Adestra uplandsoftware

Case Study

Southeastern Trains helps passengers navigate strike action, combining booking data to provide personalised and relevant information for upcoming disrupted travel.

southeastern

INDUSTRY
Transport

COMPANY
Southeastern Trains Ltd

southeasternrailway.co.uk

southeastern

Southeastern operate one of the busiest rail networks in the country, running the train service between London and Kent and parts of East Sussex. Passengers frequently use its high speed service to commute to and from London daily, as well as mainline services to smaller destinations, and those seeking travel to London and the south-east for leisure activities, attractions and events.

Southeastern Trains use Adestra's flexible data tables to deliver personalised communications at scale to help passengers navigate strike action and plan ahead for upcoming travel.

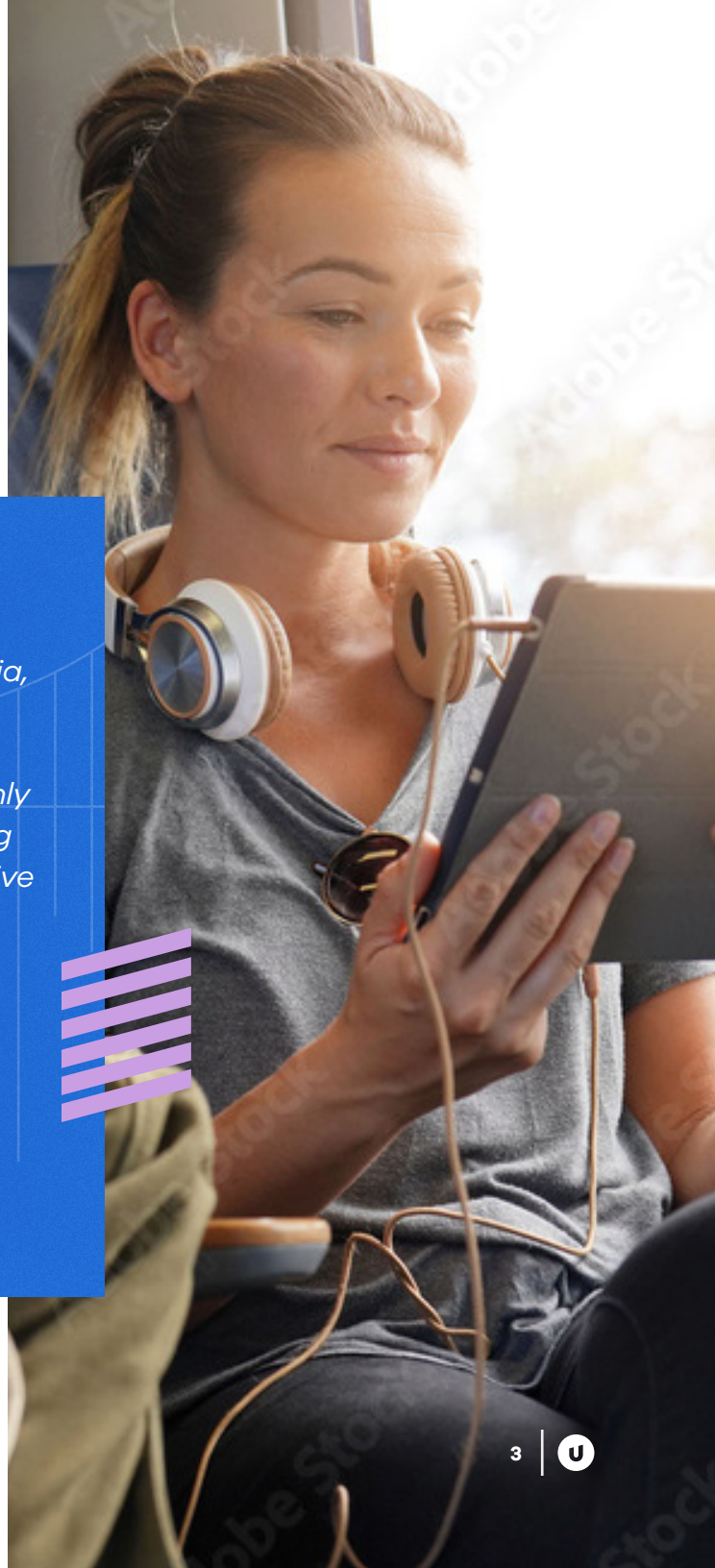
Objectives:

- Stem negative customer responses and change customer perception.
- Send customers only relevant urgent information they needed for their upcoming journey.
- Integrate booking data with Adestra to enable personalised emails at scale.

Results:

- Reduced complaints online and into the Customer Service centre.
- Optimal engagement achieved with personalised subject lines and body copy.

Despite mass media press announcements via national & local media, commuters – used to having a regular and reliable service – suddenly found themselves having to hastily make alternative travel arrangements on the day with some only finding their trains were cancelled upon arriving at the station.



Deliver engaging emails at every step of the journey.

The Challenge

Over 400,000 passengers a day depend on the smooth running operations of 1,700 train services running across the network by over 4,500 employees across 180 stations.

But ongoing disputes that were happening nationally between trade unions and rail owners found their way to Southeastern Trains. Soon, sporadic strikes were being announced at short notice to disrupt service. Insight from customer surveys revealed customers felt there wasn't enough information and some didn't even know about the strike action.

Despite mass media press announcements via national & local media, commuters – used to having a regular and reliable service – suddenly found themselves having to hastily make alternative travel arrangements on the day with some only finding their trains were cancelled upon arriving at the station. Customers were given refunds, but this didn't stop complaints on social media and emails into the Customer Service team.

Something had to be done to stem complaints, improve customer satisfaction and reduce the demands being placed on the Customer Service team. Above the line mass media promotion had achieved very limited success and so the business sought Southeastern Trains' CRM team to address the issue and communicate the with customers on a 1-2-1 basis. This challenge was further compounded because the data held in Adestra only had opted in contact records when lots of customers had purchased tickets but weren't opted in.

The Solution

The CRM team knew that Upland Software's Adestra email marketing platform could be used to deliver personalised email at scale. So the team decided to split emails into 6 different versions that were based on ticket type. Each version would provide information around the strike action and what each passenger needed to do if they bought a certain type of ticket during the strikes. – for example season ticket holders would receive information on how to claim the money back whereas day ticket passengers would be offered different days to travel on.

Data for non-opted in contacts needed to be ingested from the booking engine with fields such as ticket type, origin and destination. The existing Adestra Core Table wasn't set up for this purpose so the CRM team created a new Core Table with fields for data selections and personalisation. Subject lines were personalised with each customers' date of travel so it would stand out and increase the likelihood of being opened.

Copy would be personalised as well and Call to Actions (CTA's) would vary depending on ticket types purchased.

With personalisation of subject line and copy, Southeastern achieved a stunning open and click through rate.

The Results

The email campaign series had a staggering 88% open rate and a click through rate (CTR) of 39% of delivered emails. Complaints lessened which had a positive impact on Customer Service centre employees as well as Customer Satisfaction scores. Importantly, Southeastern Trains were keen to demonstrate a willingness and desire to be more customer centric and the email series achieved this.

What's Next?

Southeastern continue to be agile and flexible in their approach to serving customers in a period of unsettlement for the rail industry and the Upland Adestra platform will be crucial to this. Southeastern will apply this approach for other major service-based emails to provide more personalised engaging information.

Results for Southeastern Trains

88% Open Rate

39% CTR

Upland Adestra

Email automation, built to suit your needs.

Upland Adestra's powerful, easy-to-use software can be customized and uniquely configured to the structure of your business. In-depth email reporting gives actionable insights to drive your marketing success.

upland Adestra

For more information visit: uplandsoftware.com/adestra