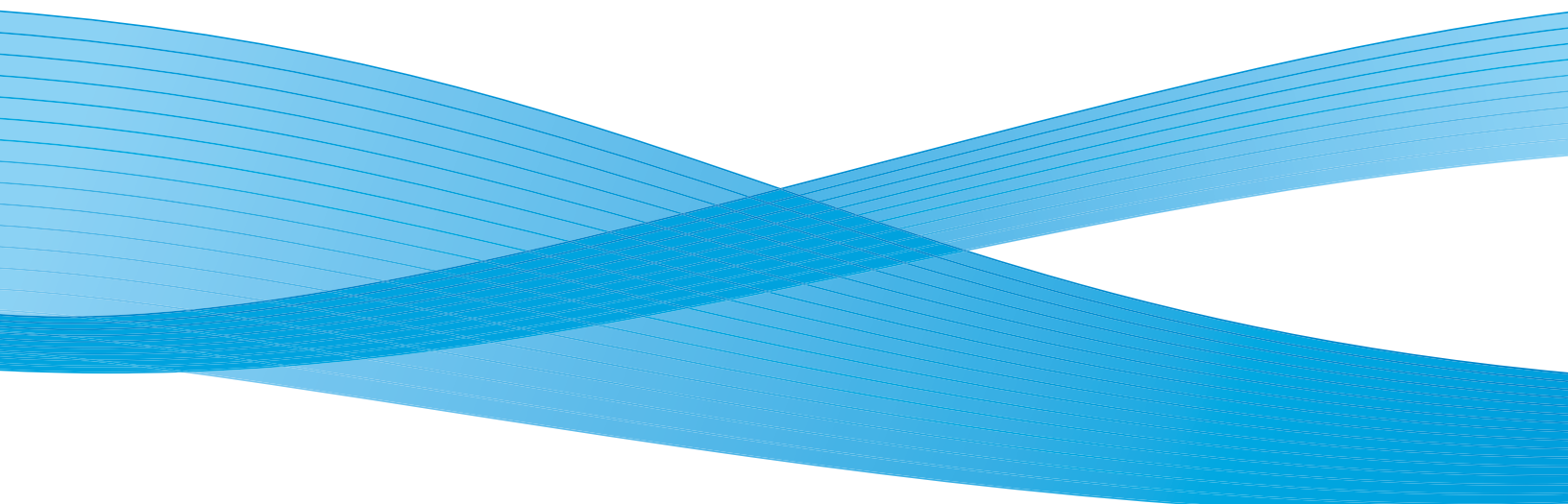


# The New York Mets: A Team Effort



# The Magic of Baseball

Baseball holds a special place in the hearts of many Americans. Fans of all ages have fond memories of long, balmy summer evenings spent on small town bleachers or in big city ballparks, cheering for their favorite team. Baseball has it all: Drama. Heartbreak. Redemption. Triumph. It's a game of physical prowess and mental agility, with plenty of pauses in the action for reviewing, rehashing, relaxing (and refreshments) in the stands. In short, baseball is a form of entertainment so compelling and so linked to our national psyche that it seems like it should sell itself. Only that's not the way it works.

In a major metropolitan area like New York, baseball has to compete with so many other activities and distractions vying for entertainment dollars. Professional baseball teams like the New York Mets need winning strategies both on the field and in the marketplace. They have to break through the clutter in a highly competitive urban market, entice fans to spend hard-earned money to buy tickets – and then work tirelessly to make sure the game experience lives up to fan expectations. That's the business of baseball.

## New Field, New Era

After nearly 50 seasons of playing professional baseball for fans from the boroughs of New

York City and the surrounding tri-state area (and nearly three decades of holding the baseball attendance record for the New York area), the New York Mets entered a new era with their move to a new ballpark, Citi Field. The club was confident that fans would embrace the experience at the new field; the challenge was to get them there in the first place. With a long season of seats to fill despite a stubbornly sluggish economy, the Mets looked to new ways to engage and energize their fan base.

As a sponsor of the New York Mets, Xerox was dedicated to improving both the fan experience and the business effectiveness of this storied baseball franchise. Faced with the challenge of driving up attendance numbers for the 2010 season at Citi Field, Xerox offered the Mets the opportunity to participate in a Xerox 1:1 Lab. Available by invitation only to Xerox Graphic Arts customers, the Xerox 1:1 Lab sets up and carries out targeted marketing tests pitting a company's static "one size fits all" direct mail pieces against relevant direct mail pieces that utilize 1:1 variable data to customize communications to each recipient. Presented with the opportunity to improve their marketing game, the Mets stepped up to the plate – and the game was on.

## The Team Ethic

In a game situation, teamwork is essential. As a member of the Mets behind-the-scenes team, the Xerox Graphic Communications Marketing group offered to lead and fund the 1:1 Lab program test. Xerox brought in the Pente Corporation, an experienced Toronto-based marketing and advertising firm, to act as chief strategists for the campaign. Pente would leverage their expertise in relevant direct marketing to define the 1:1 program strategy and content – analyzing available data and providing creative design and copywriting for both the static and variable marketing pieces. The 1:1 programming, variable digital printing (using XMPie® and iGen4®) and mail services would be handled by RP Graphics Group, a specialty printer based in Mississauga, Ontario, with more than 30 years of experience serving multiple industries with a wide range of custom print solutions. The New York Mets would work closely with the rest of this experienced 1:1 team to ensure that the new campaign adhered to the requirements of their brand and the look/feel/tone of their overall marketing efforts.



A First name

B Last name

## The Game Plan – Target Groups

Working with Tina Mannix, Senior Director, Marketing for the New York Mets, and Kirk King, Senior Manager, Season Tickets & Group Sales, the 1:1 Lab team analyzed marketing materials, histories and schedules from prior ticket sales efforts. The Mets had already started marketing to season ticket holders for the 2010 season, so it was decided that the Xerox 1:1 Lab would focus exclusively on group ticket sales.

Group sales were clearly important to the Mets operation; the Group Sales department had a dedicated sales staff of 12 people and a database of 2,500–3,000 groups that had taken advantage of group offers in the past. For the Lab, the Mets purchased additional mailing lists to bring the number of targeted recipients to 6,800. Since the total audience for the campaign was relatively small, the 1:1 team decided to send two mailings to the same list several weeks apart, effectively doubling the impact of the campaign.

The Lab was set up to test static direct mail pieces like those used in previous

group sales campaigns against data-driven pieces customized with pertinent variable information. Groups were segmented according to categories such as youth baseball, scout groups, churches, schools, business groups, etc., which enabled the 1:1 team to vary messages and images according to what was most likely to appeal to each segment. Variable copy reflected each group's projected interest in specific theme days and group seating options. A wealth of available Mets imagery – including photos of different groups at actual games, action shots of the team, and pictures of the new ballpark – gave the Lab a powerful resource for customizing the visual impact of each 1:1 mailing piece.

## Executing the Play

The data the Mets were holding on organizations that had bought group tickets in the past included the organization name, contact name, address and email address. This data was used to customize the variable marketing pieces with the name of the targeted group, copy reflecting the group's category and likely interests, and the name

of the group leader (including a high-impact photo with the group leader's name on the back of a Mets jersey). This acknowledged the special status of the group leader, reinforced the importance of the relationship between the Mets and the groups who support the team, and reminded the group contact that it was time to seize the initiative and make plans so as not to miss out on the coming season.

The first mailing for the Xerox 1:1 Lab test program was sent on April 7th to a list of 6,800 group leaders. Half of the mailers were static mass-marketing pieces similar to those the Mets had sent in the past. The other 3,400 mailers were customized utilizing variable information mined from the team's group sales database and purchased databases. On April 30th, a follow-up mailing was sent to the same divided list, with a simple disclaimer for those who had already responded to the first mailing. The call to action on both the first and second mailings was to purchase group tickets for the upcoming 2010 New York Mets baseball season at Citi Field.

A First name

B Group name

C Timing – last year, couple of years or years past

D Message determined on whether or not they visited in the past at Citi Field or previous stadium

The collage features several sections of marketing copy and a form:

- Top Left:** Photos of fans and players. Annotations A, B, C, and D are present.
- Top Middle:** A photo of a player with the headline "IT'S NOT JUST A FIELD... IT'S HOME." Annotations C and H are present.
- Top Right:** A "ORDER FORM" for group tickets. Annotation F is present.
- Bottom Left:** Text titled "We Believe...in COMEBACKS." Annotations A, B, and C are present.
- Bottom Middle:** Text titled "And We Have More!" Annotations C and H are present.
- Bottom Right:** Text titled "A Full Roster of HOSPITALITY Areas" and "Two Great Areas for East Side Church Youth." Annotations E and B are present.

E 2 or 3 recommended group areas for 6 group sub-types

F Contact name and address

H Copy for 9 different group types

G Copy for 19 different groups

# The Results

## The Right Stats

Statistics matter in baseball – and in marketing. In the case of the Xerox 1:1 Lab for the New York Mets, the numbers speak for themselves. The data-driven mailer resulted in a 57.2% increase in group ticket sales over the control mailer, with 36.3% more groups responding to the campaign's call to action from the variable mailings than from the static mailings. Revenue from the data-driven mailer was 40.9% higher than revenue from the static mailer. And the New York Mets exceeded their 2010 group ticket sales goal, with an 80% increase over the previous season.

Those are compelling results, but the real story of the 2010 Mets season was in the stands, where groups of friends, families, co-workers and club members gathered on sunny afternoons and long summer nights to cheer on their favorite team, creating memories that will last a lifetime. And the story was behind the scenes, where a new 1:1 marketing strategy helped the business side of the team hit one out of the park.

## Case Study Snapshot

### Industry

- Sports

### Key Client Contacts

- Senior Director, Marketing, New York Mets
- Senior Manager, Season Tickets & Group Sales

### Partners

- The Pente Corporation
- RP Graphics Group
- Xerox Graphic Communications

### Business Challenge

- Increase group ticket sales for the Mets 2010 season
- Utilize the power of personalized direct marketing to build stronger relationships with an important fan base of groups and group leaders

### Background

- The Xerox 1:1 Lab provides expert guidance and “proof of concept” to clients interested in improving their marketing results through data-driven direct mail
- The New York Mets campaign used creative segmented messaging and images to reach out to fans from diverse groups, encouraging them to make group ticket reservations for the 2010 season

### Program Objectives

- Demonstrate that data-driven direct mail generates more interest and sells more tickets than static mass mailings to diverse groups of sports fans
- Strengthen the relationship between groups of fans and the Mets baseball team
- Increase group tickets sales over the previous season's totals
- Build brand awareness and loyalty through targeted data-driven marketing
- Create a 1:1 direct marketing program that can be replicated in other customer segments of the market

### Results – The Final Score

- Exceeded 2010 group ticket sales goal
- Increased total group ticket sales by 80% over the previous year
- The data-driven mailers generated a 57.2% increase in group ticket sales over the control mailer
- Increased the number of groups responding by 36.3% versus the control
- Increased group sales revenue by 40.9% over the control

For more information about the Xerox 1:1 Lab or to schedule an appointment with a Xerox representative to discuss how your business can build better relationships with customers using the power of digital, data-driven direct marketing, visit [www.xerox.com/1to1lab](http://www.xerox.com/1to1lab) or call 1-800-ASK-XEROX.

**Xerox: We take marketing personally.**

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