

Homebase's customer relationships bloom after the RHS Chelsea Flower Show



Homebase entices more customers into its stores and doubles campaign response rates with O₂'s digital bubble, a secure wide area wifi network, designed to maximise customer engagement.

About Homebase

Homebase is one of the UK's leading garden centres and home enhancement retailers, stocking around 38,000 products for the home and garden. It has 323 large, out-of-town stores throughout the UK and Republic of Ireland, serving around 60m customers a year, along with a growing internet offering at www.homebase.co.uk

Homebase is part of Home Retail Group, the UK's leading home and general merchandise retailer.

The Challenge

The RHS Chelsea Flower Show is the UK's most prestigious showcase for gardeners and garden retailers. Hoping to win a gold medal hat-trick, Homebase wanted to highlight its gardening credentials and encourage customers to recreate a piece of Chelsea magic at home, regardless of their gardening ability.

In addition to handing out leaflets, Homebase wanted to take advantage of O₂'s technological and marketing expertise to interact with customers before, during and after the show to differentiate Homebase from its competitors and drive business into stores.

The Solution

O₂ installed a machine to machine cellular WAN (Wide Area Network) at the show to provide secure wifi using its 4G network. This connectivity created the "digital bubble" that underpinned each digital solution to deliver a seamless online experience.

Pete Connor, Home Retail Group IT Director, said: "Major events like the RHS Chelsea Flower show are traditionally challenging for communications because they are so crowded. O₂'s Cellular WAN service worked really well in this situation to create a wifi hotspot over its 4G network, attracting visitors and enabling us to reach more people.

"As a simple means of setting up remote access to the web quickly in a potentially difficult environment, it's ideal for a big event like this."



Results

- Versatile management of messaging
- Timely, efficient customer communication
- Increased customer confidence
- Full compliance with FCA regulations

Products and services

- O₂ 4G
- O₂ Wifi
- O₂ Wifi Insights
- Cellular WAN
- Apple iPad mini

O₂ equipped Homebase Garden Academy students, who helped garden designer Adam Frost build the garden, with tablets featuring a definitive list of featured plants.

The students assisted visitors with questions around planting, and demonstrated the Homebase PlantMatch app, which helps customers choose the right plants for their garden.

O₂ Wifi enabled Homebase to identify opted-in users who had recently visited their store and were within geographic reach of the event. Using this profiling, following the event Homebase worked with O₂ Wifi to send a text announcing that they had won gold at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, offering a discount voucher and a link to the PlantMatch app.

7.5% of people who received the targeted text message returned to a Homebase store within a week of receiving it, and 11% returned within two weeks. This is a 50% increase in the rate of return Homebase typically experienced before the RHS Chelsea Flower Show campaign. The campaign text message promoting the PlantMatch app achieved a 1.15% click-through rate against an industry average of under 0.5%.

Homebase Retail and Distribution Director Graham Heald said: "The awareness campaign using the profiled data of O₂ Wifi users in Homebase performed very well against campaign objectives. We've seen higher than expected engagement with the PlantMatch app and a significant rise in return visits to our stores."

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**Pete Connor, Home Retail Group,
IT Director**

We'd love to hear from you. To find out more about how O₂ can help your organisation, just contact your Account Manager or call us on 01235 433 507.

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