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BlueSky ETO
MARKETING SOLUTIONS. ENGINEERED TO ORDER.

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the Digital Printing Initiative

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PODi HONORABLE MENTION

Project: VetCentric Boosts Sales and Cuts Costs with Personalized Postcards

Vertical Market: Other

Business Application: Direct Marketing/Direct Order

Business Objectives

VetCentric, Inc, headquartered in Glen Burnie, MD, is a complete veterinary pharmacy. Working with veterinarians, VetCentric delivers pet owners prescription medications directly to their front door.

Prior to working with Heckman Ink and BlueSky ETO, VetCentric sent weekly refill reminders to pet owners by printing form letters in-house and manually folding, inserting and mailing them. Full first-class postage was used on each letter and the process took 8-10 hours every week to complete..

VetCentric needed a solution that would:

- Reduce labor costs
- Reduce postage costs
- Increase response rates
- Improve quality of marketing materials

Results

- 14% response rate
- Labor reduced from 8-10 hours a week to 15 minutes a week
- More than $9,000 in postage saved annually

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Campaign Architecture

Heckman Ink and BlueSky ETO worked with VetCentric to design a program that would streamline the refill reminder process, reduce costs and increase response rates. The result, a highly-personalized, full-color jumbo postcard template that includes the following variable elements:

- Veterinary Clinic's Name & Contact Information
- Pet's Name
- Pet's Species (cat or dog)
- Pet Owner's Name
- Prescription Due for Refill
- Prescription Discount (custom for each product)
- Discount Expiration Date

VetCentric's weekly refill reminder program, which took VetCentric 8-10 hours a week to implement in the past, now takes less than 15 minutes. VetCentric simply exports and emails a list once a week to BlueSky ETO and they're done. BlueSky ETO qualifies the list for maximum postage discount, drops the data into a Pageflex-powered template and prints and mails within one business day.

Pet owners can respond by ordering online or by calling a toll-free number. While the mailings are segmented (cat versus dog), there is no difference in the response rates for the two segments.

Offer

The order discount varies based on the customer's order history, whether the pet is a cat or a dog, and the pet's medication history.

List

VetCentric maintains a database of all its customers and exports a list that drives all of the variables (text and images) listed above.

Creative and Outbound Piece

In addition to the variable text on the postcard the images vary depending on the type of pet.

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Reasons for Success

The amount of time it takes VetCentric to send their weekly refill reminders has decreased from 8-10 hours to about 15 minutes a week, according to Sherry Plummer, Direct Mail Coordinator. That's the amount of time it takes to export a contact file from the customer database and e-mail it to BlueSky ETO.

Plummer says VetCentric has reaped other rewards beyond the time and postage savings. According to Plummer, the full-color postcards look much better than the letters and are producing a 14% average response rate, which is much higher than the response rate from the reminder letters. Plummer thinks the reminder letters might have had a lower response because people may have thought they were junk mail. Since the postcards are large and bear the name of the veterinary clinic and the name of the pet, people are much more likely to keep the cards and use them as reminders – in some cases even putting them on their fridge, the ultimate goal of any marketer. According to Plummer, if someone is going to respond to a postcard by ordering a refill, they usually do so within two to three weeks of receiving the card.

VetCentric plans to continue using personalized reminder postcards for the foreseeable future. Plummer says VetCentric is also exploring options for incorporating more e-mail communication in the reminder process, but will probably combine e-mail with print reminders instead of switching to e-mail completely.

Awards

This application won a 2009 PODi Best Practices Honorable Mention in the Direct Marketing category.

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Client	VetCentric, Inc. www.vetcentric.com Headquartered in Glen Burnie, MD, VetCentric, Inc. is a complete veterinary pharmacy. Working with veterinarians, VetCentric offers pet owners easy, secure ordering, reliable delivery, and great customer service for their pet's prescription medication needs.
Print Provider	BlueSky ETO www.BlueSkyETO.com **BlueSky ETO** develops sophisticated web-based marketing storefront solutions…Engineered to Order. These systems provide marketers, and their channels, with streamlined tools to communicate and enable them to efficiently order, customize and control marketing materials, while maintaining brand integrity - swiftly, cost effectively, and without waste. Branded templates, content management, cost control co-op management, and comprehensive reporting are our primary deliverables. We don't create your brand, we help you deliver it consistently and seamlessly - wherever it needs to be. BlueSky ETO is the development and workflow automation arm of MSP, a single-source direct marketing partner offering comprehensive production capabilities from a 150,000 sq. ft facility in Pittsburgh, PA, staffed by over 450 professionals.
Agency	Heckman, Ink www.heckmanink.com Headquartered in Annapolis, MD, Heckman, Ink, serves customers throughout the United States. As a full-service business printing supplier, the company specializes in custom direct digital printing, business forms, labels, tags and envelopes.
Hardware	HP Indigo 5000
Software	Pageflex .EDIT and Mpower
Target Audience	Pet owners
Distribution	Quantities vary from hundreds to thousands per week
Date	Ongoing

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