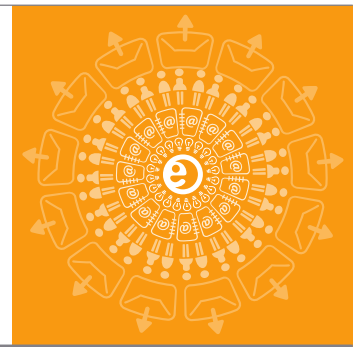


## CASE STUDY

### Tourism Ireland – Innovative and Creative Email Campaigns



➔ "Today more and more customers book their holidays online. It now no longer seems a question of whether to book online but how to find the most suitable offer. Online customers expect emails offering incentives to ensure they find the best offer."

*(Marie-Isabel Brauckhoff, E-Marketing Executive, Tourism Ireland)*

 [Email List Rental](#)

## OVERVIEW

### CHALLENGE:

- To increase the number of tourists visiting Ireland and in turn turnover
- To encourage long-term customer retention of high quality users to Ireland's online portal and drive traffic to the site
- To communicate brand values such as Ireland's fascinating history

### SOLUTION:

- To broadcast email campaigns including prize draws and localised, country specific content to generate leads
- 24-day advent calendar campaign, which included daily emails to remind and encourage visitors to the site
- Video mail campaigns to promote Ireland

### RESULT:

- Eight out of ten recipients clicked through via the localised, prize draw emails
- The advent calendar campaign produced some outstanding results: Open rates of up to 72% and click rates of up to 97%
- Targeted, relevant campaigns encouraged customer retention and generated leads effectively

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## Tourism Ireland

Location:	Germany
Industry:	Tourism
Website:	<a href="http://www.discoverireland.com/gb/">http://www.discoverireland.com/gb/</a>
Products:	Email List Rental



*As part of their online marketing strategy, Tourism Ireland focuses on creative and effective campaign concepts. By utilising emotive videomail and seasonal advent calendar promotions over a 24 day period, the Irish Tourist Board achieved sensational response rates, showing that 72% of their target audience opened emails sent and around 8 out of 10 recipients clicked through for more information.*

Tourism Ireland represents the tourism board for Ireland. The main objective of Tourism Ireland is the promotion of Ireland as a holiday destination in partnership with various travel companies.

### → The Challenge: to make Ireland a first choice holiday destination for German tourists

Tourism Ireland's main goal is to increase the number of tourists visiting Ireland and generate a higher turnover via various marketing activities.

To achieve these goals Tourism Ireland wanted to implement an integrated marketing campaign to give people in Germany an insight into all things Irish! Offline communications such as TV, print, cinema, and radio and increasingly the internet are currently used to promote tourism Ireland. All promotions are based around conveying Ireland's identified 'brand values' such as the country's regional history or beautiful Irish landscapes.

### → Tourism Ireland and the potential of online media

Due to recent trends in the travel industry, Tourism Ireland increasingly uses on online media as a means of promotion. Marie-Isabel Brauckhoff, E-Marketing Executive of Tourism Ireland comments:

"Today more and more customers book their holidays online. It is now no longer seems a question of whether to book online but how to find the best offer. Online customers expect emails offering incentives."

Recent studies reveal that one third of all online users book their holiday via online tour operator websites. A further third of all internet users research their holiday online first to ensure they get the best deal, then book offline (Source: study "2006 Summer Travel" of Prospective). In order to reach these users and encourage them to visit the Tourism Ireland website, they plan to utilise online marketing, in particular email.

### → Smart email marketing campaigns help Tourism Ireland stand out from the crowd

Not only does Tourism Ireland send regular newsletters but they also broadcast email campaigns focusing on particular promotions. eCircle is responsible for the development and distribution of these campaigns. All email recipient addresses derive from eCircle's extensive permission database. Tourism Ireland's eye-catching emails are themed around Irish traditions and customs with the aim to drive traffic to their website and to generate addresses via competitions and prize draws. In order to reap additional benefits offline, their email campaigns are usually complemented across all media forms, e.g. corresponding print campaigns.

### → Tourism Ireland cleverly engages users with an advent calendar campaign over 24 days

To encourage users to recurrently visit the website a unique 24 day advent calendar campaign was employed. The objective was to give recipients a real understanding and flavour of Irish culture and introduce different tour operators to recipients.

Recipients were encouraged to open a door of the advent calendar each day in the run up to Christmas and to read a new anecdote about Christmas in Ireland each day. Marie-Isabel Brauckhoff says: "The initial goal was to increase publicity and drive traffic to our website."

Tourism Ireland came up with the concept of sending a daily reminder email about the advent calendar to increase repeat visits to the website. This offer was very well received by recipients as the number of recipients doubled, open rates reached up to 72%, click rates were over 80% and peaked at 97% – even at a later stages of the campaign. "The Christmas campaign was special because we could deliver snippets of personal communications on a daily basis via email", says a pleased Brauckhoff. "During the course of the campaign we could further strengthen the relationship between Ireland Tourism and our users".

➔ **Unique birthday email – one to one, personalised communication**

Tourism Ireland developed a highly profiled, customised campaign using Celtic horoscopes as the theme. 140,000 customers received an email each having the chance to find out their Celtic horoscope and additionally take part in a prize draw.

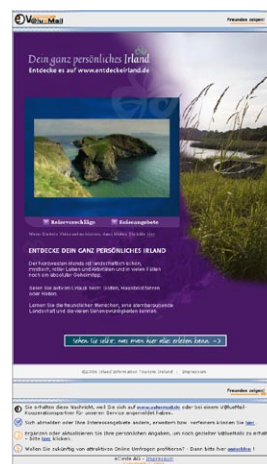
Since the initial email, recipients were sent further personalised, Celtic themed emails on their birthday. Their horoscope prediction was given and a tour operator and holiday break were suggested. >>>

"During the Christmas campaign we could further tighten the bond with our users via our daily, personal emails."

**Marie-Isabel Brauckhoff**  
E-Marketing Executive  
Tourism Ireland



Christmas calendar mailing incl. reminder emails



Pure emotions: Video mail for holiday experience in Ireland

➔ Tourism Ireland managed to more than double the number of recipients receiving the advent calendar emails. Open rates reached up to 72%, click rates were over 80% and reached peak values of up to 97% – even at a later date of the campaign.

## → Experience Ireland first hand through video mail

To capture the interest of potential holidaymakers Tourism Ireland has started sending video mail campaigns.

In September, Tourism Ireland sent out a video mail campaign. This email included images of the autumnal Irish countryside accompanied by Irish music. Also built into the email was an interactive game whereby recipients had to collect gold pieces to qualify for a prize draw. Information on 150,000 recipients was collected using this method providing Tourism Ireland with highly profiled data.

## → Conclusion: Tourism Ireland campaigns work because they are innovative and creative

eCircle worked in partnership with Tourism Ireland to create some really sophisticated concepts and email designs. These campaigns demonstrate clearly how it's possible to retain and engage prospective clients through clever email marketing techniques.

Email marketing is more than just a means of selling your product. It can help you to generate greater awareness and interest of your organisation, strengthen and develop relationships with your customers as well as retaining them. In theory, you can communicate with your customers throughout their entire customer life cycle.

Emails allow you to be creative with your design and can successfully communicate brand values. Similar to TV adverts or print advertisements, a capability not easily achieved by text-based online marketing. In conclusion, by implementing email marketing effectively it can become the cornerstone of your overall marketing mix. This is not only the case for tour operators but also FMCG and automotive companies. ■



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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-art technology solution for digital direct marketing. Since 1999 eCircle has stood for innovative and efficient online marketing for customer acquisition and retention. Leading organisations including Argos, HBOS and Samsung trust our consistent customer care, our long-term experience and not least our highly motivated and committed employees. The company has more than 160 employees, with headquarters in Munich and additional offices in London, Paris and Milan.