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Nailed It: Matt Griffin, senior director of sales and marketing operations, Boston Celtics

Ryan Chatelain August 23, 2010

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Matt Griffin, the Boston Celtics' senior director of sales and marketing operations, talks to DMNews about the team's Facebook application game, which helped to grow its e-mail database.



Matt Griffin

Q What are some of the challenges for a National Basketball Association team trying to communicate with its fans?

A Our challenge is really no different than it is for all marketers, pertaining to e-mail, social media or digital communications. It's just getting our customers' attention. And in my opinion, the way to do that is to be as timely as possible, as relevant as possible and as targeted as possible in those communications.

Q Working with the agencies Click-Squared and Isobar, the Celtics last season introduced an application in Facebook called "3-Point Play." Why was that a good marketing strategy?

A We did a survey last summer of everyone who was a ticket purchaser. We realized how much time people were spending on Facebook, and it wasn't just the younger demographic. It was literally our best customers, our season ticket holders. Our strategy was, let's engage those people in that space in a fun way. The key for me is they can opt in to our e-mail communications. There's a profile form. You get to know a little bit about who these people are. It's great to have 1.3 million Facebook friends, but I, as a marketer, want to know who these people are.

Q What were the results?

A We had more than 50,000 downloads, the vast majority were all new opt-ins for us. Our e-mail database grew by 25%.

Q You're trying to use this information to customize your messages to fans. If you know that I'm a fan of Glen "Big Baby" Davis, how would you customize your e-mail newsletter for me?

A If you sign up with "Big Baby" as your favorite player, we're going to say, "Thank you for joining" and "Get your 'Big Baby' custom jersey at <http://celtics.com/shop>." We also ask questions about who you tend to go to games with. So if you have young children, you're going to get information on our Kids Club as well as our family packages. We also know what games you've attended over the last few years. If we have availability on a Friday night and we know that you purchased Friday night games in the past and you're a "Big Baby" fan, the message will be, "Come see Big Baby this Friday night."

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