

Client



Maximizing the value of Cisco's global contact universe

Company:
Cisco Systems Inc.

Size:
66,000 employees and annual revenues of \$40 billion

Website:
www.cisco.com

Headquarters:
San Francisco, USA

Solution:
Customer Analytics

Results:

1. Customer analysis is performed 30 times quicker than before
2. Faster counts help marketing managers size opportunities more accurately
3. New database services re-activate, enrich or acquire contact information
4. Cisco is now able to plan, design and execute more engaging campaigns.

"The new approach helps managers on a day-to-day basis but also in a more strategic vein when mapping out annual marketing plan. We needed better quality insight in a shorter timeframe and Alterian delivered on both counts."

Mike Bull
Global Database Marketing Manager
Cisco

As a worldwide leader in networking and internet solutions, Cisco Systems Inc. generates annual revenues of \$40 billion. Providing hardware and software which carries all types of network traffic from voice to video, the organization helps individuals, companies and even entire countries become better connected, more efficient and increase their productivity.

At the heart of Cisco's worldwide database marketing strategy lies a team purely focused on developing a global contact universe and maximizing its use at a regional or country level. Cisco Database Marketing's core responsibility is to identify the health of the global contact database and understand how marketable it is. Fusing both analytical expertise with traditional direct marketing skills, the central department provides a vital set of strategic and tactical services to the rest of the business.

Identifying the right contacts worldwide

Like many technology companies targeting the IT audience, the majority of Cisco sales are through an indirect reseller channel, limiting the type of data collected on prospects and customers. By mirroring its operational contact data warehouse, Database Marketing had already achieved a rare feat for a company of Cisco's size and created a single customer view of tens of millions of company contacts worldwide. But the challenge lay in being able to improve the quality and quantity of individual contact information, in order to engage more effectively with prospect companies.

"The primary business goal was to maximize the value of our global contact base and create a solution to increase engagement with prospect companies," explained Mike Bull, Global Database Marketing Manager at Cisco. "We wanted to be able to size a campaign opportunity quickly, and simultaneously identify where we needed to improve the data."

In the past, identifying marketable contacts was done towards the end of the campaign process, using a combination of business intelligence tools and Excel pivot tables, which took several hours. Marketing departments around the world would also often discover they had too few contacts to make a proposed campaign worthwhile.

In order to enhance the database's contact view, Cisco knew a powerful analytical tool was required – not only to create quick counts but also highlight where data enrichment was needed. Any new solution had to be capable of importing and analyzing disparate data

sources, including Dun & Bradstreet's global company universe, Cisco purchase and contact history, propensity models or survey data, to improve the company's campaign planning phase.

Increasing production of contact-level insight

"We had to be able to create an analytical environment in which we could bring together vast amounts of data and cut down on how long ad-hoc queries or segmentation would normally take," said Bull. "After six months of testing we determined that Alterian's speed and flexibility met our requirements perfectly. Tremendous potential for gaining new insights has been unleashed, as counts now take seconds or minutes not hours and days. Today we can perform analysis tasks around 30 times quicker than before."

The global team can now take into consideration all necessary data to size a campaign opportunity, including:

- Cisco's contact universe of tens of millions of contacts
- Dun & Bradstreet's company universe containing 100+ million companies
- Contact and purchase history
- Trigger-based data at a company level for up and cross-sell opportunities
- Survey and questionnaire data (around 25 million responses)
- Propensity to buy scores at a company level, developed by Cisco's Advanced Analytics team
- Potential value of sales for each prospect company.

The new solution is currently being rolled out to all regions and is already benefiting users in the US and Canada, Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan, the UK & Ireland and India.

"Previously, data analysis was done at a company level using propensity modeling alone, which ran the risk of finding that not enough contacts were available for a campaign. Today, right at the start of the campaign planning phase we can analyze who we can target and if any data quality improvement services are needed," continued Bull.

The new approach is also helping Database Marketing to grow the database in a very pragmatic way, focusing on companies that Cisco knows it has good opportunities with and revealing where any missing contacts might be. Also, using insight derived through Alterian, Cisco is highlighting which companies are worth investing most heavily in to acquire new contacts.

Alterian Case Study

Cisco Systems Inc.

Using the improved insight, Database Marketing now produces reports for countries on a monthly basis. Updating marketing managers on how many good quality contacts they have available, the dynamic reports allow users to interrogate the data and view it in different ways to size campaigns for various verticals or products. The team is also producing quarterly reports for executives, highlighting where the best campaign opportunities are, or where improvements could be made to the contact universe in each country.

New data services developed

Through Alterian analysis, Cisco discovered that only a quarter of the tens of millions of contacts could be deemed 'Active Marketable'. As a result, Database Marketing developed a set of services designed to either acquire new contacts, re-activate dormant ones or enrich contact information where necessary.

An early re-activation test campaign in the US targeted 145,000 dormant contacts, for which Cisco had email permissions. Three different emails tested incentives, asking recipients to provide complete up-to-date contact information and opt-in to future campaigns. Results were impressive, with almost 3,500 dormant contacts re-activated with an overall response rate of 2.3% (eight times the expected). The best performing email achieved a remarkable 6.1% response rate.

Based on the US success, Cisco tested the model in other English speaking countries including the UK & Ireland, India, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Global findings were very similar, indicating that prospects responded favourably to the direct approach and valued the opportunity to share information about themselves and re-engage with Cisco.

"The re-activation tactic has re-opened marketing dialogue with a large number of contacts at very low cost, previously deemed as unmarketable," said Bull.

Improved insight in a shorter timeframe

Cisco's Database Marketing team has developed a world-class set of services for the wider Cisco marketing community, ensuring that the database's potential is fully exploited. Bringing together data resulting in tens of millions of contacts to be analyzed is a significant achievement, of which the team are rightly proud.

Overall, Cisco is finding that the main benefit of the Alterian environment is the delivery of accurate information to regional and country marketing managers showing how many good quality contacts they can target. Changing the way Cisco's marketing does business, the new solution has introduced contact-level insight into the initial planning phase, vital for successful planning, design and execution of more engaging campaigns.

"The new approach helps managers on a day-to-day basis but also in a more strategic vein when mapping out annual marketing plans," said Bull. "We needed better quality insight in a shorter timeframe and Alterian delivered on both counts."

Alterian

Alterian (LSE: ALN) enables organizations to create relevant, effective and engaging experiences with their customers and prospects through social, digital, and traditional marketing channels. Alterian's Customer Engagement solutions are focused in four main areas: Social Media, Web Content Management, Email, and Campaign Management & Analytics.

Alterian technology is utilized either to address a specific marketing challenge or as part of an integrated marketing platform, with analytics and customer engagement with the individual at the heart of everything. Working alongside a rich ecosystem of partners, Alterian delivers its software as a service, or on premise. For more information about Alterian visit www.alterian.com or the Alterian blog at www.engagingtimes.com.

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