

The Celtics

:: Overview

The National Basketball Association's Boston Celtics is the most celebrated team in the NBA with 16 World Championships, 31 Hall-of-Fame players and 22 retired numbers.

:: Challenge

When the Boston Celtics missed the playoffs during the 2005-2006 season, its marketing team was faced with driving ticket sales in a difficult selling environment for the season ahead. Obstacles included:

- The loss of highly qualified sales leads (playoff strip buyers and playoff single game buyers)
- A longer selling season
- Weaker selling platform in May and early June
- Lower intrinsic demand for seats; and the challenge to create an urgency to buy
- Greater regulatory hurdles -- with almost two thirds of single game buyers opting into "Do Not Call" lists and popular email domains getting harder to communicate with

2x returns over
standard email
campaigns



Sold **additional**
3500 seats from
email program



Success story **became**
best practice for other
NBA teams.

:: Solution

Over the past decade, ticket sales for the Celtics had gone from nearly 70% box office sales to 70% Internet transactions during the 2006 season. Working with ClickSquared, the Celtics' marketing group recognized a prime opportunity to reach out to its most loyal customers by developing timely and relevant email marketing promotions and drive pre-game interest to meet its sales objectives. The Celtics organization used ClickSquared e-services expertise to:

- Review existing ticket sales for the game a month in advance and identify a distressed inventory of nearly 4,000 seats
- Identify and target present and past ticket holders to increase advance sales
- Develop a highly targeted email campaign that recognized key demographic/behavioral clusters allowing them to customize ticket offers
- Analyze click-thru behavior to identify 'near buyers' which allowed them to drive near conversions to ticket purchases

:: Program Results

- Generated 2x returns over standard email campaigns and helped drive sales to near sellout
- Sold an additional 3,500 seats as a result of the email program
- Created a successful ground-breaking marketing model that has become standard practice for games with the same ticket buying patterns
- Success story was shared with the entire NBA and has become a best practice for other teams to follow