

# City Lit harnesses the power of Automation to re-engage dormant contacts

**City Lit is where London learns, the capital's ultimate destination for inspiring daytime, evening and weekend courses for adults. The brand welcomes thousands of learners every year, offering a wide range of courses taught by expert practitioners – from one-off sessions to year-long programs in areas such as performing arts, languages and business.**

## CHALLENGE

City Lit's email database rose sharply due to increasing numbers of students and courses. It soon became clear that 'batch and blast' would no longer be effective; the brand was in need of highly segmented campaigns based on subject preferences.

A key challenge was to identify and distinguish between subscribers who had dropped off the radar and those who had never engaged before.

## KEY OBJECTIVES

City Lit wanted to specifically re-engage students who had received, but not opened, at least 10 newsletters in the last 6 months. The goal was to retain as many subscribers as possible and convert them back into enrolling students.

To achieve this, it would be necessary to offer students more choice about their communication preferences – what subjects they'd like to hear about and how frequently.

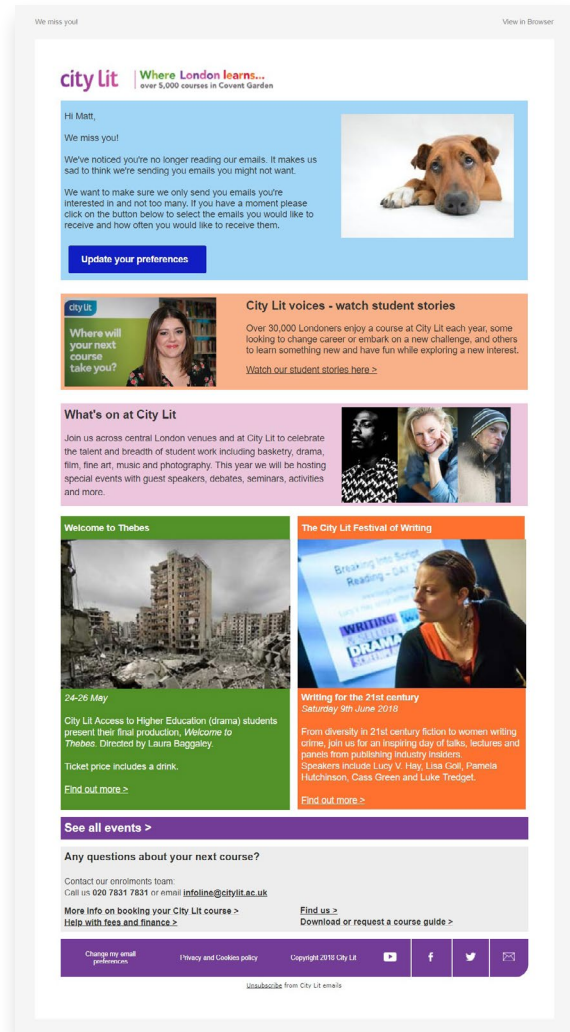
A by-product of the winback initiative would be a cleaner database, made possible by unsubscribing contacts who remained inactive. This would lead to a more efficient email list, increased ROI and a better sender reputation.

## SOLUTION

City Lit used several dotmailer features to help achieve its goals, including Program Builder to trigger emails and Surveys & Forms to build a preference center.

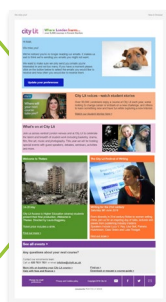
## 6 steps to success:

- 1. Segment:** the number of unengaged contacts based on the pre-defined criteria was identified.
- 2. Survey:** segmented contacts were asked to either submit their subject preferences or take a temporary break from emails.
- 3. Automation:** the “we miss you” campaign linked to the preference survey and was a ‘last chance’ for people to remain subscribed.
- 4. Engagement:** contacts that had filled out the survey would stay opted in; if they provided their subject interests they’d be enrolled onto the brand’s course preferences program in conjunction with their submissions. Further afield, this would allow City Lit to use survey data, web insights and buying history to tailor emails.
- 5. Timeout:** those wishing to take a break were enrolled onto a separate program and held there for a delayed period of time before receiving emails again.
- 6. Feedback:** non-responders were automatically removed from the database and sent a triggered email as confirmation. Sticking to best practice, City Lit offered inactive contacts the chance to either re-subscribe or provide feedback on their experience.



## RESULTS

The ‘we miss you’ campaign achieved an open rate of 30% - healthy considering these contacts were deemed unengaged.



1,500  
dormant contacts  
re-engaged while some  
went on to purchase  
a course.

600  
of those who  
unsubscribed provided  
valuable feedback on their  
reasons why, allowing  
City Lit to rethink and  
refine its strategy.

## About dotmailer

dotmailer is the leading marketing automation platform that empowers global marketers to achieve outstanding results. The software enables businesses to use advanced data to design, test and send powerful automated campaigns. A Premier partnership status with Magento provides a deep, powerful ecommerce integration. dotdigital group’s acquisition of COMAPI in 2017 has brought best-of-breed omnichannel messaging capabilities into the dotmailer platform, providing marketers with the opportunity to achieve human conversations at scale.\*

**For more information, please visit [www.dotmailer.com](http://www.dotmailer.com)  
or call the team on +44 845 337 9170**

\*Please note, some of the advanced SMS capabilities mentioned in the case study may be using features that aren’t yet available in dotmailer, and may also be reliant on having a COMAPI account.