

MICROSOFT BUSINESS SOLUTIONS ENROLLMENT PROGRAM

THE CHALLENGE

Microsoft developed the Microsoft Partner Program (MSPP) to recognize expertise, provide business value, and reward partners for their impact on the marketplace. Partners could enroll in the program with a Microsoft Business Solutions (MBS) competency if they had proven expertise in deploying business management solutions. Once enrolled in the MBS program, the partner must re-enroll each year to continue receiving program benefits. Microsoft's goal was to retain all enrolled partners, and have re-enrollment completed by January, 2007. A serious obstacle was that partners were already overwhelmed with news of Microsoft's Vista launch and Office 2007 launch. And with it being the holiday season, there was too much for partners to absorb. Microsoft needed an outside marketing team to get the re-enrollment message out to partners in a unique and interesting way – and they needed help right away!

WHY EXTRA MILE MARKETING?

Pam Johnson, Senior Marketing Manager for Microsoft's Dynamics Program, was attending a class taught by Extra Mile Marketing for the Microsoft marketing community. A light bulb went off when the topic of bulk mailings came up. Pam approached us to discuss the re-enrollment project. We instantly engaged with Pam and embraced the challenge. We brainstormed some creative solutions to meet her objectives.

THE SOLUTION

Extra Mile presented a number of options. Pam decided on the idea of sending out gifts to partners: a bag of gold chocolate coins, wrapped like a present complete with an oversized gift tag and a simple message – "Why re-enroll? What are the benefits to my company?" The gift tag gave instructions on how to re-enroll, broken down into 4 clear and easy steps. Extra Mile was a one-stop-shop for Microsoft, doing everything from developing the concept and creating the copy, to packaging and shipping. The gifts were sent to about 1,000 partners that had not yet re-enrolled in the MBS partner program. Extra Mile executed in a timely manner, with partners receiving their gifts in the thick of the holiday season.

The end result was a fun gift with a concise, easy to understand call to action for partners. Extra Mile made it simple to understand the re-enrollment process, and the benefits to their company. Re-enrolling allowed partners with an MBS competency, to continue to receive Microsoft's market development funds (MDF) – money to help partners grow their business with Microsoft. Microsoft was very pleased that Extra Mile accomplished the task with imagination – from start to finish.

As a testament to the success of the MBS re-enrollment program, Microsoft asked us to develop a recruitment campaign to get high potential partners interested and enrolled in the MBS competency program. Extra Mile sent out another 2000 packages using a modified gift concept. With help from the Extra Mile team, Microsoft achieved their goals of educating and rewarding their partners in a new and interesting way.

"Their MBS knowledge reduced the amount of prep time needed to deliver an effective communication piece that was concise, easy to follow and fun."

*Pam Johnson
Microsoft*



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