

eBay Gets Personal with its Email Marketing Program through SendGrid

Introduction to eBay

eBay is where the world goes to shop, sell, and give. An ecommerce platform which enables \$84 billion of gross merchandise volume for 167 million active users around the globe, eBay provides C2C and B2C sales and services via the internet.

Alex Weinstein, Director of Marketing Technologies & CRM at eBay, leads the team managing over one billion highly personalized emails sent per month via SendGrid's powerful API.



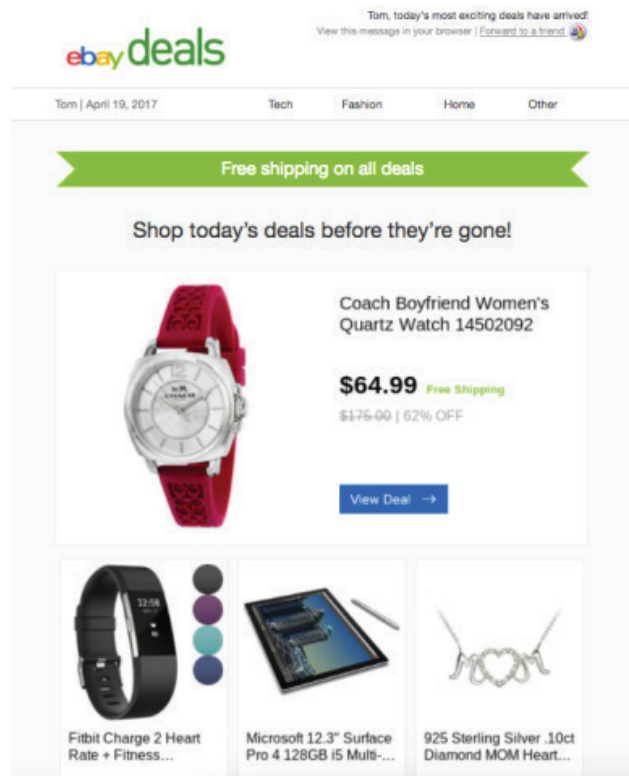
“With the help of Sendgrid, we are well on our way towards a 1:1 personalization solution that uses real-time customer engagement data. This solution has transformed email marketing at eBay.”
- Alex Weinstein, Director of Marketing Technologies & CRM

Challenge

Email is a powerful driver for ecommerce. Not long ago, eBay sent standard “batch-and-blast” emails with hand-authored targeting criteria for each of their marketing campaigns. While the batch-and-blast approach worked well enough for eBay’s peers in ecommerce, Alex knew that eBay could provide even more value for customers by treating them as individuals with true 1:1 personalization.

eBay committed to a differentiated experience in email, setting a high bar for their email program:

- Each offer to a customer would be driven by an up-to-the-minute understanding of the products and services the customer had shown interest in, and how other customers were responding to similar offerings.
- eBay would never direct a customer to an expired deal.



An example of a personalized eBay promotional email.

Solution

After evaluating multiple off-the-shelf solutions, Alex and his team selected an in-house targeting and personalization CRM system built on top of SendGrid.

eBay's innovations included:

- A **machine learning model** to target customers with a **built-in feedback loop** to adjust recommendations quickly by testing how a subset of customers reacts to the recommendation. If the click-through rate is higher or lower than expected, the tool increases or decreases that product's visibility in real-time for other customers.
- **Open-time rendering** of email content so that product recommendations are personal and relevant based on the latest customer activity and product availability data.

To accomplish this experience, eBay leverages engagement data from its CRM and SendGrid's real-time email event webhooks. eBay's email system also depends on SendGrid's reliable infrastructure to send an incredible amount of email, scaling seamlessly to one billion emails in four months.

Results

Now instead of hundreds of small, uncoordinated campaigns each month, eBay houses a small set of "flagship" campaigns comprising one or more real-time, personalized offers. Each of the offers is selected upon the machine-learned model which uses real-time data, resulting in **significant improvements in both click-through and sales driven by emails**.

Bottom Line

Alex has found the email partner that he can rely on to deliver the most relevant content to the right user at the right time. SendGrid's API is a perfect fit for eBay because of its:

- **Customizability.** SendGrid's APIs enable integrations you can build on to fit your needs.
- **Real-time Analytics.** SendGrid's real-time analytics and performance feedback help drive quick and well-informed decisions.
- **Reliability and scalability.** With deliverability proven at scale, you can depend on SendGrid's unmatched performance to grow with your email program.

"Personalization is very much an area of focus for us. We're just getting started on this journey...Our aim is to create truly individual, personalized experiences that help every customer find their version of perfect—from new to unique and everything in between."

- Alex Weinstein