



Case Study: Expedia.ca



Transforming the business of travel

With more than \$17 billion in annual gross travel bookings, Expedia, Inc. plays a leading role in facilitating business and pleasure travel for people in countries around the world. The company is committed to providing travellers with the very best resources to serve their travel needs.

Expedia, Inc. is parent to some of the world's leading travel companies, including Expedia.com, Hotels.com, Hotwire.com, TripAdvisor, Expedia Corporate Travel, and Classic Vacations. Together, these popular and innovative businesses make Expedia, Inc. the largest online travel agency in the world, the third largest travel company in the U.S., and the fourth largest travel company in the world. The company also operates internationally with sites in Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Australia, Japan and China, through its investment in eLong. Well known to many Canadian travellers, Expedia.ca is the company's online travel agency for this country.

Successfully advertising online travel—using Canada Post

Travel is one of the largest industries in the world, and competition is intense. Would-be travellers have many different companies from which to choose, as well as being able to book flights directly with many airlines. Although it might seem to make sense to advertise an online travel agency online, Expedia.ca has been reaching a wider audience, including those customers who have opted not to receive emails from Expedia.ca, with Canada Post's Unaddressed Admail™ and Addressed Admail™ services. "We had been using Unaddressed Admail with Prizm targeting by Environics for two years," explains James Positano, Expedia.ca's CRM Specialist. "During



● "Timing of advertising is crucial in the travel market. When I use Canada Post, I can be confident that my direct mailers will arrive when they are supposed to. I'd always use Canada Post if I could."

*James Positano
CRM Specialist
Expedia.ca*

this time we had also been building our own database, as we believe we can obtain a better response to our campaigns through more targeted advertising.”

Targeting customers

Once the database was built, Expedia.ca wanted to test it and see which recipients would respond most favourably to special travel offers. A direct-mail postcard, which offered a 30 per cent discount on hotel bookings, was sent via Addressed Admail service to 100,000 people listed in the database. The mailing comprised a control group and a test group.

“We wanted to validate the database,” says Positano, “and also to find out if the test customers would respond better to the mailing and spend more money than the control group customers. And, Addressed Admail enabled us to ‘hit’ a much more targeted audience, and increase our chances of a favourable response.”

A favourable response

The results of the mailing were positive with a 3.94 per cent response rate from the test group of customers. This group of customers also spent more per purchase than the control group.

“The results of this test definitely validated our database,” says Positano. “And we also learned a great deal. Addressed Admail is certainly a lot easier and less involved than other mailing methods and it gets our pieces to customers’ mailboxes more rapidly. We also like the ability to target our mailing.

For more information on Canada Post’s Addressed Admail service, please visit www.canadapost.ca.

