

## Direct Mail Case Study

# Café Express

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Sector & Brand: Retail, Café Express  
Country: USA  
Campaign Date: 2010

## Background

### Who was the advertiser?

Café Express is an award-winning restaurant chain in the US. The Texas-based company prides itself on its fresh handmade food and is a long-time lunch and dinner favourite, thanks to the 'good fast food' approach of its owner, celebrated US chef, Robert Del Grande.

### What was the challenge?

It recently launched into the breakfast market but take-up had been slow. Research revealed that many people didn't know that the chain served breakfast, so it needed a marketing campaign that would raise customer awareness and bring new customers into its restaurants.

### What were the objectives of the campaign?

- » Raise customer awareness about the Café Express breakfast offer
- » Generate traffic to the restaurants

### Who was the target group?

Local customers (in the geographical area of the retail chain)

## The campaign in detail

### Which media were used?

The campaign was a cross-media campaign, including direct mail, online and social media.

### What was the mailing approach?

Café Express decided to reach out to its target audience, 20,000 local customers, and invite them to try the new breakfast for themselves, for free. Their agency came up with an innovative cross-platform campaign, kicking off with direct mail and encompassing personalised websites and social media, which would create the necessary buzz.

### What was the creative concept?

A target audience of 20,000 local customers received a personalized direct mail pack which featured a 'breakfast gift card' containing a personalized URL (PURL). This directed recipients to log on using their PURL to activate their gift cards and claim their free breakfast.

People were then prompted to complete a quick online survey, which harvested demographic information and customer habits – valuable volunteered personal information. Once the activation process was completed customers could redeem their free breakfast at any Café Express location in Dallas or Houston.

In addition to claiming a free breakfast, they could also post the free breakfast offer to a multiple of social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. As an added incentive, people who chose to share the offer were entered into a draw for a \$100 gift certificate.

## The results

- » 20,000 personalized direct mail packs were sent.
- » Total response rate: 24 percent; of which 62 percent was generated from the DM pack.
- » 20 percent of respondents activated their cards sharing their offer on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.
- » Demographic questions confirmed what the Café Express core customer looked like: a woman in her 40s with a household income in excess of \$100,000.

