

CASE STUDY

Argos Boost Sales with Award-Winning User Generated Content



→ “We generated hugely impressive click through rates of over 34% and open rates of almost 25% thanks to the relevancy of the campaign” (*Grant Baillie, Multi-Channel Customer Retention Manager, Argos*)

 [Email Marketing Software](#)

OVERVIEW

CHALLENGE:

- To introduce a product review section of the Argos Website
- To drive sales of reviewed products online
- To engage customers further with the Argos brand

SOLUTION:

- Branded email to be sent out to each customer 2 weeks after purchase and asking for review
- Highly personalised emails thanks to dynamic content
- Reviews to be uploaded within 72 hours generating sales of reviewed products

RESULT:

- Open rates of almost 25%
- Click through rates of over 34%
- Target of 209,000 reviews over 6 month period reached 2 months ahead of schedule

Argos

Location:	UK
Industry:	Retail
Website:	www.argos.co.uk
Products:	Email Marketing Software



Argos wanted to introduce a product review section on their website and identified email as the key channel to help them achieve this goal. eCircle devised an automated email programme, whereby customers who purchased products on the Argos.co.uk website were sent an automated email two weeks after a purchase was made, thanking them for their custom and giving the opportunity to review the product they purchased to ultimately drive sales of reviewed products online, helping Argos to use the information to understand what customers feel about the products after purchase.

Argos are a unique multi-channel retailer selling general merchandise and products for the home from over 700 stores throughout the UK and Republic of Ireland, online and over the telephone. In the last financial year, their sales were £4.3 billion and they employ some 33,000 people across the business, serving over 130 million customers a year through their stores and taking 26% of sales through the internet channel alone. On average, 18 million UK households, or around two thirds of the population, have an Argos catalogue at home at any time and their website was the most visited high street retail website in the UK in 2008.

→ Dynamic content to produce emails unique to each and every customer

Argos customers who have purchased online for home delivery or reserved online for in-store pick-up were sent a branded email thanking them for their purchase and asking them if they wanted to review the products they recently purchased. To maximise response rates, every email was sent approximately two weeks after purchase, giving customers' time to use the product but with it still being front of mind. Instead of sending one generic email to each customer, Argos utilised dynamic content so that each email generated was unique to each individual depending on what products the recipient had purchased.

After the product had been reviewed and moderated by Bazaarvoice, they were uploaded onto the website within 72 hours, allowing Argos to engage customers directly with highly targeted, personalised content, providing communication on an individual level with the objective of boosting response rates, generating customer reviews for multiple products and driving sales of reviewed products.

→ Innovative advanced automated data programme delivering impressive results

This campaign is made exceptional thanks to an advanced automated data programme, implemented specifically to populate the dynamic email content. At the outset, data company Planning Inc were employed to work on the data, selecting only consenting customers, supplying the data to eCircle which was then uploaded into eCircle's email broadcast software eC-messenger. Based on this data, personalised email content could simply be generated for each recipient and sent out on an automatic basis, ensuring relevance and timeliness.

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Multi-Channel Customer
Retention Manager, Argos

→ **Engaging customers making them feel integral to the Argos brand**

In the dynamic world of web 2.0, brands must recognise the power of the consumer so Argos's customer review programme embraces this by giving them the chance of writing a review. By creating this initial dialogue, Argos can build on these relationships, guaranteeing that they are long-lasting and profitable, allowing them to use the reviews for future re-targeting campaigns and help with building an accurate profile for each use in Argos's database.

→ **Conclusion**

An initial target was set by Argos to generate 209,000 product reviews in six months. In the space of just four months, they had already generated 203,095 reviews.

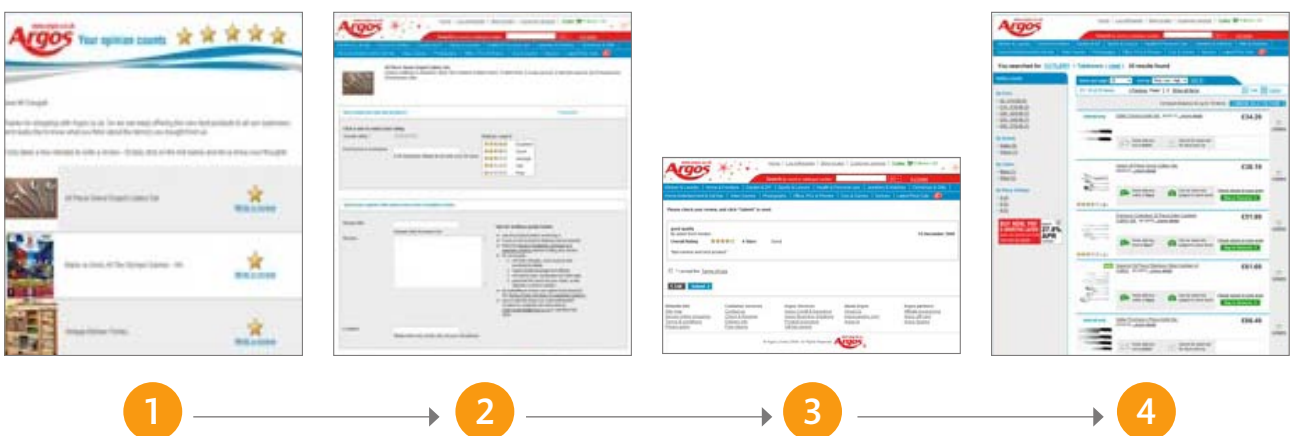
This unique and innovative campaign won the Best Use of Email at the prestigious Revolution Innovation Awards 2009, and was shortlisted for the Best Use of Email award at the NMA Effectiveness Awards. "To win one award and get shortlisted for another is a great honour and a credit to everyone involved in the project. We should all be very proud of our achievements" said Grant Baillie. ■



Winner of the 'Best Use of Email' Award



Shortlisted for the 'Best Use of Email' Award



→ **A snapshot of the user generated content programme**



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→ **About eCircle:** eCircle is one of Europe's largest digital direct marketing companies, owning the most comprehensive permission marketing database for email campaigns and lead generation as well as a state-of-the-art technology solution for digital direct marketing. Since 1999 eCircle has stood for innovative and efficient email online marketing for customer acquisition and retention. Leading organisations including Argos, HBOS and Samsung trust our customer care, our long-term experience and not least our highly motivated and committed employees. The company has more than 200 employees, with headquarters in Munich and additional offices in London, Paris and Milan.
