barcodes in various types of mailings.

The Caslon Response Rate Report does not currently offer response rate data specifically related to
mobile barcode use; however, Boelte-Hall can break down response from a variety of sources,
including mobile barcodes, in any campaign implemented.

Factors Affecting Response Rates

Consider the following components when estimating response rates for a cross channel campaign.

- **List** - Does the mailing target the appropriate audience?
- **Message** - Is the copy effectively written, with the message tailored to the particular needs and desires of each audience segment? Does the copy use key emotional triggers?
- **Offer** - Is the offer compelling and relevant enough to make recipients respond?
- **Timing** - Will the recipients receive the message when he or she is ready to make a purchase or accept your offer?
- **Creative** - Does the creative support the communication goals? Does the design make it easy to follow the message? Do graphics vary by audience segment to help establish connections with relevant recipients?
- **Response mechanism** - Is the response mechanism easy to use and one with which the audience is comfortable? Have you provided multiple response mechanisms to accommodate your recipient and make it easy to respond?
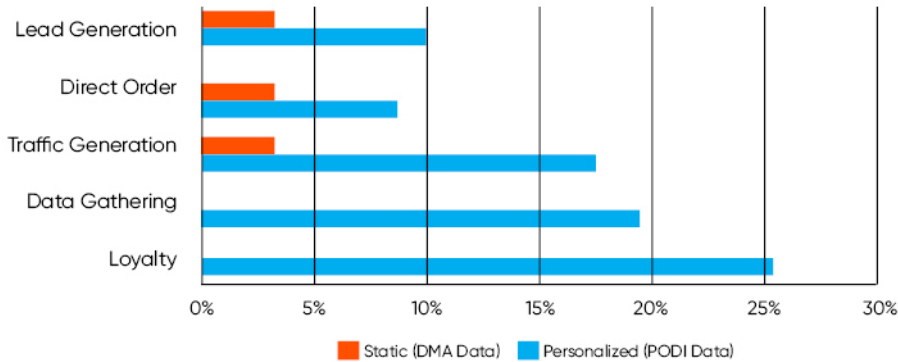
Continuity is crucial in a cross channel campaign.
Make sure all elements work together to provide a good overall experience for your recipient.

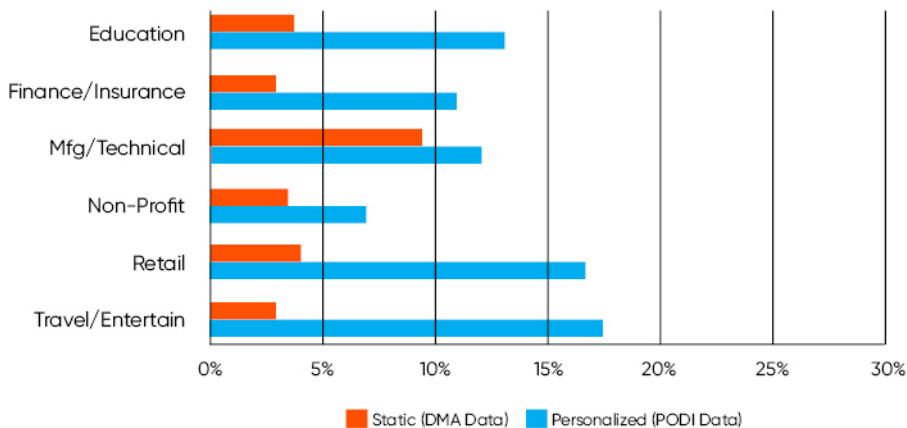## Response Rates for Static Vs. Relevant Messaging

Caslon has found that on average, **response rates to relevant marketing campaigns are four times higher than response to static, same-to-all messages.**

Static vs Personalized Campaigns by Objective Response Rates

Lead Generation
Direct Order
Traffic Generation
Data Gathering
Loyalty

0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30%

■ Static (DMA Data) ■ Personalized (PODI Data)

Response rates are especially high in data gathering and loyalty campaigns where frequently special incentives are offered based on recipient's purchasing history and/or there is not an immediate push for a sale.

Static vs Personalized Campaigns by Vertical Market Response Rates

Education
Finance/Insurance
Mfg/Technical
Non–Profit
Retail
Travel/Entertain

0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30%

■ Static (DMA Data) ■ Personalized (PODI Data)

Response rates by vertical market segment ranged from **7.2%** in non-profit to **16%** in the printing/publishing segment.

Part Two – response rates by objective

Response rates can vary depending on what you are trying to accomplish. In many lead generation situations, for example, you may simply want to get as many prospects as possible to identify themselves and permit you to contact them further. If you are doing fundraising, on the other hand, your goal might be to nurture the relationship and/or to maximize the net contribution dollars you can collect. In this report, we will show examples from five different main objective types.

Lead Generation

These campaigns generate leads by **creating interest** in a product or service and provide the prospective buyer with a means to request additional information. They typically ask recipients to agree to a meeting, to sign up, or request more information.

Key elements - Message prompting customer to either obtain further information or qualify as a lead using a direct response mechanism such as a PURL, QR code, toll-free number, or business reply card.

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SUMMER SESSION CAMPAIGN

To **promote its summer session programs** Oakland University used a cross-media campaign that incorporated **email, direct mail, on-campus signage and social media**. Emails and a postcard directed prospective students to a personalized microsite. On-campus signage encouraged students to scan a QR Code to visit a mobile landing page where they could enter a contest and receive more information on summer sessions. The relevancy of all these channels and the design of the landing pages led to outstanding results for Oakland University.
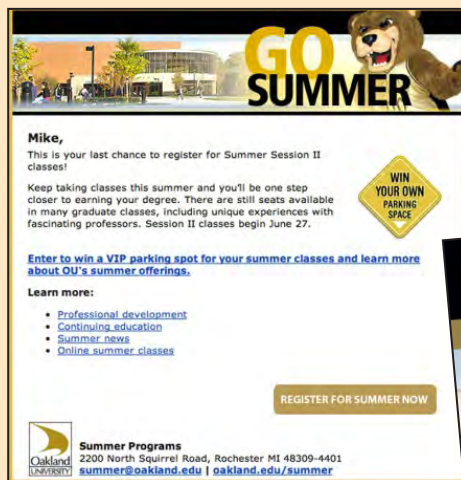
On-campus signage, email and personalized postcard.

Results

- **11%** email response rate – visited site and requested more information
- **2%** direct mail response rate – visited site and requested more information
- **Over 1,200 mobile site visits**
- **Increased enrollment** in summer classes 4% compared to prior year

Direct Order

Direct order campaigns are used to **solicit contributions,** or **close a sale or transaction**.

Key elements - Use copy relevant to recipient based on history with the organization to create relevant messaging; provide information necessary for prospective buyer to make a decision and complete the transaction.

FULTON THEATRE USES PERSONALIZATION FOR SUBSCRIPTION/DONATION APPEAL

The Fulton Theatre is a regional professional theatre company located in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The Theatre needed a direct mail campaign to **sell subscription packages for season performance tickets while also encouraging patrons to make an additional donation** to support the organization and its performances.

The **personalized direct mailer** for the early-bird renewal campaign was sent to individuals who had purchased a season ticket package the previous year. **Three segments** were identified among this audience and a different message was crafted for each segment.

- **Renewal donors:** Individuals who had already made a donation to Fulton Theatre during the year
- **Acquisition donors:** Individuals who had made a donation in the past but had not yet done so this year
- **Non-donor subscribers:** Individuals who had purchased season tickets before but had never made an additional contribution

To make it easy for the recipient to renew their season ticket package, **variable data** was used to make the piece highly personal for the recipient. Over 120 fields from the subscriber's ticketing data was mapped to ensure that the proper seating and account information was printed and matched to the individual. The direct mailer was personalized with the subscriber's current subscription information and a color seating chart was included.

Results
- **60%** renewal rate
- **22%** of subscribers increased gift donations compared to the previous year
- Over **2,468% ROI**
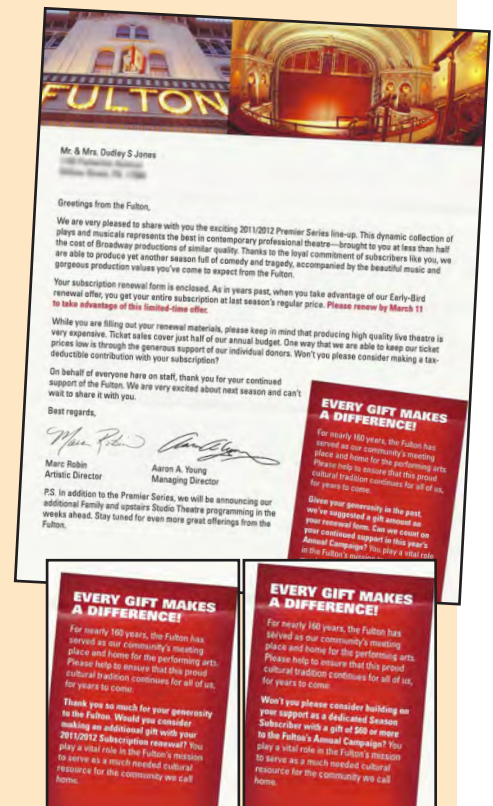
According to Caslon, the response to Fulton Theatre's campaign exceeded the average of direct order campaigns; even so, organizations typically do see improved results when they provide highly specific information to a targeted audience.

COMPARISON: STATIC MESSAGING VS. RELEVANT MESSAGING

In another direct order campaign, mail order clothing retailer Boden tested the impact of personalization by sending half their audience a static postcard and the other half a personalized postcard with a PURL. **The response to the personalized postcard was six times higher than that of the generic one.**

Traffic Generation

The primary objective of a traffic generation campaign is to **motivate the recipient** to visit a store or trade show booth, or attend an event. They can also be used to simply create awareness, identify hand-raisers or qualify responders.

Key elements can include pricing and product information, event details, coupons, and/or gift incentives. Multiple response mechanisms can generate greater response.

SCHMOOZE KIT OFFER MOOOVES AUDIENCE TO ACTION

Boelte-Hall launched the Schmooze Kit campaign at the annual Agricultural Media Summit in St. Paul, Minn. to **get people to the booth and learn more** about Boelte-Hall. Registered attendees received a **personalized postcard** inviting them to visit a landing page and sign up for a Schmooze Kit to be picked up at the Boelte-Hall booth. We also offered visitors a complimentary lift from the airport.

Results

Of the 1136 people on our original mailing list, **256** registered for AMS.

Of those 256, we had 157 unique visits to PURL **(61.3%).**

138 people completed the online survey **(53.9%)**.

127 wanted to pick up a Schmooze Kit **(49.6%)**

66 wanted to be picked up at the airport **(25.7%)**

Best of all, 25 visitors to the booth were very interested in learning more about cross channel campaigns and wished to discuss how a similar campaign could help them, and two companies set up meetings immediately to develop cross channel campaigns for their own events.

PODi (PODi.org) is a global, member-supported not-for-profit organization that helps the digital print community thrive with top-notch research, case studies and solution tools.

Data Gathering

The primary goal of a data gathering campaign is to **collect information** from customers or prospects, including contact information, preferences, and need for or evaluation of a product or service.

Key elements - To encourage participation, some type of incentive is usually offered. Information gathered can be used to make future communications more relevant. A data gathering campaign is frequently used as a precursor to a direct order or lead generation campaign. Since there is no immediate push for a sale, response on data gathering campaigns is frequently high. Multiple response mechanisms are highly recommended for maximum ROI.

SEATTLE HUMANE SOCIETY STRENGTHENS RELATIONSHIPS WITH FIRST-TIME DONORS

The Seattle Humane Society (SHS) needed a campaign that would **gather information from donors** in order to:

- **develop targeted leads** for potential volunteers
- **build** upon their existing opt-in email list
- **improve connections** with donors who might want to make additional contributions of time or money

A **letter** was sent to new donors inviting them to visit a **Personalized URL** (PURL) and complete an online survey. Donors were also given the option to complete a paper survey and mail it back in an enclosed return envelope. The **incentive** for completing the survey was the chance to win a drawing for items such as gift cards and gift baskets. A **reminder postcard** was sent to non-responders two weeks after the first mailing.

Letter from Director of Development

Landing Page

Online survey

Findings

- **68%** of new donors had adopted an animal in the past and 30% had adopted from SHS
- **6%** planned to adopt a cat that year and 14% planned to adopt a dog
- **38%** were interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities with SHS
- **40%** opted in to receive further email communications from SHS

Results

- **17%** response rate to initial campaign
- This campaign has been repeated three times and each time has yielded a **14% to 20% response rate**
- The response mechanism used has been close to evenly split between the online survey at the Personalized URL and the paper-based survey

Not only did SHS receive over $4000 in contributions as a result of this outreach, the organization gathered valuable information for future communications.

Loyalty Campaigns

Loyalty campaigns are designed to **continue or expand relationships with existing customers**. The goal of these communications is to increase customer satisfaction with the product or service as well as encourage retention and repeat purchases.

Key elements - These campaigns frequently offer information about new or additional products or services to encourage cross- or up-selling, and a house list is typically used. Relevant messages and special offers based on known past behavior (previous purchasing history and preferences) usually results in high response rates.

SALONS DRIVE BUSINESS WITH PERSONALIZED REWARDS COMMUNICATIONS

To support franchise owners, reduce guest churn and increase business, value priced hair salon Fantastic Sams launched Guests First™, an **ongoing loyalty program** for franchise owners. Data is collected from individual salons and used to personalize communications. The data includes the date of last visit and specific services used in the last six months and is used to target guests based on buying habits and patterns.

The primary channel of communication for the program is **direct mail** with 97% of touches happening through direct mail postcards and 3% through email. The postcards are **highly variable**:

- Over 27 variables including customer name, images, offer, salon location, reward status, and copy
- Over 15,000 combinations of variables in every mailing
- Each owner selects the segments and controls the cost
- Each owner selects specific offers to send guests by segment target

Results

The response rate for the personalized postcards has been **between 14% and 20%** depending on the targeted customer segment. It has also been noted that **members now spend almost 33% more** than the average transaction.

Postcards containing over 27 variables

Part 3 - Response Rates by Vertical Market

Response rates can be influenced by the vertical market being addressed as well as the campaign objective. Some vertical markets typically see higher response rates than others. This section showcases seven vertical market campaign examples.

Education

Many education campaigns fall into one of two categories: communications designed to **attract prospective new students** or communications focused on **raising funds from alumni and other supporters**.

Key elements - Personalization can create a strong connection with recipient. For campaigns soliciting new students, known information such as specific academic and extracurricular interests can be incorporated into communications. Fundraising appeals might include information specific to the alumni's class year or other emotional triggers.

LYON COLLEGE USES CROSS CHANNEL CAMPAIGN TO DRIVE NEW APPLICATIONS

Lyon College in Batesville, Arkansas implemented a cross channel recruitment campaign targeting high school seniors. The campaign incorporated **direct mail**, **personalized URLs**, **email** and **augmented reality**.

First, a **personalized direct mail postcard** was sent to prospective students, inviting them to visit a personalized landing page and take a survey for a chance to win an iPad.

Based on answers to the survey, a **second direct mail piece** was sent to the student, featuring highly customized text and graphics based on the student's interest, such as messaging, major of interest, and favorite activity. In addition, an **augmented reality trigger** was included to further engage the student and show part of Lyon's campus and community. This trigger was a picture that, when scanned with a smart phone, launched a video of the college president riding the on-campus zip line.

Landing Page
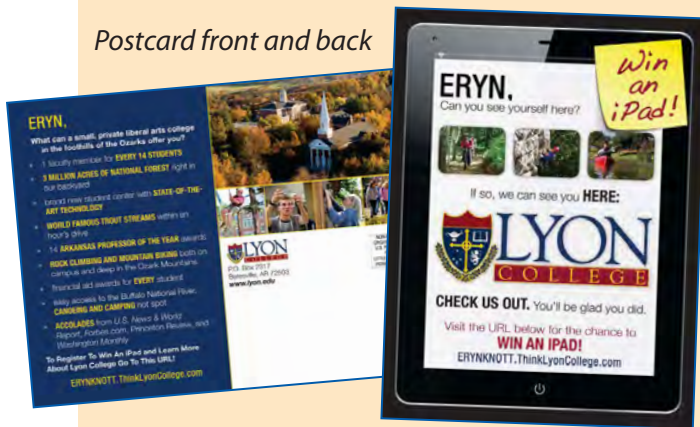
Postcard front and back

Below: The second direct mail piece, which includes the augmented reality trigger (photo on right)

Results

• **2.85%** of recipients visited their Personalized URL

• **70%** of those who visited their Personalized URL completed the online survey/entry form

• The College saw a **76% increase in applications** received compared to the same time period of the previous year

• 1,116 applications were received, representing a **70% increase over the college's initial goal** of 655

Financial and Insurance Services

Financial and Insurance campaigns are primarily used for **lead generation or data gathering**.

Key elements - Personalization is used to present information relevant to the recipient's financial or insurance needs. Alternatively, incentives can be used to gather information about recipients for future communications. According to the Direct Marketing Association, direct mail has been shown to be consumers' preferred channel for financial services information. No data was provided for insurance services preference.

Timing can be critical in financial services, as shown in the case study below.

WALLINGFORD MUNICIPAL FEDERAL CREDIT UNION DRIVES BUSINESS IN TOUGH TIMES

During the current economic downturn, Wallingford Municipal Federal Credit Union (WMFCU) was looking for a way to offer its members a stimulus package that would **encourage increased loan activity**. WMFCU had money available for loans that was not providing income for the credit union because of the current Fed rates. WMFCU decided to reduce their loan rates by 2% for all categories of car and personal loans to entice their members to open a new loan or refinance an existing one with additional borrowing.

WMFCU sent **postcards** personalized with the recipient's first name to approximately 1500 current credit union members, offering new and used car loans as well as personal loans with reduced loan rates.
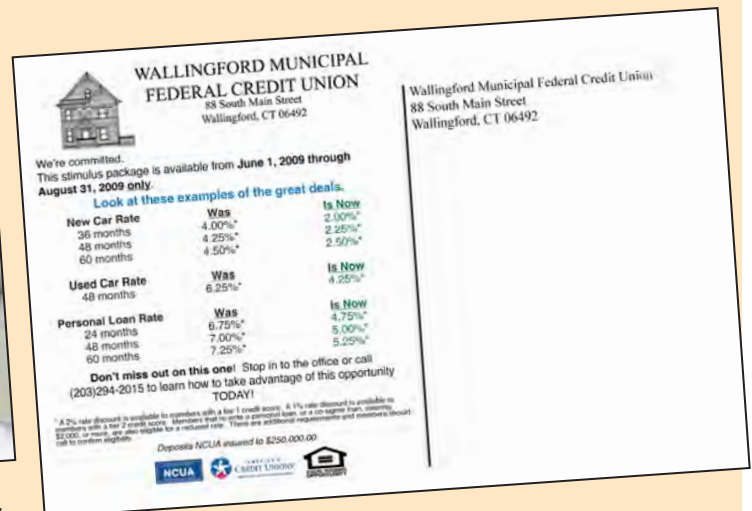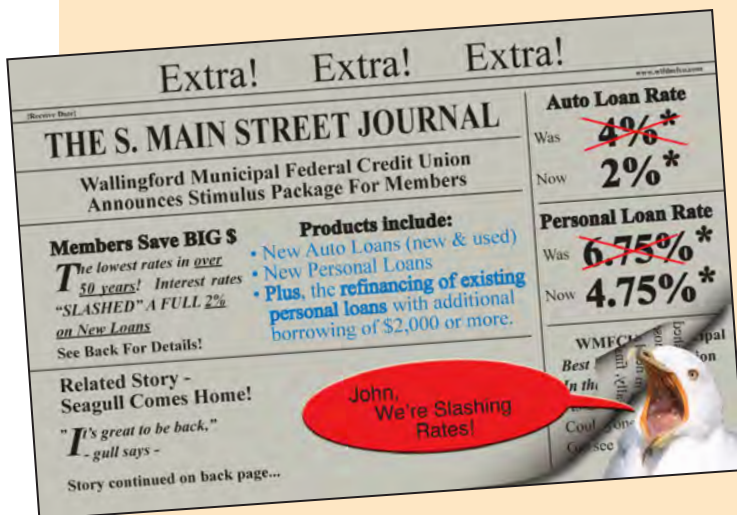
Postcard front and back

Results

The results for this campaign were outstanding. In fact Richard Cassello, CEO of WMFCU said "We have never been involved in any marketing campaign that has been as successful."

- Over **$1 million** in loans was generated
- **90 new loans and 27 rewritten loans**
- The entire portfolio of personal and auto loans increased by 25.7%
- The first year of interest income on these loans represent an ROI of over 2,700% for WMFCU
- Considering the full terms of the loans, the total interest income will represent an ROI of 8,400%

The postcard announcing reduced loan rates was sent in early June. Since auto sales typically increase in summer, as does interest in home improvement projects, the credit union benefitted from a built up desire among credit union members to get financing for these activities.

Manufacturing and Technology

Manufacturing and Technology campaigns frequently focus on **lead and/or traffic generation, or data gathering**.

Key elements - Manufacturers often have databases full of contacts waiting to be analyzed and used to grow their market**.** As in many other types of campaigns, using as much personalization and relevance as possible in the message helps increase response rates.

WIX FILTERS DEVELOPS THEIR CUSTOMER DATABASE

WIX Filters designs, manufactures and distributes products for automotive, diesel, agricultural, industrial and specialty filter markets. They had amassed a database of contacts but had not yet contacted these individuals. A cross channel campaign was designed to **help them determine light-duty versus heavy-duty customers** on their list so they could:

- **develop email marketing campaigns** geared to these two audiences
- learn which distribution channels create revenue and use that information to **grow their business**

The target audience was purchasers of aftermarket auto parts, which included auto parts store employees, professional service technicians, resellers and distributors, and do-it-yourself consumers. Contacts for whom WIX had email addresses received a **personalized email** while all other contacts received a **personalized postcard**. Both encouraged recipients to visit a Personalized URL where they could provide information on their preferences with regards to WIX Filters' products. Communications were sent in three phases using various methods to manage incoming responses.

Personalized postcard

Personalized landing page and survey

Results

- **20.42%** response rate to direct mail
- **30.94%** response rate to email
- WIX was able to gather specific product usage/purchase information and use that to **update/enhance contact information** on 10,000 qualified customer and reseller leads
- Data gathered was used to **segment respondents** into light duty and heavy duty categories for future communications

Build your database to improve future communications, and make it easy for recipients to respond.

Not-for-Profit

The primary goal of most not-for-profit cross channel campaigns is to **cultivate donors and solicit donations**.

Key elements - Establishing a strong emotional connection between donor and organization is key. Personalization and relevance are crucial factors in not-for-profit campaigns to make recipients feel valued and emphasize the importance of their contribution.

CROSS CHANNEL MARKETING DRIVES GIRL SCOUT COOKIE PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

The annual cookie program is a major fundraiser for the Girl Scouts of the Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys Council (River Valleys) and **encouraging Scout participation** is critical to the success of the program. In the past, staff had provided vital information through a monthly email that only reached the parents or troop leaders. In 2010, River Valleys decided to launch a more targeted **three-wave personalized cross channel campaign** that encouraged participation based on program level.

Wave 1 targeted Girl Scouts in Kindergarten through third grade who may be new to the Girl Scout cookie program. They were sent a **personalized mailer** customized with 12 variable fields. The mailer included a static cling car decal and small stickers to be worn by the Scout as she was out selling cookies, identifying her as a "Girl Scout Cookie Rookie."

Wave 2 targeted parents of returning Girl Scouts, thanking them for their support of the Girl Scout in their family. As in the first wave, these **oversized cards** included messages specific to each girl's program level.

Wave 3 targeted older Girl Scouts (returning junior and senior high school age girls) who may need extra encouragement to continue their efforts in the cookie program. An **oversized mailer** contained a message designed to encourage the girl to think of the cookie program as a business plan. The girls could visit their PURL and learn valuable information about the Girl Scouts older girl program, Cookie Executive Officer (C.E.O.). Their online survey asked for feedback on the Girl Scout Cookie program and suggestions for improvement, valuable information the organization could use to make the program more fun for the younger girls.

Cookie Rookies mailer

Results

- **Greater engagement** among Girl Scouts led to the council's cookie program exceeding their sales goal
- **Valuable insight** was gained from **12%** of the older Girl Scouts visiting their PURL and providing feedback on the cookie program.

Using segmentation to make the message relevant deepens the relationship so critical in not-for-profit fundraising efforts.

Girl Scout C.E.O. mailer

Printing and Publishing Services

Many campaigns are implemented by print service providers to **show the power of cross channel marketing to create more relevant communications and to track results**.

Key elements - Education is key. Many customers and prospects are unaware of the variety of options available to customize their message to reach the right person at the right time through the right channel.

BOELTE-HALL HARVESTS LEADS AT AGRICULTURAL MEDIA SUMMIT

Boelte-Hall partnered with three other companies to **increase booth traffic** at the Ag Media Summit in Albuquerque. We mailed **personalized postcards** to 458 registered attendees, offering them a ride to the hotel from the airport as well as a **chance to win** an iPad2. Registered attendees visited a Personalized URL (PURL) and completed an online survey and indicated if they wanted a ride from the airport.

Answers were compiled on entry cards, which were available at each partner booth at the show. Attendees visited each of the three booths, where their card was pulled and dropped in an entry box, which was a miniature version of the 7 foot barn in Boelte-Hall's booth. After the show, all entries were combined and the winning name was drawn.

Entry box

Variable data postcard with QR code

Results
- 155 people entered drawing; 266 total entries were received.

Of the 458 on mailing list:
- 264 visited PURL (**57.6%** of mailing)
- 251 completed survey (**54.8%** of mailing)

Of the 251 who completed survey:
- 87 responded after initial postcard mailing (**18.9%** of mailing)
- 103 responded after heads up email sent (**22.4%** of mailing)
- 61 responded after last chance email sent (**13.3%** of mailing)

Boelte-Hall's booth, as well as the partner booths, experienced a high rate of traffic and conversation, and all four companies now have an extensive list of leads for future marketing efforts.

Retail

Many retail cross channel campaigns are used **gather data and/or strengthen relationships**.

Key elements - Retailer campaigns frequently offer incentives and rewards to prospects and customers. When conducted as a data gathering effort, response is typically high since there is no push for immediate sale.

This case study illustrates a comparison between a personalized direct mail campaign and a static campaign conducted within 4 months of each other by the same company.

BRAKE CHECK INCREASES STORE TRAFFIC WITH PERSONALIZED DIRECT MAIL

Brake Check, a family-owned and operated automotive service company, has 41 store locations in Texas. When opening new retail stores, Brake Check regularly employed static direct mail as a way to **offer specials and attract local customers**. The target audience for these static mailings was determined by a geographic radius from the store's location. A typical response rate was 1-2%.

For its July grand opening in Harker Heights, Texas, Brake Check implemented a **personalized campaign** using a new list created from a customer analysis which identified characteristics of its best customers. **Oversized postcards** were mailed, containing name personalization and a family image on the front that varied based on the ethnicity of the recipient.

This highly personalized campaign received a good response, but the folks at Brake Check were not yet convinced that the variable approach made a significant difference. When they decided to do a **second mailing** in October, they decided to use the best prospect criteria from its customer analysis but without the variable elements. This **static** mailing contained similar coupons but no customized text or graphics.

As you'll see in the results below, there was a marked difference in the outcome.

Personalized Direct Mail Postcards

Static Direct Mail Postcards

Results

Personalized Direct Mail
- **3.6% response rate**
- 541 coupons redeemed for **total sales of $24,000**

Static Direct Mail
- **Less than 1% response rate**
- 45 coupons redeemed for **total sales of $1,500**

Travel and Entertainment

Many of these campaigns are developed to **encourage loyalty and repeat business** from customers.

Key elements - Because of the nature of the travel and entertainment industries, companies can benefit from cultivating and nurturing relationships. It's important to learn as much as possible about customers' needs and preferences so messaging is always relevant to your audience.

GWINNETT BRAVES HIT HOME RUN WITH GOOD NEIGHBOR CAMPAIGN

The Gwinnett Braves (AAA ball team in Atlanta) were looking for a way to **establish a relationship** with residents near Coolray Field where the team played its games. Neighbors had become aggravated at the traffic created in the neighborhood, especially on Sundays when a game coincided with nearby church attendance and traffic was especially congested.

Initially, the team wanted to send 5000 static postcards to nearby residents, offering free tickets to a game. Instead, a cross channel campaign was implemented that included a **personalized postcard** with messaging focused on the team and the church trying to be good neighbors. The card featured a **PURL** that took the recipient to an online form. Visitors to the site filled out the form, printed out the resulting thank you page and brought it to the ballpark to redeem for free tickets, parking and food vouchers. **Email confirmations** were also sent.

Sample Postcard

Results

- **12.6% response rate**
  631 out of 5,000 recipients visited their Personalized URL and completed the online survey
- All **2,200 tickets** for the designated game were given away
- **260 overflow tickets** were distributed for a later game

The important results go beyond the numbers, however. The Gwinnett Braves started out requesting a simple postcard mailing but ended up with so much more:

- A growing new database with **631 names, emails and addresses**
- A **budding relationship** with neighbors and attendees
- **Additional information** was captured such as whether recipients had attended a game, how much they attend, etc. that can be used for future communications.

Turning a simple postcard mailing into a cross channel campaign resulted in exciting new marketing opportunities for the client.

Top: Online survey.
Bottom: Thank you page that visitors brought to ballpark.