

THE POWER OF CASE STUDIES

DOTGAIN.ORG MANAGER **TONY HODGSON** LOOKS AT ONE OF THE MOST
POWERFUL TOOLS FOR MARKETING YOURSELF AS A
CUSTOMER-FOCUSED BUSINESS



Case studies are powerful, not least because they can be used in so many ways. They can feature your specialist capabilities, help you enter new arenas or underline your leadership in a market you already serve.

They also provide great PR for your business. You can give them away for free to visitors to your website. They are useful references in sales appointments. They can help you win awards that prove your worth. And best of all, they cost you nothing.

A good case study is not just about describing a job you did for a customer. It's more about showing how the customer benefited

from your services. After all, that's what potential customers want to know. The starting point should be the business objective that the customer wants to achieve by engaging you.

It should clearly describe what problems you solved – and spell out the results that your customer gained. That invariably requires input from your customer; you will need to obtain their permission at the outset to mention them in a case study and get their approval for the text itself. It's a collaborative activity just like the work itself.

Here are three examples of case studies used for different marketing purposes and different customer business objectives. They are all

recent, taken from the huge database of case studies compiled over the last ten years by PODi, the US-based digital printing association that dotgain.org has partnered with in the UK. Yes, they are all American, but if more UK printers were to write up case studies, you would see the best practices and great applications that we are capable of in this country. Find out more about the PODi case study database at www.dotgain.org and join up if you want to take it further and create your own.

→ For more information contact **Tony Hodgson on 020 7915 8386 or email tony.hodgson@dotgain.org**



1. Market yourself

DUKE educates customers about personalised URLs

DUKE, a print services provider located in Cleveland, Ohio, had recently begun offering personalised URLs as a service for its clients. DUKE describes itself as "an image solutions company combining integrated design, manufacturing and technology". Last year the company developed a campaign that would explain to clients the benefits of incorporating personalised URLs into their marketing communications.

DUKE's direct marketing campaign consisted of multiple touches including sending 1,530 postcards and follow-up emails to an audience of C-level executives, marketing specialists, creative design people and purchasing professionals. The postcards were printed on an HP Indigo 5500 using HP's own Yours Truly software to manage the personalisation.

In terms of results, 19.5% of recipients visited their personalised URL and 64% of those completed an online survey. Of the visitors, 53% came as a result of the postcard and the other 47% came from a follow-up email sent to those who had not responded to the postcard. From the survey, 54% of respondents requested more information about personalised URLs and DUKE closed deals on six new campaigns for clients.

DUKE received an Honorable Mention Award in the Self-Promotion category at the 2010 PODi AppForum for this project.



2. Develop a new market

Allegra helps Arizona Girl Scouts to raise funds

Allegra Print & Imaging is an integrated marketing and print organisation based in Scottsdale, Arizona specialising in cross media applications. It was commissioned in 2009 by the Arizona Girl Scout organisation to help with fundraising; donations were falling and they needed to find new donors.

Allegra devised a cross media direct marketing campaign with the theme "Support the Sash". The objectives of the campaign were to engage alumni, gather donations and develop a network and database of donors for future campaigns.

The campaign's recipient list of 3100 was selected from the organisation's alumni database. It was segmented by age group, making the messaging more targeted. The creative was versioned by segment and featured prominent women of the community who had been Girl Scouts.

The campaign used a variety of media: a variable data direct mail postcard, email, personalised web pages, social media (Facebook and YouTube) and telesales follow-up. Allegra printed the cards on a Xerox DocuColor 5000 with XMPie personalisation software and MindFire to personalise the web pages.

Of those contacted, 4.9% of the recipients responded of which 31% made donations, raising \$11,750. The average donation was five times higher than usual.



3. Demonstrate leadership

Ready Group markets a sales event for Volvo

The Ready Group is a "Strategic Automotive Marketing Firm" in Massachusetts, USA. It also runs seven Konica Minolta bizhub PRO C6500 systems, printing more than 100,000 pieces of direct mail a day.

As part of its "Get2Gether with a Volvo" national campaign in 2008, Volvo Cars of North America developed a direct marketing lead generation campaign for 64 Volvo retailers.

Volvo hired The Ready Group to develop creative materials that included collages of photos of people enjoying activities from the 1960s to the present – inserting various Volvo models subtly into the photos. The main objective was to sell new Volvo vehicles to both current Volvo customers and owners of other cars. This was done by enticing them to visit their local Volvo retailers through special lease prices and incentives.

The campaign targeted 465,000 people. Each piece was personalised with the name of the recipient and their nearest retailer. It also contained a PURL that enabled each recipient to log on to a personalised web site. A staggering 58% of the people who went to their PURLs made a purchase, resulting in sales of 1,019 vehicles. That amounted to a 265% increase in the transaction rate.

This campaign was nominated for a Stevie (the corporate world's equivalent of an Oscar) at the American Business Awards in 2008 in the "Best Direct Response/Direct Mail" category.