



THE SOCIETY OF LONDON THEATRE

Theatre company uses Silverpop Engage to build stronger connections with customers and double average open rates

The Company

The Society of London Theatre (SOLT) is the trade association that represents the producers, theater owners and managers of the major commercial and grant-aided theaters in central London. SOLT provides many services, including promoting theatergoing to the widest possible audience.

The Challenge

SOLT's charter is to understand the demographics of the theatergoing community. If a particular audience is underserved, SOLT will endeavor to figure out ways to engage that particular segment. When SOLT wanted to reach out to theatergoers with special needs, it soon realized that its email marketing was woefully inadequate for segmenting its email list to more strongly connect with specific audiences. In particular, it wanted to create campaigns that would better engage the 16-to-26 age group, since SOLT research had shown that this group was a highly underserved demographic.

At the same time, SOLT wanted to begin monetizing its newsletters by selling advertising space. However, if it were to include advertising, SOLT would need to provide metrics to advertisers regarding sends and click-throughs. "We realized we needed to take a more sophisticated approach to our email marketing so that we could do better targeting of emails," said Philippa Salvoni, head of publishing, Society of London Theatre. "At the same time, if we wanted to monetize our newsletter, we would need a solution that provided us reporting capabilities that our current solution did not provide."

The Solution

SOLT decided to implement Silverpop's Engage solution after attending a Silverpop event and learning firsthand how Silverpop clients were using the product. "It was an easy decision to select Silverpop because Engage had all the capabilities we needed to meet our business needs," said Salvoni. "We also understood that there would be a significant learning curve for us, and we knew that Silverpop would be brilliant in getting us up to speed."

Before SOLT could monetize its newsletters, it needed to rework its emails to meet the unique requirements of individual ISPs, with the goal of getting whitelisted and improving overall deliverability. "Prior to Silverpop, we had never even heard of whitelisting," said Salvoni. "Silverpop worked with our former vendor to obtain our list and then with the ISPs to get our data into a significantly better state so we could increase our deliverability rates."

After getting up to speed on the basics, SOLT enlisted Silverpop's account services team for periodic account reviews. These interactions guided SOLT's targeting efforts and led SOLT to request that Silverpop build certain modifications to its email preferences page to enable SOLT to better engage customers through personalized, one-to-one messaging.

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Philippa Salvoni
Head of Publishing
The Society of London Theatre

Challenges

- Desire to monetize newsletters
- Lack of process efficiency
- Little data collected—minimal opportunities for targeting

Results

- Targeted campaigns double average open rates
- Ability to monitor behavior across mailings
- Reduced subscriber churn

This preference center allowed SOLT to start collecting more data on the theatergoing community so that its promotions and newsletter were specifically targeted by segment as well as behavior. Through its email sign-up page, SOLT began to collect information on its subscribers, such as their preferred type of communications (e.g., type of newsletter and offers, genre) and frequency.

To better engage the 16-to-26 age demographic, SOLT worked with Silverpop to develop a dynamic option on the email sign-up page so that when subscribers enter a year of birth that places their age in that range, a special prompt invites them to sign up for "Theatre Fix," an exclusive newsletter to subscribers 26 and under.

The Results

SOLT has had enormous success using targeted email campaigns for subscribers in different age groups. "Using an age-centric subject line, we managed to double average open rates for subscribers in the 16-to-26 age group," said Salvoni. In addition, SOLT's improved preferences page has helped build brand loyalty and reduce newsletter opt-outs. "Giving our subscribers so many options when they sign up for our newsletter has allowed us to provide them much more targeted content," said Salvoni. "Ultimately, it has been a significant factor in reducing subscriber churn."

Today, SOLT is using Engage to send out its newsletters and email promotions as well as promotions on behalf of specific theaters. In fact, SOLT has become so adept at understanding best practices for delivering the highest open and click-through rates that it acts as an advisor to its theater customers on how to optimize their email communications. "We will often provide some feedback to these customers based on our previous experiences using Engage to let them know which creatives get the most optimal open rates," said Duncan Sweetland, SOLT Website Designer.

To find out more about Silverpop's Engage solution and how it can benefit your company, please contact us toll-free at 1-877-484-7704

Visit us at www.silverpop.com