NATIONAL EDUCATION MARKETER

RedPoint Global helps a leading education marketer improve customer engagement through complex, multi-step, multi-channel trigger-based campaigns.

Overview

Colleges and universities increasingly seek to engage prospective students in an ongoing dialogue as those students move towards enrollment decisions. A leading higher education marketing service provider needed to help its clients build those dialogues, but its campaign and data management tools stood in the way. The marketer's email/digital team couldn't build trigger-based, interactive marketing dialogues, and its direct mail group lost a large client due to the unreliability of their campaign management tools. Both groups encountered frustrating and costly problems integrating and using data from clients and list houses: problems that directly impacted student engagement.

In an attempt to improve its customer engagement capabilities, the marketer replaced its legacy systems with RedPoint's Convergent Marketing Platform™. Using RedPoint, its digital marketers are delivering hundreds of complex, multi-step, multi-channel campaigns – helping its clients engage prospective students through every step of enrollment decision-making. The direct mail group has overcome its schedule and reliability problems – regaining its lost client and earning top performance awards. Data management improvements have reduced list rental costs while improving flexibility. Finally, the marketer can now compete effectively in social and mobile arenas, and extend its services to engage students even after they have enrolled.

Background

Our client, a leading marketing services firm, specializes in helping colleges and universities use customer engagement to achieve challenging enrollment and student retention goals. It provides innovative, data-driven enrollment marketing exclusively to higher education, generating high-quality student prospects, and helping schools convert them into committed enrollments.

After building a strong presence in the for-profit marketplace, the company has recently grown significantly amongst not-for-profit colleges and universities, and is expanding to encompass online education.

The Challenges

The company's separate email/digital and direct mail marketing groups each used different marketing technology, but neither system worked well. Meanwhile, the firm also faced

OBJECTIVES

- A leading higher education marketing service provider sought to engage prospective students for its clients more effectively as they moved towards enrollment decisions.

- As part of its strategy, the marketing service provider wanted to deploy complex, multi-step, multi-channel trigger-based campaigns using multiple data sources, and overcome data problems that had made campaign development far too cumbersome and costly.

RESULTS

- By consolidating on RedPoint's Convergent Marketing Platform, the client made it dramatically easier to create and manage increasingly sophisticated campaigns.

- Response rates and brand awareness were improved by implementing true dialog marketing through interactive trigger-based campaigns.

- Operational costs were reduced in multiple areas, from list rental to ease of campaign development.

- The company won back a major lost client, even winning their bonus for speed and accuracy.

major customer data problems. These interconnected issues were seriously impacting the marketer's ability to build interactive dialogues that engaged students and encouraged them to enroll at their clients' institutions.

The email/digital group works closely with search marketing and media management, relying heavily on portals and lead aggregators. It used Aprimo for campaign management and ExactTarget for email delivery. It also performed extensive lead generation and remarketing using its clients' own databases.

Using Aprimo, marketers found themselves unable to build the sophisticated, trigger-based campaigns their clients wanted. Email marketers were also frustrated with Aprimo's poor integration with ExactTarget.

Meanwhile, direct mail marketers found their hosted Alterian campaign management system generated full campaign builds far too slowly. It took hours to create output files, and these would often fail during processing. Extensive data pre-processing requirements slowed the system even further, and made it even more expensive to run. The resulting inability to deliver campaigns on time caused the group to lose a major client.

Going forward, the direct mail group wanted to start building time- and status-based campaigns to nurture leads over time. But its hosted Alterian campaign management system wasn't up to this task, either.

To deliver virtually any campaign, the company must efficiently buy and manage prospect lists, and integrate these with its own prospect database. Collectively, the firm must manage data on roughly 200,000,000 individuals.

When it contacts someone on a purchased or rented list, it is often charged to do so. Therefore, if an individual appears on multiple lists, the company wants to use the least expensive list. However, its database infrastructure could not reliably identify the cheapest list for each name.

Finally, the firm struggled to integrate "dirty" client data with its own database, using homegrown ETL tools. Errors were commonplace, costing tens of thousands of dollars per month. These errors were hard to spot until late in the process, when fixing them was even more expensive.

The Solution

Recognizing the value of solving its campaign and data management problems together, the client adopted the one comprehensive customer engagement platform capable of doing so: RedPoint's Convergent Marketing Platform™.

RedPoint's flexibility meant that each group could take the approach to campaign management that made the most business sense. The email/online marketing group chose to deploy RedPoint on its own premises; the direct mail group uses RedPoint hosted through a partner.

The Results

These new RedPoint deployments solved each of the key problems the firm's marketers had struggled with. After replacing its hosted Alterian system with a hosted RedPoint system, the direct marketing group was finally able to create and execute campaigns quickly – so quickly, in fact, that it won back the major national client it had lost.

Recognizing the value of solving its campaign and data management problems together, the client adopted the one comprehensive customer engagement platform capable of doing so: RedPoint's Convergent Marketing Platform™.

After replacing Aprimo, the email/digital group was able to use RedPoint's powerful APIs to connect to its SMS provider gateway, and dramatically improved its integration with ExactTarget.

Still more impressive, the email/digital group has achieved its strategic goal of delivering true dialogue marketing. It now runs hundreds of long-term campaigns with multiple touchpoints driven by triggers: cutting-edge marketing that its previous system was simply incapable of supporting.

Now, for example, it can first move prospective students to get in touch with a school, and then use status-based marketing (e.g., marketing to students based on the status of their financial aid applications), drawing on timely data provided by each school. Alternatively, it can create campaigns incorporating time-based delays or waves.

On the database side, RedPoint has helped the marketer reduce costly processing, and eliminate costly mistakes. Unlike the previous homegrown system, it also alerts the firm's database specialists as soon as it encounters data import problems it can't solve on its own, so these problems can be addressed quickly and inexpensively.

With its RedPoint platform in place, the company's digital marketers are ready to move more aggressively into social media – starting with social media ad targeting linked to direct mail campaigns, and lookalike modeling to find new targets. RedPoint will also help the marketer work through mobile channels, without running afoul of the new restrictions recently added to the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA). Finally, using RedPoint's tools, the company is identifying new ways to help its academic customers keep students engaged after they are enrolled, supporting another critical goal: student retention. ■

About RedPoint Global Inc.
RedPoint Global provides market-leading data management and customer engagement technology that empowers organizations to optimize customer value and deliver their brand promise with high contextual relevance across all touchpoints. The RedPoint Customer Engagement Hub™, underpinned by the RedPoint Customer Data Platform™, delivers a unified view of each customer, in-line analytics to determine next-best actions, and intelligent orchestration to personalize engagement across the enterprise. Leading companies of all sizes trust RedPoint Global to power their customer engagement strategy and drive profitable revenue growth. For more information, visit www.redpointglobal.com or email contact.us@redpointglobal.com.

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