

Successful List Growth Through Co-Registration



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R E S P O N S E **M** E D I A

Of all the tactics marketers can use to grow their business, one always rises to the top: **marketing to your house list**.

A marketer's house lists are made up of people who have overtly requested to receive communications from them. They are customers and warm prospects. They should be the most responsive group a marketer reaches with a message.

To put it simply, they are people who have asked to have a relationship with your brand. Relationships are not to be taken lightly. In today's cluttered media marketplace, reaching a group of individuals who have raised their hands to have a relationship with your brand is increasingly valuable. However, there are three major concepts that need to be considered here:

1. **How do you find the most qualified individuals to invite into a relationship?**
2. **How do you best deliver on that relationship to create maximum shared value between brand and individual?**
3. **How do you scale your effort to an optimal volume?**

Marketers are faced with the challenge of finding the best methods and tactics to grow their in-house email, telemarketing and postal lists. At Response Media, we help our clients find these hand-raisers every day. We help marketers to build relationships with willing individuals by proactively starting those relationships through the online, permissioned acquisition of their personal information.

To begin this process with clients, we identify what works for the specific brand, category, audience, offer, or client goals. We always start from a holistic perspective, testing multiple tactics and tweaking accordingly. First, we identify the right online tactics to test. This typically includes online display media, search, co-marketing partnerships, viral programs and co-registration (the act of riding along with someone else's registration).

Over the years we have perfected this service for our clients, and we have found a few specific tactics that work, time-and-

again, as long as they are strategically planned and flawlessly executed.

Co-registration is always one of the hands-down winners, bringing in the greatest volume of permissioned individuals, most efficiently, providing the best return on investment. Co-reg is commonly priced on a cost-per-acquisition basis, meaning a marketer will only pay when they receive a new individual (incremental to the current in-house database) that meets certain quality criteria.

The quality of the individual registration captured via co-registration is what is often questioned in today's marketplace. We believe co-reg's questionable quality reputation persists due to the consistently poor practices many marketers and co-registration providers apply to their campaigns.

Through the development of key best-practices, we have optimized co-registration quality to put it on par with driving people to a marketer's own web site to register. We have done this in a wide array of industries, including consumer packaged goods, entertainment, publishing, financial, pharma, and non-profit.

A few basic best practices we utilize for successful co-registration are listed below:

1. **Capture co-registration leads on good web sites**

Go where your customers are, e.g. Williams-Sonoma can capture good quality registrations from cooking sites, and Pampers from baby sites. Keep in mind that your customers also frequent general web sites too -- you shouldn't ignore those in order to expand your universe.

Be careful, as many co-reg providers offer "blind" networks, those that do not disclose the specific sites on which your offer runs. If you care about the quality of the registrations you are buying, then you ought to know where your offer is running. This consideration has increased importance if the brand is conscious of image or cares about the added branding impact co-registration can provide.

Additionally, many promotional co-registration sites over-use or abuse the email addresses captured, mailing an email address up to twenty times per day (yes, 20)! If you are trying to build a relationship through email, stay away from those sites. We frequently check the email behavior of these web sites to ensure that we avoid those providers altogether. If an email address receives 20 emails per day after signing up on one site, how much attention do you think your emails will receive?

2. Target your offer

Many sites allow targeting of your offer to specific demographic, geographic, or behavioral segments. This permits you to screen out any unwanted individuals from viewing or taking your offer to register. For example, Dove may only want to offer their relationship program to women, Golfsmith to golfers, Vytorin to high cholesterol sufferers, Allstate Home Insurance to homeowners, Lane Bryant may want to only offer a chance to receive emails and catalogs to plus-sized women. This is all possible in co-registration.

Additionally, many sites offer response, best-customer and good-credit models to be applied to co-registration. We often use these sophisticated targeting options in order to optimize co-registration quality.

3. Validate your registrations

Whether you rely on the co-reg provider, your agency or a 3rd party for validation of records, ensuring that you have valid information on a registration is a simple component of successful co-registration. We often provide validation services for address, email address, and phone for clients. We also negotiate a valid record clause into each contract, ensuring that we only pay for records that are real and deliverable through multiple channels.

4. Make a prospect work for your relationship

We have found the best quality registrations from co-registration come from offers that require the prospect to proactively complete questions in order to be added to a

list. The more time a prospect spends with your form, the more qualified and responsive they become. Never forget to ensure that one of those proactive questions capture the prospect's clear and overt permission.

In co-registration, you also have the opportunity to ask questions that will help you to better segment those registrations. When segmentation and customization allow you to send the most relevant, most meaningful messages to your prospects and customers, then you start the relationship out on the right foot. For example, if you are Gap, you may ask what styles or categories a consumer is most interested in; if you are J. Crew, you may ask what size the consumer is. Likewise, if you have multiple email programs, such as one for "Clearances and Specials," and also a newsletter for valuable tips and content, ask the consumer which communications they would like to receive and how. If an insurance company plans to call the prospect, then ask them the best time to call them.

We constantly challenge clients to test their question volume, content, and combinations in order to continually optimize the quality of their registrations.

5. Make your intentions clear

Remember to always be overt about your intentions. Show them a sample of what they will be receiving. Tell them how, and how often you plan to communicate with them. Tell them you plan to call them, if the phone is part of your strategic communication plan. Ask for the opt-in, perhaps, separately from your offer. Clearly state that you will transfer and keep Personally Identifiable Information (PII) data safe, and that you will not share, rent or sell the data to anyone without their clear and overt consent. Be sure to provide a link to your privacy policy.

6. Use co-registration for new relationship building methods too

Mobile, desktop applications and social nets are newer ways to build relationships between brand and customer. Co-registration can also be used to capture permission to communicate with folks via mobile device: ask someone to

download your custom Instant Messenger device, RSS Feed or become a friend on MySpace. If you plan to use these methods to enhance and strengthen relationships (and I highly encourage you to test these), then leverage your co-registration to start these relationships too.

7. Consider partnerships

Partnering with other brands, products, and services can add multiple dimensions to your co-registration effort. Imagine a tooth whitening product paired with a photo sharing web site in a “Brite Smiles” contest or sweeps. Consumers can opt in to offers from either or both brands, and partners can share the permissioned consumer data.

8. Put your best foot forward

Make sure to communicate with that registration immediately, in a meaningful way. If you are building a relationship, give that individual something of value. If you are a merchant, provide the consumer with an immediate exclusive offer that will lead them to transact and convert soon. They will quickly value their relationship with you.

About Response Media

Headquartered in Atlanta, GA, Response Media is a national provider of direct marketing with over 27 years of experience in developing and executing solutions geared to customer acquisition and retention. RM embraces “channel agnostic” strategies and uses its expertise in database building and management, lead acquisition, e-marketing, list management and e-CRM to help marketers acquire and manage customers most profitably. Clients include Procter & Gamble, Disney, Gerber Life, Bank of America, Wachovia Bank, Pfizer, Wyeth, Gerber Life, and Shutterfly.

Interested in implementing any of the suggestions in this report? Let a Response Media representative explain how to create similar initiatives for your company. Please call Josh Perlstein at (770) 220-5086 or visit:

<http://www.responsemedia.com>