



PERSONALIZED HOLIDAY MAILING PAYS INSTANT DIVIDENDS Sonopress Case Study

CHALLENGE

It's a rule of thumb in direct marketing -- particularly in business-to-business communications -- that mailing during the holiday season is a fool's bet. Any mailing is all but certain to get lost in the crush of seasonal correspondence. For media replicator Sonopress LLC and their partner Ditan Distributors, Inc., it turns out the holidays were the ideal time to get the attention of their customers (publishers of home movies and electronic entertainment). It's the time of year when they're scurrying to get their titles onto retail shelves in time for holiday shoppers. The Sonopress/Ditan team wanted to contact their prospects specifically during the holiday sales period -- when the pain of missed deadlines would be most acute.

"If you don't make that deadline, your year is pretty much shot," says Per T. Save, Vice President, National Sales and Marketing at Sonopress. "We wanted them to know -- while they were really feeling the pressure -- that we could help them get product produced and shipped quickly. But we needed something to really grab their attention."

SOLUTION

A three-wave program, conceived and produced by Cole & Company of Boston, dropped over November, December and January. Wave 1 was two versions of a 13" x 18" poster depicting a film noir and an electronic game -- each called "The Deadline." The copy for every poster cites each individual recipient by name as the "star" of the program. It's also customized to reflect recipients' professions -- CFO, Sales and Marketing Directors, or Production/Logistics Manager. On the flip side is the "story treatment" -- additional customized messaging stressing the value of the Sonopress/Ditan team to the respective financial, sales and production needs of the reader. Waves 2 and 3 -- oversized postcards sent to the same list -- were also personalized to the recipient in both copy and graphics. "We knew that our creative had to fly above the holiday noise," says John Cole, President and Creative Director of Cole & Company. "But it also needed to generate near-instant response to meet the client's financial objectives. Our only real option was to touch recipients with a relevant, individualized message -- in an oversize format to really grab their attention. And only one option -- Variable Data Printing -- offered the tools and technology allowing us to meet those goals." LaVigne Inc. has been a leader in Variable Data Printing output and digital printing for the past 10 years. LaVigne worked closely with Cole & Company to merge the database with the artwork and print the high-quality piece Sonopress was looking for.

RESULTS

So how did it work? "We love this campaign," says Per Save. "We couldn't be happier with it. It paid for itself within the first month, generating \$2 million from just one new client. It's also helped add new businesses to our roster representing \$10 million in incremental revenue. "Among the very largest prospects on the mail list, the poster yielded a 30% increase in the company's customer base; among the next largest prospects, the mailing generated a 12% increase. "The Deadline" has proven to have real legs. Its run has been extended, with more waves of customized direct mail, trade show graphics and thematic giveaways.