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Brookstone is a nationwide specialty retailer that offers an assortment of consumer products that are functional in purpose, distinctive in quality and design, and not widely available from other retailers. Originally a catalog company, Brookstone today operates a multifaceted direct-marketing business that includes catalogs, email and affiliate marketing, and an online site offering thousands more products than are available in their physical stores. The company currently operates more than 240 retail stores throughout the United States and Puerto Rico.

Brookstone® From the start, Brookstone created a fun, interactive shopping experience. At their stores, customers are encouraged to try products out for true hands-on shopping. Every visit to Brookstone is an opportunity to discover new and ingenious items of superior quality, all in a friendly environment of customer care and integrity that simply can't be found anywhere else.

With the growth of ecommerce, mobile and other digital channels, Brookstone has worked hard to translate this core brand promise from the physical world to the digital one. But like many retailers, the translation has not been easy. "In our stores, the personal interaction with the sales associate is a vital part of the Brookstone experience and finding that unique item you are seeking. While the selection online is broader, the connection is less personal and therefore harder to differentiate," says Marc Delcheccolo, Director of Outbound Marketing. "This is our challenge, and our opportunity."

Lisa Johnson, Senior Marketing Manager, was focused specifically on how to bridge this gap in email. "Email is an extremely important channel for us as it impacts both our stores and web businesses," says Johnson. Historically, Brookstone emails had the same message for everyone and typically featured sale announcements and/or popular products. While this approach produced results, Johnson didn't believe they matched the Brookstone ideal of superior service, and she knew they could be much more powerful if they were more tailored to the individual. But this was far easier said than done.

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For one thing, Brookstone carried such an array of unique items it was not obvious, for example, that someone who looked at a remote control helicopter would also like a foot massager. Also, being such a gift-oriented business, they also had a large portion of their customer base that only shopped around the holidays, and yet were being marketed to year round.

"When we looked at traditional personalization technologies, we found that they mainly used recent web browsing behavior to personalize. But for us, a major portion of our email list had either never browsed on the site (as they had purchased in store) or if they had, they only did so months ago. So the established approaches to personalization just would not work for us. We needed a more powerful approach." Enter CQuotient.

CQuotient enables leading retailers to deliver uniquely tailored messages to every customer at any interaction. The company combines rigorous predictive science with omni-channel data to drive incremental revenue. Importantly, CQuotient is able to predict what a consumer wants and not just react to what the consumer recently did. In this way, CQuotient is able to personalize the message for every customer, including those who may not have interacted with the retailer in months.

THE TEST

CQuotient started the process by working with the data Brookstone already had available — store and web transactions, weblogs, email logs, product feeds, and customer reviews. CQuotient used its Personalized Marketing Engine™ to decode what that data was telling Brookstone about each individual customer's tastes, preferences and shopping patterns. CQuotient then worked directly with Brookstone's email service provider (ESP) to integrate directly into their promotional emails. The ESP remained the system that sent the emails, managed the campaign, and reported on click-throughs while CQuotient dynamically populated the individual content to each recipient when the email was opened. Each email was executed as a single campaign by their existing ESP and followed their normal business processes. And yet the output was highly tailored to each individual.

RESULTS

Brookstone ran several campaigns and variations using CQuotient, each time against a control group who received hand-picked item recommendations. The results were measured internally, using their existing processes for revenue attribution and measurement. And the outcome was clear: much higher click-through, order rates and revenue for the CQuotient-powered emails. "It is very hard to achieve lifts like these. CQuotient absolutely delivered on their promise," says Johnson.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Based on the strength of these results, Brookstone continues to look for more ways to leverage CQuotient. "I have been impressed with how easy it was to get started with CQuotient and use it on a regular basis." says Johnson. "We are excited to take advantage of these capabilities in many different ways going forward."

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