

# How bol.com turned an underperforming campaign into an award winner

**Bol.com is an e-tailer committed to building longterm and lasting relationships with their customers. Delivering a perfect customer experience is one of the focus areas of their CRM strategy. And yet the anniversary email campaign that they had high hopes for was not hitting the targets. Bol.com knew a drastic make-over must take place. They met the challenge head on and achieved success: the optimized campaign improved results radically. And as icing on the cake, it won them an award. How did they do it?**

For several years, bol.com have been running an email campaign meant to celebrate their relationship with over 6 million customers. Its message was very positive, but the campaign wasn't as successful as bol.com hoped it would be. In fact, the opposite was true: although its fine profitability, the CloseAlert feedback was mostly negative.

### A deep dive into feedback

The CRM department at bol.com dove into the customer feedback. What improvements could be made to the campaign?

Their conclusion: "The email was no longer up to date, not surprising and above all: not personal enough". In short: it begged for a make-over.

### Setting goals and conditions

The make-over started where it should: setting the proper goals and conditions. The main goal was already defined: a positive customer experience. Bol.com then asked their people how this could be accomplished. This led to identifying 5 conditions the campaign had to meet in order to be successful:

1. Relevant and fun
2. Innovative
3. Scalable
4. Sustainable
5. Personal, but not over the top



### Setting the KPI

Bol.com chose CloseAlert's sentiment score\* as the main KPI for measuring the customer experience. The new campaign had to reach at least a 5 point increase in sentiment score in comparison to the old version to be a success.

***"We measure all our emails by CloseAlert sentiment"*** - Margot Ramondt,  
Manager Campaigning at bol.com

We're proud to say CloseAlert plays an important role at bol.com in measuring the succes of all their email campaigns. As bol.com's Manager Campaigning states: "We measure all our emails by CloseAlert sentiment and by email metrics such as opens and clicks."

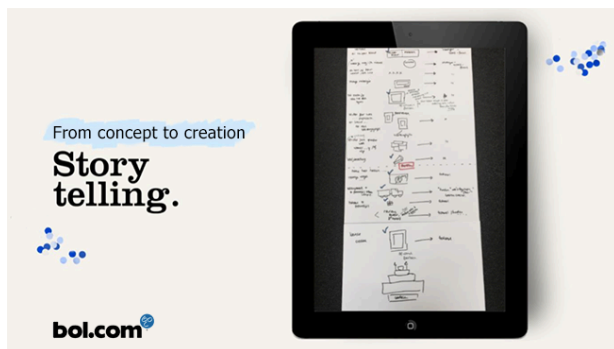
\*CloseAlert's sentiment score is calculated by subtracting negative feedback from positive feedback and dividing the outcome by total

feedback and multiplying this by ten. The resulting score ranges from -10 to 10 and gives you a quick indication of the overall sentiment.

### Back to the drawing board

With the 5 conditions in mind, the CRM department went back to the drawing board and brainstormed on how to improve the campaign and the overall customer experience. All generated ideas were written on post-it notes and hung on a wall.

At the end of the brainstorm session [bol.com](https://bol.com) grouped and ordered the best ideas and sketched a first crude email message. The result was a personal story about you and your history with [bol.com](https://bol.com).



### Complete personal storytelling

In collaboration with Gracious Studios [bol.com](https://bol.com) chose for a long-form storytelling e-mail. This meant having the start and a finish in the message itself, so no need to click through.

Another anniversary campaign is no breaking news, but this one made headlines due to the scale, the applied intelligence and the use of subtle techniques such as animated gifs that guide you through the story.

A mixture of personal data and the so-called “wisdom of the crowd” - information on a higher and more extensive level, like your hometown for instance - was used to create an entertaining and personal anniversary experience.



### The improved experience

When you open the anniversary email the first thing you'll see is an animated book opening up with a personal message for you. Below it you'll see for how many years you've been their customer, what your first order was and your last, how often you've ordered, what your favorite time of day is to shop at [bol.com](https://bol.com), and the like. They also tell you what happened in the year you first stopped by, what was popular back then and how many parcels in total were delivered in your hometown.



### The results

Remember [bol.com](https://bol.com)'s goal was to outperform the old campaign? Well, they nailed it by doubling the initial target. It reached a 10 point higher sentiment score! A staggering 81% of the gathered feedback was positive.

***“It felt very personal and was a pleasant surprise”*** - customer feedback on the renewed anniversary campaign

Examples of customer feedback show us that the 'relevant and fun' condition was more than met:

- "Very attentive for such a big company"
- "Unexpected and so much fun, all those facts"
- "It felt very personal and was a pleasant surprise"

### **Icing on the cake**

The anniversary campaign was nominated for 2016's DDMA Email Campaign of the Year award and won the audience award after an exciting on stage presentation by bol.com, beating Albert Heijn (MijnBonus program) and Blokker (Out of stock campaign).

### **Conclusion**

Bol.com aimed for delivering a perfect customer experience. Their anniversary campaign failed to achieve this. The mainly negative feedback told bol.com a make-over was necessary.

By setting the proper goals and conditions they came up with a very personal email campaign for their more than 6 million customers. This resulted in a huge increase in positive feedback, a positive and improved customer experience plus a coveted award.

This case teaches us that no matter how big your company is, you can still be personal and make a difference if you listen to your customers, focus on their experience and strive for excellence!

### **Want to learn more?**

Please contact [yori@closealert.com](mailto:yori@closealert.com) or ring +31 (0) 20 26 118 62 to request a demo.