

Holiday Extras Case Study

Leading UK travel company improves performance and efficiency of marketing and transactional email programs



"It's completely changed the way we manage our marketing and transactional emails and allows us to develop timely, relevant and highly targeted content."

Emma Bates
Email marketing manager
Holiday Extras



Holiday Extras
Kent, UK
www.holidayextras.co.uk

Industry
Travel

Customers
2.5 million

Return on Investment

- > Lower email marketing costs
- > Improved response rates
- > Fewer resource requirements
- > Reduced customer service inquiries

Key Benefits

- > Automated lifecycle messages
- > Dynamic, targeted messaging
- > Centralized management and analysis
- > Improved efficiency and reliability
- > Increased email deliverability
- > Faster sending times
- > Real-time access to detailed performance metrics
- > Easy-to-use testing and optimization tools
- > Maximum data security

Products & Services

- > StrongMail® Email Integration Server
- > StrongMail® Transactional Email Platform

Integrated IT infrastructure

- > Internal Customer Database
- > Custom Campaign Management Application

Founded in 1983, Holiday Extras is an award-winning provider of add-on services for holidays, including airport parking at 26 airports across the UK, hotel packages and holiday insurance. The company conducts 90 per cent of its business online and serves over six million travellers annually.

Time for a Break

In recent years it has launched a number of new brands that sit under the Holiday Extras umbrella, including 'Show and Stay' and 'Play and Stay,' which offer theatre breaks, London days out and theme park breaks. Holiday Extras has also launched its brand into Germany with an operation based in Munich.

The company relies on email as a tool for many customer marketing and transaction-based services. With campaign deliverables including fortnightly emails sent to its database of more than 2.5 million customers, Holiday Extras has a huge task on its hands to effectively manage its email communications.

Choosing the Perfect Destination

To support the company's continued growth, Holiday Extras urgently needed to find a solution that would help it maintain control of its customer data and provide real-time reporting and delivery functions. It was also important that the solution integrated into the company's own bespoke automated email platform.

Emma Bates, email marketing manager at Holiday Extras explains, "Previous to our relationship with StrongMail, compiling reports was time consuming and as soon as a report was completed, it was out of date. We couldn't leverage valuable customer behavioural data for future campaigns and were missing a major revenue opportunity."

Importance of Email Revenue

Given the importance of email for driving revenue, Holiday Extras made a strategic decision to invest in an in-house email platform that enabled it to improve efficiency and reliability.

"We started looking at best-of-breed ESP vendors, but we soon realised that, with our requirements for security, control and confidence in sending, a hosted model wasn't going to work for us," said Bates.

Holiday Extras' CEO, Matthew Pack, suggested StrongMail as the solution, due to its capability of linking directly to the company's databases, making the process of sending marketing emails more fluid and less time consuming.

“StrongMail allows us to use our data more intelligently and to build better emails while also giving us the control to avoid replicating data or worrying about security.”

Emma Bates, Email marketing manager at Holiday Extras

We Have Lift Off!

With an email marketing team of just four, responsible for sending more than four million emails a month, switching to StrongMail has freed up time to concentrate on the strategy behind marketing campaigns, rather than worrying about email delivery. The StrongMail solution has helped to improve the delivery of confirmation emails from the booking engine.

Using StrongMail, Holiday Extras can create bi-weekly offer alerts, automated follow-ups, holiday count down emails, welcome home feedback requests and automatic responses. All of these emails can be analysed using metrics including click through rates, comparison between specific batches and comparing campaigns on a week-by-week basis.

“StrongMail allows us to use our data more intelligently and to build better emails while also giving us the control to avoid replicating data or worrying about security,” explains Bates. “Implementing StrongMail has been a success company-wide and supports our strategy to keep email in-house.”

Rather than being charged the CPM (cost per thousand) fee that most firms charge, StrongMail’s unique pricing model has enabled the company to save money on its bulk email marketing.

“The whole process is now easier and it would be difficult to go back to uploading mailing lists manually, taking into account the amount that our databases have grown. StrongMail is very much a tool that enables us to do what we need to do.”

Wish You Were Here

Bates continues, “One of the best features about StrongMail is that it integrates with our systems. We now have a single location from which to send, track and analyse our customer data. It’s completely changed the way we manage our marketing and transactional emails and allows us to develop timely, relevant and highly targeted content.”

The image shows a promotional email for airport parking. At the top, it says "holiday extras" and "Bonus 10%+ off airport parking with this email". The main headline is "Airport Parking: why pay full price?". Below this, there is a "10% off" badge and the text "Don't pay full price. Early bookers save up to 60% off the price at the gate." It also states "On any day, our prices are guaranteed* to be the lowest available." and "So book now through this email and you'll get an extra 10%* discount." At the bottom, it says "We take the hassle, you take the holiday." and "PRICE GUARANTEE: Find airport car parking spaces or airport hotel rooms for less and we'll give them to you for free*." The visual includes an airplane, a car, and a parking sign.

StrongMail enables Holiday Extras to easily personalise their email messages based on customer preferences.



About StrongMail Systems, Inc.

StrongMail enables marketers to forge meaningful, profitable and long-lasting connections with their customers through email marketing and social media.

Offering a comprehensive suite of technology and services, StrongMail takes a fundamentally different approach to traditional email service providers that offers many unique advantages to brands. StrongMail’s dedicated solutions offer the lowest total cost of ownership of any enterprise email marketing solution and easily integrate with customer data sources to help marketers improve the performance of their email marketing campaigns.

StrongMail’s email and social CRM agency provides industry-leading strategic and creative services to help marketers listen, learn, engage and influence best customers.

It’s these differences that have led Fortune 2000 brands to switch to StrongMail.

To learn more about StrongMail, please visit www.strongmail.com.

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