

Digital Marketing for a Top-50 QSR Brand

Solution Summary



Challenge | With personalized, family-oriented service at the core of the brand, the quick-serve restaurant (QSR) leader sought an innovative way to further its close ties with customers and in so doing, increase sales at nearly 500 locations.

Solution | In partnership with the QSR's digital agency of record, a phased approach to rolling out an SMS text message loyalty program based on Signal's Cross-Channel Marketing Platform was developed, offering corporate marketing centralized control while enabling individual stores the flexibility to execute programs locally.

Results | Signal was chosen to meet this top 50 QSR brand's needs, based on the platform's enterprise-strength scalability, customizable and easy-to-use interface tailorable to users both novice and advanced, and unique features designed for QSRs such as a centrally managed offer repository.

With personalized, family-friendly service a big part of a top-50 QSR brand, it was logical for their Vice President of Marketing to seek an innovative way of connecting one-on-one with guests as a means of competing in the hotly contested quick-serve Restaurant market. Treating all guests the same via mass marketing methods is becoming less effective as consumers come to expect individualized, relevant communications. Taking as personal an approach to marketing to its guests as serving them at the point of sale made SMS text messaging the optimal approach for this QSR brand.

Problem

A top-50 QSR brand's agency of record was tasked with identifying a technology solutions vendor who could meet their client's unique requirements. There are numerous options for simple text messaging services, but the brand's requirements were more akin to true customer relationship management than basic text alerts. Moreover, they envisioned a solution whereby the corporate marketing team maintained centralized control over text message offers across nearly 500 store locations, while giving each store the flexibility to execute local programs. Thus, a premium was placed on a vendor who offered a solution that was easy for busy store staff to use productively while providing the level of administration and oversight required by corporate marketers.

Solution

After a thorough evaluation, the QSR's digital agency of record selected Signal as the technology partner to power an innovative text message marketing program. Key to the selection of Signal was:

- An intuitive, easy-to-use campaign management interface, lowering the training hurdle for local store staff and corporate marketers alike.
- The ability to configure the application interface and access to functions by role, again mitigating training requirements, while also focusing users on targeted tasks.

About the Client | With nearly 500 locations and greater than \$600 million in sales (2009), this brand is among the top-50 quick-serve restaurant (QSR) businesses in the United States (according to QSR Magazine). Key to their success are close ties to community that's a hallmark of each store location. A family-friendly menu along with personalized service makes this brand unique among QSRs.

- An offer content management system, or repository of approved offers, messages and incentives that could be defined by corporate marketing staff and accessed by individual stores for local execution.
- Pre-packaged campaign workflows, offering the opportunity to execute engaging and creative programs such as coupons, sweepstakes, contests and polls across text messaging, the web and social media.
- A Unified Customer Profile database, containing segmentable, identifying guest data such as opt-in permissions, channel preferences, campaign data and any demographics obtained during campaign execution.

As an expert in mobile channel marketing, Signal prescribed a phased rollout during which a “playbook” would document the program in test markets. Doing so would speed time to market while reducing risk and also help “sell” the program to management at the balance of nearly 500 store locations. These steps are happening right now, with an eye on franchise-wide deployment through 2011.

As a testament to the effectiveness of the Signal platform, after just four weeks, more than three times the expected number of consumers had opted into the program in two test markets. According to the top-50 QSR brand's VP of Marketing, choosing Signal was based not only on meeting requirements today, but the very near future as well.

“As consumers continue to engage with brands via multiple channels it doesn't make a lot sense to use multiple products and services,” said the VP of Marketing. “It has as much to do with the availability of cross-channel software such as Signal as with needing a single, unified view of guests from which you can segment and target more relevant offers which consider channel preferences and permissions. Signal's direction is spot on with how we—or any QSR for that matter—must adapt its marketing to fit today's cross-channel consumer.”


The Way Forward

As each location begins building its base of mobile subscribers via text offers such as “buy one get one free,” the company can look ahead to capturing details about these loyal guests with an eye on providing more relevant—and higher performing—offers.

With centralized control over the entire mobile subscriber population, corporate marketing could execute a text message sweepstakes promotion advertised at the point of sale, on the corporate website and via posts to the company’s Twitter and Facebook accounts. Guests could participate via text interaction or visiting a web landing page form from links on social media posts, the website or even in email.

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In any of these cases, Signal’s platform presents the opportunity to pose a series of questions to capture demographics such as sex, age and marital status. These data points could enable the top-50 QSR brand to align the mobile audience to the three distinct segments the company recognizes in its marketing plans—“chief meal officers,” “burger lovers” and “seniors”—then target each segment with more relevant offers and calls to action.

By marketing to its guests just as personally as it serves them, this QSR is tying brand strategy to marketing tactics. Unlike many quick-serve restaurants, the brand is thus able to efficiently reach its guests on a one-to-one basis—which always results in higher response, greater sales and instructive customer insight. 

About Signal | Signal develops and provides innovative marketing solutions designed to help companies acquire, retain and develop customer relationships via mobile and other marketing channels. The company’s easy-to-use software-as-a-service cross channel campaign management platform (Signal) enables marketers to rapidly develop, execute and analyze campaigns using multiple channels, all feeding a common customer database embracing the concept of a universal profile. Used by many leading brands, retailers, online services, agencies, and broadcast media, Signal processes millions of customer interactions each month. For more information, call 866-683-9863, go to signalhq.com or send email to info@signalhq.com.

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