Launched in 2007, Mint.com has quickly become America’s #1 online personal finance service, attracting more than 1.5 million registered users – with thousands more joining each month. The company’s phenomenal growth stems from its fresh, easy and intelligent approach to money management, which has earned it numerous industry awards from Kiplinger, Money and PC Magazine, as well as accolades from Wall Street Journal, Business Week and others.

Mint.com allows its users to easily create a summary of their spending habits, build a budget and monitor performance against personal financial goals. The simplicity of the service, combined with its unparalleled value for managing personal finances, has attracted a passionate community of users. In order to grow its business even faster, Mint.com researched ways to accelerate referrals from its loyal customer base, and ultimately decided to enhance its use of social media in its email marketing.

**Testing to Optimize Campaign Strategy**

All three social programs asked email recipients to share their positive experience with Mint.com by referring their friends. The email creative for each test was the same, only the offer was different. The first test offered the opportunity to win a “Minty Green” iPod Nano once three of their friends became Mint.com users. The second offered exclusive access to the Mint.com Beta Testing Program, also in return for three new users signing up. The third test served as a control group offering no reward, but still asking recipients to send an invitation to their friends.

Of the three offers tested, exclusive access to the Mint.com Best Test Program was the clear winner.
Mint.com launched the three variants to a percentage of their total list and then used the StrongMail Influencer dashboard to track the results in real-time. Using StrongMail Influencer, they could see which offer generated the most activity, and within that activity, which members shared the most invitations and generated the most new users.

The test mailing revealed the “exclusive access” treatment to be the clear favorite among Mint.com users. As a result, Mint.com deployed the winning campaign to the balance of the broader email target segment.

Expanding Reach and Conversions

The typical objective of any socialized email program is to increase reach and conversion, and the reasoning is simple. Intrinsically, socialized email is about extending the reach of a current email program. Finding a way to motivate customers to share an offer with their network has the potential to grow your email file, subscription lists and customer base exponentially.

Socialized email is also very effective at driving conversions, and that’s driven by two factors:

1. Social networks are filled with friends who have similar likes and interests. Consequently, the ideal Mint.com customer is likely to have several members of his or her extended social network (personal address book contacts, Facebook friends, Twitter followers, etc.) who also fit the typical Mint.com customer profile.

2. Today, consumers turn to social media when making purchase decisions. When brands are introduced to consumers via a customer’s own personal network, the brand benefits from increased trust and credibility, increasing the likelihood of conversion. The results generated by the winning campaign exemplify these concepts.

“StrongMail's approach of tapping social motivators to drive sharing behavior was unique in the marketplace, and its easy integration with our existing email program and comprehensive testing and tracking made it the logical choice for us.”

Donna Wells
Chief Marketing Officer
Mint.com

Mint.com Influencers sent an average of 5 invitations each via email and various social networks.
The Results
The winning “exclusive access” email was opened by 48% of those mailed. Of those, over 10% became “Influencers” for the Mint.com brand by sharing the invitation with, on average, 5 friends each, significantly expanding its reach.

The increase in reach aside, these invitations generated an unprecedented 61% click-through rate. More importantly for Mint.com’s bottom line, every 2.6 invite clicks led to one new Mint.com user. This socialized email campaign was extremely successful for generating new users.

“The results from incorporating StrongMail Influencer into our email programs showed us what is truly possible when you effectively tap the power of the social web,” said Wells. “For Mint.com, using StrongMail Influencer paid off in thousands of new users.”

> Over 10% of those mailed become Mint.com Influencers
> Over 5 invitations were sent by each of these Influencers, on average
> 61% of these Friends clicked-through to investigate Mint.com
> 1 new user joined for every 2.6 invite clicks

About StrongMail® Influencer™
StrongMail® Influencer™ injects rich social networking functionality into any email communication – allowing email marketers to extend the reach of their programs by creating engaging experiences that invite consumers to share their brand or offer with friends, relatives and colleagues. By leveraging social motivators when developing the campaign strategy, StrongMail helps ensure that recipients stay connected to the brand, and consumers are motivated to share the campaign with their trusted friends.

Each Influencer-enabled campaign is powered by a viral marketing engine that offers real-time optimization of creative executions to maximize virality and impact. The dashboard allows marketers to actively participate in the virality of your message, not just track it. Use it to influence the conversation, multiply your reach, and drive ROI.

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StrongMail’s Social Media Solutions

StrongMail offers a powerful suite of products and services to help email marketers monetize the social media channel. Extending beyond the common “sharing” tools offered by other providers, StrongMail provides the most comprehensive array or solutions available for email marketers looking to integrate with the social channel today.

Social Programs
Social Programs enables direct marketers to create powerful direct-response programs that leverage social media as the next generation of forward-to-a-friend. At the heart of Social Programs is StrongMail Influencer, which integrates email, the Web and social networks to enable true viral marketing programs in which consumers spend their own “Social Capital” to drive your brand, helping marketers finally deliver on the vision of viral marketing.

Social Share
Social Share enables direct marketers to increase list growth and acquire new, highly valuable targets by allowing email recipients to share branded email content across the most popular social networks, blogs and email. Marketers can leverage Social Share to provide targeted offers to their email list that ignite a natural sharing response, inspiring others to opt-in for additional special offers.

Social Direct
A natural extension of email marketing, Social Direct puts the marketer in control to send targeted and personalized messages to vibrant and fast-growing social communities. Direct marketers can leverage new email technologies to communicate directly to social networks on Facebook via messages, status updates or wall posts.

Social Circle
StrongMail offers a suite of strategic and creative services designed to complement these capabilities and help email marketers maximize the effectiveness of the social media channel, including rewarding advocates for evangelizing brands and programs, as well as identifying, targeting and leveraging those recipients most active within their social networks.

For additional information about StrongMail’s social media solutions, call (650) 421-4200 or visit us www.strongmail.com.