

How Trading Restrictions Gave a Retail Company Time to Refine and Better Their Digital Customer Experience

March 23, 2020 marked the day in history New Zealand locked the country down to combat Covid-19. Caught in a whirlwind of this upheaval the retail industry was ordered to temporarily close their doors & hold online orders until further notice. Like many other businesses, Kings Plant Barn ceased trading for the foreseeable future.

With much of their consumer demographic classed as potentially high-risk health customers, the restrictions were embraced by the business but to cease trading for any small to medium sized organisation over an extended period of time can be detrimental. Kings knew they had a unique opportunity - a captured audience, stuck at home, motivated to get outside. But how do you leverage an opportunity such as this when you can't open your doors? The answer was simply, they had to redefine their digital customer experience, and create an online presence that was unprecedented in their industry

The Opportunity

Kings Plant Barn wanted to be at the forefront of communications with their customers and to keep them abreast of everything they were doing as a company to help their customers - however they didn't want to flood their database with news or updates irrelevant to certain people and situations.

They knew they needed to revitalise their database, engage more with consumers, encourage the public to spend their time at home on gardening projects (without the ability to buy products), and most importantly, encourage sales as soon as lock-down was lifted, at a high volume to support their staff. To do this, they needed to reevaluate their digital customer engagement strategy - and fast.

The Solution

Kings Plant Barn has been an avid user of TouchpointMX for several years, using it predominately as a multi-channel self-service implementation tool focussing on email newsletters, triggered event communications and customer satisfaction surveys.

When trading from their physical stores ceased, their digital customer journey needed to change. Touchpoint Group worked with the e-commerce and marketing teams at Kings to realign their strategy to educate, engage and interact with consumers in a way that provided a meaningful connection and encourage customers to shop when restrictions were lifted. The priority was to re-segment their database to allow for the change in direction, enabling them to:

- Change the content in their scheduled eDMs to provide educational gardening content including tips, best practices and how to guides, resulting in a 19% open rate increase and 62% CTR increase

- Send relevant and prompt communications on trading restrictions, resulting in a 22% increase in open rate compared to their standard comms
- Promote upcoming events & openings to encourage spend as soon as restrictions lifted
- Send promotional material to loyalty members

As well as realigning their email marketing strategy, Kings Plant Barn onboarded Touchpoint's TXT4INFO service as part of their interaction strategy as soon as stores could trade. They pushed comms out on all digital channels, social included, around the steps they're undertaking to ensure safety to customers, including contactless payment, online ordering and drive through (for that much needed coffee!).

The Conclusion

Following the changes in their database structure, Touchpoint Group and Kings Plant Barn are in the final stages of developing an R.O.I task that will measure the email communications against transactional sales and report through an online customer portal customised to their needs.

Using the data collected to help segment and send relevant communications at critical times, Kings was able to set-up multiple customer triggered emails with dynamic content, highlight lapsed and inactive customers and provide stakeholders with confidence and agility to truly see how their email marketing has added to their ongoing growth and customer retention throughout the COVID-19 lockdown period.