

1800 Hotels Achieves Email Delivery Rate of 99% and increases Open rate to over 25% with smartFOCUS DIGITAL

1800 Hotels is an online hotel reservation service that helps its customers find quality accommodation, and get the best possible deals on hotels. Founded in 2002, the company books accommodation for both business and leisure purposes. 1800 Hotels has offices in the UK and Ireland.

Synopsis

1800 Hotels wanted to nurture its relationship with its customers by sending them a regular email newsletter. The company wanted to be able to personalise each newsletter to feature content that would be relevant to individual customers, to eliminate duplicate records in its database so that customers do not get the same email twice, and to be able to track the effectiveness of these communications. 1800 Hotels used the smartFOCUS DIGITAL email marketing solution to clean its data, and send more personalised and targeted email campaigns. 1800 Hotels now enjoys a 99% deliverability rate and improved customer retention.

The Challenge

“Retention is a major concern in the travel and tourism industry,” says Suzanne Standen, email marketing manager for 1800 Hotels. “We intended to send our customers a regular newsletter to promote our brand, but our email marketing system at the time was not flexible enough for us to do what we wanted.” 1800 Hotels wanted to automatically personalise its newsletter to feature content that was relevant to each individual customer. The company also wanted to be able to measure and analyse important statistics such as delivery rates and click-throughs. “Our existing email marketing system was only capable of basic analysis. We wanted to do more than the system would let us, and it quickly became apparent that a new solution was required,” says Standen.

Another challenge the company faced was that it had a number of duplicate records in its database. This meant that the company risked upsetting its customers by sending them the same message multiple times. “We needed to completely de-dupe our customer lists,” explains Standen. “Not only did we need to clean these lists, we had to make sure that they stayed clean so that customers were engaged by the messages instead of irritated.”

1800 Hotels wanted to ensure it was fully compliant with industry best practice. “Email is a fast moving channel,” says Standen. “We wanted to work with a company that could keep up and keep us up to date with the ever-changing rules and regulations coming from the government and ISPs.” 1800 Hotels looked at a number of digital marketing solutions and email service providers, and was impressed with smartFOCUS DIGITAL. “smartFOCUS DIGITAL offered everything we needed. The people there were knowledgeable and helpful,” says Standen. “We knew that smartFOCUS DIGITAL was the company to go with.”

The Solution

After establishing its new smartFOCUS DIGITAL email marketing system, 1800 Hotels worked closely with the company to remove all duplicate records from its database. “With the help of smartFOCUS DIGITAL, we cleaned our customer records and started segmenting our data to allow for better targeting.”

1800 Hotels now has total control over every aspect of its email marketing. “It’s very easy to personalise our messages,” says Standen.



Customer

1800 Hotels

Industry Sector

Travel & Leisure

Services

Hotel Search & Reservation

Solution Components

- ASP Solution
- Licence Install
- Managed Solutions
- Integration & API
- Consultancy



“We create a variety of content, such as news or special offers, and can automatically customise each newsletter to appeal to its intended recipient.” The company can now see the effectiveness of each email campaign by looking at details such as open rates and click-throughs. “This information can be presented visually allowing us to easily see what is and isn’t working,” says Standen. The smartFOCUS DIGITAL solution has already proven its effectiveness to 1800 Hotels. Since deploying the solution, deliverability and open rates have improved dramatically. “We now have a deliverability rate of 99% and open rates have increased to over 25%,” says Standen. The company has also seen an upsurge in business as a result of its email campaigns. “Every time we send an email campaign out we receive around 100 new subscribers. We also experience a three day increase in business, so the effectiveness of marketing in this way is clear.”

Learning to use the smartFOCUS DIGITAL solution was no problem for 1800 Hotels. “We were given a full training programme” says Standen. “We attended training days where we were guided through the solution by one of their email specialists.” smartFOCUS DIGITAL also provides online support. “The team can log in and see exactly what we are doing, and then guide us accordingly,” says Standen. smartFOCUS DIGITAL also has multiple help books available. “We don’t need much support because the system is so easy to use,” says Standen. “Even so, it’s very reassuring to know it’s there.”

Suzanne Standen is very happy with the service she has received from smartFOCUS DIGITAL. “The solution is good, but what I really like about smartFOCUS DIGITAL is that it isn’t a faceless service,” says Standen. “The team always listens to what we have to say, and the people are always responsive and ready to guide and support us.”

The Bottom Line/ROI

Since using smartFOCUS DIGITAL’s email marketing system, 1800 Hotels has seen the effectiveness of its newsletter increase significantly. The company has almost perfect delivery rates, and email open rates have increased to over 25 percent. The company is experiencing greater customer retention and is picking up approximately 100 new email subscribers and a surge in business each time a newsletter is delivered.

About ‘1800 Hotels’

1800hotels.ie is an Irish Company which specialises in offering over 70,000 quality discounted hotel accommodations worldwide. The company has an extensive range of hotels to choose from on its website, www.1800hotels.ie ranging from 2* to 5* and also provides a freephone number 1800 468357 for customers who would like advice and assistance before selecting their hotels.

About smartFOCUS DIGITAL

smartFOCUS DIGITAL is a leading provider of on-demand marketing software for email sms, rss and web channels. smartFOCUS DIGITAL (formerly Email Reaction) serves more than 200 clients and partners internationally, including Barnardos, EHS Brann, Elsevier, Epson, Morgan Stanley, moneysupermarket.com and TMW. Based in the UK, smartFOCUS DIGITAL is the specialist digital division of smartFOCUS Group plc (LSE; STF), an international multi-channel marketing software company.

The high performance smartFOCUS DIGITAL solution provides marketers with powerful analytics and campaign management to improve digital marketing results. www.smartfocusdigital.com

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