

Oceanos



Works with marketers to streamline the sourcing and utilization of contact and account data from multiple third-party sources

Defines list criteria to meet targeting needs, and enables clients to preview data before buying

Database of historical results from previous campaigns helps predict list performance

With so many external sources of contact and account data available, it's often difficult to understand how these sources differ and which ones will deliver the best information. Contact and account data acquisition can be expensive, and data quality and response rates can be unpredictable, especially if the goal is to enhance an existing marketing database. To address these concerns, many b-to-b organizations look to third-party vendors, but to date no single resource has emerged to meet all their needs.

Oceanos is a service provider that helps companies source relevant data using a database of contact information and company demographics pulled from multiple third-party sources. Its offerings help marketers gauge the audience for their offerings, identify the right types of contacts and select names from providers (e.g. databases, list rental providers) confirmed to be reputable. In addition, Oceanos offers access to its database of campaign statistics to help predict list performance; it can also execute campaigns and collect/report results or work with a client's agency partners. Typical engagements are completed within two weeks, from research to post-campaign analysis; most clients engage for multiple campaigns. Once a relationship is established, Oceanos can accommodate client requests to field campaigns in as little as two days.

Oceanos pricing is based on usage and

volume. A multichannel list for either perpetual or annual use, depending on source, starts at \$0.95 per record (e.g. customer name, address, phone, email address) and is discounted on a sliding scale as the number of contacts grows. Rental lists cost ranges per thousand names are \$250 to \$450 for email lists, \$150 to \$250 for postal lists and \$225 to \$350 for telephone lists. Clients with significant annualized spend can become a part of Oceanos' Data Asset Management Group, which allows them to design a custom list portfolio and be a part of the group's collective list buying; this arrangement drives more favorable pricing — and often accountability — from individual list vendors.

SERVICES AND VISION

The presence of functionality is a dimension that SiriusDecisions uses to evaluate a vendor's offerings; in addition, vendors must demonstrate the functionality is capable, and have a vision for continuous improvement. Our analysis of Oceanos around these components follows:

- *Services presence.* Oceanos' primary service offering is the delivery of Customized List Strategies (email/telemarketing/postal) using its List Optimizer tool, which provides a standard interface to multiple list sources hand-coded to increase

VENDOR AT-A-GLANCE: OCEANOS

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Client Roster

Autodesk
 Eloqua
 Iron Mountain
 Kronos
 SunPower

Operations

Revenue: \$1MM-\$10MM
Employees: Fewer than 25
Global Presence: Europe, North America
Key Industries Served: Business Services, High Technology, Information Services, Manufacturing

demographic depth. Oceanos works with clients to refine list criteria for new account and prospect data, or for incremental contacts at companies already in the client's database. It then aggregates contacts and companies from screened list vendors and database sources (e.g. Jigsaw, NetProspex, OMNI, Penton, United Business Media, ZoomInfo). To make job titles more relevant, Oceanos custom-codes contacts with more accurate titles than data card job function/title categorization from list providers. Its KnowledgeBank stores aggregated performance data collected directly from client campaigns, which is used to predict list performance. Service options include audience sizing, customized data strategies, multi-source list development, and analysis, benchmarking and adjustment of list strategy. Although it can execute campaigns, Oceanos is not typically responsible for creative/messaging; it refers clients to a partner network if creative assistance is required.

- *Services capability.* The Oceanos process starts with a review of a client's target to identify companies and individual title levels to pursue, as well as what contact sources to use. Using List Optimizer, researchers identify relevant accounts and/or contacts based on the available list of fields. Clients are provided with a preview file comprised of the optimal contacts from multiple databases (ready for use except for actual names, emails and telephone info). Client contacts are compared to new list requests so names are not purchased more than once, unless contact information has changed. Monitoring can provide clients with ongoing contact updates based on standard criteria such as target accounts, potentially valuable for cross-sell and upsell initiatives. List strategies are designed to leverage the strengths of multiple data types to ensure comprehensive coverage of a given audience.

- *Vendor vision.* Oceanos is focused on improving its list sourcing capabilities by adding to the fields clients can use to filter contacts and companies. It also plans to add social media handles (for Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook) to its contact profiles. Oceanos continues to grow the roster of publishers (both large and small) and data owners that submit preview files to the List Optimizer database. It is also looking to expand its ability to support clients with non-U.S. contact and account data needs, and may consider providing direct self-service access to the List Optimizer as the technology is refined for non-expert users.

- *Integration.* Although it uses a proprietary technology tool, Oceanos does not sell technology, so there are no technical integration issues. Oceanos will, however, work with a client's agency partners to provide names to be used in campaigns executed by those agencies.

- *Training.* Oceanos completes work on behalf of its clients using its proprietary List Optimizer tool; thus, there is no need for formal training. However, companies may find that working with an expert consultant to improve the use of third-party lists may enhance an understanding of targeting and email optimization.

- *Support.* Each Oceanos client is assigned a project manager; a company executive also takes an active role in campaign strategy. For larger client engagements, an executive is assigned to co-manage the account. Engagements typically begin with an onsite visit or conference call to formulate strategy. Once the budget and marketing objectives are agreed upon, the strategy is presented for client signoff. At the end of the campaign, performance is reviewed to see what can be done to improve future efforts.

- *Best practices.* The primary drivers of Oceanos' offering are its unique access to performance data on a large number of third-party lists, and its use of a defined process to determine the best list strategy for each client's goals. Oceanos information around sourcing, costs, cleansing and use of third-party names is incorporated into every engagement. The most important best practice is the rental of contact information from only reputable list providers to keep clients out of email spam traps; Oceanos also structures email campaigns to avoid CAN-SPAM violations.

- *Vendor viability.* Founded in 2002, Oceanos is privately held. It currently is working with more than 150 client companies (both b-to-b and b-to-c) of various sizes. As with any private company, we recommend securing references from similar organizations as part of your due diligence.

THE SIRIUS DECISION

Our research consistently shows that better targeting and cleaner data are directly related to better performance at the top of the demand waterfall. List optimization is an important part of an overall data strategy, and Oceanos presents a compelling case for why it can be a strong partner in achieving this goal. As marketers get more sophisticated with targeting and segmentation, they must become careful consumers of third-party data or risk wasting budget on a high volume of useless contacts. Being able to see actual response rates from

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

As important as features and functionality is a vendor's ability to deliver and implement its solutions. Our analysis of Oceanos along this dimension that we call "essential elements" is as follows:

various sources is also valuable because expectations can be set appropriately. Consider carefully the time and cost required for do-it-yourself sourcing and quality management of multiple list rentals and

database subscriptions; with volume discounts for clients with ongoing requirements, Oceanos may be a rare case where quality and lower cost need not be mutually exclusive.