

Mission Restaurant Supply Builds Brand & Drives Demand With a Well-Defined Marketing Automation Strategy

Mission Restaurant Supply (MissionRS) has been selling food service equipment in Texas since 1988. They're one of the top 10 dealers in the U.S. with thousands of regular clients and a catalog of more than 15,000 items. More than 5,000 users visit their site every day – a rich opportunity that had not been cultivated. Until recently, the company had yet to stage and implement targeted marketing campaigns. Since adopting marketing automation and working with a content provider, MissionRS has effective campaigns that deliver rich, relevant content to customers and foster engagement. They went from one-off emails and inconsistent traditional marketing pathways to impactful automated marketing campaigns with advanced content marketing in less than a year.



At a Glance:

Customer since: 2015

Industry: Retail

Founded: 1988

Challenge

Restaurant supply is traditionally a transactional business. Customers buy based on price, availability, and delivery times. Online marketing is typically restricted to search, remarketing, and banner ads. Emails usually announce deals on particular products, storewide sales, or new products. Mission Restaurant Supply fell in line, and didn't stand out from their competition very well. Since launching their online store in 2003, the team had not expanded beyond the average marketing and advertising efforts.

The MissionRS marketing team collected about 10,000 email addresses from customers who had expressed interest on their website, yet this lead data wasn't capitalized on. They had little data about who these visitors were – or what they were interested in. "We sent newsletters once a month, but we really had no insight into the people receiving them," says MissionRS General Manager of E-commerce, Chris Collins. "Our open rates were hovering around five percent and click-through rates were also low. I felt the emails could be more effective and drive stronger leads."

Collins knew Mission Restaurant Supply needed to revamp its marketing efforts and utilize marketing automation to reach his audience with appropriate and timely messages. "We had years of contact information that hadn't been properly nurtured," he says. "We needed to put that to better use, start engaging with those people in a more strategic, proactive way."

Mission's small marketing and E-commerce team wasn't sure they could implement marketing automation and fully utilize its capabilities. "We needed a robust tool, but we have a small team with limited resources," said E-commerce Marketing Coordinator Luis Garcia, Jr. "We wanted to make sure we had the support we needed to use the tool properly."

MissionRS chose to kick-start their marketing automation programs by enlisting Act-On Professional Services.

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LUIS GARCIA, JR.
E-commerce Marketing
Coordinator
MissionRS

Solution

Act-On's Professional Services works with trusted partners, and tapped NuGrowth Digital to work with MissionRS. NuGrowth is a long-term Act-On customer, and a provider of outsourced sales, marketing, and marketing automation services, using Act-On to support its clients. NuGrowth set up the company's Act-On account and partnered with them to create a marketing strategy and content.

NuGrowth helped MissionRS create customer personas and a clear messaging voice for the company. "We defined the types of customers we really wanted to message to," said Collins. "We segmented them into groups and began developing ideas for targeted content that would resonate with them."

NuGrowth also worked with the MissionRS marketing and sales team to develop Salesforce.com best practices to ensure efficient lead management processes were in place; directing those leads to sales at just the right time.

With clearly defined personas in mind, NuGrowth got to work on the database. They culled the existing MissionRS contact list, purging outdated and irrelevant addresses, and then MissionRS purchased several more lists that matched prospect criteria. "They had a large list of contacts, but no real data about them," says NuGrowth President Paul Fuller. "We were able to further identify the contacts in that list and add contacts – restaurant owners, managers, franchise owners. This gave us the information necessary to start creating content that audiences could relate to." Targeting specific audiences, NuGrowth worked with MissionRS to create a wide variety of content – everything from blog articles to infographics. "We didn't have the type of engaging articles and blog pieces that we really needed to reach our

audience," said Chris. "Working with Act-On and NuGrowth, we were able to build an extensive, easily accessible library that we could deploy in campaigns."

"We wrote articles about creating healthy menus, creating dishes for locavores, expanding beverage menus and more," says Fuller. "We built a really strong library of engaging, informative content that positions MissionRS as thought leaders in the space while at the same time promoting the products they sell."

That library of content is promoted to targeted potential customers through email campaigns, blog posts, social media, and other tactics. Newsletters and promotions are now sent and tracked through the Act-On platform, so the team knows how content and campaigns are performing. The MissionRS team holds bi-weekly brainstorming and reporting meetings with NuGrowth to develop, track, and analyze campaigns.

Results

In less than a year, Mission Restaurant Supply, in partnership with Act-On Pro Services, has built a full-fledged marketing automation strategy, that is now fortified with rich content. Email campaigns have been far more successful than in the past. Open rates have jumped from five percent to more than 20 percent and click-through rates have doubled. The newsletter has higher subscription rates and lower unsubscribe rates. Unique content and a consistent drumbeat of promotion has helped propel the MissionRS brand.

"Pro Services and NuGrowth have taken ownership for us and it has been amazing," said Collins.

"We've helped to differentiate the brand in a big way," says Fuller. "The content is completely different from what you'll see from anyone else in the industry and while not quantifiable, that's hugely important."

The MissionRS team has also gained insight into customer interaction like they've never had before. "Being able to utilize all of this really great data has been tremendous," says Collins. "Now we can drill in deeper and create segmentation and personas for our audience. That's proven to be invaluable."

The combination of Act-On's marketing automation and Pro Services partner NuGrowth's

content has launched a new era of marketing at Mission Restaurant Supply. Without it, the team would still be sending single send promotional emails with low performance rates. "Having Act-On and its Pro Services partner, NuGrowth, has been a nice fit for us because they've been an extension of our team," said Collins. "We don't have the headcount to take on managing software and developing content. For a team that's just getting started and wants to use a powerful tool, finding expert help really makes sense."

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CHRIS COLLINS

General Manager of E-commerce
MissionRS

About Act-On Software

Act-On Software is a marketing automation company delivering innovation that empowers marketers to do the best work of their careers. Act-On is the only integrated workspace to address the needs of the customer experience, from brand awareness and demand generation, to retention and loyalty. With Act-On, marketers can drive better business outcomes and see higher customer lifetime value. The Act-On platform provides marketers with power they can actually use, without the need for a dedicated IT resource.

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