

GMC Article

Trans-Promo

Transforming the Face of Communications

Author: Hal Morrow, VP Marketing, GMC Software Technology

Publication: OutputLinks

Publication Date: April 2007

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Transforming the Face of Communications

Sending a statement? Why not send something more valuable. Banks, utilities, retailers and credit card providers are among the companies discovering the communications value that previously had gone untouched in their statements. This is being commonly referred to as trans-promo communications. The trend is towards merging transaction and promotional content into one document, and delivering it via print or electronic channels.

Forward-thinking companies now are incorporating highly tailored messages – based on data about a consumer’s buying habits and preferences – into transaction documents to provide messages relevant to a client’s specific needs and promote additional products and services. Additionally, some companies are selling ad space to business partners to drive more revenues, or teaming up with partners on joint promotional campaigns.

Visual Appeal and Selling Power

On average, a consumer will spend forty two and a half seconds reviewing a bill. However, two thirds of consumers rarely or never the read the inserts and brochures included with their bills. Transaction documents have the compelling “must read” quality that direct marketing strives for, and direct mail has the visual appeal and selling power that statements have been lacking.

Combining both in the same document and in the same envelope not only saves money but opens up additional revenue opportunities. Creating the document in both print and electronic versions to accommodate the preferences of the individual consumer is quickly becoming the standard.

The pairing of financial account information and personalized marketing communications in one package is hard to resist. Promotional messaging is more likely to be noticed when it is part of the reader’s bank or credit card statement. Statements, in turn, can become high response vehicles and relationship builders with the right relevant messaging.

Get Ready

Several factors are fueling the emergence of trans-promo communication: the growth of digital printing, the adoption of color, and increasing skill in variable personalization. According to InfoTrends, a leading worldwide market research and strategic consulting firm for the digital imaging and document solutions industry, variable documents already comprise about one third of the volume of today’s digital output. InfoTrends further estimates the North American market for trans-promo applications printed in full digital color will grow from 1.6 billion impressions in 2006 to 21.7 billion impressions by 2010 – a 91 percent annual growth rate.

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Mr. Kenny Erlich
 PO Box 6013
 Irvine, CA 92614-3649

ACCOUNT INFORMATION				
Account Number	Statement Date	New Balance	Minimum Payment	Payment Due
10003 756 721	1/1/07	\$232.89	\$9.32	2/1/07

ACCOUNT SUMMARY	
Previous Balance	\$823.00
- Payments & Credit	\$823.00
+/- Finance Charge	\$0.00
+ New Charges	\$232.89
= New Balance	\$232.89
Minimum Payment	\$9.32

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 Join like-minded enthusiasts for an unforgettable week of fresh powder, including a heliskiing adventure. Co-sponsored by GMC Outfitters and Lost Coast Travel. Full itinerary at www.gmctravel.com/travel

TRANSACTIONS			
Date	Item Number	Description	Price
11/18/2006	166603-004	Alpine Stainless Plates - Svc. For 4	\$49.95
11/18/2006	166606-004	12 Quart Stew Pot	\$159.95
11/18/2006	166607-004	Granite Gear Folding Kitchen Sink	\$22.99

25% off Mens Outerwear
 Valid on all White River and Sun Pass Winter Gear

Peak OUTFITTERS

Account Number	New Balance	Minimum Payment
10003 756 721	\$232.89	\$9.32

Make payment to:
 Peak Outfitters
 529 Main Street
 Charlestown, MA 02129

Amount Enclosed

February 1, 2007

Due date

Thank you for your purchase.
 Send me more information about the Peak Outfitters mailing list for coupons and specials.

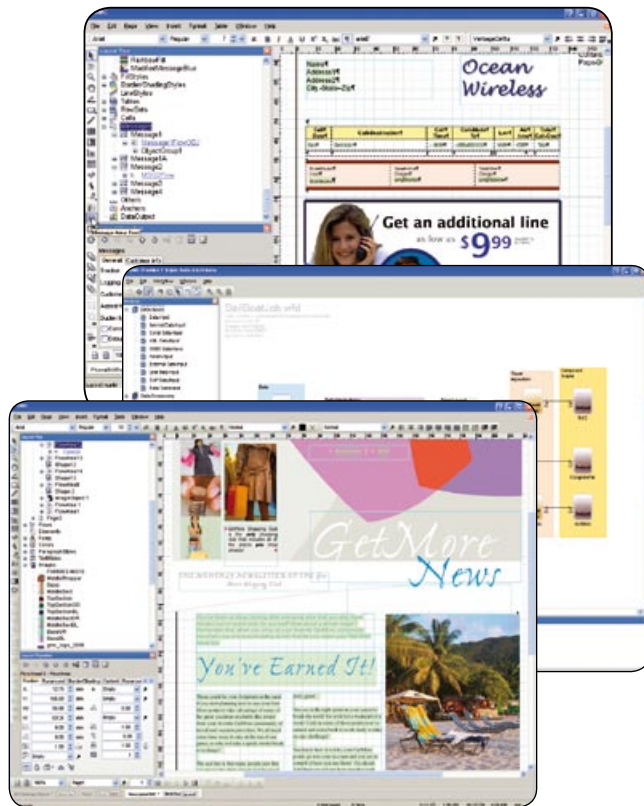
Add messages tailored to the recipient’s interests and needs

Trans-promo is a natural outgrowth of variable data printing for graphic arts and on-demand applications. Some would even say transactions were the first variable print applications. What were once routine requirements – regulatory notices, privacy updates, invoices – can now become sales opportunities.

Raising the Value

Marketers who have successfully used variable messaging in direct mail are waking up to the value of adding personalized communication to high-value transaction statements. And today marketing will not be run out of IT for making the request. The software tools are available; digital printers are primed; color is ready; and marketers are eager.

Companies already have the data, the customers and the documents, too. Trans-promo communication takes it all to a different level, while maintaining the intent of the original financial information. Taking a cue from direct mail, graphical representations of customers’ transactions along with dynamic content and personalized proactive marketing promotions and campaigns can grab attention, mold perception of a corporate brand, and increase the potential of customer spending.



Cross sell additional products and services

Transforming the Business Document

A trans-promo strategy allows richer content that adds interest to routine business documents and resonates with readers, including:

Benefits
Graphical representations of transactions
Dynamic content and personalized messages
Color and personalization to get attention
Messaging and consistency to support branding
Cross selling additional products and services
Additional revenues from selling white space advertising.

Statements and invoices are the most consistent, mutual communications between businesses and their customers. These documents are expected, and because of their financial information, they are often opened and read before other mail. The consumer expects the document and recognizes its relevance to their financial interests.

As communication media, statements stand far above other mailed communications, although they have never had the reputation of being marketing tools. That is, until now.

Start with a Strategy

Trans-promo communications can take many forms. Possibilities range from basic personalized messaging on a one-color statement to the most elegant full color communication with spot-on messaging, splashy images and formatting based on customer data about needs and preferences. But it should all start with a plan. The strategy should be more than just a marketing message plugged into extra white space on a bank statement.

Look at your transaction documents and your promotional campaigns and figure out the best way to blend the two. This could be an opportunity to evaluate all your customer communication touch points. Involve all stakeholders – marketing, billing, legal and other appropriate departments – in the choice and use of customer data. Do testing and measuring as you would with any campaign. Trans-promo users benefit from an awareness of the psychology of customer communications, in addition to an understanding of variable design and printing.

What You Will Need

The migration to trans-promo will force enterprises and service providers to re-evaluate their software infrastructure to ensure they have the right tools to build personalized optimized for high-volume production and trans-promo campaigns.

What You Will Need

- The statement source data should be available in a format that is compatible with information mined from CRM systems, ERP systems, and other external databases. The more integrated this data is, the more effective trans-promo applications can be.
- A platform capable of handling a mix of different applications – transaction, promotional, hybrid trans-promo, and one-to-one interactive applications.
- A vendor that provide a strong technology offering for direct marketing and marketing applications, as well as for transaction materials.
- Technology that is easy to implement and use, and has platform and protocol support capabilities for easy integration with enterprise architectures.
- The ability to quickly develop and easily maintain marketing/ trans-promo applications.
- Technology that is compatible with your data input sources; integrates with your CRM, content management, document production and archiving systems.
- A system with data handling and processing capabilities required for robust, high-volume trans-promo applications.
- Multi-channel distribution capabilities.
- Message management and version control capabilities.

Trans-promo communications can build on what your company is already doing with direct marketing and statement applications. Highly targeted efforts work best, leveraging customer data and spending patterns to directly target users for measurable results.

Invest in the services of a graphic designer with the skills to create eye-catching promotional pieces. Bold design is more likely to draw the customer’s eye towards a specific promotion. Ideally, the designer should have knowledge of transaction documents to maintain the integrity of the document’s original purpose. Even better, the designer should understand digital printing and use of variable data.

Documents Will Change

According to Charlie Corr, Group Director of InfoTrends, “The adoption of trans-promo documents could transform the existing document landscape.” It is certainly transforming the face of the transaction document.

For decades, invoices and statements have retained a typical look of black print, columns of numbers and a balance at the bottom. Other than minor changes in layout or spot color logos and amounts due, there haven’t been any dramatic changes.

These documents often contain a lot of unused white space, and today businesses are recognizing the value of that real estate. “Companies can utilize the white space on transactional documents as selling space to target recipients with specific messages relevant to their buying

patterns and preferences,” continued Corr. Customer data is imported and combined with targeted marketing graphics that reflect each individual customer’s demographics.

Color is part of great trans-promo applications, but not everyone will make the switch overnight. According to Print Media magazine, „the gestation period for changing the design of a transactional document might be as long as two years in some cases.” Some may not go beyond highlight color, and that might be just fine. It all depends on the goal and the strategy.

Every month, millions of statements, invoices and checks are printed. With trans-promo, you can make the most of every one. With a combination of bold design, color print and variable data, any transactional document can become a valuable marketing tool that allows you to inform and offer a wider range of services to your customers.

Quite simply, it’s the new direction of customer communication.

GMC Software Technology

GMC Software Technology helps businesses implement high impact, personalized customer satisfaction and loyalty, drive new customer acquisition, improve productivity and cut costs. Our PrintNet software is an easy to implement, end-to-end solution that provides full data integration and processing, design and composition, collaboration and approval, distributed output management and process automation for highly targeted print and electronic communications.

We offer exceptionally reliable technologies and services based on worldwide ISO 9001:2000 certification and CMMI development methodology. GMC serves thousands of users worldwide, and many of our customers are producing in excess of 100 million personalized documents per month – including direct mail, statements, bills, policies, catalogs, correspondence and trans-promo materials.

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Contact

For additional information about this article or about GMC products, please contact:

Hal Morrow
GMC Software Technology
529 Main Street, Suite 223
Charlestown, MA 02129, USA
h.morrow@gmc.net
Phone (603)425 5152
www.gmc.net