

RBFF State R3 Program Grants New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife – Lapsed Angler Campaign

Overview

The New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife (NJDFW) partnered with the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) in 2018 to explore e-mail communications to reactivate lapsed freshwater anglers. The NJDFW used RBFF’s Direct Mail and Email Marketing Toolkit to Reactivate Anglers to influence development of targeted e-mails. Three primary goals were sought to be accomplished:

- 1) Utilize GovDelivery to reach approximately 90,000 lapsed freshwater anglers with a minimum of 4,050 purchasing a freshwater license.
- 2) Generate additional revenue >\$75,000 related to targeted freshwater anglers.
- 3) Evaluate messages, timing of messages, etc. that would elicit license purchases

Partners

Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation

Benefits

- For NJDFW,
 - Additional revenue that would have otherwise not been generated.
 - Have a snapshot into freshwater angling churn and better understanding of how e-mail communication and message content can potentially reduce NJ’s angling churn.
- For lapsed freshwater anglers in NJ,
 - Increased participation in those with previous interest in freshwater fishing.
 - Increased awareness for current freshwater fishing opportunities.
- For other agencies,
 - Information and recommendations as to how timing of e-mails and targeting specific user groups of lapsed freshwater anglers with specific message content may reduce angling churn within their own states.

Results

- We attempted to send 93,704 e-mails. Overall, a delivery rate of 94%, bounce rate of 6%, open rate of 22%, and click rate of 2.1% was achieved.
- When comparing engagement between anglers lapsed less than five years to those lapsed longer than five years, open rate was 17% higher and click rate was 37% higher among anglers lapsed less than five years.
- Overall engagement (i.e. open and click rates) dropped as send date went later into summer. Follow-up e-mails also became more important to elicit license purchases when messages were sent into the summer.
- A total of 1,730 lapsed anglers reactivated (1,251 lapsed less than five years and 167 lapsed more than five years) as result of the e-mail messages, which generated **\$54,351.94**.
 - Control: 149 anglers
 - Group 1 (Email 1X): 866 anglers
 - Group 2 (Email + Follow-up): 848 anglers, 432 prior to follow-up and 416 *after*.
- Age cohorts 35-44 and 45-54 had the most lapsed anglers purchase licenses and reactivate.
- Younger age cohorts took the longest time after receiving an e-mail to reactivate, nearly a week (Figure 2).



Figure 1. Imagery used in early April pre-trout season reactivation e-mails, as well as on social media platforms.



Support

“We have found that our improved e-mail system has allowed us to effectively reach out to a large population of lapsed anglers and reactivate them. We see great potential with this type of R3 campaign for future use to reduce angling churn.”

- Dave Golden, Director of NJ Fish and Wildlife



Lessons Learned & Future Plans

Future Plans:

- Follow-up e-mails appear to become more important later in year. We need to further evaluate timing of the year and also timing of week e-mails are sent. We hope this will aid us in reducing the lag between anglers receiving an e-mail and making a license purchase.
- In 2019, we will be doing a follow-up with the 1,730 individuals that reactivated to understand the extent to which they independently retain, or to what extent we need to send additional reminder e-mails. We will refer to this in 2021 and 2023 as well to determine how effective this initial e-mail project was at retaining individuals who reactivated in 2018.
- Understand the “ripple effect,”; the true reach of a unique e-mail. We noted instances where multiple individuals within a family, or anglers taking advantage of our buddy fishing license because of one individual receiving an e-mail, but they themselves did not. So how far does that one e-mail truly go?
- Utilize our saltwater registry for freshwater angling recruitment and reactivation efforts.



Methodology

- The NJDFW acquired 99,982 e-mail addresses from lapsed freshwater anglers 18-69 in our Automated License System (ALS), who either:
 - Had purchased at least one license between 2013-2016, but not in 2017 (defined as less than five years lapsed).
 - Had purchased at least one license between 2007-2012, but not since 2012 (defined as greater than five years lapsed).
- E-mail addresses were divided amongst four scheduled e-mails (Trout opener in April, Memorial Day Weekend, Free Fishing Day – Father’s Day, and Fourth of July).
- A control group (no communication), and two treatment groups (either receiving an e-mail 1X or an e-mail plus a follow-up e-mail five days later) were established for each e-mail blast made up of individuals lapsed less than or more than five years.
- The NJDFW evaluated license sales 15 days after to determine the number of freshwater anglers that reactivated after receiving an e-mail.
- Age, what license(s)/stamp(s) were purchased, transaction total, length of lapse, days between receiving an e-mail and make a purchase and number of days between receiving a follow up e-mail and making a purchase (if applicable) were recorded.

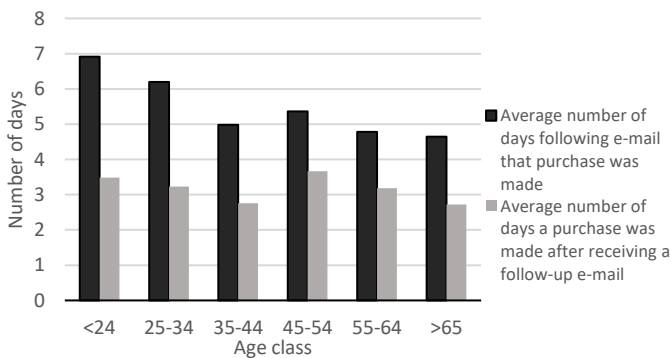


Figure 2. Average number of days individuals in an age class took to purchase a freshwater fishing license.



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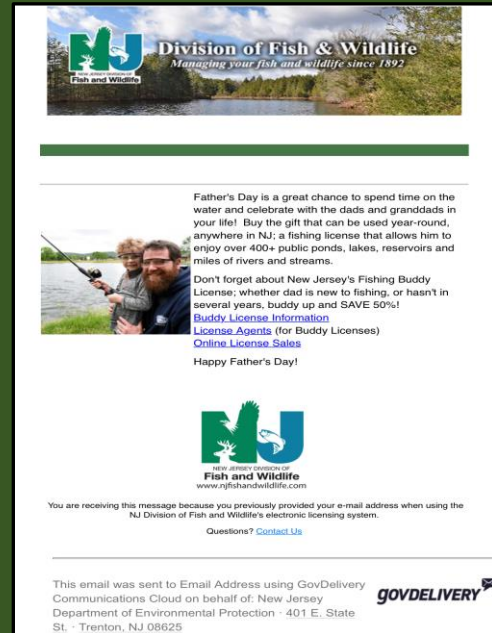


Figure 3. Reactivation e--mail sent prior to Father’s Day in June.