How Freshly Picked Michigan Apples Cut Their Sales Cycle by 550%

Increasing sales by $15,000 in five days was easy with texting

SlickText

Tailored Connections

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Overview

As a seasonal small business, it's vital for Freshly Picked Michigan Apples to maintain customer relationships each year.

Owner, Alex Richert, knew he'd have to be more engaging than ever during COVID-19 when customer behavior was unpredictable. He wanted a reliable, efficient way to communicate with customers that would inspire loyalty and sales.

> Adopting new marketing methods isn't easy but he let the stats do the talking, convinced the best way to acquire new customers and nurture current relationships was with the method that has a 98% open rate: text messaging.

98%

The Challenge

Richert's company previously texted customers twice per year: Once to remind them to place an order and again when their order was ready. When Richert started his business, a rudimentary strategy worked fine, but as he grew it became hard to scale:

- ☑ Richert's staff sent these texts individually — with a list of nearly 1,000 customers Richert estimated it consumed between 40 to 60 hours of staff time.

- ☑ If a customer placed an order via text, Richert and his team manually wrote it down. Not only was this time consuming, but as the business grew it proved increasingly harder to keep track of orders.

- ☑ Staff were required to verify and update contact information manually when customers received their orders. This took a lot of time but the biggest risk was that staff would transcribe the wrong information, making it impossible to follow up with that same customer the next year.

The Solution

The team knew they wanted to continue leveraging text messaging, the high open rate for text messages couldn't be beat. But, they wanted to find a way to streamline their process. They also needed not just an easy communications tool but a way to track messaging history.

"We came from another text marketing service, but when I came across SlickText, I saw the difference. It was clear and easy to understand the value above and beyond simply automated text messaging," said Richert. "With SlickText, I send thousands of order pick-up updates and deadline reminders in a matter of minutes."

☑ **Richert and his team delivered apples to 20 cities across Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Tennessee and segmented each area with different text words.** For example, a customer based in Duluth texted "DULUTH" to opt-in to the specific list for the town. They further segemented based on order status.

☑ **When the team arrived on location, they texted everyone on the list,** letting them know the timing and location of their apple pick-up.

☑ **Each text they sent to their subscribers included a link to their website.** They began seeing a significant increase in web traffic, company awareness and sales.

The Results

Freshly Picked Michigan Apples transitioned to SlickText at the end of July 2020. Richert added a link on the company's website for customers to opt-in to company texts.

☑ **In three weeks, they gained 150 subscribers, an increase of nearly 20%.**

☑ **Just five days after implementing SlickText, Freshly Picked Michigan Apples gained $15,000 in sales with its first campaign.** Previously, it took three months of collecting handwritten orders, one at a time, to make comparable sales.

☑ **Within the first five days of its texting campaign, Freshly Picked Michigan Apples made 95% of the sales it took three months to make in 2019.** And, that number didn't include 50% of its legacy customer base, because they hadn't yet placed orders. Based on this success, the company expected to see $20,000 to $40,000 in additional sales with another campaign issuing a last call for the season's preorders.

"Before implementing text message marketing into my outreach strategy, I didn't have a good way to keep track of my customers' information. I would hurriedly write down contact info with pen and paper at the stand. This not only took up valuable time, but required even more time on the backend to transfer handwritten information to a digital version," said Richert. "This season, I'll have my tablet at the stand with me, allowing customers to opt-in right then and there, sharing their information so they stay in the loop next year, all while building my contact list and ultimately saving time."

By texting customers through a text marketing platform, Freshly Picked Michigan Apples can now stay in regular, consistent communication with loyal customers, saving time while maintaining personalized, targeted outreach. This enhanced use of texting enabled the company to see an increase in sales and continue to grow year-over-year.

"Now that I know what SlickText offers me, it would be impossible for me to contact customers any other way," said Richert. "I didn't realize the expanded marketing opportunity SlickText provided far beyond sending a simple text and, now that I do, I am sold. As long as I am texting my customers, I will be texting them through SlickText."

SlickText

SlickText is the leading text messaging platform. Since 2012, SlickText has turned text messaging into a major competitive advantage for companies. Today, over 177,000 customers across North America, including ESPN, American Cancer Society and FedEx, have used SlickText's award-winning software to drive relationships, leverage data, and get results. SlickText has been named a 2021 High Performer by G2 Crowd and is a former Technology Innovator of the Year. The company has dual headquarters in Jamestown, NY and Nashville, TN.

Learn more about SlickText at
SlickText.com

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