

Episode 6 - Case Study on Selling a High Ticket Item via Email

Hello everyone this is Jason Owens. Thank you so much for joining me for podcast number six where we're going to do a bit of a case study here on a campaign that I'm running to help people go to Israel.

And in this episode, as we get started, some of you may have noticed a little bit of a change in the sound quality which is just fine. I'm using a brand new mic that I just bought.

I have hooked it right up to my iPhone and I am doing some blending here while in the neighborhood.

I am walking the dog so we are now on this podcast with myself and Violet on leash are now going out around the neighborhood.

Have a funny story to tell as we get started here today. My daughter; I'm out walking the other dog Vic. My daughter just finished up with school.

I see her get off the bus over the bus stop and walking over towards her. She's all jacked up and all excited she and some of her friends are getting together to bake cookies tonight.

So on the counter, I have all kinds of cookie ingredients and what not all set up and ready to go. And I was I was prepared for this last night. I was told at least three times that cookie baking was going to happen.

So my daughter comes in, does all of her after school chores right away, super-fast ends up feeding the dogs, taking care of her lunchbox and all that. There is no homework tonight so that's a good thing.

And she grabs her bike and she is gone. And I'm standing outside watching her pedal away and I'm telling you what, I am thrilled that we live here even though it's short term.

We live in a great neighborhood on a six-month lease and it's just it's fantastic to watch my kid socially be around other kids who are very close to us. Back when we lived in North Carolina our house was kind of at the middle of nowhere.

We weren't in a really close neighborhood and there weren't a lot of kids who are very close to us so we always had to be very intentional about arranging a playdate. There was none of this spontaneity, right.

You can't just “Oh, yeah, instead of doing this, I'm gonna go over their house.” Now that was not part of our life then, but it clearly is now, and it's a really really good thing. So anyway, just wanted to share that with you as we get started.

So we're going to turn our attention now towards a campaign that I was asked to join in on I'm going to say I was asked to join in on this midstream because after I got into it a bit I came to more grips with the earlier work that had been done before I arrived.

And I was told this at the beginning but it just didn't really sink in. So here's the gist. Usually when you send a campaign, you're going to do that in at least a three email sequence.

And now here's what you would expect to happen, and I've seen it hundreds of times, where you have this kind of downward stair step that happens from email one, to email two, email three, right?

So you get people to raise their hands. Some people are going to sign up for whatever it is you have — whether it's a lead magnet, a free report a blueprint, a training video; you're going to have a number of people sign up to get this thing from you, right?

And it's going to be in a three email sequence. So you're going to deliver some kind of value to them over the course of three emails.

So what happens almost every time is that email one is going to have a higher open rate than email two which is going to have a higher open rate than email three

You end up with a downward stair step of open rate and engagement rate between those three emails.

Okay, so as I'm looking through the previous work that was done on this campaign, what I found is that the church had sent I'm just going to call them — business cards, right? A kind of a postcard email that they sent out.

And this postcard email said, “Hey, join us for our trip to Israel and here's a link where you can learn more about the trip”.

Okay so that's okay right and there's nothing wrong with that at all as far as a way to just start. So that was the first email that went out.

The second email was pretty much the same as the first one and it was “Hey, join us for our trip that we're taking to Israel in 2017. Click here.”

Well on the second email, the link, for whatever reason, didn't work, okay? So there were virtually no click throughs — no actually there were no click throughs — on the most important link in this email.

And again it was more of this kind of an email postcard thing that just had a really nice picture in the background and “Hey, join us”. So anyway it those were the first two messages that went out.

As I come in and join the effort here I'm looking through what has happened and what we've seen right now is an open rate that is not what I'm going to say is healthy but actually pretty common among lists, especially for churches.

Very common because a church newsletter — if you have people who are really dedicated to this — are going to end up sending something out once a week.

Most of the time the people on the list maybe didn't really opt in for the list one hundred percent, and they're not always going to be interested in everything.

So you have a guy opening the email. He's probably not going to open the email that has to do with the women's ministry, and vice versa, right, for women opening the men's ministry emails.

So, again, all this stuff is pretty straightforward, but going back to that downward stair step.

Okay, we've already sent out two outreaches to the church about this trip to Israel. We've already seen the downward stair step happen in a big way between the first email and the second email.

Now here I'm coming along with the third email going “Wow, the third one here! I'm really gonna have to do something different. Otherwise, this campaign is going to be practically non-responsive.”

So let me tell you about the changes that I made that I feel have breathed some new life — breathes additional life into the campaign — and frankly, I think it's working really good.

So here are a couple things that I noticed right off the bat.

When I went in and was looking through the emails that have been sent previously about the campaign, they were coming from an address essentially was a generic address of something like “church office”.

So if you go through your inbox and you see something from admin@churchoffice, frankly, that that may not get you too excited.

It's not a very personal feel and you're not going to be as excited to open that. So one of the changes that I made was ... The good news is that I had the choice to use the pastor's email.

So, of course, he has his own email account there on the branded Church domain.

So I ended up changing it to the pastor's email and of course up in the from area of the header, I ended up saying that it was from Pastor; in this case I'm just going to say Pastor John.

So this is from Pastor John right. I did not use "Pastor John Smith". That's a little bit too formal. I just said "Pastor John" okay.

A little bit more informal, and I think that ended up helping a lot, because it had a lot more of this personal feel.

"Hey, I usually get stuff — when it comes from the church — I usually get it from 'church office'".

"Wow the *pastor* sending me something!"

Okay, so I'm planning, I'm hoping that that's going to be a little bit more of a cause to open the email because, again, at the early stages, we're just going for the open.

Another thing I did here was not give away the entire email in the subject line. So some of the earlier subject lines were "Hey, join us for our trip to Israel in 2017".

Well guess what you're expecting you open the email. You're expecting a lot to do with the trip to Israel in 2017.

So, I ended up having to change that around and I ended up choosing the subject line of: "Is this on your bucket list?"

Okay, then the opener that I hand for this text was about a trip that the pastor had taken here not too long. It actually is this past summer. I'm really looking for something contextual right.

I really want to capture this whole idea of the *experience* and *once-in-a-lifetime* okay. So a lot of these aspirational-type feelings these aspirational emotions.

The pastor and I had brainstormed on what do we want to capture? How do we want to get people excited about this? So we decided that these were things that we wanted to capture. So really playing to this and pretty heavily in the email.

The pastor had gone to the life-size replica of Noah's Ark that is in Kentucky, so I had him describe to me what it was like when he saw this thing for the first time.

He's "Oh my gosh! It was amazing, was huge, was big. Like you read about it and you see the pictures that still does not prepare you for what you're going to see when you're actually there."

BAM! That is exactly the opener that I wanted. So I started off this email. The whole thing was maybe 200 words, and I ended up opening with just describing — I'm, of course, using his voice here — I'm describing what it was like for him to be standing in front of this ark for the very first time, and seeing it, and what he felt, and how he wasn't really prepared for it to be that huge.

And then I segue into this is the exact same feeling that I want *you* to have when you come with us to Israel. So that was my segue into his pitch, so to speak, for the trip.

Now the way that I've set up this campaign; I'm doing it as a three email sequence, right. So even though this is technically email three already; you know the very first one, we're going to do another three emails.

And the entire intention of these three emails is just to get people to raise their hands and say I'm at least a little bit interested right.

Now we still included the same link that we have sent out to the church the past two emails. The exact same link right. It's a link over to the travel agency.

They've created their dedicated page for this trip so we're essentially linking off of the church website going straight into the travel agency so people could get the itinerary and schedules and bla, bla, bla.

All I care about here is just a click right. So when somebody has clicked and we intentionally say in the email, "Hey listen, if you want more emails, if you want more details from me click here. That will show me that you're interested in receiving more".

So we were really clear and very intentional about what we're doing in this email and asking people to click.

So again we put a couple of chances in the email, a couple of those active links for people to click on and I was blown away at the results for this first email. While our open rate wasn't .. no wait...back up.

The open rate was **larger** for this email so it was my email number one. It was larger than the first couple of times that it was sent out earlier saying it was from church office right.

So that tells me that the combination of

1. **who the email is from** — being from the pastor; a little bit more that personal approach, and
2. **the subject line** that is enticing people to click.

Those two things as a combination that helped out tremendously alright. So you're wondering about the clicks. “Jason how many clicks did you end up having?”

Through this email that we sent out we ended up having an **additional 32 people** raise their hand.

I am really happy with that rate because that's 32 people — 32 more people who get to hear about the trip.

Alright so, really good stuff and I just wanted to pass this along to you that a lot of these fundamentals that we hear about; about subject lines being important and we hear a lot about personalizing the message really having a little bit of a story behind it.

But we hear all these fundamentals and we hear they're important but I just wanted to let you know that **absolutely yes, they are important!**

In fact they are so important in this case that **we were able to reverse the upside down or reverse the declining staircase there from email three.**

So this email three looks like now a step up from what it used to be right or a step up from what you would expect rather than it being a step down. So we had a really good time with that and just thrilled with it absolutely thrilled.

And just today we sent out email two and I'm not going to give away my own Thunder here. What I'll have you do is: I'll have you come back to the next podcast where we're going to talk a little bit more about this case study that is live and developing.

Okay so, it's really good stuff. What I'll have you do is go over to the show notes, I have some screen captures inside these show notes and the screen captures are of the open rates here; kind of the before and the after.

And I'm going to go ahead and sanitize this text so that you don't know exactly which church this is and I'll go ahead and give you the complete text to the email.

So the show note that you want to go to is JasonROwens.com/6. That's JasonROwens.com/6. Now tell you what folks, email marketing is just absolutely phenomenal.

I love doing it and I would love the opportunity to be able to do some of this for you and for your organization. If that's something that would interest you by all means just reach out to me.

Go over to my email on side of my sight or I'll tell you what my email is jason@jasonrowens.com. So do that, drop me a line I would love to help you out. Take care everybody bye bye.