

Ski Resorts Achieve 60% Email Open Rates through Automated, Timed Messaging

Pre-Arrival & Post-Departure Emails Boost Relevancy and Engagement

The Opportunity

As marketers we strive for relevancy. We want to get our messages in front of the right eyes at the right time to turn potential customers into actual customers. Unfortunately, most email messages are sent en masse, to tens of thousands of people at the same time, regardless of where they are along the path of being a customer at your resort.

The Issue

Unlike other marketing campaigns, email gives you the ability to instantly see the efficacy of both your headline (open rates) and copy (click rates). For most resorts, open rates hover around 17%, with click rates below 13%. In other words, for every 100 emails a resort sends, only 2 people will end up clicking a link. For any given message, the offer and content simply isn't relevant to the vast majority of recipients. Every irrelevant message a subscriber receives is a strike against your relationship with him or her.

The Basic Solution

When your guests take an action that would make them a perfect candidate for a specific message, you want to be able to send them that message. In a dream world, it would be great if you knew when a family starts discussing next winter's ski vacation around the dinner table so a list of your best family-related offers would be waiting in their inbox when they finished. But even if you can't watch their every move, there are still opportunities to communicate around many of their actions.

"With more pressure on budgets and decreasing ability of mass channels to reach enough of our market, building relationships with the customers we already have is more important than ever before. Ryan Solutions has helped us automate our customer database feeds, allowing us to execute focused, relevant, and timely retention initiatives designed to keep our guests coming back."

Molly Mahar

Loon Mountain
Lincoln, NH

Our Solution

When a guest books a room, this opens the door for tailored and carefully timed pre-arrival and post-departure messaging. Resorts use a variety of booking platforms, so the first step Ryan Solutions takes is to install an adapter on their server that gathers guest data at regular intervals. This data is cleansed to remove duplicates and pushed to the resort's Blue Hornet email account where each guest is tagged with an arrival date. Email copy is then loaded into a new message with is label with a number of days, either before or after their stay, when those guests should get this message. Every day the system automatically sends messages to the guests who will be arriving in 3, 4 or however many days the message specifies. These messages can include offers, upsells, information to improve the guests experience and satisfaction, post-departure surveys, and more.

The Results

Below is a sample of 8 of our clients that use pre-arrival and post-departure transactional messaging and how those messages compared to standard emails sent to larger groups.

	Standard Emails		Pre-Arrival		Post-Departure	
	<i>Open</i>	<i>Click</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Click</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Click</i>
(averages ->)	18.97%	11.82%	60.18%	42.26%	47.49%	29.17%
Resort #1	15.1%	8.22%	67.96%	46.06%	51.49%	44.49%
Resort #2	20.44%	8.08%	39.10%	10.70%	50.31%	0.00%
Resort #3	19.9%	13.53%	69.95%	14.22%	46.80%	29.64%
Resort #4	17.96%	9.03%	70.94%	66.45%	50.90%	6.12%
Resort #5	23.23%	11.89%	71.85%	53.36%	46.06%	47.44%
Resort #6	18.07%	17.41%	55.00%	46.11%	45.51%	43.56%
Resort #7	15.78%	14.58%	63.44%	55.86%	45.63%	46.96%
Resort #8	21.29%	11.82%	43.18%	45.35%	43.23%	15.13%

The Possibilities

This is a simple example and uses an arrival date as a trigger, but the data we can use and possibilities of relevancy are everywhere:

- Communication on the anniversary of a past stay
- Reminders of remaining scans on a 4-pack of tickets
- Offers, alerts, updates, or rewards for boarding a certain chairlift
- Helpful information sent to a beginner who is skiing for the first time
- Sending different versions of a message based on type of individuals/groups (family vs. non-family, skier vs. boarder, promoter vs. detractor, social networkers vs. not, etc.)

Again, the key is relevancy. You want your message to be delivered with the right message, to the right person, at the right time. When you automatically trigger customized messages based on the information that is already in your database, you get higher opens, more engagement, and most importantly, a higher ROI on your email campaigns.



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