

Cover Page

Will Be Added Later

As part of its overall efforts to find more effective ways to attract visitors to its state, Tourism Maine tested the use of customized digital printing in its marketing campaigns. Variable data printing was used to produce custom travel guides based on the particular interests of people responding to questions on the Maine web site. To test the new approach, the customized mailing was run against a static mailing and the results were tracked to enable comparison of the two approaches for use in designing future marketing campaigns.



Project: **Tourism Maine Increases Response and Revenues with Personalized Pocket Guide**

Vertical Market: Travel

Business Application: Collateral Management

Business Objectives

The overall objective was to test the power of one-to-one marketing against the traditional “one size fits all” approach of static direct mail. Specific objectives included:

- Provide consumers with customized brochures relevant to their requests for information made on the Maine Web site
- Increase responses, visitor traffic to Maine and revenues
- Test customized direct marketing vs. static direct marketing, in both visitor traffic and revenues, with a view toward planning future campaigns
- Get the metrics needed to make a strong business case for a customized marketing communications program utilizing variable data printing
- Create an infrastructure for follow up marketing efforts to past and potential visitors to Maine

Results

The program demonstrated that the variable data-driven package, which included a Personalized Pocket Guide, outperformed the static “one size fits all” package in the following ways:

- 23.4% increase in revenue generated from variable data-driven package over the static package (attributable to increased visitor traffic)
- 24.1% increase in the response rate of the variable data-driven package over the static one
- 72% of consumers indicated the customized Personalized Pocket Guide was helpful in planning their trip
- 96% planned a trip to Maine in 2007-2008
- Future strategic program development is currently under way

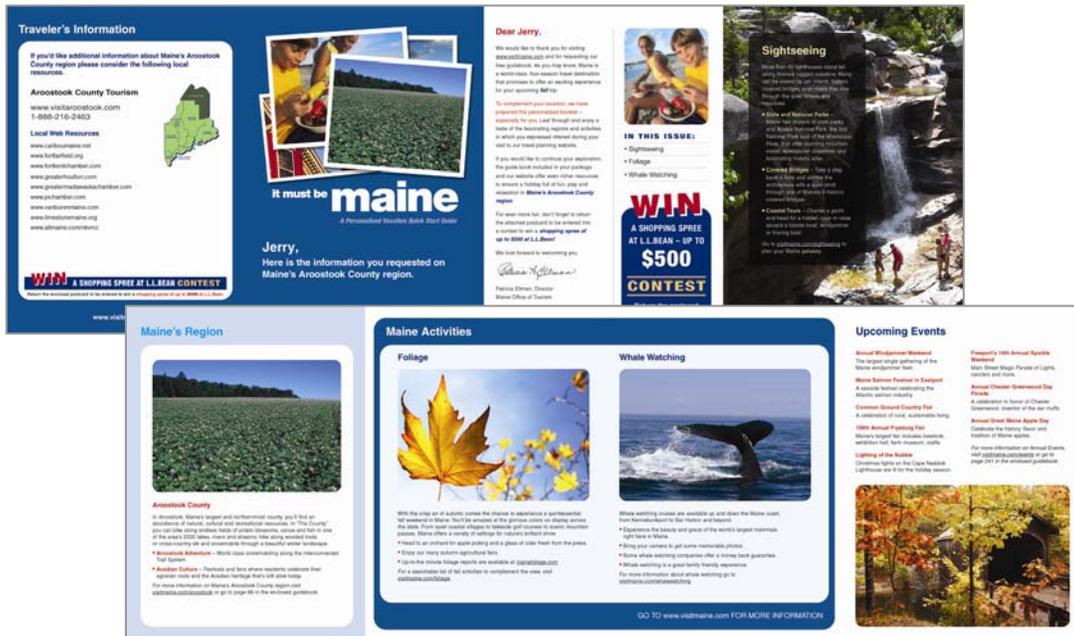


Campaign Architecture

Within its conventional advertising program, the State of Maine used its Web site (www.visitMaine.com) to offer prospective visitors a chance to request information about traveling to Maine. People who responded became candidates to receive promotional mailings as part of a new campaign designed to test the use of static mailing against customized mailing.

The campaign centered on mailing two different packets of materials: one to a control group and one to a test group of the same size. The control group received packets containing static direct mail. The test group received digitally printed custom materials as well as some static material.

Both packets contained return postcards for use in tracking results, and both included an offer of a chance for a free shopping spree at L.L. Bean if the recipient returned their cards with feedback. Tourism Maine used the postcards for tracking and also noted responders' activity on the suggested web sites and their use of toll-free telephone numbers.



Target Audience

The target audience was consumers requesting travel information about Maine and people who responded to questions at the Maine Web site regarding plans to visit the state. The prospects were divided randomly into control and test groups, with approximately 500 packets going out each week (250 to each group) for about 15 weeks, as people responded to queries at the Web site.



Depending upon the number of questions answered by the consumer, more than 2,000 unique variations of the Personalized Pocket Guide were possible.

Creative and Outbound Pieces

The control audience received a static direct mail packet and the test audience received a customized packet, although both audiences received an identical 245-page, static Travel Guidebook & Map. Besides the static guidebook, the control audience received a generic postcard as a response device, asking questions pertaining to the usefulness of the complete package.

The package for the test audience included two custom items in addition to the static Travel Guidebook & Map:

- A Personalized Pocket Guide with content based on information each person entered at VisitMaine.com. It was printed on a single sheet (40" wide x 7" high), folded to form eight 5"x7" panes of specific, user-requested information. Variable information included the recipient's name plus customized copy and images determined by the season the visitor planned to travel, the region to be visited, activities of interest to the visitor and upcoming events scheduled to take place in the same time frame. The customized Guide also served to drive visitors to other relevant web sites for more information. The Guide was designed by Tourism Maine with DMM, Xerox, Terminal Van Gogh Ltd. and Portland Webworks.



- A personalized postcard to be used as a response device, populated with the recipient's name and address, as well as a photo that changed based on the region the individual had expressed interest in. It included survey questions about the recipient's travel plans and queries pertaining to the usefulness of the Personalized Pocket Guide:

- When are you planning to visit Maine? – by month and year
- Where are you planning to go? – by region
- What are you planning to do? – by activity
- When did you last visit Maine?
- Was the information included in the package helpful? Why?

I'd like to WIN a shopping spree at L.L.Bean!

In order to qualify for your shopping spree, please tell us about your trip below. For more information, call us at 1-888-Maine-11 or visit us at www.visitmaine.com/contest

When are you planning to come in 2007?

Oct Nov Dec

When are you planning to come in 2008?

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun
 Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

Where are you planning to go?

Maine Lakes & Mountains Beaches
 Downeast & Acadia Bed & Breakfasts
 Greater Portland & Casco Bay Foliage
 Kennebec & Moose River Valleys Day Hiking
 The Maine Highlands Museums / Theaters
 Acadia County Romantic Getaways
 Mid-Coast Scenic Byways
 The Maine Beaches Shopping
 Sightseeing Whales

What are you planning to do?

When did you last visit Maine?

Was the Personalized Pocket Guide included with your package helpful in planning your visit to Maine?

Yes No "Why?" _____

Look! Your information is all filled out!
Just drop this card in the mail and enter to win.

Name: Jerry Sample
 Address: 123 My Street Name
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: 12345-6789

Official contest rules are available at www.visitmaine.com/contest or call 1-888-624-6311.

Personalized response card – top image changes based on recipient's interest

Offer

Both audiences received the offer of a free shopping spree at L.L.Bean. They would be entered in a drawing if they returned their postcard surveys. Three recipients won shopping sprees.

List

The list was comprised of people who went to the Maine Web site and requested information about visiting Maine.

Reasons for Success

As Theresa Cloutier, DMM's Senior Vice President of Marketing, noted, "The higher response rates and increased revenue due to greater visitor traffic which were generated by the personalized approach demonstrates one measure of success."

"In addition, actual consumer feedback demonstrates another. The Personalized Pocket Guide was a hit with people who received it. There were many things about the Guide that people liked. Most liked the size and its efficiency. Others liked the regional web sites. And many reported that it was helpful in planning their trips because they were able to learn more about what to do in Maine."



“This education piece was important,” Cloutier added, “since approximately 60% of those receiving the information had never visited Maine. From a strategic standpoint, the overall objective of the program is to attract first-time visitors – 96% of the respondents reported planning a trip to Maine in either ’07 or ’08. The Guide was successful in achieving this goal.”

Feedback from both groups of recipients – those receiving customized and generic packages – was mostly positive, praising the supply of information as well as the convenient presentation. Among those who received the Personalized Pocket Guide, comments included: “Addressed my interests,” “Gave me what I asked for,” “We can find which places would be nice to visit,” “Good info on regional interests,” “It provided me with a lot more info than searching on the Internet,” and “I’ve never been to Maine so it gave me good ideas on where to spend my time.”

In addition, 6% of the respondents went to the other Web sites suggested due to recipients’ expressed interests. Feedback indicated that visitors found the sites helpful in providing specific ideas for trip planning.

Looking beyond the success of this initial program in attracting visitors to Maine, Tourism Maine is addressing the question of how to design future campaigns. Part of the plan being considered is to integrate the Personalized Pocket Guide into the overall marketing program in both digital print and in an online format.

“Tourism Maine understands the value of offering potential visitors individualized guides reflecting what they ask for as opposed to generic guides. They’re interested in moving forward,” says Cloutier, although, she adds, “budgets are always an issue.” Plans are being made to make improvements in the area of content development, specifically more photos, since Tourism Maine had limited creative assets. They also foresee more precise tracking which will make it easier to implement new ideas and fine-tune the process.

