Triangle Communications jumpstarts digital marketing program to maximize customer reach and drive significant savings using Calix Marketing Cloud

THE CHALLENGE

Incorporated in 1953, Triangle Communications is a rural telecommunications cooperative and one of the largest employers in Central Montana. Triangle provides "Montana-sized" telecommunications services including high-speed Internet, voice, and mobile telephone service. Triangle’s 16,000+ subscribers live in parts of 16 counties all the way from Wyoming to the Canadian border spanning over 23,000 square miles.

Triangle’s mission is to deliver technology solutions that break boundaries, create opportunities, and build connections for the residents in their serving areas. Connecting people to advanced broadband technologies to enhance their personal and professional lives is a top priority for Triangle.

Triangle’s marketing team is charged with the task of connecting with subscribers and selling them new and innovative offers. Whether it’s speaking with customers at community events, providing education courses on the latest technology, or connecting on social media, the Triangle team constantly engages with customers. With limited resources, however, Triangle needs to make every marketing dollar count and identify the most effective channels to reach subscribers. Ultimately, their objective is to transform into a data driven marketing organization to maximize revenue and drive customer engagement in the most cost-effective manner.

To achieve these goals, Triangle needed to:

- **Identify the right mix of advertising channels to drive effective campaigns.** Triangle employs both digital and traditional advertising channels to reach subscribers, but they lacked the data and insights to determine the right mix. Without the right insights, dollars allocated to digital and traditional campaigns were based on trial and error, resulting in a waste of marketing dollars and low campaign effectiveness.

- **Drive more cost-effective upgrades with better targeting.** Triangle relied on mass marketing to drive upgrades. But, mass marketing to all 16,000 subscribers was proving to be ineffective and expensive. And, the generic “one-size-fits-all” messaging was not enabling them to truly connect with their subscribers.
THE SOLUTION

Triangle was looking for a data and analytics solution that would provide insights into subscribers’ online behaviors and how they were using their network. This would provide Triangle with the ability to segment subscribers based on usage profiles, identify when and how to communicate with them, and perform advanced targeting to better market offers.

Triangle turned to Calix Marketing Cloud (CMC) to address these needs. CMC is a software solution that provides powerful, off-the-shelf behavioral insights, and segmentation capabilities. By equipping marketers with intelligent, actionable insights, service providers are able to:

- Target specific audience segments based on online behaviors
- Reach subscribers with tailored offers and messaging
- Identify the most relevant social platforms to maximize exposure
- Drive measurable improvements in business objectives - ARPU, customer acquisition, retention, churn, and marketing programs

THE RESULTS

With the help of the Calix Services Team, Triangle seamlessly implemented CMC in May 2017. The marketing team quickly tapped into the insights they needed to not only meet their goals but quickly exceed them.

Optimized advertising mix and jumpstarted their digital marketing program

Triangle analyzed the online behaviors of their subscribers and immediately made impactful adjustments to their marketing programs. They quickly established the right advertising mix and identified where they were wasting marketing dollars. The CMC Social Channel Heatmap showed that Facebook was the most popular channel with their subscribers, while Pandora was not. Only three percent of their subscribers were active on Pandora. Before the CMC implementation, Triangle was relying on Pandora as an advertising platform to reach existing subscribers. Upon seeing this data, they quickly cut their Pandora advertising spend and saved thousands of dollars.

Next, they used the CMC data to jumpstart their Facebook program. They focused their efforts on developing Facebook as a primary advertising channel for their offers. CMC’s Social Channel Heatmap revealed subscribers’ actual Facebook usage across days of the week and times of the day. Triangle used this data to identify the best times to engage with subscribers. The powerful geographic segmentation capability of CMC enabled them to identify differences in online subscriber behaviors across different serving areas. Using the Social Channel Heatmap, Triangle tailored the timing of content placements for each serving area to maximize subscriber reach.

With this advanced targeting, Triangle saw a dramatic shift in engagements on Facebook. In the first week following the targeted placements, they saw more than 4000 engagements, a 1800 percent week over week increase! And, at the end of the two weeks, they were up to an astounding 17,000 engagements. Overall, they doubled their Facebook engagement level within one month. And, with this increased engagement, they decided to significantly reduce their marketing spend on traditional media campaigns such as print and direct mail. As a result, they were able to better connect with all their 16,000+ customers across 23,000 square miles – all on one Facebook page.

“Our goal was to be more strategic with our marketing budget. Calix Marketing Cloud helped us find the right mix of advertising to have the best reach while leaning more toward social. I spend each of those dollars like they are my own and now we know our dollars are being spent more cost-effectively.”

Bethany Chinadle, Marketing and Sales Manager, Triangle Communications
By using CMC, they not only saved thousands of dollars but also jumpstarted their social media program by establishing Facebook as an effective advertising channel. And, they now have ongoing access to the right subscriber data to maintain the right advertising mix and maximize effectiveness.

**Reduced cost of service-tier upgrades by 28 percent**
Triangle also used the subscriber insights and data to perform better targeting for their upgrade initiatives. Before using CMC, they were mass mailing to all 10,000 broadband subscribers which represented a significant cost. They again relied on CMC to better target subscribers by segmenting on usage profiles. Triangle identified the subscribers who would most benefit from a speed increase – heavy streaming users and gamers on low service tiers. As a result, they narrowed down the target list for the upgrade offer to include the identified subset of 1500 gaming and high-streaming users. And, with a good understanding of subscriber usage profiles of these subscribers, they also tailored the upgrade offer messaging to fit the profiles. As a result of this targeted approach, Triangle reduced the cost of upgrades by 28 percent, resulting in more than $100,000 in savings which can now be allocated to other areas of the business.

**Saved 38 percent in overall marketing expenses**
As a result of the actions, Triangle is projecting a savings of 38 percent in their overall marketing spend for 2017. With the savings, Triangle is looking into augmenting their marketing team with the possibility of an additional member to drive more social media initiatives.

“Since implementing Calix Marketing Cloud, our marketing spend is down significantly in every category compared to last year while our take-rates on promotions are going up,” said Bethany. “So far, we’re spending less and getting better results with Calix Marketing Cloud. That’s great for Triangle, our members, and our community.”

Ultimately, this was a win-win for the Triangle marketing team. They are now data-driven, dramatically more effective with their marketing programs, and able to make a stronger connection with subscribers. All while significantly reducing their marketing budget!

Now that’s Montana-sized success.

**The Future**
Triangle will continue to use CMC’s data and insights to further personalize offers, manage the marketing mix more effectively, and increase engagement with customers. They also intend to explore how to use CMC as they plan a network upgrade, the upcoming launch of a managed Wi-Fi service, and a potential home healthcare solution.