

How one Canadian specialty retailer used email marketing to accelerate its ecommerce business

Article

In the past year and a half, several traditional brick-and-mortar retailers in Canada have accelerated their personalization and segmentation efforts, largely due to the pandemic and the need for brands to communicate more effectively via email. In the end, it fast forwarded the uptake of an innovation that had already been identified as a must-have for competing in the evolving retail landscape.

Here's one example.

Golf Town

Profile: Specialty retailer with 49 locations across Canada

Objective: Personalize mass emails

Tactic: Segmentation by digital behavior

“Our email program is on a journey toward mass personalization,” said Frederick Lecoq, CMO of Sporting Life Group, which includes the Golf Town banner. “The days of blasting to a massive database are over. You have got to be much more surgical about what you do.”

Golf Town's personalization program segments more than 1 million email addresses into behavioral profiles. Because the retailer's audience is generally homogenous—golfers—its program segments by email engagement history and web behaviors. For example, subscribers who have been inactive for specified periods of time filter into separate buckets for personalization.

Email communications go out three times weekly, with each message focusing on a different metric and tone—driving sales, educating consumers about products, or surfacing recent content via Golf Town's newsletter.

In addition to newsletter sign-ups, display ad redirects, and other offer-based acquisition tactics, Golf Town also collects email addresses in-store. “The most profitable email addresses that you can acquire, by a mile, are the ones you get in-store,” he said. Lecoq estimated that an email address acquired in-store is about 10 times as valuable as one collected via digital sources and allows the program to segment on a deeper level, based on a store location as well.