

# Direct Selling *News*

Serving the Direct Selling and Network Marketing Executive

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Up and Comers

Send Out Cards

## PROMPTING POSITIVITY ONE GREETING CARD AT A TIME



Greeting cards. Everyone likes getting them, and most of us like sending them. But in today's hectic world, sometimes we forget to acknowledge a special occasion or convey our thanks, best wishes or even our love. Kody Bateman knows firsthand how important it is to act on the impulse to express our feelings and founded Send Out Cards in 2005 to help thousands do so with the click of a mouse.

When Kody graduated from college, he moved on to an internship in New York City. A job offer ensued, so he returned to Salt Lake City, newly married and a new parent, to gather all their belongings and move to NYC. The moment of departure came, and the family said their good-byes. Kody remembers the moment vividly, saying "We said goodbye to my mom and dad and went out in the front of the house. My brother Chris was about 200 feet away in the front yard, moving some vehicles around, and I had a prompting that I needed to slow down, go over, give my brother a hug and say goodbye," he says. "It was strong, overwhelmingly strong. But it was bizarre because we really just weren't that way. We were not that type of huggy-kind of family, even though we were close."

People were in a hurry, others were waiting, so Kody ignored that pull. He honked and waved, Chris waved, and Kody drove away. Three months went by. The phone rang at three o'clock in the morning. It was his mother, telling him that Chris had been killed that day. He was killed on the job at 29 years old.

"The only thing I could think about was the prompting and how I ignored it. Now I realize why I had the prompting," Kody says. "I spent all night soul-searching and made a promise to my brother that I would always act on my promptings and try to help others do the same. That's where our story was born. From that day forward, I've tried to come up with programs to help people act on their promptings. It's been going on for 19 years. And here we are, 19 years later, as Send Out Cards."

*Direct Selling News* recently spoke to Kody Bateman about Send Out Cards' mission, saleforce and remarkable growth.

**DSN: What made you choose direct selling as your channel of distribution?**

**KB:** We knew that there was an educational process to sending a greeting card over the Internet. Direct selling or network marketing is a great platform for education. What we needed was to change consumers' behavior. We needed them to get to the Internet, choose a card, type a message, have it come out in your own handwriting font, push the send button and allow us to print the card, stamp it and mail it. This is a completely different experience. So I felt from Day One that the best way to do that was to have an army of people out there in the marketplace who could sit down one-on-one with another person and show them how to send a card. The only way to do that was through direct sales.

**DSN: When you launched, you started with a relatively edited selection of cards and now that has grown. Can you tell me a little bit about that?**

**KB:** We have over 12,000 greeting cards in about 40 different categories. We expand by about 200 to 300 cards a month. We filter out older and unpopular cards on a continual basis. But we are very aggressive in making sure that there is really a good selection. On top of that, we have our Picture Plus product, where you can build your own greeting cards.

**DSN: So you combine technology with the personal touch of direct selling. Do you have many competitors?**

**KB:** We have zero competition in direct sales, and we have pioneered the way of offering a greeting card through network marketing. It's interesting: A few public greeting-card companies

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have launched Internet sites very similar to what we are doing. And they spent millions of dollars on this. They all have the same dilemma: They still do not have an educational system to teach people how to do it.

## **DSN: How does your greeting card system work?**

**KB:** It's all a print-on-demand system. People from all over the world can go to Send Out Cards, set up an account and then send a card. And all those orders go into a massive server, and every morning we come in and push some buttons for print production. What happens is the automated system goes to the server and captures all of those orders and pulls them into another server that has all of the greeting cards. It marries your information, marries the data into the card you chose and then sends it to our printers.

Our printers are Xerox, the Rolls-Royce of digital printers; we have three of them here in Salt Lake City. Those printers print our cards out. We average right now about 30,000 cards a day. And each card is unique. Every card that comes through has a different picture, different image, different copy inside, different fonts, signatures. It's very sophisticated and automated. Every day, on average, between greeting cards and postcards, about 30,000 pieces a day come off the presses.

## **DSN: What kind of training to you provide to your salesforce**

**KB:** I work very closely with the field. I like to say that I surround myself with people who are much more talented than I am and we all worked together and created an easy-to-follow plan.

We have a program called the Daily 8, or eight basic things that you should do every day. If you do it consistently, you'll be successful in this business. And it's very simple to follow. I've learned in my 12 years of network marketing that you must have an easily duplicated system.

## **DSN: How can people participate in Send Out Cards?**

**KB:** There are three primary ways to become a card sender. We don't try to sell anybody, because we're out to help people to become card senders, and that's it.

There are three ways to do that. You can become a retail customer or a wholesale customer and get the same discount as a representative. Or you can become an entrepreneur, which means becoming a representative for the business. There are three different price points, three different ways; it's very simple to follow. We train our reps to allow the people they talk with to decide on their own how they want to become a card sender. Just give them the options and allow them—don't force them, don't try to persuade them, just show them the three choices they have and let them make their own decisions. Ironically, most opt for the biggest entrepreneur package.

## **DSN: How have you made personal development a priority for your field?**

**KB:** It's an integral part of our culture. At Send Out Cards, we have the "Treat Them Right" seminar, and when you purchase an entrepreneur package you get a ticket to a seminar, and we do them all over the country and all over Canada. We are in a different city every other weekend. I personally go out and do most of these seminars. And this seminar is all personal development and teaching basic affirmation principles, positive thinking principles, law of attraction principles—all of the things that we have learned over the years in the books we've read and seminars we've attended, and what we've accumulated. The cool thing is that we give you a mechanism to implement what you learned every single day: It's called Send Out Cards.

## **DSN: Can you share any company metrics with me, such as the number of distributors or sales figures?**

**KB:** We currently have more than 30,000 distributors in the United States and Canada. In 2006, we finished at \$10.5 million in sales. In 2007 we jumped to \$25 million in sales. And we are on course this year for a \$60 million year.

Also, we're in Canada already. And we are expanding into Australia, as of July this year. Our goal—this is long term—is to be able to deliver a greeting card anywhere in the world in 48 hours or less. To do that, we need printers all over the world. Right now, the only printing we do now is out of Salt Lake City. Next year we will have a facility, probably in Cincinnati, that will supply the entire East Coast. Salt Lake City will supply the West Coast. In the future, we will do the same thing in Canada and around the world.

We believe that we will be one of the largest greeting card companies in the world. And we are definitely on course for that.

## **DSN: What is the ultimate goal of Send Out Cards?**

**KB:** It's really simple: We are on a crusade to help millions of people become card senders. To help millions of people to act upon their promptings every day, to deliver on a promise that I made to my brother that I'd help as many people as I could act on their promptings, and as people join Send Out Cards they join that crusade. And it's a lot of fun. If you think it's fun to receive cards, start sending them. Now, if you think it's fun to send cards, start helping others to become card senders. The further you go in the process, the more fun it is. That's what the crusade is all about.

The average consumer buys about 10 greeting cards a year, so it's about a card a month. Our movement at Send Out Cards is to get the consumer from a card a month to a card a day. That's it, a card a month to a card a day. And we teach people to send at least one heartfelt card every day of their lives. And if you do it, your life will change forever. 🌱