

University of Alabama Tide Pride Renewal Campaign



Project: University of Alabama Tide Pride Renewal Campaign

Vertical Market: Education

Business Application: Direct Marketing/Direct Order

Business Objectives

The University of Alabama wanted people who have season tickets to pay their seat license fees online to cut down on the waiting time for the money and the labor involved in processing checks and forms that come in the mail. Seat license holders, who are members of Tide Pride, had not previously used credit cards or the Internet to renew their licenses, since they preferred to pay by writing checks. Because seat license fees generate revenue totaling between \$10 and \$20 million, the amount of money involved and the effect on cash flow are significant.

The University needed a campaign that would:

- Motivate seat license holders to renew their licenses online
- Simplify the handling of transactions to reduce associated costs
- Generate additional revenue by offering products to online customers

Results

The university was delighted with the response. Prior to this campaign only 5% of members had renewed online. The campaign set **an all-time record for online renewals, 35%**, thereby achieving its major goal. The gain translated into millions of dollars collected online.

- More than 29% of Tide Pride members who received mailings went to their personalized URLs (pURLs)
- More than 1,000 posters were sold, generating over \$58,000 in revenue
- The cost of the campaign was more than offset by the revenue earned from the sales of posters

Campaign Architecture

In order to get members to renew online, the university needed a way to drive them to the Tide Pride Web site. Once they were there, seeing a compelling offer might persuade them to do what they have not done in the past – pull out their credit cards and complete the transaction immediately.

For this campaign, the university mailed a 6×9-inch postcard. The postcard then directed them to a pURL. The online renewal process ended with a link to the poster order form, which the member filled out and paid for with a credit card. Orders went directly to Kennickell Print and Global Marketing, which received them each day and printed and mailed the posters within three days.



Administration of the campaign was divided, with the university collecting renewal fees on its own site, and Kennickell handling sales of posters and collection of those fees. Once a month during the campaign, Kennickell sent a check to the university for its portion of the month's sales and a second check to the Collegiate Licensing Company for its fee. Since Kennickell handled all orders and payments, the university didn't have to do anything except cash the checks. All costs Alabama incurred for the campaign were more than offset by the revenue earned from the sales of posters.

Creative and Outbound Pieces

On the front of the card was a picture of the Alabama football stadium (Bryant-Denny Stadium) packed with fans on a game day. On the field, the photo showed the band in formation, spelling out the name of the recipient of the postcard. So, for example, if the person receiving the card was named Thomas English, the band's formation in the picture spelled "Thomas English." The caption under the photo read "Find out why it's Thomas English Day at Bryant-Denny Stadium at thomas.english.renewtidepride.com."

Target Audience and Messaging

Members who received these cards were surprised to see their name on the field and wondered how it happened. When they read the caption saying it was their day at the stadium and instructing them to find out why at their Web site, they couldn't resist the temptation to go to the site. Once they arrived at the site, they saw university cheerleaders holding up signs spelling their first name, and, again, the photo of the stadium with the band on the field spelling their full name.



Offer

Recipients who visited their pURL saw an offer for a custom stadium print. The site explained that renewing online entitled the member to order the print for \$40 – an offer available only to Tide Pride members. People placing orders had the option to put any name they wanted on the field and write any caption they chose under the photo. They could order as many prints as they wanted, but only after they had renewed their membership.

List

Approximately 12,000 Tide Pride Members

Reasons for Success

Although this campaign was a one-time effort, the university was so pleased with the results that it has already run a different campaign using similar technology. The attention getting image of the member's name spelled out by the University marching band, combined with the one-of-a-kind poster offer led to the high success of this campaign.