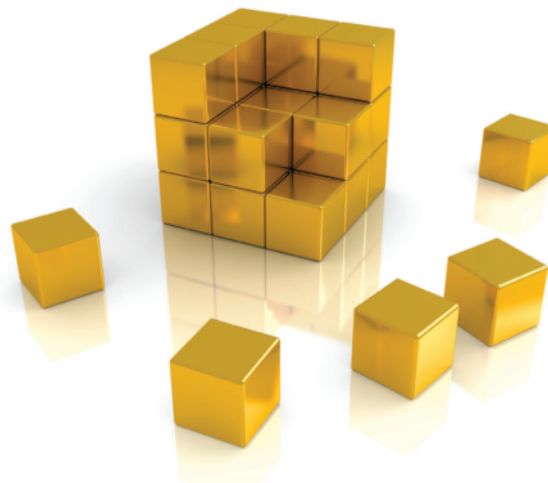


Eight Direct Marketing Projects Where Personalized URLs Fit



One of the golden rules of direct marketing is to always include a response device in every message sent to your audience. Your arsenal of reply devices today probably includes business reply cards, websites and/or 1-800 numbers.

More recently, direct mailers have begun sending responders to web sites that match the look and feel of a mail package and allow the campaign to continue with more content online. A few direct marketers have taken this one step further and are using personalized URLs in direct mail or email. Every recipient receives a personal link to a response website that is personalized with relevant information from your data file.

Once you leverage the power of a personalized URL as a response device, you can capture additional information about each one of your respondents and continue to drive involvement.

Here are eight examples of direct marketing campaigns where a personalized URL can be most effective as a response device:

1. EVENT REGISTRATION

Event marketing is extremely time-sensitive as a date is tied to the event and all marketing activities must be planned around this date. If you use a mail reply card, you risk receiving some replies too late due to the mail stream, but a response via a personalized URL is instantaneous and can make your projections for attendance more accurate.

Your guests benefit from the use of personalized URLs because they will not have to key enter all of their data into the registration form. Personalized URL registration forms can be pre-populated with any information in someone's file and are editable if needed, allowing you to keep your database up to date.

If your organization has regular conferences or classes, you can reduce the amount of generic information initially sent and instead, invite recipients to visit a personalized URL and customize a conference brochure. You can even mail targeted follow-up material based on the information you capture online.

Track and manage attendee lists with ease as you automatically build an electronic file of all registrations from the personalized URL response report. This list can be exported and used to send updates to your exhibitors, create name badges and provide an up-to-date roster for your event manager.

2. TRADESHOW MARKETING

As a tradeshow exhibitor, you can utilize personalized URLs in pre-show marketing communications to inform potential visitors about your organization before the show and encourage them to visit your booth. Most marketers find that a contest or promotional item helps to encourage participation in your marketing campaign. Think about pushing attendees to register for personalized promotional giveaways on the personalized URL that

they will pick up at your booth. If you also capture email, you will be able to send reminders about picking up their item at the show and increase your booth traffic overall.

Exhibitors also face time constraints when it comes to tradeshow. The attendee list is given out to the exhibitors usually within only two to three weeks of the actual event, leaving limited time to execute a complete campaign. Personalized URLs allow for quick response from potential booth visitors and permit sales reps to engage these people before the show launches. Imagine setting up appointments for sales reps before a tradeshow – what better opportunity to have face-to-face time with potential customers at an event?

3. LEAD GENERATION AND ACQUISITION

Direct marketers typically find that an email cannot replace a direct mail piece for acquisition campaigns, since emails can easily be deleted or ignored, and email lists are very costly to acquire.

However, once you've made a connection with your potential customer on a personalized URL, you can capture email addresses, update your database, and utilize email as a channel for strategic lead nurturing communications.

Personalized URLs can be used to gather additional information for each respondent to help you define and qualify new leads. Simple surveys of three to five questions



with drop down selections will serve to easily segment your responders for future communications.

Once you've captured a personalized URL response, it's easy to automate generic or personalized follow-up messages. You can also create an automated message to follow up with non-responders by using your personalized URL response report to remove the names of leads that have already responded, and then target all others with an additional mailing or email.

If you have a sales force assigned to various geographic territories, you can direct new leads to the proper sales associates. Leads can be automatically assigned to them in real time using the address from a personalized URL visitor's data file. This eliminates a manual assignment process and lag time.

Personalized URLs provide response tracking and reduce the errors and omissions associated with key-entering mailed response information. These responses will also provide a link directly to the acquisition mailing that caused a person to respond, thus adding an accurate source code to every lead and eliminating manual data collection.

4. LEAD NURTURING

Once you've compiled a list of responses from your acquisition campaign, you can then use personalized URLs for a more cohesive, targeted approach to nurture these leads. Lead nurturing campaigns involve a series of marketing attempts to move a lead through the conversion process. Personalized URLs allow you to automate some or all of this process, so that a thoroughly pre-planned campaign can almost run itself with significantly less administrative work for you and your employees.

Another benefit of using personalized URLs is the testing platform they provide, which allows personalized URL content to be modified as soon as you discover what has worked in the testing process. Based on response rates and conversion performance, you can make modifications throughout the duration of the campaign. These changes can happen immediately with no lag time between the launch of a new campaign.

5. LOYALTY

As customers convert from your lead nurturing campaign, you can continue to use personalized URLs to strengthen your customer relationships. Customers can respond to promotions, access their reward points, redeem points, and renew through a "lifetime" personalized URL that is constantly updated with new, relevant information. This technology exists with sign-in member-based websites, but a personalized URL allows members to bypass the sign-in step.

Loyalty personalized URLs also allow for continual data collection, which is useful in gaining customer intelligence to utilize for future promotions and customer-centric marketing messages.

6. MEMBERSHIP/CUSTOMER RENEWAL

Of course, customer erosion is a fact of life as well, making renewal campaigns imperative to reviving customers and members. By using the information you collected on these customers, you can create a personalized URL featuring relevant offers in a renewal campaign to encourage customers to return.

7. DONATION AND SPECIAL APPEALS

Fundraisers can use information they've collected about their donors to personalize personalized URL pages. Many not-for-profits already use past giving donation amounts to determine how much they will ask from their donors in their next communication. Personalized URLs used for pledge forms online allow donors to see the same variable gift string that they received in the direct mail piece and simply confirm their information rather than re-enter it.

Fundraising direct mail packages typically have at least a website to appease the donors that would prefer to give online via a secured server. Personalized URLs close the gap between the mail event and general online donations. When a visitor gives via a personalized URL, it links the donation definitively to a direct mail

event for simple, effective, and comprehensive response rate and revenue tracking across both channels.

Personalized URLs also allow not-for-profits ease in offering back-end premiums to donors. This solution could help reduce the costs of sending front-end premiums to everyone on your list by providing premiums only after the individual makes his or her donation. With the use of personalized URLs and the ability to capture information during the time of the donation, you can also customize the offer as opposed to offering everyone the same premium.

8. PRODUCT ANNOUNCEMENT

The dynamic tracking capabilities of a personalized URL allow marketers to collect information regarding what links visitors clicked online, how long they viewed a page, and which downloads they requested, among other things. This could provide insight on new product interests or needs. Marketers can then relay this information to the sales person assigned to an account or use this to create new messages based on a web visitor's specific interests – all accomplished by the initial visit to a personalized URL.

Clearly, rather than a marketing gimmick, personalized URLs are the ultimate response device. Moreover, as part of the social media revolution, personalized URLs open another venue for the all-important "conversation" with customers. Not only do personalized URL respondents show us what they're interested in by "stopping by", the information they choose to leave behind strengthens the relationship.

EU Services has been helping direct marketers improve their efficiencies, performance and investment in direct marketing production for over 40 years. EU Services offers print collateral, direct mail production and integrated marketing campaigns using online and offline media. For more information visit www.euservices.com

