

More online traffic, more conversion, more sales

How Virgin Mobile Australia exceeded customer expectation

Problem

Poor online customer experience was leading to sales decline

In a world of increasing customer impatience with online services that don't meet expectations, Virgin Mobile Australia's online retail presence and customer experience was progressively viewed as inflexible and 'out of sync' with the company's trademark brand perception of 'can-do' innovation and friendly, personable service.

The commonly held view of the site as 'just another sales channel', triggered a strategic review whose sole objective was the improvement of the customers' online experience. With no suitable replacement or 'off-the-shelf' solution evident, Oakton was engaged to solve clearly define the problem. The recommendation was to design, build and deliver a breakthrough competitive solution to increase distribution by greatly improving the online customer experience.

Approach

Design and deliver an online customer experience designed to increase distribution

How Oakton approached the project has been credited as one of the key factors of success: first and foremost, the clarity of Virgin Mobile Australia's business objectives; second Oakton's experience and knowledge of leading-edge technologies; third, Oakton's management proficiencies, in both technical leadership and overall project management; and lastly, the agile delivery approach which helped realise a quality result under very tight time constraints.

Recommendations

An agile approach ensured greater visibility and flexibility and team ownership

To achieve defined objectives Oakton recommended the new platform be built using the latest enabling technologies from Microsoft including, .Net Framework 3.5; ASP .Net 3.5 with MVC; MS Ajax, JQuery; WCF; Linq to SQL; Enterprise Library 4: Logging, Exception, Caching Blocks; and MS SQL Server 2005.

Following approval of the solution architecture and initial scope, Oakton then managed the range of works as an 'agile' program with .Net developers, an architect and a ScrumMaster who drove a very successful Scrum Coaching strategy, ensuring stakeholders had much greater visibility and flexibility to review and change requirements if and when necessary. This approach also resulted in a higher degree of ownership across the whole team, a real driver in achieving genuine development momentum and a high quality outcome in an extremely tight timeframe.

Results

A 50% increase in 'browse to order' rate and a 300% increase in offers

The goal to drive more sales, increase store traffic, and raise the 'browse to buy' conversion rate was spectacularly achieved by improving the customer buying experience.

First, direct marketing support was enhanced, allowing special campaign deals to be linked directly to eShop pages, streamlining the purchase process. Second, the 'up-sell' capability was expanded, offering value-add items online to existing packages, bonus items as promotions, and bolt-ons to services being purchased. Third, selection processes were simplified, through the introduction of a new 'product chooser' bringing ease, clarity and greater utility with a dose of Virgin style to the online shopping experience. And fourth, the checkout process was improved, reducing the number of steps to complete any purchase.

Not only did the 'browse to order' rate increase by a sustained 50% but the creation of an admin console greatly enhanced the ability to make 'offer' changes on the fly while ensuring consistent service levels. Administrators increased offers from 23 per month to 70 per month, an increase of 300%.

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Virgin Mobile, with over 1,000,000 members and 600 plus staff, is one of Australia's leading mobile and broadband providers with a reputation for innovative products and service.

We're an Australian consulting and technology firm founded in 1988. Our business is helping create lasting value by uniquely blending business insights and technology solutions to give our clients a significant advantage in today's rapidly changing world.

At Oakton, we think differently: instead of jumping in we step back and invest time and effort to improve our understanding of the problem you're trying to solve. We focus on examining the problem from different perspectives to master what we believe is the most important step, clearly defining the problem in the first place!

For a more indepth look at our research and expertise with some of Australia's most successful companies, visit www.oakton.com.au