

Category L - Customer Relationship Marketing: Pre-Flight Countdown Programme

Executive Summary (300 words covering off: objective, scale of the task, key results)

By focusing the business on the customer experience, easyJet wanted to differentiate themselves from other budget airlines and create incremental revenue not just through hard sales, but through a memorable and positive traveller programme.

How? By leveraging easyJet's brand proposition '**where are you going?**', we ignite the natural feelings of anticipation travellers have during the countdown to their next trip. We provide help and inspiration at each milestone during the pre-flight experience, and ultimately transformed a functional, hard-sell approach, into a dynamic and fun-fuelled conversation.

Because of the dynamic capability of our programme, we were able to highly tailor the content both visually and tonally. We create a clear distinction between vital information you **need to know**, information that is **nice to know** and **inspiring content** to enhance our travellers' experiences.

Our overall objectives were to:

- Increase opportunities to talk in order to provide the customer with useful and practical information before the flight, but also with suggestions for an improved journey
- Decrease marketing investment while increasing its efficiency at every touch point

Whilst our measured objectives were to:

- Increase engagement with the emails
- Increase online check-in
- Increase ancillaries and extra service revenue

Over the last ten months, the pre-flight programme has been delivered to 36 million of our travellers so far with an overall ROI of 199:1.

Our open rates are **more than double** travel sector benchmarks, and have even been mentioned by easyJet's CEO, Carolyn McCall, in her city announcement, 'Email is now driving close to 70% more revenue against the same period last year. Emailed customers are 20% more valuable and book 11% more frequently than non-email customers.'

In a nutshell, the results exceeded our most optimistic expectations, positioning **easyJet the third best email marketer of the UK's top retailers**. (Source: *Econsultancy compendium July 2013*): http://econsultancy.com/uk/blog/63044-easyjet-email-marketing-flying-high-as-ryanair-crash-lands?utm_medium=feeds&utm_source=blog

(299 words)

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Award Entry (2,000 word submission covering: Understanding of customer life time value, Superior customer segmentation, Improved value for customers, Original thinking to increase customer revenues and Return on marketing expenditure)

Where other airlines treat 'the journey' as the time between take-off and landing, we see it as so much more - from the moment someone thinks about booking, to the moment they get home. We want to make every step of this journey as simple and enjoyable as possible.

There's nothing like the feeling of anticipation when you are on the countdown to your holiday. So we leveraged that, turning a series of functional procedures into opportunities to inspire. Our customers receive personalised programmes reflecting their type of trip, travel needs, the destination and trip duration.

After booking, our dynamic content kicks in. Our customers first receive an email (using live API feeds) offering live pricing for available hotels in their destination at the time of travel and segmented based on booking type (whether that's for business, family, or a city break). Then, as they enter the 8-week countdown, families, for example, receive the car-hire email pulling in available family-friendly vehicle suggestions whilst offering a few day trip ideas that the kids would enjoy in /around their destination.

Essential check-in information, best routes to and from the airport and last minute tips are all provided in a timely and tailored way to ensure a stress-free trip.

The programme is scalable, which flexes, according to the time between booking and departing. We even have a bespoke programme for business travellers.

Overall these are very personal email journeys that reflect our travellers' very personal real-life journeys.

Each pre-flight email is tailored to the natural milestones within a traveller's own countdown to their trip. Headline imagery matches trip type and destination, whilst dynamic content within the email meets travellers' individual travel needs.

Throughout the journey, we ensure the right balance between the functional moments of truth is made: 'I need to choose my seat' or 'I need to check in'; to emotional ones: 'Making the trip with kids run smoother'; to helpful ones: "20% discount of car hire."

We combine customer data with live API feeds to personalise our hotel and car emails with live pricing, relevant offers based on their booking type (i.e. business vs. family), where they are going and the duration of their trip.

We use clear image and tonal delineation to reflect the different emotional and functional needs. Punchy, clear and straightforward language is used to convey the essential information you need to know, such as check in details, flight information or passport detail reminders, with icons rather than photography, to ensure information is not mistaken for marketing.

For inspiration and offers that help enhance our travellers' experience, we use richer and more emotive imagery and tone. This means, travellers can quickly identify when we are trying to help them get the most out of their trip.

These distinctions allows travellers to scan the emails for the information they want and see at a glance and what they needed to do next without losing sight of the bigger picture – a fun trip away.

Our travellers receive a pre-flight programme blending useful information about travel plans, with relevant operational messages and ancillary services.

As opposed to the previous programme that contained one cross-sell communication for all the products and one reminder at 72-hours, our new programme suggests only one ancillary at a moment in time, based on type of booking and lead time to the flight, but also useful information about the flight and the destination.

As a result, the open rates have increased three times, compared to our previous programme.

By sending relevant and timely messages and offers, we also increased the engagement (click rate) with both hotel and car emails between 70% and 95%.

We optimised the cross sell of targeted ancillary offers by contacting customers at the right stage in the travel life cycle, with live data that was relevant for their trip and booking type. This resulted in more than doubling conversion rates, when compared to previous approach.

Over the last ten months, the pre-flight programme has been delivered to 36 million of our travellers so far with an overall ROI of 199:1.

In addition to this, we have increased our online check-in rates to 93% - a 25% increase when compared to the period before the pre-flight programme began.

Overall results, when compared to the previous year's cross-sell emails show incremental increase on all levels:

- Open rate by 333%
- Click rate by 95% for hotel emails and by 71% for car emails
- Conversion for hotel by 250% and for car by 111%
- Revenue by £23.5 million

Compared to UK travel industry statistics (source econsultancy July 2013), our emails have on average:

- Open rate 52% (+133%)
- Click rate of 16.6% (+317%)
- Unsubscribe rate of 0.1% (-92%)

Creative to support entry can be found here: <http://www.ourawardentries.co.uk/easyjet/>

(789 words)