



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY: SUDDENLINK

Suddenlink improved its direct mail and saw its consumer ratings jump as a result of working with CSG Message Manager

THE CLIENT

Suddenlink, a Missouri-based provider of Internet, telephone, and video-on-demand (VOD) services, serves more than a million subscribers across the southern United States. Multinational telecom Altice acquired 70 percent of Suddenlink in 2015.

CHALLENGES

Suddenlink had a multi-page, black-and-white statement where even the marketing messages were primarily text-based. Without graphics or color, key messages were obscured and blended together with important billing details and offers from Suddenlink. The statements were longer than they needed to be—which reduced the number of inserts Suddenlink could include in the envelope.

As a direct mail piece—you might argue, the most strategic and highly read direct mail that Suddenlink's subscribers received from them—the statements weren't pulling their weight.

"I think of our statement as our Suddenlink garden," said Marsha Gee, Vice President of Billing Operations at Suddenlink. "Most of the time, your garden space is limited. Usually you're paying something for that

space, and the space in your garden is very valuable, so how you use that space is critical."

In addition, the process to include messaging graphics on the statements took considerable time to design, and if Suddenlink needed to make changes, the change process could take up to two months. The envelopes that held the bills—themselves valuable real estate when it comes to marketing to consumers—weren't being as customized as they could be.

Gee approached Mary Meier, Senior VP of Marketing at Suddenlink, about the need to retool the statements as part of a strategy to better connect with customers.

CSG's APPROACH

It was clear that Suddenlink could leverage its statements as a strategic customer communication tool, if they could only improve statement readability, highlight key offers, and pursue greater statement customization.



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So with that in mind, CSG implemented Message Manager, CSG's online messaging tool that maximizes usage of the white space on the statement by providing effective, targeted messaging capabilities. Shortening the statements allowed Suddenlink to include more inserts and reduce their overall statement fulfillment costs. Not only that, but the company began leveraging their statement envelopes by customizing the messaging on them.

Message Manager allows companies like Suddenlink to control the composition of their statement messages, providing advanced design and placement tools, expanded selectivity options, and robust message reporting capabilities.

The Suddenlink team was pleased.

"Our new statements are bright, they're bubbly, they're eye-catching," Gee said. "When a customer opens a statement, we know their eyes will immediately go to the graphic on the first page, where our key message is. And they're going to get it. If it's buried in text on another page, they're never going to get that message."

Marketing messages are now much easier for subscribers to discern, as well—the Suddenlink team now has six dedicated spots for promotional messages, which can include color and graphics. They're easier for customers to differentiate from Suddenlink's billing information, which cuts down on support calls from subscribers and increases subscriber awareness of offers and deals. In addition, the ability to customize statements for broader subscriber relevance means Suddenlink is encouraging deeper relationships with its customers.

MARY MEIER,
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING, SUDDENLINK

"IT'S GREAT TO SEE THE KIND OF IMPACT ON THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE, JUST THROUGH YOUR BILLING STATEMENTS. IT'S INCREDIBLE. IT'S A MARKETER'S DREAM."



It's also easier for the Suddenlink team to change their statements to react to the fast pace of their industry. "Message Manager is very, very flexible," said Mary Meier, Senior Vice President of Marketing at Suddenlink.

"Before, we needed a 6- to 8-week lead time before we could make changes. That made for a lot of constraints, given how fast the market moves and how competitive the market has been. Now, with the billing statement, we control what we put in our statements—and we can change that as fast as we need to."

RESULTS

After implementing Message Manager, the Suddenlink team watched their JD Power and Associates consumer rating rise significantly.

"Our scores went way up right away," Meier said. "It's great to see that you can have that kind of impact on the customer experience, just through your billing statements. It's incredible. It's a marketer's dream."

In 2007, Suddenlink had a score of 537 in the JD Power and Associates ranking of Strong Brand Built through Investment in Superior Customer Care, as measured in the South Region. By 2012, that had risen to 649, and they were number one on the JD Power and Associates list of Most Improved. "We consider our bill a direct mail piece—but it's one that the customer has to open, every single month. So it's a key part of our marketing efforts," she continued. "The new statement has allowed us to target and color our messaging; we can highlight our bundling savings when a customer bundles; we can highlight our VIP program. It's unbelievable, what we can do."

ABOUT CSG

CSG simplifies the complexity of business transformation in the digital age for the most respected communications, media and entertainment service providers worldwide. With over 35 years of experience, CSG delivers revenue management, customer experience and digital monetization solutions for every stage of the customer lifecycle. The company is the trusted partner driving digital transformation for leading global brands, including Arrow, AT&T, Bharti Airtel, Charter Communications, Comcast, DISH, Eastlink, iFlix, MTN, TalkTalk, Telefonica, Telstra and Verizon.

At CSG, we have one vision: flexible, seamless, limitless communications, information and content services for everyone. For more information, visit our website at csgi.com and follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).