

ACT-ON MANAGED SERVICES USE CASE: Traverse City Tourism



TRAVERSE CITY TAKES ON EMAIL AUTOMATION

At the end of 2018, the team at Traverse City knew they needed to up their email game. While their list of more than 200,000 subscribers was impressive, their email engagement rates were not, particularly their open rates and click-through rates.

Coryn Briggs, Digital Marketing Manager at Traverse City Tourism, reached out to the team at Simpleview to assess her options. They put her in touch with Adam Nutting, Simpleview's Marketing Automation Specialist, and together they came up with a plan. Using Simpleview's Act-On managed services, they worked to create a dynamic, automated email campaign.

JUMPING INTO ACTION WITH ACT-ON

The study was Traverse City's first attempt at marketing automation, so Coryn wasn't sure what to expect. With Adam's help, they mapped out three email blasts to be sent out over a three-month period, beginning in October 2018.

Their regular monthly newsletter served as the first email, sent in its usual format: three blocks that covered seasonal packages and deals, upcoming events, and restaurants and breweries.

This time around, Simpleview's marketing automation specialists used lead scoring to track users and determine who was interacting with what content. In doing so, each block was assigned a certain number of points, and users were scored on a hot-warm-cold system based on their total point value. They also assigned a point value to landing pages and other site content to further determine the extent to which each user was engaging with the content, and to evaluate how users were moving through the site from the single point of entry.



We created the scoring process and system, and came up with the segmentation strategy and designed the user journey.



– Adam Nutting | Marketing Automation Specialist

The second blast, sent in mid-November, had three variations. The email only had one piece of content, as opposed to the usual three, and the email each user received was based on his/her initial point value.

In the final email, sent in December, the team reverted to the original three-block format, this time varying the order of the content based on the lead scoring numbers. For example, someone who scored highest in the upcoming events block would see that block first, followed by their second-highest block, and so on.

THE RESULTS ARE IN

At the end of the study, Coryn was surprised to find that the lodging packages, which they usually placed at the bottom of their newsletters, were the highest-converting content block. They also found that users were more likely to click through to read blog posts about local businesses and events over other types of content.

More importantly, the team at Traverse City finally had a way to classify and categorize their data. Using the lead scoring system, they were able to begin phase one of a months-long process. In this campaign, Adam and the team worked to create a segmented audience using top level navigation. In the future, they'll be able to further carve out those segments and create multiple audiences to target with customized content.

The lead scoring system could also potentially be useful in the Traverse City sales process. The team could create different types of evergreen content for users in various stages of the sales funnel, all the way from the first click on a blog post, through to booking a hotel room with a partner.

Throughout the process, Coryn was surprised to learn how much time it took to set up an automation campaign. She was glad to have had the help of Simpleview's Marketing Automation team to create the lead-scoring strategies, provide editorial oversight and help her navigate Act-On.



“Marketing automation is really new and Act-On is such a robust system. And when we first signed on, we didn't realize how much work it would be to set it up.”



– Coryn Briggs | Digital Marketing Manager, Traverse City Tourism

As the Traverse City team looks to create additional audience segments, they'll also see an increase in their content creation as they begin to send more than just their usual one newsletter per month. Coryn and the team will be working closely with Simpleview as they develop multiple email campaigns for each audience, in an attempt to improve their open rates and increase their conversions.

For more information on Act-On, please contact our Account Services team at accountmanagers@simpleviewinc.com or call 520.575.1151.

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