

Case Study

Revamping an Eloqua multi-stage nurture campaign

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Logarithmic

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◆ ◆ Summary

Headquarters: Fontainebleau, France

Company size: 1,000+ employees

Industry: Higher Education

◆ ◆ Challenges

1. A generous, but inefficiently leveraged potential audience.
2. A database shared by several business units and multiple contact data points requiring to be consolidated into a single segmentation plan.
3. Inconsistent lead flow and audience size throughout past nurture campaigns leading to missed conversion opportunities.
4. Outdated content and asset designs used across nurture emails.
5. Lack of personalization or misused personalization opportunities in content building and display.
6. An acute need for on-going campaign reporting and performance monitoring.

◆ ◆ Results

1. A comprehensive nurture campaign with four clearly defined journey stages: Awareness, Interest, Consideration and Decision.
2. 40 cohesive emails creating a story that informs and educates the reader, offers answers and arguments, establishes trust and likeability, paving the path towards conversion.
3. A strategic segmentation approach engaging the entire available audience, ensuring a constant contact intake and flow throughout the entire campaign and each individual journey stage.
4. A consistent design across the campaign where all emails follow the same structure and employ dynamic elements for enhanced personalization.
5. Extensive reporting options allowing our client to view and compare multiple layers of data.

6. A campaign handbook that's documenting the entire project - from segmentation to reporting - and that the client can share across teams.

7. Excellent campaign performance similar to or higher than the agreed benchmarks

8. An increased stream of known website visitors via the nurture campaign

Solutions ◆ ◆

We focused our efforts on five primary areas:

1. Database and audience segmentation

We clearly defined who is our core universe of contacts based on profile and engagement.

2. Lead journey

Following a thorough assessment of past nurture initiatives to understand what went well and what can be improved, we decided on key campaign elements:

- journey stages and length
- qualification criteria for each journey stage
- rules for fast tracking and exiting the campaign
- email frequency

3. Content management

Together with the client, we built a content audit document and from the entire pool of available resources, we selected the pieces that best fit the agreed journey stages, audience types, nurture topics and email structure.

4. Asset design, copywriting and configuration

We developed the asset design and structure with three principles and mind: enhanced personalization, multiple conversion opportunities, minimum maintenance over time. The copywriting and asset configuration fully respected our client's branding and communication principles.

5. Reporting and documentation

From the early stages of the project, we established what reporting data should be available as soon as the campaign goes live and what technical set-up is required in the background to make it happen.



Overview

With locations in Europe (France), Asia (Singapore), the Middle East (United Arab Emirates) and North America (San Francisco), our client is one of the world's leading and largest graduate business schools, offering to its students a truly global educational experience.

Our client's excellence in teaching, research and global impact is constantly honoured and its academic programmes are recognised in high profile business school rankings year after year - it is one of these prestigious business academic programmes that stood at the very center of the Eloqua nurture project highlighted in this case study.

For any business that aims to build and maintain a long-term relationship with its target audiences, including nurture in their customer journey framework is mandatory.

Nurture campaigns are one of the best ways to bring in front of your audiences the information they want and need, to showcase the value of your products and to remain top-of-mind, as you're fully paving the path towards conversion.

Our client was already aware of all that as they have experimented with nurture before. But knowing that things can be done differently, they engaged our MarTech expertise and Eloqua's automation capabilities in an exciting revamping project that lasted from September until December 2022.

During these four months, we focused on rebuilding our client's nurture strategy from the ground up through a refreshed overall approach on database segmentation, lead journey, content and asset design, and reporting.

The final product is a comprehensive 4-stage nurture campaign backed by a framework that can be easily applied to similar initiatives.

Client Team Involved

- ◆ Marketing Team
- ◆ Lead Management Team
- ◆ System Administrator

Logarithmic Team Involved

- ◆ Eloqua Consultant
- ◆ Project Manager
- ◆ Campaign Production Expert
- ◆ Content Lead
- ◆ HTML Developer



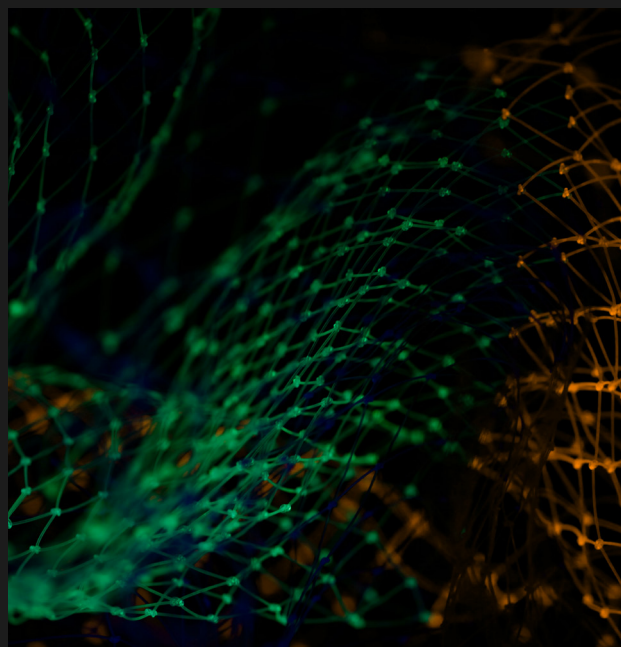
Project **Timeline**

Week 01	Kick Off Meeting
Week 02	Client Interview-identify pain points, requirements & set project basis
Week 02-03	Initial analysis of past nurture campaigns and lessons learnt
Week 03	Define the audience and identify potential problematic data gaps
Week 03-04	Propose the new lead journey
Week 04	Design and propose the new email structure
Week 05	Build and discuss the content inventory document.
Week 05-06	Map the existing content to: journey stages, audience types, nurture topics and the new email structure
Week 06	Discuss the content mapping, collect feedback & implement changes
Week 07	Copywriting
Week 08-10	Campaign configuration in Eloqua: emails and lead journey
Week 12-13	Internal testing and QA
Week 13-14	Client testing and feedback implementation
Week 15	Set-up reporting options
Week 15	Go live and on-going campaign monitoring
Week 15-16	Campaign documentation



The Pareto principle, commonly used in business and economics, is an excellent method to put things into perspective when developing a nurture strategy.

In short, this principle states that 80% of results come from 20% of actions: for any kind of work that can be broken down into smaller portions, the Pareto principle can help you identify what parts are the most influential, so you can correctly concentrate your efforts.



In our case, setting the right framework foundation represents our high-impact 20%: starting off with a solid base will not only maximize the nurture campaign results, but will also ensure a smoother execution of all assets required.

This means that the nurture project can be broadly split in two major phases: **a foundational phase** and an **executional phase**. Read along to have a look at each and discuss them in more detail.



Phase 1 - Setting the foundation

Step 1

Database and Audience Segmentation

Our client has a generous database of over 2 million contacts shared between several business units, but not every contact is a good candidate for the academic programme we're building the nurture campaign around. To navigate the database complexities and to strictly determine who is and who isn't part of our core audience, we explored key contact fields and custom data objects that helped us sketch our target persona and identify slight persona variations we planned to address through dynamic content injected into emails.

We always aim for a constant flow of campaign members, prompt nurture for all new qualifying contacts and minimum maintenance after the go-live moment. As a consequence, we prioritized feeders over static segments across all journey stages: Awareness, Interest, Consideration and Decision.

Step 2

Lead Journey

The usual timeframe to buy of your ideal customer is a good indicator of how long the nurturing process should be. Exploring this dimension together with the client allowed us to build an Awareness to Decision full-length lead journey that perfectly mirrors it.

When setting-up the nurture email cadence, we wanted to make sure that our client regularly delivers add-value content, without oversaturating the audience. Time-sensitive communications around webinars or events targeting the same contacts needed to take sending priority, while the nurturing was happening in the background, supporting the other activities in our client's marketing portfolio.

Drilling down into the core audience, we needed to understand where's everyone in their customer journey. Are all audience members equally knowledgeable of our client's academic programme? Of course not: while some have just become aware of the programme, others were only one step away from conversion.

Together with the client, we defined the qualifying criteria for each journey stage, but we also established under which conditions a contact is no longer a good fit for the campaign or, on the contrary, is highly engaged and should be pushed faster towards the end of the journey.

LEAD : A unique individual who fits the demographic profile.

MAL : A lead that has downloaded or viewed programme specific content.

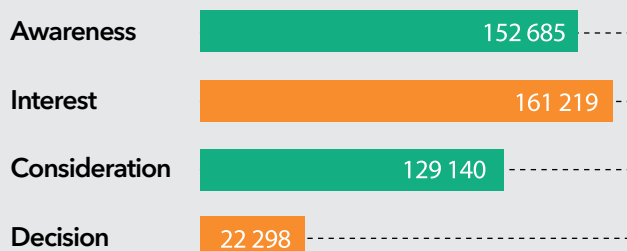
MQL : A lead that had a consultation call or has attended an event.

SQL : A lead ready to put in an application.

The one-size fits all journey length approach is an option, but for the purposes of this campaign we adopted a direct flow - direct input audience take instead. On one hand, campaign members who fully consume a stage flow towards the next. On the other hand, not everyone needs to start the journey in Awareness: every audience member is matched with the most fitting journey stage depending on profile and engagement.

One thing we've noticed not only in our client's past nurture initiatives, but in many similar projects we've analyzed over the years, is the use of harsh, usually engagement-based decisions used across nurture campaigns that are excluding members from the flow mid-journey, significantly shrinking the audience size. While we're not afraid of harsh strategic decisions, we don't believe nurture campaigns are the right place for them either. Therefore, we've avoided them altogether, allowing contacts to move freely between stages, towards the end of the funnel.

Campaigns members per stage



The graph illustrates how the consistent contact funnel we've implemented looks one year after the campaign launch.



Step 3

Content Management

Starting with a content inventory provided by the client which included all available resources and resource types, we built an audit document where we handpicked only those content pieces that best served the purpose of the nurture campaign.

Once the content selection was approved by the client, we mapped the resources with the agreed journey stages, nurture topics and email structure, creating a story that informs and educates the reader, offers answers and arguments, establishes trust and likeability, paves the path towards conversion.

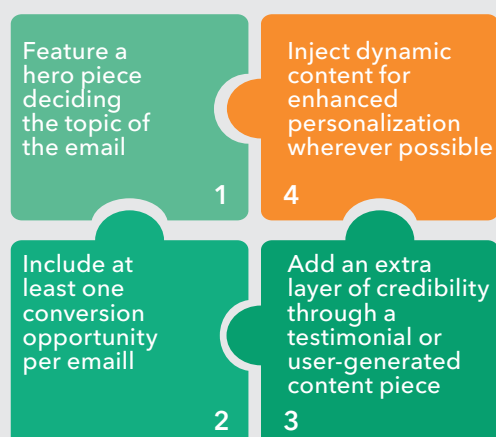
Details gathered in the content audit document
Understanding the demographic and the content preferences of our target audience, we favored videos and podcasts throughout the campaign.

Being aware of the investment the academic programme means for the candidates and knowing their interest in straightforward, applied information, we prioritized this type of practical content, especially in the middle and late journey stages.

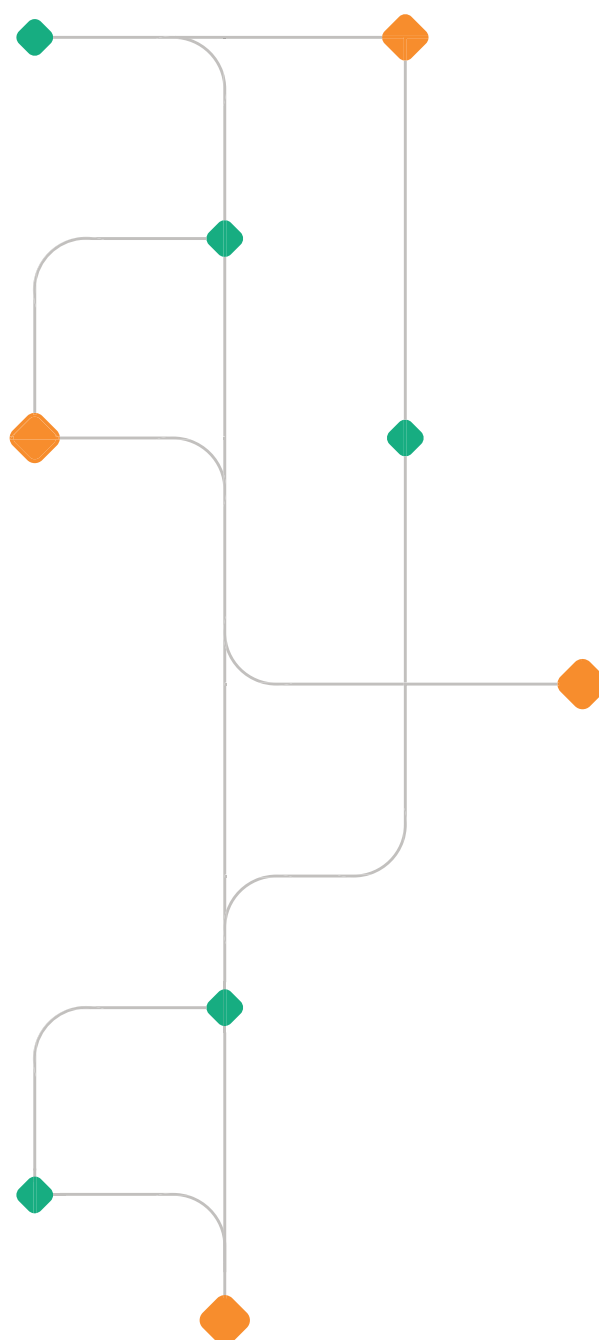
Step 4

Asset Design

Considering the valuable resources we've selected in the previous step, we opted for a 3-section email structure allowing us to implement a content hierarchy and to:



Additionally, to enhance email personalization and to address the persona variations identified in one of the previous steps, we employed pieces of dynamic content based on demographic (e.g. geography, sector of activity, gender) and engagement (e.g. event attendance, asset consumption, application status) variables, all essential in our client's global targeting strategy.





Phase 2 - Execution

With the foundation laid in front of us, we are ready to confidently tackle the executional phase of the project.

Step 5 Copywriting

Created under the guidance of our client's messaging playbook and marketing team, the final email copy - from subject lines to CTAs - fully complies with the required branding and communication principles.

Step 6 Asset configuration

The complexity of the nurture project is reflected by the configuration activities involved. The campaign utilizes a wide array of Eloqua assets and audience tools, all working in perfect sync:

- 40 emails spread across the 4 journey stages
- field merges and dynamic content for enhanced targeting and personalization
- 4 campaign canvases, one for each stage
- feeder segment evaluating the available database every 24h
- shared filters for re-routing
- shared lists for data storing and reporting

Following the configuration model adopted by our client in the past, the emails built within this framework are a balanced mix of modular and html elements, requiring minimum maintenance and coding knowledge.

For efficiency purposes, we inserted the same dynamic content piece into multiple emails, meaning that whenever a content or design refresh is needed, the change will simply propagate across all occurrences.

Step 7 Reporting

The careful planning of the campaign reporting belongs to the foundational phase of the project. However, setting the reporting wheels into motion

requires actual Eloqua configuration work. In addition to the usual performance insights the platform provides, we made sure all interactions triggered during the nurture are correctly associated with the campaign and we set up two complimentary reporting features that make campaign metrics as easily accessible as possible.

Firstly, through a clever system of shared lists, we disclose the campaign membership status of all campaign members, going beyond the 3-month mark of operational reports.

ENTRY all time

A historic list including all the campaign members from the go-live moment until campaign completion

ENTRY in campaign

A dynamic list including only the members that are currently part of the campaign

EXIT completed

A historic list including all the campaign members that have finished the journey

EXIT errors

A historic list including all the campaign members that have unsubscribed or hard-bounced during the nurture journey

An example of a shared list system that can be implemented at canvas level to gather campaign membership data. The system can be extended and modified according to the project specifics.

Secondly, we deliver a bi-weekly campaign performance overview straight to our client's team inbox with the help of automated reporting agents. This way, the team can monitor campaign performance without logging into Eloqua to find the metrics they need.

Step 8 Documentation

Finally, no well-oiled machine is complete without a handbook of instructions. Because this is how we see the campaign documentation: a handbook detailing and illustrating the final product.

This way, the client has a convenient way to share and reference the campaign details across teams, a starting point to replicate the process for a similar project, as well as a behind-the-scene look into all the elements ensuring the campaign's functionality.



Results

The cooperation between our client and our team fuelled the successful completion of a project showing what can be accomplished when complex Eloqua functionalities and MarTech expertise come together.

From the very beginning, we agreed on treating every campaign element as part of the same framework and our holistic approach proved to be correct. Significant milestones, with impact going beyond this project and the usual email marketing metrics, have been achieved:

1. Contact Journey

A cohesive, well-organized multi-stage nurture campaign built around one of the world's most prestigious business academic programmes and ready to serve as template for similar initiatives.

2. Streamlined Database Segmentation and Audience Targeting

An engaged global audience whose every member was matched with the most fitting journey stage and added to the corresponding campaign starting point for further nurturing.

3. Content Overview

A content audit document that offers quick access to all the available content pieces, their key details and usability, and that can be easily replicated, extended, or repurposed for other projects in the marketing realm.

4. Brand Recognition

A stronger, more recognizable brand supported by the consistent design replicated throughout the entire campaign and an increased campaign engagement supported through personalized pieces of dynamic content carefully crafted to match the interest of various audience groups.

The augmented personalization is a marketing trend meant to become the norm within the next years, so investing in personalization tactics and using content in a more efficient and targeted manner is proof of our client's commitment to staying fresh and relevant.

5. Project Documentation

A campaign documentation allowing our client to understand and reference any campaign detail

and to further share it across teams and departments.

A complete documentation can serve as basis for a similar future project or for a campaign refresh since the team can easily pinpoint the pieces of content that need to be upgraded, replaced or retired altogether.

Additionally, the documentation can easily be used in the onboarding process whenever a change in the team happens, and the new hire needs to get up to speed regarding the nurture strategy.

6. Extend Reporting Capabilities

Complementary reporting features that amplify the usual Eloqua reporting functionalities and that have already been into other projects belonging to our client. Having online, self-service and downloadable reporting options means that multiple client reporting needs are addressed through one single reporting product.

Having all campaign relevant metrics brought together through custom reporting means less time invested in data gathering, more informed strategic decisions, and a quick overview on best performing and underperforming assets across all journey stages.

7. Campaign Results

Excellent campaign metrics and over 2,000 meaningful campaign responses (e.g.: asset downloads, programme applications, contact-us interactions) in the first year post-launch.

Since the previous nurture initiatives had tracking, attribution and reporting gaps, for this nurture campaign we made sure the client is able to track and correctly attribute every response generated across all four journey stages – a key element in evaluating the campaign's performance.

This project illustrates that a strong strategy and a flawless execution – the two main components of a comprehensive nurture framework – lead to outstanding results only when they work together, supporting and complementing each other.



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