

Canada's Largest Frozen Food Retailer Dramatically Improves Email Deliverability

M&M Meat Shops supports its coast-to-coast stores with a brand new customer loyalty program powered by an integrated e-marketing strategy from Sitebrand

M&M Meat Shops

Canada's largest retail chain of specialty frozen foods

Location

Kitchener, Ontario, Canada



www.mmmeatshops.com

Key challenge:

- Improve email deliverability and convert more customers to eMAX, an improved e-communication loyalty program

Solution:

- Use Sitebrand's professional email marketing services to develop and implement an integrated email marketing program based on industry best practices

Results:

- Jump in email deliverability (average rate increased to approximately 98.5 %)
- Energized M&M marketing team
- New email friendly HTML templates
- Improved reporting capabilities

Innovative frozen food retailer

When busy soccer moms go hunting for a fast, quality family meal, many turn to M&M Meat Shops. The company caters to the needs of time-crunched people by providing a wide assortment of convenient frozen meals that can be prepared quickly. More than 375 high quality products, a strong community presence, and knowledgeable, friendly in-store Product Consultants have helped M&M become Canada's largest retail chain of specialty frozen foods.

MAX loyalty program

Another reason customers make a beeline for their local M&M store is the company's aggressive e-marketing strategy, that until recently, consisted of regular e-flyers and e-newsletters brimming with juicy specials. At the heart of this strategy is the M&M MAX program, where customers are encouraged to sign-up to receive exclusive offers and reap special savings.

M&M is now shifting gears with its e-marketing strategy and launching eMAX: a pumped-up program that delivers even greater value to its loyal customers. The goal: increase email conversion from existing customer base by 23%.

E-marketing challenges

A key to the success of M&M's entire e-marketing program is the ability to quickly and cost effectively segment audiences. That was proving to be an increasingly costly proposition with its previous email provider. In addition, deliverability was emerging as a concern. "This discipline is getting more complex," says Sarah Otto, Interactive Marketing Specialist, M&M Meat Shops. "You have privacy laws and a host of technical issues that crop up on a monthly basis. Just making it to the inbox is becoming a major challenge." These and other factors motivated M&M to look for a new strategic email marketing solution provider.

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Sarah Otto,
Interactive Marketing Specialist,
M&M Meat Shops



About Sitebrand

Retail focus

Seven year track record of helping E-tailers and multi-channel retailers convert more visitors into on-line or in-store buyers.

Unique real-time technology

Solutions use advanced predictive technology to personalize the website experience of every visitor in real-time.

Comprehensive services

Solutions are backed by professional services to ensure fast time to ROI.

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Customer-centric thinking

Following a comprehensive tender process, M&M Meat Shops selected Sitebrand to spearhead professional email services related to its e-marketing program following. Sitebrand was chosen because they have extensive experience with the planning of successful integrated email marketing programs—from initial strategy through to evaluating results. In addition they have extensive food industry experience. “From other e-marketing programs that Sitebrand was running, we could see its team thought above and beyond traditional email marketers. They really looked at customer preferences by creating opportunities for customers to identify the types of information they wanted to receive. This enabled the marketing organization to deliver relevant messages that addressed its customers’ specific needs—and that impressed us,” says Otto.

High-impact recommendations

Sitebrand provided immediate advice on how to optimize M&M’s templates for different customer preferences and special offers. One of the key pieces of insight Sitebrand provided involved moving away from embedding top-level messages in graphic boxes as M&M had been doing. “They showed us how our e-newsletter looked when customers had their images turned off,” says Otto. “That was really eye-opening and has now enabled us to create structurally sound templates that ensure our key messages are still visible to those customers who block images.”

Another key recommendation Sitebrand made was to merge the M&M e-flyer and e-newsletter program. A brief analysis revealed these were creating confusion for customers and individual M&M stores alike. Many did not know there were two separate programs. Merging these into one integrated email program to promote eMAX enabled M&M to realize improved efficiencies, including cost reductions, while implementing industry best practices.

Dramatic increase in deliverability rates

“Right off the bat we saw a spike in deliverability with our new email activities,” Otto confirms. “We also got feedback from customers that we hadn’t heard from in a very long time so we knew our e-newsletter was finally making it through.” M&M’s deliverability rates, which had been hovering around 95%, jumped to 98.5%.

As well, the previous provider did not provide open rates, only clicks. Open rates provide insight into subscriber engagement. Since many of the M&M emails include the most important information inside the email, with no strong need to click, open rates now give a better glimpse into total interest levels. M&M is enjoying average “measured” open rates for its newsletters of 26%, and 52% for welcome emails. Considering measured open rates can’t track emails that are received as “text only” versions or with “images turned off” (a big reality of today), M&M’s measured open rate, particularly the welcome email, is impressive in terms of industry norms which hover around 25%.

A new benchmark for customer support

M&M also comments on the responsive customer service the Sitebrand team provided. “They are always thinking above and beyond with new promotional ideas while keeping us informed about industry best practices,” says Otto. “The level of proactive thinking and exceptional customer support has established a new benchmark for us. More than anything, the marketing objective to convert more MAX customers to the new eMAX program is well underway to reaching our 23% growth objective.”