

Case study: Institute of Directors

Institute of Directors takes advantage of the National Business Database to power direct marketing campaigns



Client

As a national association, the Institute of Directors (IoD) provides a professional network that reaches into every corner of the business community. A non-political organisation, it has over 50,000 members from all sectors of the economy, ranging from CEOs of large corporations to entrepreneurial directors of start-up companies. The IoD offers its members a wide range of business services including business centre facilities, conferences, networking events, publications and information services. In addition to establishing a certified qualification for directors, Chartered Director, the IoD also runs specific board-level and director level training and individual career mentoring programmes to help directors maximise their potential.



Institute of Directors

Challenge

An ongoing objective for the IoD is to continue to recruit new members across all industry sectors and areas of Britain. Over previous years, membership acquisition had grown, yet the IoD needed a sound strategy to enhance its trajectory and encourage further growth in the future. By closely examining its direct marketing programme – the IoD's primary means of attracting new members – the organisation identified the quality of the prospect data it was buying in as a key area for improvement.

unnecessary costs, an issue that was creeping into the IoD's direct marketing campaign results.

The IoD therefore needed to work with a data services provider which could ensure that its data was up-to-date to clarify that named directors were still employed at the companies being targeted. This was given added importance as the IoD prides itself on its integrity and exclusivity.

The IoD needed to ensure the quality of this data was of the highest level possible. Outdated information can result in wastage and high

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“The success of our membership recruitment drive is largely based on the accuracy and superiority of our direct mail campaigns so it was of paramount importance that we find a way to ensure we are constantly working with the best data possible. Experian has proved to be an invaluable partner in this quest as it has enabled us to introduce more focus and reduce waste in our campaigns while also giving us greater control in the selection procedures that build our final prospect list,”

**Linda Stranks,
Head of Membership
Marketing, Institute of
Directors.**

Solution

The IoD turned to Experian and its National Business Database (NBD) to power its ongoing new member recruitment campaign. Experian's NBD is one of the largest and most extensive commercially available business-to-business databases in the industry. It offers 4.8 million accurate business records and over 2 million ready-to-mail business records – including both limited and non-limited businesses – for direct marketing purposes, through a unique combination of independent and trusted data sources, including Yellow Pages, Thomson, Experian and Companies House data.

Experian was selected as a supplier not only because of the breadth of data it delivers but also the depth of variables which can be used to sophisticatedly segment prospect lists according to strict requirements.

The NBD has the most up-to-date data available and was one of the first databases to achieve Direct Marketing Association (DMA) Business List Audit recognition.

With the quality of the prospect data secured, the IoD then worked with Data Lateral to develop the content of its targeted marketing campaigns and ensure the composition was appropriate and pitched for the target.

Results

Improved data quality has had a clear impact on the success of the IoD's prospect direct mail campaigns in terms of response rates. Other improvements concerning the achievements of the IoD's database are clear when current performance is compared to old. One flaw with the IoD's previous database tended to occur with an individual that is a director with several companies. Often, that single director would receive repeated mailings in accordance with each company, despite it being the same person in each position. This did not reflect the exclusive, one-to-one attention the IoD prides itself on. The NBD has made it possible for the IoD to improve the personal experience for each director as each member now has a Unique Reference Number (URN) which links to each individual's personal and business history.

Nick Frazer, Head of B2B Marketing, Experian commented: “We invest an enormous amount of resources into ensuring our B2B lists are the most effective in the industry to enable organisations to focus their direct marketing efforts on the best prospects and realise a higher return on marketing investments. Our experience with the Institute of Directors is proof of the fact that the single most important factor in the success of any direct marketing campaign is the quality of the target list and we're delighted to have had such a positive impact on the Institute's ongoing membership recruitment programme.”

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