

ODESSA Poissonnier

The fish market that made its mark



Tired of the race to the bottom, ODESSA Poissonnier harnessed the power of direct mail to stand out

Background

Established in 1982, the Ferron Group company built its seafood business handling everything from importing and distribution to product development and retail after identifying large gaps in its marketplace.

In 2011, the family-owned company decided to focus on its ODESSA Poissonnier retail locations (with six in Quebec) and ready-to-cook meal operations.

Putting an end to bottom-of-the-barrel discounts

The major supermarket chains had a good thing going by using loss leaders to reel in customers trolling for deep

discounts. ODESSA knew it could not compete with “lobster at \$6.99 a pound”- type deals. “Big chains can afford to sell at a loss because it generates in-store traffic,” explained Émilie Robillard, Marketing and Communications Director. “We need to make a profit.”

But the brand’s offers were drowning in an ocean of Publisac flyers. ODESSA’s ads only attracted sporadic, unreliable, price-oriented customers. It had to start over every week.

The time had come to **harness the power of direct mail to stand out from the competition and create a strong, distinctive brand.**



Case study

It pays to invest in your brand

ODESSA decided to develop a high-end brand image that better reflected its values. The weapon of choice was a 16-page holiday gourmet magazine promoting new products, tips, recipes, discounts and suggested wine pairings.

Featuring lavish photos of delicious food, *Odessa Gourmet Magazine* showed the joys of entertaining guests and feasting, true to local values. The timing was perfect. Christmas dinners were cancelled due to COVID-19 lockdowns, and while people were not up for the usual festivities, they were still hungry for something special. ODESSA's delicious seafood platters and exquisitely prepared dishes were gobbled up.

Attracting a new clientele

ODESSA used the **Canada Post Neighbourhood Mail™** service to send 100,000 copies of the magazine, strategically using sociodemographic data and geolocation targeting around stores. It found instant success and orders flooded in. The head office team jumped in to lend a hand to stores, using tents and refrigerated trucks. December sales reached record highs.

Online activity was exploding, too. Many of the 97,000 page views and 30,000 unique visitors were a direct result of the magazine and its digital version. Social media was used to the hilt with an Instagram influencer activation and a Facebook promotion. Good reviews poured in on Google.

A brilliant direct mail idea that drives the whole brand

With direct mail driving record results, other advertisers might have said "mission accomplished" at this point, but ODESSA was not ready to rest on its laurels. Determined to build a strong, distinctive brand, it drew on the visuals from the magazine to revamp flyers, websites and social media pages.

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ODESSA campaign by the numbers

Distribution: 100,000 copies

Timing: December 2020

Number of stores: 6

Service: Canada Post Neighbourhood Mail

Targeting: Sociodemographic and location data

Results (Dec. 2020 vs. Dec. 2019)

Total sales:

+45.2%

Average transaction:

+\$15.14

Catering platter sales:

+43.7%

(+63.8% at the Molson store!)

New customers:

+1,207

That was not all. The need for content created by the magazine's publication schedule (three issues a year) spurred the company to develop new products and offers, including 10 frozen dishes, some of which are sold at Metro supermarkets.

A taste for quality

"We've realized that the magazine is reaching a more loyal clientele, for whom quality and expertise are more important than price alone. They buy more and eagerly await our next issue by mail!"

Fish tale? Not at all.



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