

The Mahoney Company:

Personal URL Technology Helps Persuade Consumers Resistant to Corporate Messaging

CASE STUDY

The Situation

Portola Plaza, an upscale hotel set against the backdrop of the Monterey Bay, was running a campaign designed to build customer loyalty and strengthen the brand image, for the purpose of increasing revenue. The hotel's marketing director hired an agency to design and produce a personalized 1:1 postcard campaign to reach previous guests.



The highly personalized, high-impact postcard campaign was the first step in connecting with guests. The next step was to build loyalty by creating a dialogue with guests. The hotel wanted to learn what was important for guests in making a lodging decision. By learning more about each guest, the hotel could offer incentives and services tailored to a guest's specific interests, and provide an outstanding lodging experience during subsequent visits.

Guests needed a fast, simple way to communicate their needs and desires, and the motivation to provide that information.

The Results:

- 7.4% response rate via personal URL, an increase of more than 350% over traditional direct marketing
- 15% conversion rate among respondents
- Ongoing customer dialogue initiated
- Database information and customer insight expanded
- Ongoing consumer response

Tactics:

- Personal URL web sites to augment client's personalized 1:1 postcard campaign.
- 1:1 email communications.
- Daily and weekly reports to client detailing client response and activity on personal URLs.
- Campaign summary report detailing client response, activity, efficacy

The Solution

Portola turned to The Mahoney Company to create and implement a platform for ongoing guest dialogue and messaging.

Mahoney's solution included a unique and personal web site for each guest, real-time actionable data reporting, 1:1 email communication and campaign direction.

The 1:1 postcard campaign directed guests to their personal URL, which mirrored the personalized, attention-getting design of the postcard, provided one of two offers, and the opportunity to complete a brief survey. A guest who completed the survey received additional promotion opportunities.

Guest's actions while visiting their personal URLs, along with survey data, was reported daily and weekly in granular detail to the hotel, giving Portola the ability to track the campaign's success and make any mid-term messaging changes. The data can be used to continue guest dialogue by delivering relevant messaging and interest-special offers in future campaigns.

The Results

The dialogue approach to this campaign was part of an ongoing effort to gain guest insight on hotel services, build loyalty, strengthen the brand, and keep guests engaged in the process.

The 7.4% response rate was dramatically higher than a typical direct-marketing campaign, in which response is generally in the 1-2% range.

Personal URLs played a large part. "It triggered curiosity," says Wade Bryant, Marketing Director for Portola Plaza. "When people got the direct mail with their own URLs, they wondered what could be on websites with their names on them." One-third of respondents filled out the survey to take advantage of the promotion.

Portola plans to use data from this campaign to address the preferences of its guests in future campaigns with more specific, personalized messaging, aimed at bringing customers back to the hotel, exceptional visit after visit.