

LICENCE TO BILL

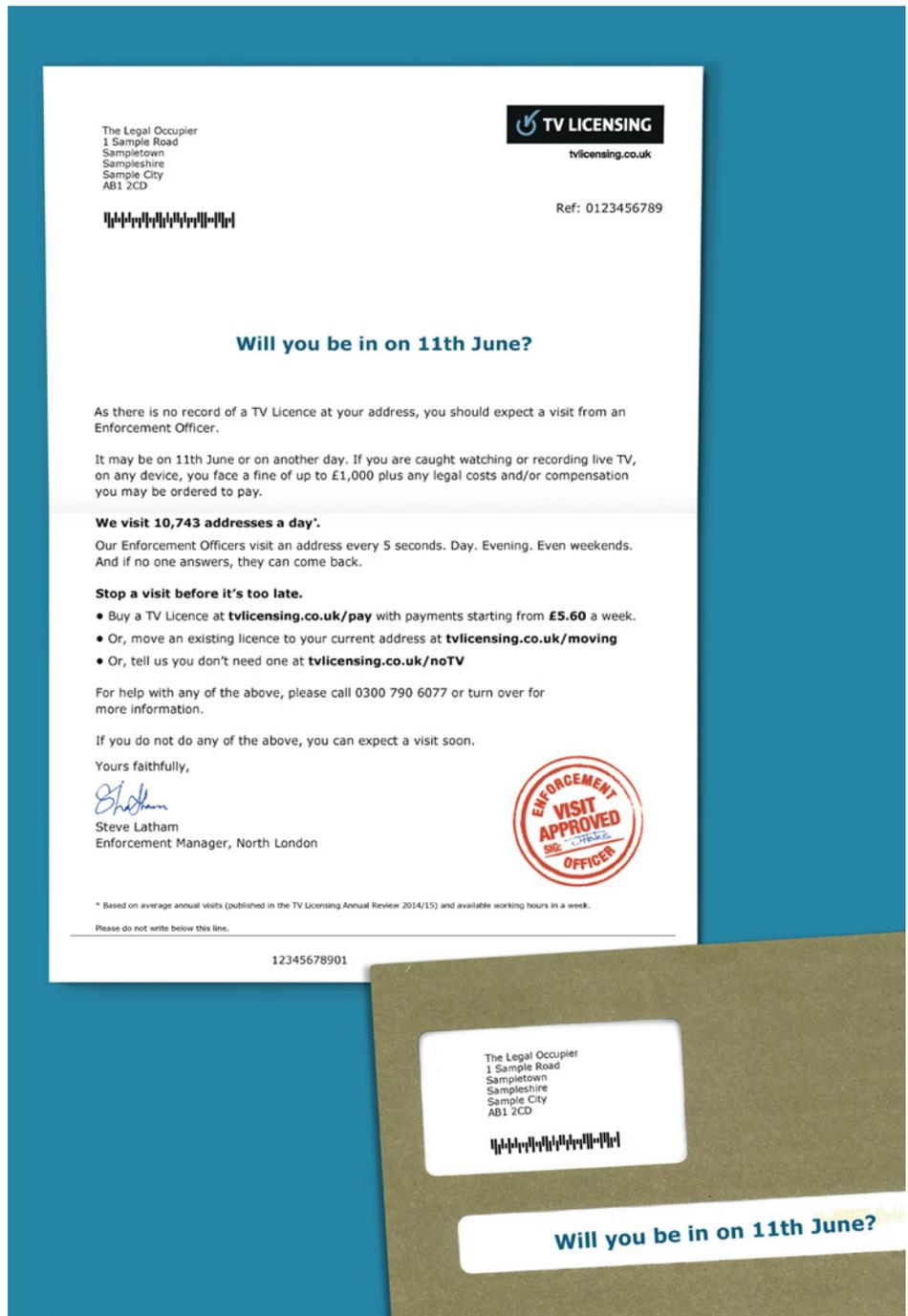
How a simple sentence in a mailing window changed consumer behaviour and created valuable business efficiencies.

In the U.K., you must have a TV licence to watch or record live TV and download or watch BBC programs on iPlayer. But getting evaders to pay up isn't easy. Monthly letters are mailed to about 1.4 million unlicensed addresses.

Despite the possibility of a visit by an Enforcement Officer, most recipients ignore the letter. Time for a new way to get householders to open the envelopes and act on the information inside. Licensing authorities chose intrigue over alarm. The plain outer contained two windows. One for the address and a second, which asked, "Will you be in on <XX Date>?" The implied possibility of a visit by an Enforcement Officer was real.

The date was close enough to feel imminent, and far enough away to get in touch in advance and take action if a licence was required. The letter was signed by an Enforcement Manager in the area, making a visit seem probable [across the country, officers make visits every five seconds, including evenings and weekends]. The message spelled out the consequences of evasion [a fine of up to £1,000]. A "Visit Approved" stamp added a sense of authority.

A simple question in the window of an envelope generated a 230 per cent uplift in response rate against the control, leading to significant incremental revenue. But that's not the only measure of the mailing. There was also value in the reduction of enforcement visits by field officers.



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