

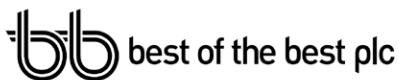
# Best of the Best Case Study

Company behind UK supercar competition takes control of email marketing campaigns and improves delivery with dedicated email solution



*"StrongMail's On-Demand service provides a solution that offers the best of both worlds. We get more control over the timing and segmentation of our campaigns, while also gaining a dedicated email delivery server..."*

Richard Bewley  
Online Marketing Manager  
Best of the Best



#### Best of the Best

London, UK  
[www.bestofthebest.co.uk](http://www.bestofthebest.co.uk)

#### Industry

Supercar competition organisers

#### Members

250,000

#### Return on Investment

- > Increased repeat business opportunities
- > 40% reduction in time needed to create an email campaign

#### Key Benefits

- > Improved email delivery
- > Greater control of email campaigns
- > Potential to scale with future growth
- > Increased productivity
- > No hardware management requirements

#### Products & Services

- > StrongMail® On-Demand

If you've walked through one of the UK's main airports, you may have come face-to-face with a Ferrari, Lamborghini or other supercar that's being offered as first prize in a 'spot the ball' competition. The company behind these competitions is Best of the Best, and in the last six years it has given away £8million worth of cars to more than 200 winners.

The company's revenue is largely derived from ticket sales within airport terminals, although an increasing number of participants are playing online too. Every entrant is asked to provide an email address so that they can be contacted, should they win. It also allows Best of the Best to contact players again in the future and encourage them to take part in new competitions.

Best of the Best has built up a database of over 250,000 players who are contacted each week. This means the company generates around one million emails per month. Email is, therefore, a vital part of the company's sales and marketing strategy – and the principal way in which it can encourage repeat business.

#### Limitations of a Traditional Email Service Provider

Prior to StrongMail, Best of the Best outsourced the management of its email campaigns to an email service provider (ESP). Richard Bewley, online marketing manager for Best of the Best, notes that this originally seemed the best approach as Best of the Best had limited IT resources and wanted its IT staff to focus on email campaign development and support for other employees. However, as Best of the Best's database continued to grow and its email campaigns continued to evolve in complexity, flaws began to appear in the traditional outsourced ESP model.

Best of the Best's IT team had already started investigating an alternative solution as it had become increasingly concerned that their email campaigns were being compromised. This was because the ESP used the same server to send out multiple campaigns for a range of different customers and there was no way to specify what time a specific campaign would go out to potential players. "It was down to pot luck," comments Bewley, "and that's no way to run an email marketing campaign in the twenty-first century."

Matters came to a head when Best of the Best suffered a major delivery problem with one of its email campaigns. Bewley explains: "We were told by our ESP that they were turning off the server one Friday afternoon – it was a *fait accompli* and there was no room to negotiate. We send our campaigns out on Fridays each week because we know it's the most effective time. However, that week, we simply couldn't send them out when we wanted to. It cost us a great deal in time, effort and most worryingly, lost revenue."



## About StrongMail Systems, Inc.

StrongMail's online marketing solutions for email and social media enable businesses to reach, engage and influence their target audience using the most powerful channels available to marketers today.

StrongMail gives email marketers the control and support they need to improve campaign performance, boost deliverability and lower costs, while also leveraging the power of social media to extend the reach of their campaigns and brand to new audiences. Combining an easy-to-use email marketing application, high-performance delivery system, viral-marketing tool, social media integration, and a wide range of deliverability, strategic and supporting services, StrongMail makes it possible for companies with all levels of resources and expertise to take advantage of its proven solutions.

Headquartered in Redwood City, CA, StrongMail's clients include global leaders across virtually every industry.

To learn more about StrongMail, please visit [www.strongmail.com](http://www.strongmail.com).

## Contact StrongMail Systems today.

800-971-0380  
[info@strongmail.com](mailto:info@strongmail.com)

StrongMail Systems, Inc.  
1300 Island Drive, Suite 200  
Redwood City, CA 94065  
P 650-421-4200  
F 650-421-4201

[www.strongmail.com](http://www.strongmail.com)

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*"StrongMail On-Demand has been a revelation to us. It combines ease-of-use with detailed campaign analysis and practical ways of ensuring improved deliverability levels."*

Richard Bewley, Online marketing manage, Best of the Best

At that point, it was clear to Best of the Best that it couldn't rely on a traditional outsourced email service provider any longer and had to take more direct control of its email campaigns. However, the company still faced the same dilemma about over-stretching the IT team's resources.

## StrongMail's Dedicated Solution Selected for Precision, Speed and Control

After reviewing a number of alternatives, Best of the Best selected StrongMail's On-Demand service to replace the now tired and troubled ESP relationship. Bewley explains: "StrongMail's On-Demand service provides a solution that offers the best of both worlds. We get more control over the timing and segmentation of our campaigns, while also gaining a dedicated email delivery server – so we no longer have to battle with other companies for the necessary bandwidth to send our email campaigns."

In addition, as Rackspace, one of the world's most respected managed service providers, hosts the StrongMail On-Demand service, Best of the Best doesn't need to dedicate IT resources to server upkeep and management. "We can therefore take direct control of our email campaigns, without having to invest time maintaining and managing the server ourselves," comments Bewley.

## Firing on All Cylinders

In addition, StrongMail's solution has cut the time taken to create an email campaign by allowing Best of the Best to design and send personalised emails based on customer participation history and preferences, which improves customer responsiveness to campaigns. Furthermore, StrongMail's automatically analyses message delivery trends to check bounce-back numbers and unsubscribe requests, which improves list hygiene and deliverability levels. Bewley also notes that, prior to StrongMail, he had no such visibility and found it extremely difficult to gain a full understanding of potential delivery problems.

Bewley was particularly enthusiastic about StrongMail's Live Update feature, which ensures Best of the Best's emails meet changing ISP delivery requirements. He explains: "Thanks to StrongMail, we are always aware of the parameters that Google, Hotmail or other ISPs are using to identify potential spammers – and we can take action to make sure our emails which have, after all, been requested by our customers, arrive in their inboxes and not their junk folders. Our previous email solution didn't even come close to offering such a dynamic and responsive way of improving deliverability – and I'm convinced that the effectiveness of our campaigns suffered as a result."

Bewley concludes: "StrongMail On-Demand has been a revelation to us. It combines ease-of-use with detailed campaign analysis and practical ways of ensuring improved deliverability levels. It offers us much more control than an ESP solution could and, because our StrongMail server is located in a hosted environment, we don't need to worry about maintenance, management and updates. In short, it's an all-round winner!"

