



CASE STUDY

The UPS Store

Small Business Buzz for Big Results

The Problem:

Doner, a full service advertising agency needed to provide an innovative, viable strategy to gain insights about the small business owner target. They desired a way to easily and continuously engage The UPS Store target audience - small business owners - to gain the benefits of traditional research activities. The team was looking a single community solution that could house multiple different types of business owners, such as brick & mortar retail, online retail, and service providers, across various industries. Overall, they wanted the ability to quickly reach out to this audience for insightful feedback. These insights would be leveraged to better understand the behaviors and attitudes of small business owners and learn how The UPS Store can better meet their needs.

The Approach:

Doner recommended an online community to discover critical insights about The UPS Store target audience. In turn, they could use the insights to make better-informed business decisions. Doner decided to work with Fuel Cycle and recruited hundreds of small business owners to join their new online community, Small Biz Buzz. They selected Fuel Cycle's online community platform because it afforded them the exibility to execute qualitative, quantitative and ethnographic research in a single platform. It also consolidated their research expenses and allowed for 24/7 engagement. The Fuel Cycle community platform provided the perfect environment for The UPS Store small business customers to voice opinions, offer feedback, and submit ideas that would assist with loyalty and retention efforts.

The Solution:

Fuel Cycle offered a single turnkey platform for Doner and The UPS Store to conduct all their research projects. Due to Fuel Cycle's ease-of-use, they are able to directly involve the community members' voices into the decision-making process for new product and service development, marketing and advertising campaigns, and website and store redesigns. The centralizing platform serves multiple departments within The UPS Store and Doner, providing further cost benefits. The Fuel Cycle online community platform is so fast and easy to use that multiple studies can now be launched in the same time it used to take to do one traditional study. At the moment, The UPS Store conducts 3-5 research activities each month and gathers findings in days, not weeks. The UPS Store able to directly engage with their customers in real-time to glean valuable brand insights quickly, guiding them to make smarter business decisions to better serve their customers.



3-5 Research
Activities/Month



24/7
Engagement



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The Results:

- Measurement of promotions: determined which promotions appeal to members most and will cause them to make a purchase.
- Store re-designs: had members take in-store experience surveys to provide feedback on the current design of stores.
- Innovation/co-creation projects: learned about products and services that members would like to see that are currently not ordered, i.e. loyalty cards.
- Marketing & Ad campaign testing: learned what resonates with members most and discovered what would influence them to visit The UPS Store website/store.
- Website usability tests: tested and provided feedback on the website experience a during corporate website redesign.
- Media usage activities: identified what channels work best to reach specific segments of their customer base.
- Collection of user generated content: asked members to share their small business stories via social media campaigns. The content was used in the launch of a new The UPS Store microsite.

Looking Forward::

Because Doner and The UPS Store can tap into an “always-on” environment, they are able to continuously mine the community for valuable insights, such as member success stories that can be used for case studies, marketing materials, and potential PR opportunities. Small Biz Buzz not only allows small business owners to connect with The UPS Store team, but also to interact with other small business owners, acting as a resource for them when facing business challenges. This approach of using community to gather insights to improve both The UPS Store business and the members’ own businesses, allows The UPS Store to foster brand advocacy and turn members into brand ambassadors.

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