Conference Board of Canada
Direct mail response rate doubles with a relevant marketing campaign.
The Conference Board of Canada is a national, not-for-profit organization whose expertise lies in not only running conferences, but also in conducting, publishing and disseminating research, helping people network and developing individual leadership skills. It has a membership base of 8,200 organizations and 100,000 individuals.

Funded exclusively through fees it charges for services to the private and public sectors, The Conference Board’s vision is to be recognized as Canada’s most influential, independent source of insight for leaders. Its mission is to build leadership capacity for a better Canada by creating and sharing insights on economic trends, public policy and organizational performance.

The Challenge

The Conference Board has a strong tradition of direct marketing in its organization. With a diversified portfolio of businesses, including conferences, research and leadership development, it works with its print and marketing communications partner, St. Joseph Communications, on a multitude of campaigns throughout the year.

“For when you include the programs offered by our affiliated organizations, The Niagara Institute and the Directors College, we hold over 350 events per year. Plus we have over 200 research reports and periodicals over the same time period,” said Perry Eisenreich, vice president, The Conference Board of Canada. “To support these we use direct mail, business-to-business communications, and e-marketing.”

With that number of offerings, the Conference Board is aware that too much direct marketing risked turning off its members.

“We don’t want to irritate our members by bombarding them with marketing messages,” he said. “The more efficiently we can begin target marketing our initiatives, and the fewer mass campaigns we have to do, the better.”

The Conference Board had recently launched a new initiative, Conference e-Proceedings, essentially a conference captured digitally and made available to its members and customers on CD or via the Internet. Conference e-Proceedings were designed with two objectives in mind. First, they provide a permanent record of the conference for people who had attended it and wanted to share it directly with their colleagues and thereby extend the conference’s teachings throughout the organization. Second, they also allow members who were unable to attend the conference to benefit from the insights shared at the event.

The Conference Board wanted to highlight its new initiative and set about offering a free Conference e-Proceeding to its members. Each member would be offered to select one of three conferences, specifically chosen to reflect their interests.

When St. Joseph Communications heard about the opportunity to invite one of its customers to participate in Xerox Canada’s unique 1:1 Lab, and witness the results that can be achieved with a customized, digital colour direct marketing campaign, it approached The Conference Board of Canada.

“We have an ongoing relationship with all of our customers, including the Conference Board, and we’re constantly looking to bring added value to the table,” said Jacques Cyr, Vice President, Business Development, St. Joseph Communications. “It was a perfect opportunity to highlight the benefits of the 1:1 Lab and how it can help our customers and their audiences achieve their goals.”

The Conference Board of Canada Project Production Price Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CBOC Central Piece (static)</th>
<th>Cost per Package</th>
<th>CBOC 1:1 Lab piece (variable)</th>
<th>Cost per Package</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Printing (offset) – 1 piece (17” x 10.125”) – 2 sides, bleeds on both short edges. Paper stock included.</em></td>
<td><strong>$0.24</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data preparation, processing and set-up</strong></td>
<td><strong>$0.06</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Finishing and Binding -- laser printing, trimming, folding, tabbing and mail preparation</strong></td>
<td><strong>$0.22</strong></td>
<td><strong>Variable Print Ready File Processing (VPS)</strong></td>
<td><strong>$0.29</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage</td>
<td><strong>$0.37</strong></td>
<td><strong>Digital Printing – 1 piece (17” x 10.125”) – 1 variable – 2 sides, bleeds on both short edges. Paper stock included</strong></td>
<td><strong>$0.53</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Finishing and Binding -- trimming, folding, tabbing and mail preparation</strong></td>
<td><strong>$0.10</strong></td>
<td>Postage</td>
<td><strong>$0.37</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Production</td>
<td><strong>$0.83</strong></td>
<td>Total Production</td>
<td><strong>$1.25</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Client Benefits Close-up

The Conference Board of Canada has gained significant benefits since testing the 1:1 Lab marketing solution from Xerox:

- Overall response rate increased by 100 percent
- Achieved 12 percent response rate for 1:1 Lab piece from hard to reach executive clients, versus six percent response rate from control piece
- Brought relevant information and targeted offers to time-strapped executives
- Protected the integrity of The Conference Board of Canada brand by minimizing marketing fatigue among Conference Board members

The Conference Board of Canada 1:1 Lab One-time Cost (TVG)

**Strategic planning, art direction, design and repurposing of existing creative and landing page**

Account service and project coordination

Database design and variable application development including detailed response tracking and reporting of responses from the variable database group

Variable programming and document engineering

Total Design and Set-up **$32,000.00**

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The Xerox 1:1 Lab

As a global leader in digital and variable colour printing technology, we are helping our customers leverage the benefits of customized marketing through the Xerox 1:1 Lab.

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The Data Driven 1:1 Marketing Plan in Action

“We were very vocal in our desire to ensure this was a legitimate test,” says Eisenschmid. “We wanted to make sure the control piece and the 1:1 lab piece were virtually identical, with the only varied elements being those that reflected the one-to-one capability.”

TVG, under the umbrella of the Xerox 1:1 Lab, undertook the design of the 1:1 Lab control and variable packages, taking care to keep the overall look as similar as possible to the Conference Board’s traditional marketing piece to avoid skewing customers’ responses and ensuring an objective comparison of results.

Using existing customer data from the Conference Board, TVG created a series of one-page 17” x 10.125” double-sided and folded direct mail pieces that included a number of data-driven elements.

The front page of the 1:1 Lab direct mail piece included a photo representing the member’s gender and position. The text included the member’s name, their title and included a personalized web site address they could visit to receive their free Conference e-Proceeding.

The 1:1 Lab direct mail piece opened to include mention of the member’s role in their organization, for example human resources, and text that identified the member’s company.

Fully opened, the piece presented the member with a choice of three Conference e-Proceedings, selected by the Conference Board and prioritized according to information it had gathered on the members’ areas of interest including business growth, change management and workplace health and well-being. In addition, other available Conference e-Proceeding that matched the interests of each member were highlighted in the brochure.

Photos used on the inside page of the piece again reflected the member’s profession, industry and gender.

The campaign’s control piece was offset printed and then a laser printer addressed each brochure. It was printed on Plainfield Opaque Brite White smooth 100 lb text.

The 1:1 Lab direct mail piece was printed on an iGen3® on 100 lb Xerox Xpressions text stock.

For the campaign, approximately 14,600 direct mail pieces were sent to Conference Board members; half were sent the control piece and half the 1:1 Lab piece.

Overall, the response rate for the 1:1 Lab piece was 100 percent greater, double the control piece, without any additional follow up from the Conference Board. At the end of the 5-week campaign, the 1:1 Lab marketing piece achieved a 12 percent response rate, compared with six percent for the control piece, evidenced by the number of visits to the Conference Board’s website.

“Considering the call to action was for high level executives to visit a personal URL (PURL) and download their choice of a free Conference e-Proceeding, the 1:1 Lab team and the Conference Board were pleased with the results,” said Hélène Blanchette, National Marketing Manager, Graphic Communications Group, Xerox Canada, and founder of the Xerox 1:1 Lab. “Media integration is a strong way of creating value and relevancy in direct mail campaigns. This is the first time we have integrated the print and web within our 1:1 Lab environment and the PURL allowed us to follow the actions taken by Conference Board members.”

“Because the control piece and the 1:1 Lab piece were almost identical, it was clear that it was the variable elements that delivered the great increase in results.”

Impressed with the solid business results delivered by the Xerox 1:1 Lab, the Conference Board anticipates using one-to-one marketing in future direct mail campaigns.

The Xerox 1:1 Lab: Demonstrating the Power of Data-Driven Marketing

“I was thrilled to see the 1:1 Lab piece doubled the results we had achieved with the campaign’s control piece.”

– Perry Eisenschmid, vice president, The Conference Board of Canada

Xerox’s 1:1 Lab, a veritable testing ground for Xerox customers, demonstrates the power and accessibility of data-driven one-to-one marketing and has accelerated its adoption by the marketing community.

The 1:1 Lab provides a learning environment to test and compare the results of data-driven one-to-one direct mail marketing campaigns with traditional direct mail methods.

The 1:1 Lab is equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and software including the Xerox iGen3® Digital Production Press, a 110 impression-per-minute digital colour press with image quality comparable to offset.

Terminal Van Gogh Ltd. (TVG) provides strategic consulting on data-driven marketing campaigns, builds the 1:1 Lab participants’ program, re-purposes existing creative to function within the data-driven environment and develops the metrics in the data to gauge results.

1:1 Lab designed marketing pieces for The Conference Board of Canada
Data-Driven 1:1 Communications in Action

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- Gender specific image
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- Test new approaches and hear about best practices
- Learn from the experts and explore winning tactics and strategies
- Focus on actual business experiences
- Minimize scheduling problems and decrease time away from work
- Reduce overall learning time because content is limited to the essentials

The Conference Board of Canada. Insights you can count on

The Conference Board of Canada has distinguished itself as a leader in producing high quality reports that deliver content, opinions, trends, statistics, and solutions. For over 65 years, we have been bringing together decision-makers from public and private sector organizations to address the top issues of the day and to learn from best practice organizations and industry experts — giving you timely insights you can put to work right away.

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