

# How email boosted ARLF's engagement *(and locked in their biggest fundraising results ever)*



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY





## The client

The Australian Rural Leadership Foundation develops courageous and authentic leadership to support resilient regional, rural and remote communities.

Established nearly 30 years ago, the ARLF is a national, not-for-profit organisation with both a national and international footprint.

ARLF's biggest strength is their network -- and ARLF wanted to engage more effectively via email. Not only that, they wanted to increase donations to their end of financial year campaign.

*'We knew our email strategy wasn't working. Our open rates and click-throughs were below par. Our intended audience weren't even opening our emails'.*

Vivienne Johnson | Manager, Philanthropy

# The challenge

## Compel alumni to take action to support a life-changing organisation

The only way to understand the nuance of a place is through immersion. The Australian Rural Leadership Foundation (ARLF) knows that.

And it knows that the making of regional leaders can only happen in the regions. That's what makes its flagship program, the Australian Regional Leadership Program (ARLP) so effective.

Over 15 months, nominated leaders participate in immersive experiences in regional Australia and overseas. The focus on continuing adaptive leadership has allowed the program to thrive for nearly 30 years.

The participants make up a dynamic network of people who live and breathe regional Australia. And who describe ARLF's program as **life-changing**.

ARLF needed an email strategist who understood their unique value and the effect their program has on participants' lives. Someone who could break through the everyday grind and take them straight back to that life-changing experience.

Having worked with copywriter Martha Barnard-Rae previously, ARLF chose her to help them improve their end of financial year campaign results.



*Martha's approach was different. She clearly explained the rationale behind her strategy and it made me feel confident in her expertise.*

*What started off for me as just an exercise to engage a copywriter became something more. And it had unintended — but very positive — results.*

Vivienne Johnson | Manager, Philanthropy

## *The solution*

### **A friendly engagement campaign — and a clear ask**

ARLF knows that their network is their greatest strength. And their Alumni know it, too.

A few friendly, engaging emails reminded the network of the incredible experiences they've had thanks to ARLF.

Designed to facilitate communication and buy-in, the copy took participants back—through story—to the experience they loved.

*'The biggest result was the overall level of engagement. The recipients actually opened the emails and then responded to the call to action.'*

*I thought the engagement tactic was a lovely hook and it really got their attention.'*

## The result

*'On top of the increased engagement, the donations went way up. We've received 35 donations totaling \$15,000 — that's **the most revenue we've ever raised from a single appeal.**'*

Vivienne Johnson | Manager, Philanthropy

ARLF's end of financial year email engagement and donation campaign was a success on all fronts. Their Alumni are more engaged than ever and they responded to the calls to action.

In fact, the email strategy meant that ARLF pulled in more donations than ever before from a single campaign.

This experiment helped the team realise how powerful email can be and is focused on integrating it across the organisation to better engage Alumni. Not only that, they've started planning their Christmas campaign already!

*'We'll never go back to the way we were doing it before.'*

*Martha's segmentation strategy was one of this campaign's biggest assets. It made the emails personal. It was all about them. And now I recognise how important that is.*

*I've seen here that the change of tactics has had a positive outcome. Working with Word Candy has been a really positive step forward and I'm excited to build on that in future campaigns.'*

Vivienne Johnson | Manager, Philanthropy