

CASE STUDY

# MandM Reaches an Additional 80 Million Inboxes Per Year with Validity Sender Certification.





In the fast-paced world of ecommerce, MandM stands as a testament to the power of strategic email marketing coupled with cutting-edge technology. Their journey began in 1987 by selling end-of-line sports products directly to customers in the United Kingdom.

Today, they're one of Europe's leading online off-price retailers with over three million active customers, numerous dedicated local market websites across Europe, and delivery to more than 25 countries worldwide.

#### The challenge:

## **Maintaining strong deliverability when operating a high-volume, highly segmented email program.**

Online fashion retailer MandM operates in a highly competitive market space. To stay top-of-mind amongst their target audience, MandM uses email as a critical part of their marketing mix. The company sends approximately two million daily emails, which feature personalized dynamic panels and recommendations that highlight their wide product range.

These efforts are paying off: The email channel drives 12-15 percent of MandM's annual revenue and growing.

"Email is such a powerful retention channel," said Oliver Wilson, Insight Activation Manager at MandM. "Avenues like paid search might win the customer initially, but email is what keeps MandM front of mind throughout the different stages of a customer's lifetime with our brand. This is why inbox placement is so important."

The Customer team at MandM constantly evolves its email strategy to suit subscriber preferences. "We can be quite reactive with email and control the subscriber experience on a day-to-day basis," said Wilson. "If we find a particular customer segment that is under or over-performing, we can really delve into what type of email that customer may want (or not want!) and adjust our targeting and volumes accordingly."

However, operating a high-volume, highly segmented email program creates challenges for the company's email deliverability, or its ability to reach subscribers' inboxes. High-volume senders are often penalized with stricter filtering by major mailbox providers like Gmail, Yahoo, AOL, and Microsoft.



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**David Morris**

Customer Segmentation Executive  
at MandM

“We have so many customers opting into our email program,” explained David Morris, Customer Segmentation Executive at MandM. “And with that comes some not-so-clean email addresses.”

“In the past, we saw a lot of emails bounce because the person entered an invalid email address or made a typo at the point of opt-in,” he continued. “And it was historically really hard to weed these out because many of them looked legitimate on the surface.”

The company’s hygiene issues compounded during their heavy promotional periods (like Black Friday and Christmas) when they saw an influx of signups from new subscribers.

To maintain their strong email performance (and build a strong foundation for other CRM channel efforts like SMS and Web Push communications), the team at MandM turned to Validity, the leading provider of email deliverability and data quality solutions.

#### **Solution:**

### **Validity’s Sender Certification program and Everest email deliverability platform.**

To tackle these challenges, MandM trusted Validity’s suite of email solutions for support.

The team used Validity’s Everest email deliverability platform to accurately monitor their inbox placement and email performance. Everest provided them valuable peace of mind that things were functioning as expected across the company’s three IP addresses and the various mailbox providers they mailed to. “We had an issue with our inbox placement at Apple last year—and without this software, we wouldn’t have been able to drill into the specifics, identify the issue, and rectify it,” said Wilson.

Everest’s List Validation feature helped the team avoid wasting time sending campaigns to inaccurate or out-of-date contacts. “We’ve been able to cleanse a lot of our contacts and put them into separate segments that we don’t mail to,” said Wilson. “This really helps our deliverability and lowers our bounce rates.”

For an added layer of deliverability assurance, MandM completed Validity’s Sender Certification. This program put them on a global allow-list with major



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mailbox providers like Microsoft and Yahoo, and reduced the amount of their emails that were blocked or filtered to spam folders.

As part of the program, MandM received an expert 24/7 monitoring team dedicated to helping them identify any deliverability threats. There have been many instances over the years when MandM leaned on the support of their dedicated team to seek advice on IP warming, spam alerts, and other issues that may have gone under the radar had that support not been there.

#### Results:

**An inbox placement rate of 100% and an additional 80 million emails to the inbox per year.**

With these tools in hand, MandM's email program clocked measurable performance uplifts in record time. The company has achieved a perfect 100 percent inbox placement rate with the four major mailbox providers—AOL, Gmail, Microsoft, and Yahoo. MandM's high sending volume and aggressive email discounting tactics make this achievement even more remarkable.

Qualifying for Sender Certification was instrumental in enhancing MandM's reputation with email providers. This benefit helped them increase their inbox placement rate by 19 percent—which translates to them getting an additional 80 million emails into subscribers' inboxes.

As for what's on the horizon, MandM is looking forward to leveraging Validity (particularly the List Validation component) to ramp up their email marketing efforts in Europe. “We don't want to spend time and resources acquiring new customers and designing and sending loads of emails, only for them to bounce,” said Morris. MandM is also eager to explore new technology like BIMl (Brand Indicators for Message Identification) to increase brand visibility in subscribers' inboxes.

“Validity is like a security blanket for us,” Morris summarized. “We're in a really good place.”