

CASE STUDY

How Virgin Limited Edition increased email engagement through cutting-edge design



→ “Working with eCircle’s Creative Services team has transformed the performance of our emails at Virgin Limited Edition. The significantly improved designs have helped us to acquire new customers through much higher engagement rates” (*Robert Speirs, Marketing Manager, Virgin Limited Edition*)



Overview

Challenge:

- To increase email open rates above industry benchmarks
- To improve engagement rates to drive more traffic to the website
- To increase enquiries and improve customer acquisition rates through the email channel

Solution:

- Creating a suite of CMS template designs
- Ensuring that the new designs cater for every property and message that Virgin Limited Edition would want to convey
- A/B split testing the new designs to further refine their performance

Result:

- Open rates boosted by 30%
- Click-through rates increased by more than 100%
- Customer enquiries significantly increased to the reservations team following the email redesign

Virgin Limited Edition

Location:	UK
Industry:	Travel
Website:	www.virginlimitededition.com
Products:	Consulting Services



Virgin Limited Edition started working with eCircle in 2010 not only to use eC-messenger as a platform to send their client emails but also to utilise its consulting services offered for best practice advice and to help drive strategic and creative development. Virgin Limited Edition is a unique, award-winning collection of retreats owned by Sir Richard Branson, chosen for their stunning locations, magnificent surroundings and offering style, luxury and exceptional personal service. The group consists of Necker Island in the Caribbean's British Virgin Islands, Necker Belle sailing around the Caribbean, Ulusaba Private Game Reserve in South Africa, The Roof Gardens and Babylon Restaurant in London, Kasbah Tamadot in Morocco, and The Lodge in Verbier, Switzerland.

Virgin Limited Edition previously had a simple email programme and an easy-to-use template. In order to align their email programme with the rest of their marketing strategy they required an entire new suite of more creative email templates to converse and engage with their prospects and customers. Virgin Limited Edition identified that by investing in their email programme they are able to target their customers to generate interest in the property and communicate the breadth of properties available across the world quickly and with ease. The new and improved HTML templates were to be used to help nurture and develop relationships with people interested in the brand through email. Increased engagement is the key performance indicator for Virgin Limited Edition, as it is not possible to transact on their website.

➔ Email a key part of the marketing mix

Virgin Limited Edition use email to increase bookings for each property not as a conversion tool. The role of email in the Virgin Limited Edition

marketing mix is to capture interest with the speed and frequency of email and also to generate enquiries for the different resorts.

Email is at the core of Virgin Limited Edition's multichannel strategy as it is closely integrated with direct mail, all marketing collateral and other online channels including social media, blogs and the website.



The new design templates for Virgin Limited Edition's Ulusaba Private Game Reserve, South Africa

→ More leads generated through best practice design and HTML

The new and improved email designs were carefully put together, to create a simpler and more consistent brand experience through the email channel. The development of cutting-edge HTML, that could be used time and time again in future, was a key component in the success of the project.

The year-on-year results to date include a 5% increase in open rates. This was gained through long-term loyalty and the increased value offered with the new design templates. The new creative approach has also yielded over a 100% increase in click-through rates which in turn has generated many more leads for the business.

“eCircle helped to improve our open rates significantly and our click through rates more than doubled. We’re delighted with our improved results.”

**Robert Speirs, Marketing Manager,
Virgin Limited Edition**

→ Bespoke CMS template and email design key contributors in the campaign’s success

On the one hand Virgin Limited Edition wanted professionally designed emails which reflected their brand identity in a slick way, and on the other hand they wanted to be able to streamline the process for creating these emails in-house.

eCircle’s content management system enables high quality professional designs to be used by non-technical teams who can create messages easily without compromising the design.

This newly designed CMS template and email creative were both created in-house by eCircle offering the client a full email marketing solution to accommodate all of their requirements.

→ Going one step further to provide a complete email marketing solution

The eCircle Professional Services team assist clients in greatly improving email templates to produce noticeable improvements in results. Clients are able to

take advantage of these services at any time, on a project or retainer basis. With over ten years’ experience, specifically designing response-triggered emails, the eCircle Professional Services Team assist clients with:

- Creative Consulting
- Design production and development of emails, landing pages, social network pages and sign-up forms
- Robust HTML production that ensures your emails render perfectly, in every scenario
- Template production, which is particularly useful if you have an in-house team that can maintain the HTML template once it has been produced by eCircle
- Creative critiques of your email programmes and competitors

If you are seeking strategic ideas and development for your brand, then eCircle can help to deliver innovative solutions that benefit your prospects and customers, to get them engaging and converting. As eCircle are one of the leading providers of online marketing services, we make it our business to be up-to-date with the latest trends and techniques.



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➔ About eCircle: eCircle is one of the leading providers of online marketing services, providing state-of-the-art technology, permission marketing databases and professional services for email marketing to the world's biggest brands. Since 1999 eCircle has stood for innovative and efficient email marketing for customer acquisition and retention. Leading organisations including Asda, HBOS and Halfords trust eCircle's consistent customer care, long-term experience and, not least, its highly motivated and professional workforce. The company has more than 300 employees, with headquarters in Munich and additional offices in London, Paris, Milan, Utrecht and Madrid.
