

## ETECH GLOBAL SERVICES HELPS MY PLATES **BEAT SALES PROJECTIONS AND REDUCE OPERATING COSTS**

### About My Plates

Launched in November 2009, My Plates designs and markets new specialty license plates as the sole vendor for the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles. My Plates' goal is to create a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship designed to maximize revenues for the state through the sale of My Plates specialty plates. My Plates is dedicated to providing Texans with greater choices in specialty plate designs, a unique way to add personality to your vehicle, and an unmatched customer experience. My Plates is a pure-Internet retailer; the company has no brick-and-mortar stores.



### Challenge

As a relatively new company, My Plates operates on a slim budget and has minimal staffing. A total of fourteen full-time employees and 10 interns work at the company, doing everything from maintaining relationships with the Texas DMV, to web-development, product conception and roll-out, marketing, forecasting and vendor relations. Too much work with too few resources is a constant challenge.

Additionally, My Plates must cater to a web-savvy customer base, one that expects to see live chat on its site. "Many of customers were young, between 20 and 30 years of age. The company knew at the time of launch that they would have to offer live chat for sales and service support," explained Sean Kennedy, Vice President, My Plates. "But who would staff and manage the channel? That was a big concern for us."

Chat experience was another concern. My Plates wanted to select a chat provider that was a recognized industry leader. "The need was to go with a well-known and respected chat company, preferably a provider that My Plates customers have heard of and used before. But even more critical, needed a partner, not just a provider. My Plates wanted to be able to tap into their expertise because the company just didn't have the resources to continuously optimize the chat channel ourselves."

As a Texas-based company, My Plates desired to create jobs within the State of Texas, so while using outsourced agents to take the chats was an obvious solution, the company needed to look close to home for an outsourcing provider.

### Solution

After significant research, My Plates chose Etech Global Services (EGS), a leading provider of inbound and outbound voice and live chat services, to provide its chat infrastructure and to staff its inbound channel.

The live chat solution automatically identifies, targets, and engages visitors who will benefit from a chat. The solution is designed to avoid visitors who will convert on their own or won't buy under any conditions. These tasks are accomplished through sophisticated business rules that constantly monitor My Plates visitors, looking for signs a visitor needs sales assistance. Only visitors who fit that profile are invited to chat.

"The business rules approach makes chat a viable option for My Plates. As a young company, the need is to be very prudent about how to use chat resources. The business rules ensure the resources are focused on just those visitors who need a little persuasion to convert. Those rules have a direct impact on bottom line," said Mr. Kennedy.

Etech takes full responsibility for handling all incoming chat, email, and phone calls from My Plates visitors. A dedicated team of chat, phone and "blended" agents is deployed and they respond to My Plates customers exclusively. All chat and blended agents have been through rigorous chat-platform training, as well as a five-day training program on My Plates products that Etech developed.

"Partnering with Etech was a smart decision for My Plates. They have over 1,000 chat reps trained and certified. When there are business spikes, as it does when release a new series of plate designs, Etech deploys additional agents to convert all of those extra visitors. This has had a significant impact on our monthly revenues," Mr. Kennedy explained.

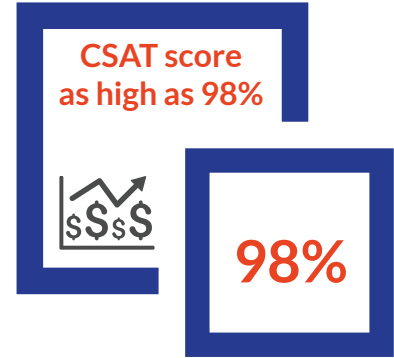
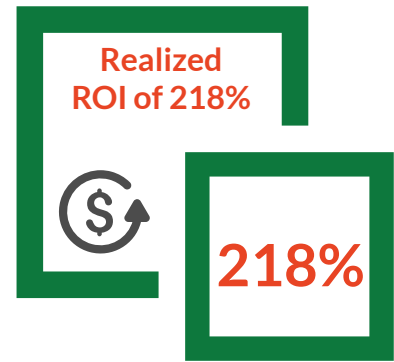
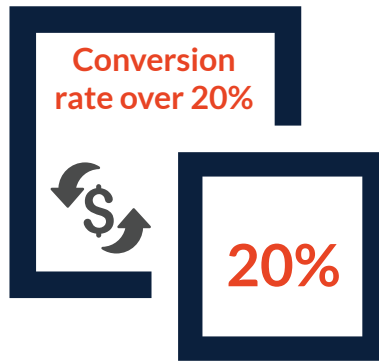


## My Plates Goals

My Plates has high expectations for their live chat service, and set ambitious goals for the effort right from the start. The company initially wanted to boost its conversion rate from 2.5% to 10%. Expectations in 2012 were to exceed a 14% conversion rate. They also wanted to increase the average order value to exceed \$250 per order.

The Etech team began by conducting an extensive walk-through of MyPlates.com, looking for any point in any of its processes that might cause a visitor to hesitate on making a purchase. The team discovered, for instance, that if a visitor received multiple errors in selecting a message for his or her license plate, frustration could set in, driving that visitor away from the site. It is at these points of frustration that proactive invitations to chat are sent to visitors, offering real-time assistance in choosing a message or completing the task at hand.

To increase the AOV of orders, chat agents encourage visitors to upgrade their specialty plate from one year to five or ten year terms. Chat agents also educate prospective customers on the personalization pricing level options.



## Results

The Etech solution has exceeded every one of My Plate's expectations, and has delivered an astounding ROI of 218%.

"Website visitor conversions are much better than the My Plates had hoped. On most days they're around 20% or better, and on some days it is over 30%. And, Etech's average order value is \$275, greatly exceeding the set goal", said Mr. Kennedy. "For a young company with an unproven business model, chat is a huge benefit and a relief."

Etech distinguishes between conversions that would have happened organically (a self-service sale), and those that happened because a chat agent engaged the visitor. The additional wins are known as "incremental sales," a metric the Etech tracks continuously. Since the launch of the chat channel, My Plates has enjoyed an incremental lift of 11.9%, a figure Mr. Kennedy is confident will continue to grow.

As an additional service, Etech reviews the chat transcripts, looking for strategic market intelligence to glean on behalf of My Plates. "Etech was able to tell My Plates that how did their customers come to know about My Plates, and how they came to the website. This is incredibly valuable to us because it told us where to focus our marketing dollars," Mr. Kennedy said.

And to top it all off, My Plates visitors are clearly happy with the sites chat service; 98% rate the chat experience as very favorable in exit surveys.

## Value-Added Partner Brings Additional Revenue and Reduced Costs

After the initial success of the live chat engagement, My Plates migrated to an entirely new chat platform with Etech's guidance and assistance. After careful consideration, Etech presented a new platform that would allow the company the flexibility to meet their inner-day peaks without having to pay for expensive seat license fees not needed a majority of the time. The new software also included additional functionality. This strategic change advised by Etech reduced My Plates chat acquisition costs by 30%. In addition, the initial results have shown an improvement in sales and conversion rates due to the capabilities and ease-of-use of the new chat platform.

Etech has also partnered with My Plates to support their new Authorized Dealer Program, where auto dealers provide new-car purchasers with a free voucher for a personalized license plate through My Plates. Etech's agents are achieving a 300% upsell rate on the face value of the voucher, a testament to their customer education, support, and sales skills. Currently 100 of the 1500 dealers in Texas are enrolled in the program. My Plates is ecstatic with the initial results and the opportunity for growth in this exciting new program.

"Chat continues to provide valuable sales and bottom-line impact to My Plates," said Mr. Kennedy. "Chat volume has doubled since the launch of this program in 2010, and remains a very popular contact channel with My Plates customers. Etech is not just our service provider but a trusted advisor that has helped to maximize the results of this critical sales channel."