

How PSE used mail to deliver outstanding results for Mr & Mrs Smith

Client: Mr & Mrs Smith

Agencies: PSE



The Challenge

Entering its 20th year of trading Mr & Mrs Smith has become an aspired household name in luxury travel. For this campaign, PSE wanted to deliver a profitable ROI whilst maintaining the brand's aspirational values when targeting active and lapsed customers. The creative brief asked for an exclusive piece that fed the emotional travel feelings without being a traditional January peak 'sale and hard sell'.

With the agency and client working in true collaboration, a clear strategy was developed which included extensive customer analytics to identify the audience and content required to deliver success.



The Approach

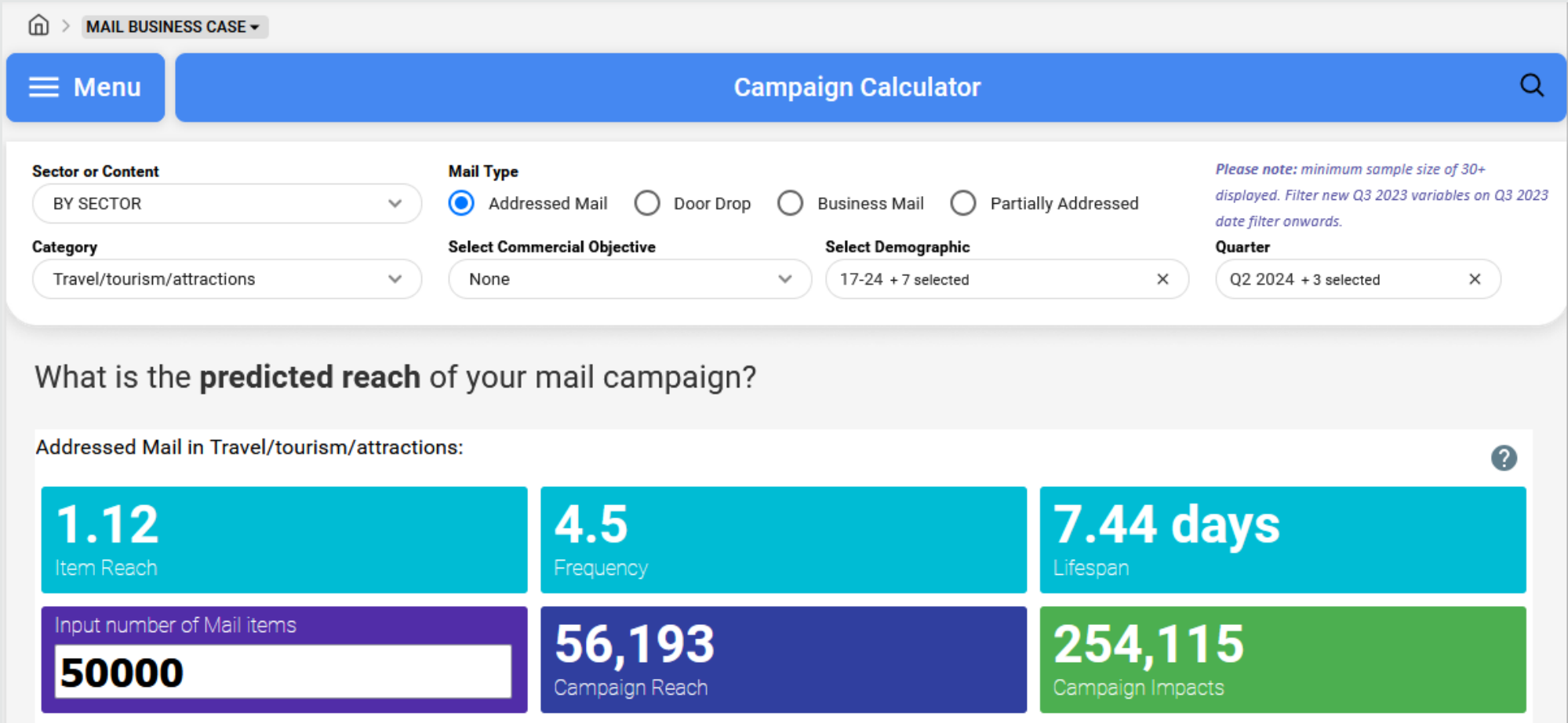
PSE profiled the database and uncovered two distinct audiences: 45+ affluent families in larger houses and affluent 20 to 30 year olds in rented or shared accommodation in cities. This in-depth analysis and their propensity model identified the customers to mail that would generate the best returns and the desired creative approach.

Using the JICMAIL insight that Travel mail is interacted with 4.5 times, PSE wanted to create something that lived on the coffee table for a long period of time. Equally the mailing had to work hard and drive bookings whilst appealing to the four segments of active/lapsed and younger/older.

With client and agency collaborating at every stage and using the client's in-house studio, PSE developed a content plan based on the insights they had produced. This included a mix of shorter breaks and longer stays plus a blend of UK and overseas all with an immersive approach so that the customer could see themselves in that place.

To create an immediate differentiation from other luxury operators, the outer envelope of the pack boldly declared, "HOTEL LOVERS ONLY ASK ONE QUESTION... BUT IS IT A SMITH HOTEL?" Inside, recipients found an 8-page newspaper titled "Room Service," a departure from conventional brochures. Aspirational content showcased the Top 9 places to visit in 2023, styled after a Sunday Supplement, enticing readers to explore further on the website and make bookings.

PSE used the insights to determine exactly who to mail and with what content. The creative team used the creative brief to develop a 'stand out from the crowd' piece to show the difference between a hotel and a Smith hotel. The mailing encapsulated everything Mr and Mrs Smith's customers have grown accustomed to.



Source JICMAIL 2025

The Outcome

The combination of an insight driven strategy and highly inspirational creative made this campaign a huge success. The results were incredible. JICMAIL data shows that the average high consideration luxury travel direct mail response rate is 1%. With this campaign, PSE and Mr & Mrs Smith achieved 1.59% at the time of reporting the results but PSE know the long tail bookings continued far beyond this. The ROAS delivered was 35:1 far exceeding expectations.

Compared to many other luxury brands, this communication didn't resort to discount offers, big phone numbers or QR codes. The editorial style, inspirational content and power of the customer aspiration were more than enough to drive the higher level of bookings. Driving short term and longer-term bookings as the insight predicted this communication ensured that Direct Mail has a place in this brand's marketing mix.

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