

Every business has a constant need to communicate with its customers, suppliers and prospects in order to sustain its life blood - Revenue! The secret is to know what data to send to whom, at a time which is most appropriate to them.

The Business Issue

The closer a message can be matched to the preference of the target audience, in terms of its content and delivery mechanism, the higher the probability of its success. Sage E-Marketing is designed for marketers, to assist them in easy delivery of the right offer to the right people - very cost effectively. Most importantly, the actions of the target audience (i.e. the online behaviour in terms of their topic preferences)



are written directly back to the contact records of your CRM system, an invaluable feature for any marketer wanting to create personalised & tailored e-channel marketing campaigns.

The e-channel is about permission based marketing and meeting the needs of the target audience. Effective segmentation of data and the targeting of specific needs in your CRM system allow Sage E-Marketing to deliver your offer in a timely and cost effective manner whilst successfully tracking the results.

The success of the e-channel is augmented by the entire organisation embracing a new channel of communication. With everyone on board, it is possible to source opt-in email addresses at every touch point in the business. If every contact point always gathers an email address, subscribers will then be included in future campaigns promoting products and services in which they have expressed an interest or preference.

Six benefits of the e-channel to the Direct Marketer

Low cost	No budget required for postage, print and fulfilment
Rapid campaign creation	Gartner estimates that email campaigns are completed in 7-10 days compared to 4-6 weeks for traditional direct mail
High response rate	On average, response rates are between 6-8% for permission based email, a much higher figure than traditional direct marketing campaigns
Rapid response & results	According to Gartner, responses to emails accumulate in an average of 3 days, compared to 3-6 weeks for traditional direct mail
Enables frequent communication	Email campaign structures enable frequent communication – in traditional direct marketing this is usually impractical due to cost
Two way communication	Feedback from the target audience can be recorded through actions on landing pages or surveys about their buying behaviour and topic preferences – this information can be incorporated into future personalised, targeted email campaigns

Sage E-Marketing Supports e-channel Technology

Sage E-Marketing allows you to create emails in HTML format. However, it is more likely that a series of templates would be used to allow email marketing campaign managers to execute campaigns using pre-designed and approved templates. These templates can be easily imported into Sage E-Marketing and re-used as and when needed.

Many organisations block HTML emails, believing them to be spam. This can obviously be a significant set back to a campaign and diminishes the target audience before the content and offer has even been delivered. To overcome this, Sage E-Marketing delivers all outbound communications as a two part mime message.

This means that both an HTML and Text format email are sent as part of a campaign, if the HTML is blocked, the Text format will be delivered in its place, thus maintaining the highest possible delivery rate. In addition, if an HTML email is blocked, it is reported back and stored against the target audiences' preferences, so that you know what percentage of your campaign audience will allow HTML through. In some campaigns it may be inappropriate to create HTML format, thus reducing time and costs.

The Bounce Back

When processing a campaign, Sage E-Marketing will auto-check the format of the selected email addresses against a predetermined list to carry out a base check and identify potential fakes in the audience before the campaign is initiated.

Once the campaign is initiated, "throttle settings" control the speed of the outflow, in line with the communication infrastructure or the resources, to cope with the call to action. Despite keeping your lists as up to date as possible, you will receive "bounce backs" – "out of office assistant" is a common one, together with delivery failures. In unsophisticated outbound tools these elements alone can create a resource overhead, which outweighs the benefits of the tool. Sage E-Marketing traps the bounce back and places them in a defined area where it automatically produces an analysis of the types of bounce back received and, where appropriate, it updates the CRM system on the invalidity of an address, or simply notes that the target was out of the office at the time of the campaign.



Fig 1: Bounce Back Manager.

Technology

As a 100% web based solution built in the Microsoft .net framework, Sage E-Marketing utilises common standards including SOAP and XML to ensure minimal impact on your environment, yet maximum functionality in the product. With no client architecture to consider, the only requirements are a database and web server using IIS. By using SMTP as the mail backbone, all the leading mail platforms are supported as a delivery mechanism (Lotus Notes, Exchange, Groupwise).

Knowledge is power

The key activity is to promote an offer to your target audience, however, what you promote, on which day of the week, at what time of day, and to whom, is crucial in terms of delivering a successful e-channel campaign.

With Sage E-Marketing, the target audiences' actions are captured within the system, allowing you to analyse your audience and helping you to build a complete picture about them. By using the invaluable data about your target audiences' preferences in products and services, as well as their preferred time of receiving email communication from you, this will ensure that all subsequent campaigns are more accurate in their ability to deliver to an audience, content that they are interested in, at a time they prefer.

See Fig. 2 below

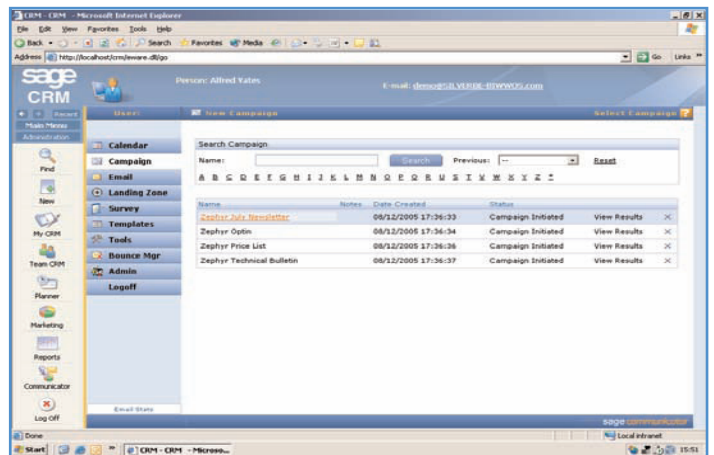


Fig 2. A customer contact record in Sage CRM, showing the return data (customer interest) enabling you to tailor the next communication perfectly

Key Benefits of Sage E-Marketing

- Automatically produces a list of email bounce backs, with reasons why they bounced
- Continuously tests the domain validity of the email audience to ensure it is correct (this reduces the number of bounce backs)
- Automatically marks a record as: 'do not email' should the customer select unsubscribe
- Provides easy access to campaign analysis
- Makes email creation with PDF download function easy
- Allows creation of predetermined campaigns collating an audience at a specified time or a triggered event (i.e. every Tuesday morning)
- Enables creation of both HTML and TXT email for greater delivery rate and reduced bounce backs
- Provides SPAM check which allows the sender to assess the likelihood of emails being rejected, due to unsuitable choice of words and content
- Provides ability to personalise the email, including the subject field, to increase open rates



Fig 3. Email campaigns are designed with click-throughs to landing zones - key topic areas are covered on separate pages; the target audience choose to visit different landing zones according to their preferences. The results are recorded and saved, enabling improved segmentation and targeting for future campaigns.

Key Benefits of Sage E-Marketing Enterprise

In addition to the benefits stated above, where time savings alone can more than justify the expense, there are further benefits to be achieved by utilising additional features which are only available in Sage E-Marketing Enterprise. Not only can you analyse who receives the information, but which specific topic areas the customer continually shows interest in – an invaluable source of information for the marketer to create tailored loyalty programs and cross-selling campaigns.

Landing Zones

- By replacing delivery of PDF documents with the creation of landing zones - where key topic areas are covered on separate pages, the 'target audience' will choose to visit different landing zones according to the topics they prefer. These preferences are automatically recorded and saved in Sage CRM.

Surveys

- Ability to carry out online surveys to gather invaluable feedback from the target audience
- Record the preferences of the audience via surveys to establish which regular communications would be most beneficial to them
- Using the data obtained from creation of landing zones and surveys, a marketer can create frequent, highly relevant and personalised communications to their target audience



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About Sage CRM

Sage CRM is an easy to use, fast to deploy, feature rich, low cost of ownership CRM solution, designed to introduce the real benefits of CRM to middle sized companies. Sage CRM aggregates individual and group efforts across sales, marketing and support teams, making people and companies more efficient at their roles. It links all departments to a single system that is deployed across an Internet architecture that inherently provides efficiencies in terms of deployment, maintenance and access.

Sage CRM allows for the pooling of all transactions and communication history into a single screen, giving you a 360 degree view of your customer.

Sage CRM Can Help Your Company to:

- Improve Sales Performance with tools that help sales professionals find and retrieve vital information quickly and easily. Sage CRM provides a snap shot of the sales cycle from first contact to final sale, allowing sales teams to effectively analyse and manage the sales pipeline.
- Manage and track every element of your campaign. View activities, objectives, leads generated and lead follow-up. You can drill down to specific activities within a campaign including communications, opportunities, responses, budget, actual cost and list of prospects.
- Resolve customer issues efficiently by providing customer service professionals with user-friendly tools to access relevant customer data including purchases, call and escalation histories, interactions, emails and documents sent and received. Armed with this customer knowledge they can handle customer queries more efficiently, which in turn enhances and strengthens the customer experience whilst improving job satisfaction.

About Sage Software

Sage Software has been responding to the needs, challenges, and dreams of small and midsized businesses for over 30 years. With a complete range of business management solutions and services, Sage Software helps companies improve customer relationships, reduce costs, and automate and integrate a variety of operational activities. Look to Sage Software for fully integrated business management applications that deliver high performance, advanced functionality, cross-product integration, and unmatched freedom of choice.

Sage Software solutions support the specialty needs of a broad scope of industry segments, including manufacturing, distribution, construction, real estate, nonprofit, and professional services. Today, over 2.4 million North American customers run Sage Software solutions. The parent company, The Sage Group plc (London: SGE.L), supports 4.7 million customers worldwide. Together, with its network of business partners, Sage Software provides the ongoing support and service small and midsized businesses need to achieve tangible business results.

For more information, please visit www.sagesoftware.com or call 0845 111 9988