



SANTANDER CONSUMER USA

Fast-growing auto finance company combines e-mail, SMS and transactional messaging to optimize customer communications

The Company

Santander Consumer USA Inc. (SCUSA) is a leading company in the automotive finance sector. With its Drive®, Santander Auto Finance and RoadLoans brands, SCUSA (www.santanderconsumerusa.com) provides finance programs that cover the entire non-prime spectrum.

The Challenge

Santander Consumer USA services more than 450,000 auto finance customers. With so many active customers paying monthly loans, the company needs a significant servicing organization to meet the demands of its customers. “Our servicing department is a large organization consisting of 900 people making more than 350,000 outbound phone calls per day,” said Will Stacy, director of marketing for SCUSA. “This operation is effective, but it has limitations in terms of cost and resources. We needed to figure out an alternative solution to help us reach people without the need for costly inbound and outbound touchpoints.”

The company decided to implement an online self-service portal where customers could accomplish many of the tasks typically done over the phone, such as making monthly loan payments or changing contact information. The plan was to use e-mail to drive customers to the portal and away from the call center. However, SCUSA's e-mail platform was not sufficient for its needs. Thus, the search for a new e-mail marketing solution began.

The Solution

After a comprehensive selection process, SCUSA decided to partner with Silverpop for its engagement marketing needs. “We chose to work with Silverpop because we were confident it would enable us to communicate with customers on a regular basis while also minimizing the need for customers to call our servicing center,” Stacy said.

Today, SCUSA uses both Silverpop Engage and Silverpop Engage Transact to minimize the number of inbound and outbound calls to its servicing center and for ongoing communication with its customer base. Santander Consumer USA uses Silverpop Engage Transact for a set of automated campaigns that includes a welcome campaign, payment reminders and confirmation e-mails when customers make changes to their profile on the self-service portal.

“The goal of our automated campaigns is to minimize the number of calls made to the servicing center by answering many frequently asked questions,” Stacy said. “For example, our welcome campaign provides information on payment options so that customers don’t have to speak with a person in real time to get that information. And all of our communications drive customers back to our portal so we can continue to provide information online and ensure that we’re collecting the most accurate contact information.”

“ We have had positive results incorporating a multi-channel approach using SMS and e-mail reminders. Our initial results show that for those customers that receive a SMS reminder, 15 percent will post a payment immediately, ensuring that customers have a higher propensity to pay if they are reminded via SMS in conjunction with e-mail. ”

Will Stacy
Director of Marketing
Santander Consumer USA

Business Challenge

- Minimize costly calls to and from servicing center
- Answer frequently asked question by customers
- Maintain accurate customer contact information

Benefits

- Automated emails save hundreds of hours of time to the servicing center
- E-mail and SMS payment reminders have helped with \$25M in on-time loan payments
- 40 percent increase in the accuracy of customers’ personal data
- Higher propensity to pay bills if reminded via SMS in conjunction with e-mail

Santander Consumer USA also uses Silverpop Engage for payment confirmation receipts. Because SCUSA is a financial services organization, it's necessary to encrypt the data flowing to and from Silverpop Engage from financial systems. With the help of Silverpop's Integration Services group, SCUSA is able to encrypt all data coming to and from Silverpop Engage, ensuring timely and secure confirmation of loan payments.

Santander Consumer USA has become an early adopter of Silverpop's SMS offering as part of its multi-channel delivery strategy. "Our customers were clamoring for us to communicate with them via SMS," Stacy said. "We initially did not advertise SMS, instead only offering it as an option on our preference page. We had thousands of customers sign up for SMS payment reminders as soon as we made it available. It's obvious that SMS is the next step in optimizing communications with our customers."

The Results

By using online tools to remind customers to pay their loans every month, SCUSA has reaped major benefits. "Silverpop Engage is helping us capture \$25 million in loan payments while saving hundreds of hours of time in our servicing center. Ultimately, these things directly impact our bottom line in a very positive way," Stacy said. "Considering our analysis shows that e-mail is 64 times cheaper than a phone call, this represents a significant ROI."

By using e-mail to drive customers to its self-service portal to update personal information, SCUSA has also significantly increased the accuracy of its customer data. The company now has correct physical mailing addresses for more than 99 percent of its customers, and there's been a 40 percent increase in the number of accurate phone numbers compared to the previous year.

"E-mail is a highly effective vehicle for communicating with our customers," Stacy said. "More of our customers are paying on time, and they appreciate the automated payment reminders—every time an automated payment reminder is sent out, at least 50 customers reply with thanks that we reminded them."

In fact, Stacy has taken Santander's approach to automated payment reminders to the next level by incorporating SMS payment reminders for those customers that signed up for the texting service. According to Stacy, "We have had positive results incorporating a multi-channel approach using both SMS and e-mail reminders. Our initial results show that for those customers that receive a SMS reminder, 15 percent will post a payment immediately, ensuring that customers have a higher propensity to pay if they are reminded via SMS in conjunction with e-mail."

To find out more about Silverpop's Engage solution and how it can benefit your company, please contact us toll-free at 1-866-745-8767

Visit us at www.silverpop.com