



Tapping into the **herd** Mentality

How Chick-fil-A used
direct mail and the
power of social media
to start a stampede.





A QUICK BITE

TARGET AUDIENCE: Consumers in the Covington, LA, area

DISTRIBUTION: 5,048 postcards combined with social media sharing, resulted in 14,000 people visiting Chick-fil-A's campaign site

DATE: February – March 2010



There's no doubt that the cows of Covington, Louisiana, are mooing with joy these days. Thanks to the highly successful direct mail campaign run by the Chick-fil-A franchise owners, more people are apparently eating chicken.

It all started when the Chick-fil-A owners asked Ducky, a marketing company, to help them increase store traffic and build their customer database. While that's not a particularly new challenge, this new technology-driven marketing company uses a proprietary process for integrating social media with direct mail marketing that could lead to new ways to meet it. It is precisely this expertise that makes the

Chick-fil-A campaign an extraordinary case study of the ripple effect of social media on direct mail.

The meat of the campaign is FREE chicken.

At the heart of this campaign are cows touting FREE chicken. These cows are already familiar and popular features of Chick-fil-A's advertising promotions – encouraging people to forgo beef in favor of chicken. This creative element added just the right note of fun to the viral component that gave the campaign its power. After all, who could ignore a cow offering you a free sandwich?

The mailpiece contained two perforated cards – one featuring an offer for breakfast, the other for lunch. It was mailed to a list of 5,048 consumers in the Covington area. Recipients were directed to a personalized URL.

In addition to the postcards, “offer” cards were distributed to employees at local businesses. These cards directed recipients to visit a generic URL tied to the campaign.

Both the postcards and offer cards drove recipients to a customized microsite for the Chick-fil-A campaign. Here, they validated their contact information, activated the offer, and answered a few questions from Chick-fil-A.

They were then given the opportunity to share the offer via social networks, e-mail, and Short Message Service (SMS) texting. All recipients who shared the offer with friends were entered into a sweepstakes.

The primary sharing outlet was Facebook, with 1,218 users posting the offer in their newsfeed. This brought in an additional 6,499 users to the site. Twitter fans proved very responsive to the offer, with 115 users tweeting the offer and 1,185 responding – almost a 1 to 10 response.

Over the moon results.

Once the results were tallied, it became clear that adding a viral component to the direct mail campaign had a tremendous impact. The findings:

- 279.8% visit rate** – Over 5,000 postcards were sent out, but with the social sharing, this number grew to 14,124 visits to the campaign microsite:
 - ◆ 7.9% were responses to the postcards.
 - ◆ 65.3% were responses to social sharing (text, e-mail, social networks).
 - ◆ 26.8% were responses to direct sharing (cards passed out to local businesses).

- 120.6% response rate** – Over 6,000 individuals provided their contact information. Because a third-party list was used, all data captured was new – delivering a higher number of leads than the initial outbound campaign:
 - ◆ 22% response rate from the direct mail alone, with 1,111 recipients logging into their personalized URL to activate offers.

- 24.8% coupon redemption rate** – Store owners reported 1,300 coupon redemptions from the campaign, with viral responses almost equaling those from the mailpieces.

A wealth of information for future grazing.

Beyond the impressive response rate, the campaign gathered a lot of useful information about Chick-fil-A customers:

Prime targets –The campaign analytics identified the primary demographic as women between the ages of 31–40 and pinpointed the geographic location of their market. Going forward, the owners can take advantage of these findings to focus their future marketing efforts on customers who will provide the greatest return.

The campaign created by Chick-fil-A and Ducky represents marketing at its best: using a successful medium such as direct mail to explore and tap into the newfound power of social media.

This campaign lassoed a 2011 PODi Best Practices Award in the Direct Marketing category.

Pictured from left to right: The postcard, and the microsite where recipients could activate and share their offer.

