

CASE STUDY

Reading For Education achieves a 200% email revenue uplift after migrating from Return Path to Everest and BriteVerify.



For over 40 years, Reading For Education has provided support to America's elementary schools, offering services including fundraising, school supplies, academic assessments, and internet-based technologies.

This privately held company has worked with 60 percent of all elementary schools in the United States, serving 15 million families.

The Highlights:

95.2%

INBOX PLACEMENT RATE

200%

EMAIL REVENUE UPLIFT YOY

97

SENDER SCORE

The challenge:

Limited revenue potential due to inbox placement issues and poor visibility of email performance.

Reading For Education (RFE) provides critical fundraising program services to America's schools. Among other offerings, the company replaces traditional door-to-door fundraising efforts with a secure, online fundraising marketplace.

RFE emails supporters of the schools with whom they partner, asking them to shop online or donate gift cards to show support. These fundraising efforts (and thus, the school's fundraising success) rely on a successful email program.

"Reaching sponsors through email to ask them to support the student and the school is a critical part of a school's fundraising program success," said Mike Thomas, President at Reading For Education. "The bulk of the program's fundraising revenue comes from email marketing."

But email marketers at RFE lacked important visibility of their email deliverability—their ability to reach sponsors' inboxes instead of being blocked or filtered to spam by mailbox providers. "We could tell that our deliverability wasn't great, though we didn't have great visibility from our tools to confirm the reasons why," said Thomas.

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Email deliverability is such a huge part of how successful our company is and how successful the schools we represent are as well.

Mike Thomas
President

Pre-Validity, RFE's inbox placement rate hovered at just 30 percent. The company's email campaigns constantly triggered spam filters and received high complaint volumes.

Furthermore, RFE's use of a shared IP address meant the negative actions of other senders on the IP impacted their sender reputation. This made it more likely that their emails would be filtered to the spam folder.

“Email deliverability is such a huge part of how successful our company is and how successful the schools we represent are as well,” explained Thomas. “Our deliverability issues caused the schools we worked with to have less successful fundraising campaigns—which ultimately can hurt our company's reputation with schools.”

These challenges were compounded by the seasonal nature of RFE's email program. The company significantly reduces their sending volume during the summer months when school is not in session, then must rebuild their lists and re-warm IP addresses at the start of peak sending season in the fall. RFE also purges their subscriber list at the beginning of every school year due to child privacy regulations.

As RFE's email engagement (including clicks and open rates) continued to decline, the team knew it was time for a change.

The solution:

A long-term partnership with Validity, including the combined power of Everest and BriteVerify.

After carefully vetting their options, the company chose to partner with Validity, the leading provider of email success and data quality solutions.

RFE initially onboarded with Return Path, Validity's legacy email platform. Over the next several years, the company's email performance improved significantly, guided by rich deliverability, spam placement, and engagement metrics.

When the Return Path platform was discontinued, Thomas knew they wanted to continue the partnership with Validity. He and the Reading For Education team

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It's daunting to think about switching your infrastructure to something new. But I know if people try (Everest) they will like it.

Mike Thomas
President

decided to migrate to Validity's next-generation email success platform, Everest.

The RFE team was initially hesitant about the migration, believing that learning the new system and tools would drain valuable time and resources. However, these fears proved to be unfounded. "It was much simpler and easier than we expected," Thomas recalled. "The tools aren't *that* different from before. But they're clearer, more powerful, and more user friendly."

RFE also added BriteVerify, the contact verification solution from Validity, to their technology stack so they could begin every school year (and every individual mailing) with a clean list.

"I love that we can now go into Everest and run our lists through BriteVerify or check the deliverability insights we need, all in one place, versus the different screens we used before," said Thomas.



About Validity

Businesses run better and grow faster with trustworthy data. Tens of thousands of organizations rely on Validity solutions – including Everest, DemandTools, BriteVerify, GridBuddy Connect, and MailCharts – to target, contact, engage, and retain customers effectively. Marketing, sales, and customer success teams worldwide trust Validity solutions to help them create smarter campaigns, generate leads, drive response, and increase revenue.

The results:

Sustained, best-in-class email performance and a significant revenue boost from the email channel.

RFE built upon the success they saw with Return Path and reached a new level of email performance by putting the additional capabilities of the Everest and BriteVerify platforms to work.

"We can now easily see how our deliverability may or may not be affecting the revenue generated from our email campaigns and make informed decisions

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Mike Thomas
President

based on the information provided,” said Thomas. “With Everest, we can see issues more clearly than we could with Return Path, or at least see areas that we need to explore.”

RFE used the new visibility of email performance to improve their deliverability and significantly boost revenue from the email channel. After migrating from Return Path to Everest, RFE achieved an impressive 200 percent email revenue uplift YoY.

With guidance from Validity, RFE also migrated to a dedicated IP address. After this change took place, they built a stronger sender reputation that could not be undermined by the actions of other senders.

This reputation boost empowered senders at RFE to avoid spam filters and achieve inbox placement rates as high as 95.2 percent.

The team at RFE now feels confident that their emails are reaching the intended audience. They also feel better equipped to meet the seasonal challenges of their email program.

With the combined power of Everest and BriteVerify, RFE can proactively monitor deliverability blips throughout the annual warmup period and ensure their changing subscriber lists remain clean and actionable.



Why Validity

Turn your data into revenue. Whether you're looking to optimize the performance of your email marketing, data management or sales functions, Validity is your trusted partner to ensure you're reaching who you need to.



For more information visit
validity.com

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