

**responsys®**

**L'OCCITANE**  
EN PROVENCE

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**Personalizing the  
Purchasing Experience.**

**How L'Occitane Touched Up  
Customer Engagement.**

# Relationship marketing makeover drives relevance and revenue.

At L'OCCITANE, online marketers are relentless in their effort to create a digital experience that mirrors the in-store experience. The company's products are sensorial in nature. So marketers must find innovative ways to convey the authenticity of the L'OCCITANE brand as well as product characteristics such as fragrance, texture, and color.

L'OCCITANE has been quick to leverage new technology to achieve this goal. The company replaced its "batch-and-blast" email approach with data-driven communications several years ago. As a result, targeted email campaigns deliver content tailored to each customer's preferences and buying behavior.

In the past year, marketers worked with Responsys to use the same customer data to deliver targeted display ads. It's all part of a customer-first initiative to strengthen relationships by distributing relevant, interactive communications across channels.

Under the direction of its digital marketing team, the retailer is making inroads in what they considers to be the future of digital marketing: Leveraging social media to engage customers in a richer conversation. A new social sign-in campaign on Facebook is generating a lot of customer interest as well as driving up conversion rates and increasing the number of new online customers. The marketing team plans to work closely with Responsys to harness that data and drive deeper levels on engagement through their targeted approach.

The social sign-in campaign is also garnering praise for creativity and innovation. L'OCCITANE received the Best Triggered Email or Auto-Responder Series Award in MarketingSherpa's Email Awards 2013 for innovative work on this campaign.

**"You can't communicate authenticity if you immediately approach a customer with a promotional message. Our approach is to give customers a chance to understand our brand and find the path they are interested in. Then we segment our messaging based on what they love."**

Digital Marketing Manager/ L'Occitane

## By the numbers

Higher conversion rate

**15%**

New online customers

**72%**



## Digital Marketing Manager / L'Occitane

**L'OCCITANE expresses a strong commitment to authenticity, respect, and sensoriality. How do those values play into customer relationships?**

L'OCCITANE is a brand based on authenticity and on the sensorial nature of our products. The ingredients that go into our products have a story behind them — a story about how we support and respect the farmers who cultivate those ingredients and how we combine ingredients in the most natural, freshest way to create richly wonderful products for our customers. As digital marketers, the most important part of our job isn't to hit customers with some kind of promotional messaging but instead to expose them to these stories. I call it educational messaging, and it's how we build relationships. We give customers a chance to learn who we are, what our brand is, what we care about, and why we do what we do before talking to them about why they should buy anything at all.

**New school marketers emphasize the importance of a customer-first strategy. How have you evolved your email strategy to put customers first?**

Like most retailers, we used a batch-and-blast approach in the past, trying to reach as many people as possible. But people don't open those messages any more. There are too many of them cluttering up their inboxes. So we're working with Responsys to improve deliverability. We've gone to great lengths to zero in on people who are responsive. We're using customer data to better understand who is opening and clicking. Who is purchasing. These are the people who are receiving more communications from us more regularly.

**What are some of the factors that drive content creation?**

When customers receive e-mail messages from L'OCCITANE, we want them to feel excited. We want the message to offer information that's pertinent to them — and compelling as well. Our goal is to target customers with whatever ingredient they're excited about most at that particular time. We like to include content that makes their purchasing experience simple and fun and rewarding. When we hit the mark in these areas, we strengthen the relationship and customers look forward to seeing our messages in their inboxes.

**I understand you're successfully applying some of the same techniques to other channels as well.**

Yes, and we're very excited about it. I believe the future of digital marketing lies in social media. Social sign-in is an incredibly useful way to get a much more in-depth picture of your current audience without specifically requesting details from customers. A solid gift offer and clear login process with an easy API makes the whole campaign seamless and self-sustaining.

**Can you give us some specifics about the campaign?**

We offered members of the Facebook community a free Shea Butter Hand Crème worth \$10, in exchange for creating a L'OCCITANE account with Facebook. The purpose of the campaign was to increase the number of registrations through Facebook, which would give us significantly more data on each of our customers.

**What were some of the ways you made it work?**

We used Facebook ads, for one thing, targeting fans of department stores and even fans of our competitors. We also used messaging on the L'OCCITANE site. We added buttons on our checkout page and our home page, but only for customers who hadn't previously signed in socially. We used Responsys Interact, and with the help of the Responsys technical services team, we coded the correct API calls so that customers received their incentive by email.

**What were some of the innovations that put you ahead of the pack in the competition for the MarketingSherpa award?**

We weren't involved in the judging, but I have a feeling they liked a few of our techniques. Our use of Facebook ads to promote the campaign and our use of the API call enabled us to send the customer a message automatically after a social sign-in. Another factor was likely our strategy of driving online traffic to our boutiques. Finally, they did seem keen on the way we used a unique barcode in the email message. This helped us reduce exploits even though the coupon was redeemable both online and in our stores.

**What's next?**

More with display. We are now combining email with individualized display ads. It's part of our focus on continuing to refine our consumer-centric approach to marketing and working to apply it, across all channels. The email plus display combo enables us to orchestrate messages across both channels, letting individual customers know which L'Occitane products they should buy next in order to complete their set. Next up, we're working on a new program to notify customers when it's time to replenish their product supply.