

Industry: Online Content > Client: Beliefnet

Challenge:

Automate lead delivery, increase lead quality, provide management and reporting tools

Solution:

LeadConduit™

Results:

Painless transition to an automated & reliable solution enabling 3X growth in e-newsletter subscriber acquisition



LeadConduit Makes a Believer Out of Beliefnet

About the Client

Beliefnet, an interfaith online media firm, is the largest faith and spirituality destination on the Internet. It is independent and unaffiliated with any spiritual organization or movement. The company is owned by Fox Entertainment Group (FEG), a unit of News Corporation (NYSE: NWS, NWS.A). The Beliefnet website provides information, tools, and other resources to meet users' spiritual interests and needs. One such resource is a set of online newsletters with a combined base of 19 million subscriptions. Beliefnet sends over 400 million emails per month to its subscribers. Its primary source of revenue is selling online advertising on its site and newsletters.

“Co-registration leads must be acted on immediately.”

VP Marketing – Beliefnet

Marketing Process

Beliefnet uses daily email newsletters to its large subscriber base as a primary method of driving traffic to its online content. Beliefnet manages 23 separate email newsletter titles. For Beliefnet, an Internet Lead is someone that subscribes to one of these newsletters. Beliefnet relies heavily on co-registration placements on 3rd party websites for acquiring new newsletter subscribers. It purchases these leads on a cost-per-lead basis. The leads all flow into the internally managed Beliefnet systems where a welcome email is then sent to the new subscriber to confirm the sign-up.

Challenges

Beliefnet faced a variety of challenges.

Managing a Dynamic List of Lead Providers. Beliefnet receives leads from as many as 25 lead providers – each providing leads for between 1 to 8 newsletter campaigns. As the number of lead providers grew and changed, Beliefnet was faced with the complexity of managing the ongoing technical issues and questions with every lead provider. Furthermore, lead providers needed timely reporting and the ability to receive lead returns. The technical and administrative overhead associated with each lead provider hindered Beliefnet's ability to quickly and effectively evaluate new providers.

Manual Processing of Leads. Lead providers were delivering leads to Beliefnet in batch files attached to emails. This resulted in unnecessary labor cost, and more importantly, the lead data would sit and become “stale” until the leads were manually processed into the Beliefnet systems. Email responses were not being generated quickly enough. Much worse, leads received over the weekend would not be processed until Monday morning. Beliefnet Marketing determined that an email response had to be sent out within a few hours to ensure acceptable conversion rates.

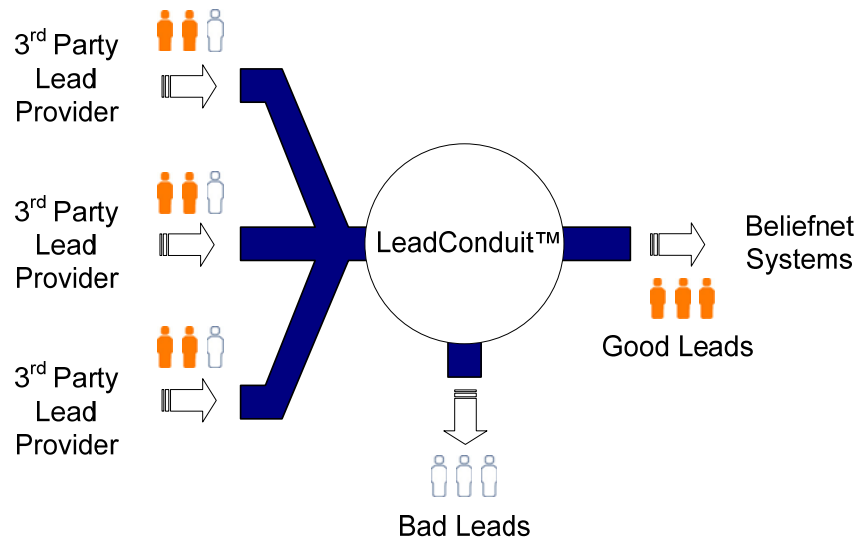
Email Deliverability. For email newsletters, it is critical that the marketer ensure reliable email deliverability to new and current subscribers. Staying off ISP “spam lists” is imperative. As the window between the subscriber’s initial sign-up step and the follow-up confirmation email widened (due to manual processing of new lead data), Beliefnet increasingly ran the risk of being blocked by ISP’s and/or being added to a subscriber’s “junk mail” list as new subscribers failed to recognize the confirmation email generated by the sign-up process. Something had to be done to shorten this turnaround time.

System Availability. New subscribers come in 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. As with most internal IT systems, Beliefnet’s systems experienced periods of system interruption. During these downtime periods, leads were either returned or not received completely. Lost leads meant lost opportunities for conversion.



Solution

The solution for Beliefnet is based around LeadConduit™ - the core ActiveProspect offering.



The Beliefnet LeadConduit Solution

LeadConduit. LeadConduit™ is a web-based real-time lead delivery platform. It is positioned between Beliefnet’s various lead providers and the internal Beliefnet systems. All Internet leads from all of its sources initially flow directly into LeadConduit. The standard LeadConduit functionality provides the lead validation, duplicate-checking, and reporting that Beliefnet so badly needed. LeadConduit then delivers only the qualified leads in real-time into the Beliefnet

“LeadConduit gives me the insight that I need into what is happening.”

Marketing Manager, Beliefnet
- Samir Banerjee

“Using LeadConduit, we can determine our lower performing vendors and implement changes quickly to reflect better conversion rates”

Marketing Manager, Beliefnet
- Samir Banerjee

About ActiveProspect:

ActiveProspect, Inc. provides reliable products and superior service to companies that buy or sell Internet Leads.

Our flagship product, LeadConduit™, is a web-based, real-time lead delivery platform which is designed to connect buyers and sellers of Internet leads. It is used to connect and integrate with partners, validate lead data, automate lead delivery, and to provide neutral 3rd party tracking and reporting.

For more information, visit www.ActiveProspect.com.

systems. Batch files attached to emails are no longer used, and manual processing is now replaced with real-time delivery.

Results

Reduced Administrative Costs. By replacing manual batch processing and reporting with automated real-time delivery and web-based reporting, the entire lead acquisition process is completely streamlined and automated. Technical staff members don't have to be involved in issues with lead providers. These improvements result in reduced administration costs.

Improved Tracking and Reporting. The LeadConduit™ online reporting allows Beliefnet to monitor the number of leads that come from each lead source in real-time. This increased transparency allows Beliefnet to better optimize its marketing expenditures. “[LeadConduit] gives me an insight into what is happening,” says Samir Banerjee. “[LeadConduit] helps me evaluate lead providers across parameters of quality, quantity, and the ROI on the leads they provide,” he continues.

Single Point of Integration. With LeadConduit™, Beliefnet can easily make changes to how it receives leads without the need to coordinate the changes with all of its individual lead providers.

Certified Lead Delivery. LeadConduit provides an additional layer of redundancy between lead providers and Beliefnet systems. LeadConduit ensures that every lead is properly delivered. In the event that Beliefnet systems are ever unavailable, or generate errors, LeadConduit™ will automatically retry the leads until they are delivered. Every lead has an audit trail to ensure that each lead is handled properly. This ensures there are no discrepancies in reporting with lead providers.

Improved Email Deliverability. In order to continue delivering periodic online content (newsletters) in the age of “anti-spam” watch lists, Beliefnet must ensure diligence in delivering content only to those who have opted into the various newsletters. The ability to filter out bad leads as well as the ability to respond in real-time to new subscribers allows Beliefnet to increase conversion rates while significantly reducing any perceived email “spam.”

Ease of Use. Integrating the LeadConduit™ solution with Beliefnet's systems went extremely well. “Definitely a key benefit [is] that it is just a lot easier,” says the Beliefnet Marketing VP involved with adopting LeadConduit. And the ActiveProspect solution is able to grow with Beliefnet. Because Beliefnet is continually looking for new providers, LeadConduit allows Beliefnet to evaluate new lead providers without investing hours of either management's or IT's time. Again, Banerjee says, “Our lead providers appreciate the ActiveProspect system. Setup is a breeze...” Furthermore, in the event of an issue with an unproven provider, LeadConduit allows Beliefnet to respond to the issue in real-time by either pausing delivery or shutting down the campaign completely.

Dependable Support: And if there is a problem, the ActiveProspect Support Team is there to help. Banerjee continues, “We are very, very happy with the support team at ActiveProspect. Their turnaround time is almost zero.”