

National Express East Coast

All aboard! Silverpop Engage helps leading international public transport group improve deliverability, quadruple click-through rates and jump-start its social marketing campaign

The Company

National Express East Coast is a franchise operated by National Express Group, one of the world's leading international public transport groups with 43,000 employees and 18,000 vehicles worldwide. More than 17 million passengers use National Express East Coast services annually for rail service in England and Scotland.

The Challenge

Prior to February 2008, National Express East Coast was using an ecommerce solution for email marketing that was insufficient for effectively communicating with its millions of customers. Understanding that its communications program was somewhat lacking, National Express East Coast began to look for a marketing technology provider that could provide a better understanding of key email deliverability metrics as well as best practices on how to improve its communications with customers.

"We understood that if we acquired a more robust email solution, we would also need the provider to be our trusted advisor," said Sara Borland, brand communications manager, National Express Group. "Since our ecommerce solution did not have the capability we were seeking, we understood that there may be a significant learning curve with a new solution, especially in terms of understanding and benchmarking our deliverability metrics."

The Solution

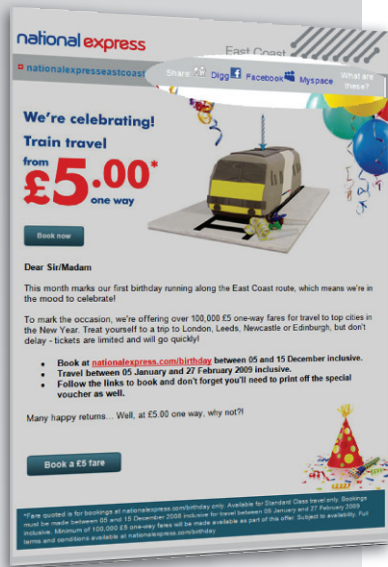
After a competitive selection process, National Express East Coast selected Silverpop as its marketing technology provider. Silverpop jumped right in, first assessing the health of the company's email list. The analysis identified major deliverability issues, with many of National Express East Coast's emails getting caught in spam filters.

Silverpop's first step to improve the company's deliverability rates was to perform a data cleansing to obtain white listing by ISPs. Since each ISP has rigorous white-listing requirements, Silverpop worked with the individual providers to help National Express East Coast meet the requirements and dramatically improve the chances of its messages reaching customers' inboxes.

Silverpop then instructed National Express East Coast on best practices to increase its open and click-through rates, as well as providing recommendations for email creative. These included using Silverpop's Share-to-Social feature to help spread the company's message through social networks.

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Sara Borland
Brand Communications Manager
National Express Group



Challenges

- Ecommerce solution insufficient for email marketing needs
- Significant number of SPAM traps hampering deliverability

Benefits

- 10% increase in deliverability rates
- 2X increase in open rates
- 4X increase in click through rates
- Share-to-social features is bolstering viral marketing activities

The Results

By working closely with Silverpop, National Express East Coast was able to clean up its list and steer clear of SPAM traps. Due to this initial data cleansing and subsequent white listing, deliverability rates rose by more than 10 percent.

“Helping us set a baseline allowed us to understand where we needed to make improvements in our email communications,” said Borland. “With Silverpop’s expertise, we were able to double the percentage of people opening our emails and quadruple click-through rates.”

Through Silverpop’s Share-to-Social feature, National Express East Coast was able to significantly bolster its viral marketing activities and engage new customers. “By simply placing social network links in our emails, it allowed us to reach a whole new set of potential customers,” said Borland. “In a recent ‘one-way fares’ campaign, hundreds of customers shared the offer on their social networking pages on Digg, Facebook and MySpace. Of those who posted the link, 17 percent had at least one open of the post, and 33 percent who opened a post then clicked. These are people we may never have reached otherwise.”