



Case Study

Boden's engagement creates a design classic tailored for increased acquisition effectiveness

Boden was founded in 1991 with a mission to bring high quality, high fashion, high value and ethically sourced clothing to the UK. Initially mail order based, the company now has a strong online presence and is expanding into the US and Europe.

Success is built on bringing its customers' catalogues with the products they want, when they want them. Staying ahead of the marketing curve, Boden works with Experian Marketing Services to ensure that it understands and attracts a growing following of satisfied customers.

Challenge

Boden identified the need to evolve, with a renewed focus on quality and style to flow through every aspect of the company; from clothing to photography to customer engagement. Whilst the catalogue remained at the heart of marketing strategy, the way it reached new customers needed to change.

A cold acquisition approach, renting third party data, led to the company renting more than 100 separate lists. Boden realised as they wanted to grow acquisition that it was inefficient, expensive and unfocused. With so many lists, contact records overlapped, meaning the company could be paying multiple times to access the same information. In addition, a physical catalogue is a significant investment and needs to hit the right prospects if it's to drive return.

Boden wanted to transform engagement by: improved understanding and identification of its highest value customers; tailoring catalogues to needs; and targeting the right catalogues to the right people. In doing so, they would grow acquisition volumes, give customers what they wanted, increase efficiencies and drive sales.

Solution

Boden's Nelissa Ishmael explained, "We needed a partner with the understanding and resources to deliver what we wanted to achieve. Experian have embedded a team of marketing, data and planning experts that got down into the detail to build a strategy that has transformed our marketing approach."

Using its data sources, Experian worked to see precisely what was happening, what was working and what wasn't. This analysis now forms the bedrock of Boden's direct acquisition strategy.

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Essentially, it's driven a four-pronged transformation:

- 1 **Data:** there is now a defined prospect pool that underpins Boden's marketing, shifting from reactive campaigning to planned targeting across catalogue seasons.
- 2 **Models and insight:** analysis is used to build multiple models of behaviours and propensities to better predict Boden's best new customers and maximise returns. Experian reviews performance at the end of each campaign, continually learning and refining each engagement to ensure that it's always optimised.
- 3 **Strategy and planning:** armed with the right information, Experian works with Boden to ensure that it's deployed in ways that deliver maximum value.
- 4 **System access:** this powerful new resource is now housed in an easy to access system that visualises the data in ways that are meaningful – making it simple and flexible enough for campaigns of all sizes.

“Experian's analysis, strategic thinking and tactical deployment have been invaluable. They are an integral part of our business: reactively, they're there to offer support whenever we need it; and proactively, they're constantly thinking about new ways to help us to achieve our goals. With budgets static, we really are doing more with less – constantly reaching, engaging and winning customers in new and better ways.”

– Nelissa Ishmael, Boden

Results

Experian has helped Boden to understand, attract and retain customers:

- **Target:** Boden has cut the number of mailing lists from 100+ to a handful. And Experian data now makes up over 85% of customer selections – with other lists used where they deliver incremental benefit. Experian also assesses circulation strategy across brands ensuring the catalogues are distributed effectively.
- **Tailor:** An ongoing test and learn approach coupled with greater customer understanding means that Boden's catalogues resonate. It's helping them decide what's on the front cover, where to place top sellers and what products to feature. Smaller (and cheaper) catalogues are having a positive impact on response rates, driving sales at a lower cost per recruit.
- **Engage:** Boden has been able to develop more sophisticated follow-up communications and increased seasonal catalogue launches. The ability to plan activity at an individual level across campaigns has been instrumental, with the ability to understand contact history underpinning campaign planning.

With Experian's expertise and ability to identify prospects across channels, Boden is also taking the learnings from Direct Mail and applying this across digital channels. The success of the relationship means that as Boden looks to the future they may replicate these learnings in other markets – exploring synergies based on Experian's global presence.

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