

Uncover the real performance of your email campaigns

Have you ever sent out a campaign that had great open and click rates but failed to deliver in terms of conversion? You did everything by the book and yet your email campaign did not significantly increase your metrics.

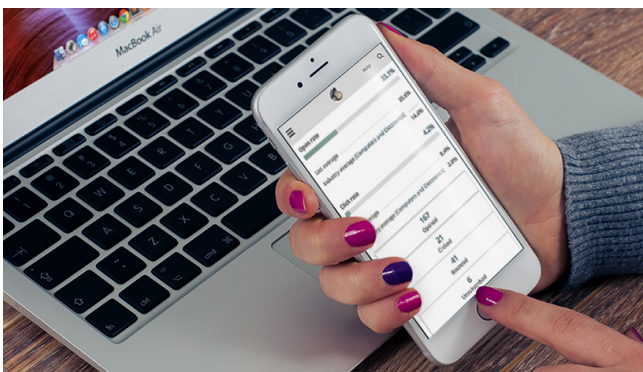
When you think you have done everything right, and still got blindsided by disappointingly low results, how can you figure out exactly what went wrong with your email campaign?

To avoid landing in the same predicament again requires a deeper understanding of your email campaign metrics. In this article, we'll share some learnings on leveraging customer feedback to uncover the real performance of your email campaigns.

Basic performance indicators

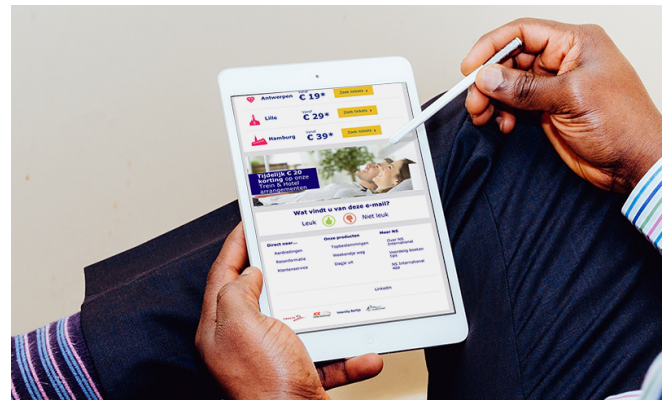
Let's have a look at the four basic email metrics first:

- The bounce rate tells you how many of your messages were not delivered;
- The open rate tells you how many emails were opened (in practice: it tells you how many people downloaded the images in the message);
- The click rate tells how many people clicked on one or more links contained in your email;
- The conversion rate tells how many people who received your email completed a desired action, such as filling out a lead generation form or purchasing a product.



Whereas you can dig into your bounce report for the reason why email was not delivered, there is no report that tells you *why* people opened your email and did - or did not - click through and converted.

What is then the best the best way to start uncovering the real performance of your email campaigns?



Get your feedback to know whether your campaign hits your goals

Just staring at your rates is not going to give you all the insights in your campaign's performance. How can you find out what is really going on? That is where feedback comes in. Go straight to the source: ask people how they really feel about you. Ask them directly why they do - or don't do - the things they do.

Of course there are several ways for getting feedback. In our opinion, the best way to get feedback from the recipients of your email is by asking for it from within the emails you send.

Make giving feedback easy for your customers

Take BJ Fogg's Behavior model in account: Motivation, Ability, and Trigger must converge at the same time for behaviour to occur. In other words, you should provide people with an easy way to give feedback since they are probably not highly motivated to spend a lot of time on it. This is why we introduced our thumbs up / thumbs down feedback solution back in 2011. Easy to understand, easy to use.

Ask the right questions

Asking the right questions to get actionable feedback is an art in itself. Do you want to understand how people feel about your content? Would you like to find out how your product helps your customers solve their problems?

First, define the answers you want to get from your customers. Then determine what question will provide you with these answers. Once that is clear, refine that question into a version that can best be understood by your audience.

Analyze your data

The next step is analyzing your customer's input to find out what the real performance of your email campaign is. Ask yourself:

- What is the general feeling my message triggered?
- Which feedback stands out?
- Which feedback touches a sore spot?
- Did I ask previously for feedback, and if so, did I see any change in sentiment compared to past campaigns?

(Another question that could pop into your head right now is: "How can I use these insights to increase my email campaigns' success rate?" Well, read on.)

Optimize your email campaigns

To illustrate how you can use feedback to optimize your campaigns we'll take a look at two of our customers. They gathered feedback in their email campaigns, analyzed what was really going on and then optimized their messages, resulting in better performance.

Example 1: how NS International increased their email campaigns' success rate



One of NS International's biggest automatic email campaigns is called 'Ready to Go'. Over 35.000 emails are sent out each month. It consists of several messages before, during and after your trip. They offer tips on hotels, local public transport and car rental, the NS International app and, of course, information about the journey itself. The email about hotels and car rental wasn't doing well and the feedback gathered was mainly negative. What was the reason?

Feedback showed the email's content was considered not relevant to the service NS international provided. Taking their customers seriously, NS International decided to pause this email, change the entire content, and cut out any offerings that were seen as irrelevant.

NS International also gave away coupons for free drinks and cookies. The coupons were originally intended for two persons. Feedback showed that customers had booked for three or more. This resulted in the new coupon, standard for four people, since January 2016. This earned NS International a lot of positive feedback.

(Read the entire case study of NS International [here](#).)

Example 2: how bol.com uncovered the real performance of their anniversary campaign



For several years, bol.com ran an email campaign meant to celebrate their relationship with their 6.1 million customers. The message was very positive, but the campaign wasn't as successful as bol.com hoped it would be. Although profitability was fine, the CloseAlert feedback was mostly negative. Why?

Customer feedback told them that the email was no longer up to date, not surprising, and not personal enough. In other words: it wasn't making the customer happy. So the email got a complete make-over and was relaunched. It was a success: 81% of the gathered feedback was positive.

As a bonus, the new campaign was nominated for 2016's DDMA Email Campaign of the Year award and won the audience award.

(Read the entire case study of bol.com [here](#).)

Conclusion

To get behind the truth of your email campaign's performance, look further than just opens, clicks and conversions. Ask for feedback by asking the right questions, then analyze your responses. Your customers will provide you with insights you may not have thought of before. Optimize your email campaigns, keep asking for feedback, and consistently evaluate performance. Being feedback-driven is an ongoing process that gets better the more frequently you use it.

Want to learn more?

Please contact yorl@closealert.com or ring +31 (0) 20 26 118 62 to request a demo.