

MERKLE'S RESPONSE

WINTER, 2013

MERKLE

Response Management Group

Market & Industry - Micro Data



I am excited about the release of our first client-specific quarterly newsletter – [Merkle's Response](#)! I hope that you find value in the information that my team and I will be sharing with you. My contribution to the newsletter will be observations and opinions regarding happenings in payment processing and related areas.

You would have to have been living under a rock for the past year to not know that a lot has been discussed and written about the need

to acknowledge donors quickly and effectively, and how that plays an important role in donor retention. Merkle Response has been a long-time advocate of daily acknowledging to increase donor satisfaction and retention. However, we recently started to explore the use of what I am calling "Micro Data" to deliver an even more personalized acknowledgement experience for the donor.

What is Micro Data? Micro Data is the unique donor-specific data that can only be gleaned from closely reviewing the incoming donation. Sure, everyone captures what has been thought to be the donors "critical" information (i.e. name, address, gift amount), but so much other data is being left on the table, and we believe that there is tremendous value in capturing and using it. For example, a donor who takes the time to apply a first-class stamp to the BRE is taking an extra step to support your organization and deserves special attention for it. But, in today's processing world, you don't know that Micro Data about that donor. What if you did? What could you do with it? Well, for starters, you could personalize their acknowledgement message by mentioning how much your organization appreciates the fact that they were extra generous by applying a stamp. How do you think your donor would react to reading that acknowledgment letter? At a minimum, very appreciated.

There are other examples of Micro Data that Merkle Response will be investigating further. I'll be sharing that information via white papers, articles and social media. If you would like to learn more about using "Micro Data" to enhance your acknowledgement program please give me a call – (301)797-4099 or email me at bsayre@merkleinc.com.

Customer Service News

As I am writing this article in early November, I am currently viewing the great feedback all of you are providing me from our Net Promoter Survey. Your scores and feedback will help us continue to strive for excellent customer service in 2014 and beyond. While a large part of customer service is creating a seamless experience where your needs are anticipated; systems are in place; employees are trained, etc... The true test of customer service comes into play when the unexpected happens. In our business, the unexpected happens every day.

In 2014, The Merkle Response Management Group will focus on the unexpected. I believe the unexpected provides the opportunity to stretch the system, improve the system, or even forget the system and really WOW our clients.

I believe we have a sound customer service strategy. The next frontier of customer service is how we WOW you when we handle the unexpected creatively and efficiently. We will be working specifically with our teams on the WOW factor in 2014. The WOW methodology will continue to separate RMG from all competitors.



Merkle Response in the News

Merkle RMG Receives Top Tier Quality Management Certification for 11th Year

<http://www.merkleresponseservices.com/merkle-rmg-receives-top-tier-quality-management-certification-11th-year>

When it comes to leadership, [Merkle RMG's](#) Bill Sayre, "attempts to create an environment that's inclusive and collaborative."

See more on Bill's leadership style in the October Issue of [SmartCEO Magazine](#) (from FB). <http://viewer.zmags.com/publication/e8c8f4ea#e8c8f4ea/12>

Bill's article on 3 ways to retain current donors (from twitter). <http://ow.ly/i/3jqJN>

[Merkle RMG's](#) Bill Sayre was featured in Advancing Philanthropy Magazine's latest edition with his article on best practices in retaining current donors. Small acts do make a big impact!

<http://www.merkleresponseservices.com/merkle-rmg-expands-footprint-healthcare-arena-dedicated-business-unit-and-digital-revenue-cycle-so-0>

100 JAMISON COURT
HAGERSTOWN, MD 21740

(T) 301.790.3100

Facebook: [MerkleRMG](#)

Twitter: [@MerkleRMG](#)

LinkedIn: [Groups/MerkleRMG](#)

Service Spotlight ~ Just Look Up

How can I get my organizations money in the bank faster, easier and more accurately when the donor does not send back my coupon? If this is a question on your mind today, Merkle has a solution for you.

We call it the "look up process" which is handled by our Exceptions Services Team. Any time a donor sends in just a check or cash with a return address on the envelope, our Exceptions experts will access your database to look up the donor's information.

Our team will write the unique ID number for that donor as well as the mailcode from your database. Before you know it, we are right back on track with the regular processing to an item that did not follow what we ideally like for the donor to send.

Today, if you receive a payment without a coupon or reply device, you may be instructing Merkle to reject the piece back to your office for further review or process the donation as a miscellaneous piece. This not only adds additional expenses in shipping fees and internal fees for review at your office, but also delaying the money from getting to the bank.

Processing these pieces as a miscellaneous item, could mean duplicating data in your database depending on how the name and address read on the return piece. Data hygiene can be a huge problem if we don't take steps to prevent more bad data or duplicated data from going in your system.

What's the benefit? Cost savings, time savings, quicker deposit of funds and clean data.

New Client Wins



Merkle RMG Holidays

New Year's Day – January 1, 2014

Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday – January 20, 2014

President's Day – February 17, 2014

Best Practices

For many organizations, it is a standard practice to ask for the phone number and email address on every mail package. Have you considered the benefit of having the information preprinted on the mail packages once the donor has provided this information to your organization?

By making this information available, it provides an opportunity for the donor to correct or make any changes needed thus making a more accurate database.

Having phone number and email address preprinted on the response device prevents your organization from paying for data to be continually re-entered for what is already on file.

USPS News

Did you know that the USPS does not require postmarks? The information below may make you re-engineer your end of year processing. Over 75% of the mail the Merkle Response Management Group receives today does not have a postmark. Based on information from the USPS Handbook PO -408 "Area Mail Processing", pages 1-2 <https://about.usps.com/handbooks/welcome.htm> states the following:

A postmark is an official Postal Service™ imprint applied in black ink on the address side of a stamped mail piece. A postmark indicates the location and date the Postal Service accepted custody of a mail piece, and it cancels affixed postage. Since 1979, the Postal Service's *Postal Operations Manual* (POM) has provided standards for postmarks applied to single-piece First-Class Mail®. Letters and flats that need to be postmarked come from carrier pick-up, collection boxes, retail counters, or lobby drop boxes. **Postmarks are not required for mailings bearing a permit, meter, or pre-canceled stamp for postage, nor to pieces with an indicia applied by various postage evidencing systems.**