Surviving & Thriving

How Cold Email Marketing became the go to channel during Covid-19

When news broke out that we were in a global pandemic and UK workers were advised to work from home where possible, we noticed immediately that many of our usual clients were taking a break from marketing to see what was going to happen next. We had to act fast to keep momentum going and to replace the pipeline that was now put on hold, if we were going to continue to operate throughout the pandemic.

We worked on generating leads using email marketing in 3 ways.

1 Email Marketing based on what we thought might happen

At first we decided to start making a list of the type of companies that we believed would still be looking to do some marketing.

One example industry is as follows:

Security Companies
(both virtual and physical)

Our thoughts were that many businesses would now be working from home for the first time, security companies could target business owners who would need added online security. For those that offered physical security, we advised targeting factories that may have ceased production for a few weeks and may need equipment to secure them.

Method

We used our email data count engine **Countrunner**, to run a count targeting 2 SIC subclasses:

80100 - Private security activities
80200 - Security systems service activities

This resulted in **2,358** contacts.

We then created email copy, similar to the following on the right and sent it to the contacts:

> Subject: Security ideas
>
> Hi {firstname},
>
> We're targeting companies like yours to see if we can help you with your email marketing during the next couple of weeks.
>
> Have you thought about email marketing to businesses?
>
> If you offer online security you could target companies with employees working from home for the first time. If you offer physical security then maybe target companies with factories ceasing production for a few weeks to see if they need equipment or services to secure the buildings/lockups etc...
>
> What do you think? Helpful or not really?
>
> Catherine

Results

The results of our security email campaign were as follows:

Only **2 leads** were generated from this campaign, however, **1** of these converted into an order for an email campaign to the construction industry.

We experimented early on with more ideas that were based on our thoughts of what industries might be interested in still marketing throughout the pandemic including:

Laptop/Computer Supplies - companies need laptops for employees working from home
Cleaning Companies - cleaning offices with Covid-19 in mind
Restaurants - Advertise locally that they are now doing deliveries

We requested ideas across the company from all employees in all departments and pulled together 8 prospecting campaigns and a campaign directed at our CRM.

Within the first 2 weeks of lockdown we reacted in this way by putting email copy together quickly after an idea was submitted and running the counts based on the industry.

This resulted in 16 leads with a conversion rate of 19%.

When the government made any announcement or changes to rules regarding lockdown, furlough schemes, loans, social distancing, closing and reopening or anything else, we reacted quickly by targeting the industries that may be able to benefit.

One example industry is as follows:

Trade Shows and Conferencing

At the beginning of lockdown, businesses that could not operate remotely had to close their doors. We decided to contact companies that usually run trade shows and conferences as we started to also receive emails from exhibitions saying they were now offering online solutions.
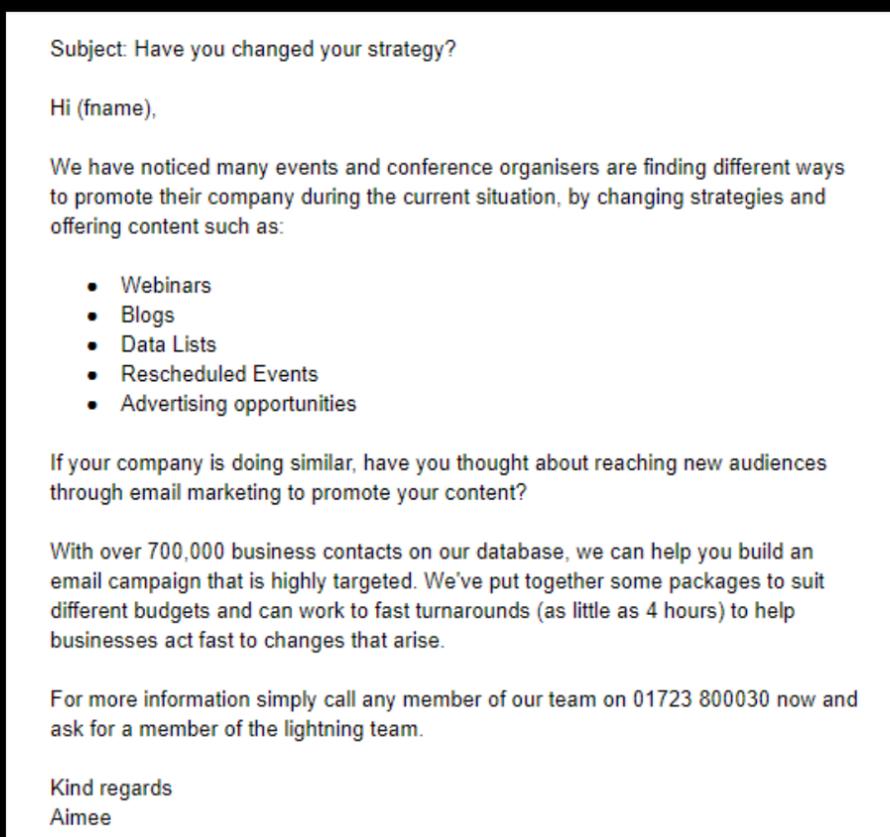
Method

We used our email data count engine Countrunner, to run a count targeting 2 SIC subclasses:

SIC SUBCLASS : 82301 - Activities of exhibition and fair organisers
SIC SUBCLASS : 82302 - Activities of conference organisers

This resulted in **1,170** contacts.

We then created email copy, similar to the following:

Subject: Have you changed your strategy?

Hi (fname),

We have noticed many events and conference organisers are finding different ways to promote their company during the current situation, by changing strategies and offering content such as:

- Webinars
- Blogs
- Data Lists
- Rescheduled Events
- Advertising opportunities

If your company is doing similar, have you thought about reaching new audiences through email marketing to promote your content?

With over 700,000 business contacts on our database, we can help you build an email campaign that is highly targeted. We've put together some packages to suit different budgets and can work to fast turnarounds (as little as 4 hours) to help businesses act fast to changes that arise.

For more information simply call any member of our team on 01723 800030 now and ask for a member of the lightning team.

Kind regards
Aimee

Results

Targeting companies within exhibition and conferencing generated **5 leads**.

We repeated this process with other industries including:

Industry	Government Announcement / changes
Virtual Training, Exhibitions, Consultants, Waste Management	Initial lockdown closure
Retail, Leisure & Beauty, Cleaning Companies, Accommodation and Food Service Activities, Hospitality, Recruitment, Construction, Manufacturing (Plastics)	Reopening of some businesses with social distancing in place Certain industries allowed to reopen
Garages	MOT extensions ending
HR Companies, Legal	Furlough Schemes
Financial Sector	Bounce Back Loans

Overall this method resulted in 21 leads with a conversion rate of 14%.

3 Marketing based on lead analysis

Our final method of generating leads through cold email outreach was to analyse leads coming into the business elsewhere (and orders), through the website enquiries, social media and any other general enquiries.

The aim was to see what was happening in the market and what type of companies were looking for our products and services during the pandemic. To do this we used our CRM.

When a lead comes in we always do our research to analyse the type of company they are and make a note of the industry or SIC they fall under. During this campaign we looked at the leads daily, sometimes hourly, to determine how our next campaign was going to be shaped.

One example industry is as follows:

Print and Signage Industry

We were contacted by multiple print and signage companies in the early stages of the pandemic, as social distancing was being introduced. One company in particular had built a purpose built product site based on promoting social distancing products and decided to use their requirements to build our campaign.

Method

First we ran a count on our count engine based on the SIC the company was registered for on Companies House.

Nature of business (SIC)

18129 - Printing not elsewhere classified

We decided to target the entire SIC Division:

18 - Printing and reproduction of recorded media

This resulted in 6,061 contacts to target.

We then created a series of emails to this audience, mentioning the current guidance on social distancing and giving ideas of how they could market to different industries, similar to the following:

Subject: Find new customers in your area

Hi (fname),

Are you still operating under the current situation and looking for ways to generate new business?

We've been helping businesses with their email marketing, to target different industries that may still be operating.

One example, A print company looking to run an email campaign to restaurants in their area, that may have started a delivery service and need new menus printing...

We have put together some email marketing packages for to a 4 hour turnaround to help you act fast.

If you would like more info, let me know or you speak to a 01723 800030.

Catherine

As more companies contacted us, we continued to target this audience with different learnings:

Subject: A demand for print materials

Hi (fname),

We have seen demand or email marketing lists from printing companies who are preparing print materials and social distancing products for various industries including doctors surgeries, retailers, pharmacies, hairdresser salons and dental practices - We have 714,831 records nationally - would you like me to send you across a cost to purchase a targeted list?

Catherine

Results

**With the print industry alone, we generated 12 leads with email marketing, with a 50% close rate.**

This method was successful due to being relevant, targeting the right audience, making suggestions to how our services could be useful and acting fast to developments.

We used this method for identifying other audiences and also repeated this process across other marketing channels too.

How can you apply these techniques?

We have shared this method as we believe our clients can also benefit from the techniques we have learnt, to identify new audiences for targeting by email.

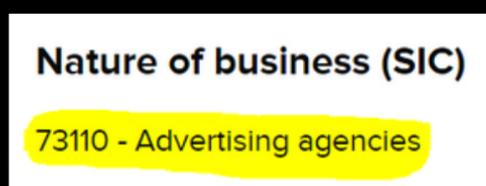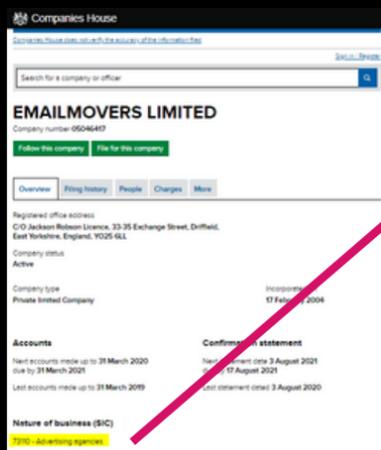All the tools we have used are available to our customers.
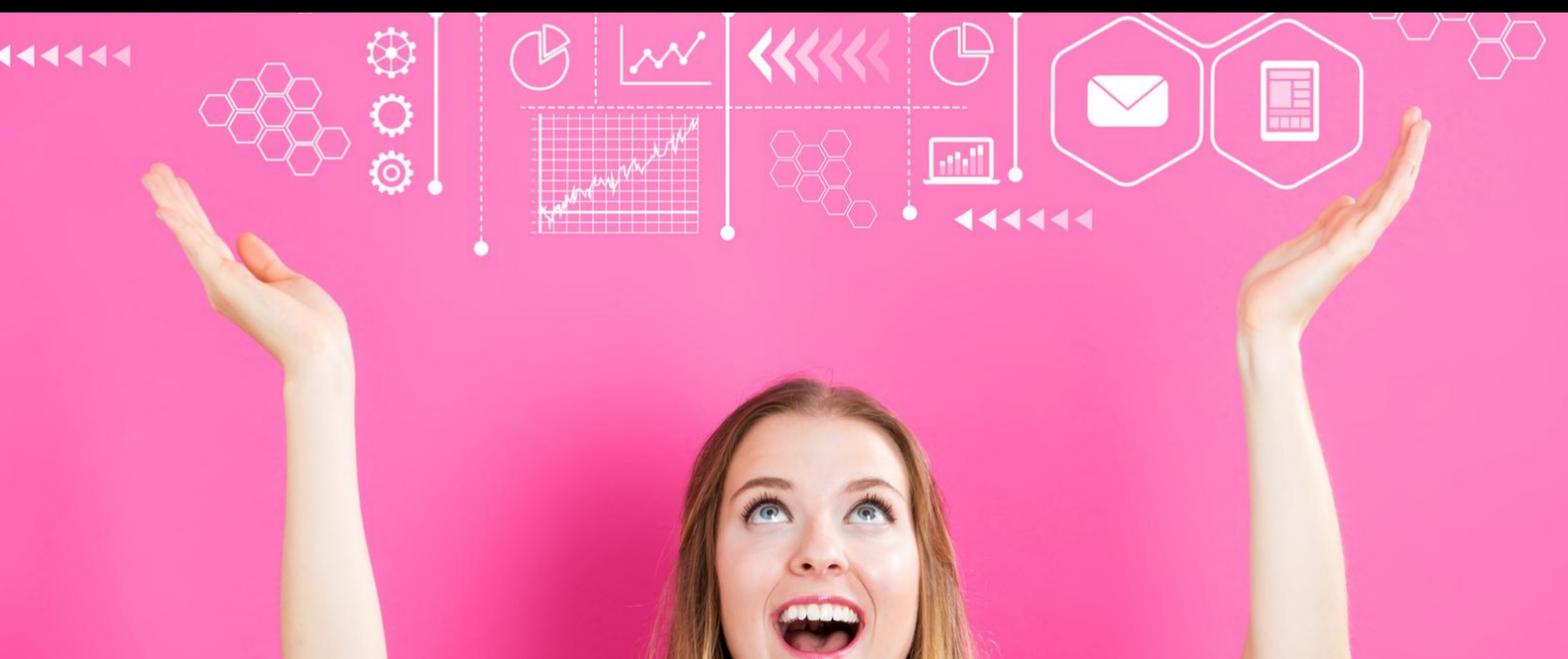
Identify a business that you want to base your campaign audience on

For example:

A current lead
A top customer

Look that business up on Companies House:

Nature of business (SIC)

73110 - Advertising agencies

Take a note of the Nature of business (SIC) - sometimes businesses have more than one

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Register (free) for an account on Countrunner
https://online.countrunner.com/

The Countrunner Count Engine is a free tool that allows you to run your own custom counts, live against our current UK B2B Database.

You can build a targeted list in a matter of minutes to check data volumes, purchase from us, or save for a later date.

Run a count on Countrunner
Run a count using the SIC(s) you want to target:

Click 'Run Count' and you will see the volume, then save it.

You can then use the 'Send Count Details' button and add your Account Managers name to the message.

Your Account Manager will then send a quote for your targeted selection.