With 99 per cent market share, Yemeksepeti (literal translation: “Food Basket”) is the biggest online food delivery portal in Turkey, and one of the country’s largest online retailers. Founded in 2001, the company aims to make ordering food online as easy as possible for its customers. It currently works with 3,500 restaurants across 12 cities throughout Turkey and has 600,000 subscribers generating approximately 500,000 unique visits per month.

Yemeksepeti lets customers place orders with its partner restaurants through its website at www.yemeksepeti.com and have their meal delivered to their door. The company takes over 15,000 orders per day via their website and also gives after sales support to their users and member restaurants over the phone, email and through IM. As the company’s business happens around the clock, it’s essential that orders are confirmed in real-time. The whole ordering process must also be run extremely tightly to ensure that once a customer order is placed, the food is delivered to the customer’s home within a pre-agreed time, often within 30 minutes.

With StrongView, we were able to start with a clean slate and build up our own reputation based purely on our own email campaigns. This has led to higher deliverability rates and, ultimately, more successful campaigns.”

Melih Odemiş
Founder and head of IT
Yemeksepeti

Given tight timeframes between ordering and promised delivery, Yemeksepeti needed a powerful and reliable email solution that could deliver messages in near real time.
Delivering Exceptional Business Growth

Yemeksepeti began its business working with individual restaurants and small local chains. However, when it started to add big chains like Dominos and Pizza Hut to its service, the business really took off. Yemeksepeti doubled in size annually during its first three years, and today the company continues to enjoy a 60 per cent annual growth rate.

Yemeksepeti founder and head of IT Melih Ödemiş explains these exceptional growth figures: “Our frequency of visitors is much higher than a typical e-commerce site because food is eaten every day. It’s not uncommon for some customers to order from us twice a day.”

Ödemiş also cites the increased popularity of fast food in Turkey, saying: “The arrival of big chain outlets has dramatically changed the culture of eating out in Turkey. The country has definitely become more Westernised, especially over the past five years.”

Need for Easy and Efficient Handling of Customer Data

Yemeksepeti developed most of the technology powering its online food delivery service in-house. This includes the e-commerce platform that integrates with the applications used to distribute emails, which in turn are used to confirm customer orders as well as deliver promotional offers.

Ödemiş says, “Customer emails are very important to us, and the relevancy of customer data plays a key role in ensuring the most useful content gets to the right individual. For example, because people can order their food from so many different restaurants, the geographical location of the customer is critical. This means that we only send promotions and mailings from restaurants near to them.”

However, as Yemeksepeti’s business grew rapidly in the early years, so too did the volume of customer data. It soon became too difficult for Yemeksepeti to manage this data efficiently with its home-grown email platform, forcing the company to explore other email options.

In 2006, Yemeksepeti moved away from its internal email platform and opted for an email service provider (ESP) to manage the huge volume of emails it needed to send. Ödemiş said, “We needed to send 1.5 million marketing emails a month. On top of that, we had to distribute around 500,000 transactional emails a month to confirm orders. Since these orders needed to be confirmed in near real time, an email glitch anywhere in the system could wreak havoc with our ordering process, which in turn would impact our and the restaurant’s revenues.”

In order to address these challenges, Yemeksepeti moved to a more sophisticated and reliable ESP. However, with its number of customers skyrocketing and plans to extend the business into further Turkish cities and abroad, paying the per email costs charged by the ESP would cause Yemeksepeti’s emailing costs to spiral out of control and impact the firm’s profitability.
Deployment of StrongView

Ödemiş said: “What we really wanted was the best of both worlds. We wanted the cost-control benefits of owning the email platform while retaining the sophistication, efficiency and reliability benefits of an industrial-strength ESP-type solution.”

After exploring different options and vendors on the market, Yemeksepeti selected StrongView Message Studio and its Transactional Email Platform to provide a service that would integrate with its existing e-commerce platform.

StrongView Message Studio is an email marketing system designed to let companies like Yemeksepeti improve their email campaign management, data segmentation and targeting. As a complementary product, StrongView’s Transactional Email Platform lets companies transform generic, plain-text transactional email into highly branded, personalised messages capable of driving incremental revenue through relevant cross- and up-sell offers. For Yemeksepeti, a branded, personalised experience managed through transactional and marketing emails would help build customer loyalty.

The project began by using StrongView’s StrongStart implementation service and Product Mailing Programme (PMP) to gauge and optimise email deliverability effectiveness with ISPs. As a result, the first email was sent within a couple of days of deployment.

“With the ESP, we faced deliverability issues, most of which were caused by the ESP’s other clients mailings; this was seriously affecting our sender reputation,” says Ödemiş. “With StrongView, we were able to start with a clean slate and build up our own reputation based purely on our own email campaigns. This has led to higher deliverability rates and, ultimately, more successful campaigns.”

Measured Return on Investment

For the first year, Yemeksepeti decided to lease the StrongView platform at an annual cost similar to that of the previous ESP. However, after a year of steadily increasing email volumes, Yemeksepeti opted to purchase the StrongView platform. By offering Yemeksepeti this unique flexibility to move from a leased option to a soft license model, Yemeksepeti was able to greatly reduce its costs over the long term. By implementing StrongView’s in-house solution and eliminating the ongoing annual ESP costs, Yemeksepeti expects to see an 80 per cent ROI within the first year of purchase. Because of the one-time purchase cost and escalating volumes, this ROI will even be higher in subsequent years.

Says Ödemiş: “If, after five years, we have also doubled our email volume, then the ROI delivered by the StrongView platform would also double from 240 per cent to 480 per cent.”

Melih Ödemiş
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What We Offer

StrongView enables marketers to leverage three of the most powerful communication channels today to achieve their customer acquisition, retention and loyalty objectives: email marketing, mobile marketing and social media. Our solutions range from industry-leading email marketing, transactional email, lifecycle marketing, mobile and viral marketing technology to powerful social media marketing solutions and services that enable marketers to effectively leverage this new channel for expanding reach and revenue. Explore our offerings to find a solution that’s right for you.

Email Marketing Solutions

StrongView’s email and cross-channel marketing solutions empower marketers to drive the highest value from their marketing programmes. Our wide range of solutions combine StrongView’s industry-leading platform and drag-and-drop cross-channel lifecycle marketing functionality with the strategic and deliverability expertise to drive conversions, increase brand awareness and improve customer satisfaction.

Word-of-Mouth Acquisition Solutions

StrongView’s word-of-mouth acquisition solutions enable marketers to leverage their biggest brand influencers to expand their reach to new audiences. By combining multi-channel sharing capabilities with detailed multi-stage sharing reporting and integrated reward and fulfilment functionality, StrongView makes it easy for marketers to launch fully branded referral marketing programmes that can track performance all the way to the conversion.

Social Media Solutions

StrongView’s social media solutions were developed with a direct marketer’s perspective in mind. Our products enable marketers to launch direct-response campaigns into social media and reach and identify key brand influencers across blogs, Twitter, Facebook and other social networks. Every social media product enables you to analyse and track campaign performance all the way through to the conversion so you can truly understand the business impact of your social media efforts.

Transactional Email Solutions

StrongView’s transactional email solutions enable marketers to take control of the branding, content and promotional elements of event-triggered email marketing, such as order confirmations and shipping notices. A straightforward integration with existing data sources and applications allows StrongView to efficiently assemble and immediately deliver fully branded and personalised messages that properly reflect customer preferences, purchase history and previous interactions with your brand.