The UK's largest consumer co-operative · 5 business units · 27 users · 500m+ customer communications a year · Salesforce Marketing Cloud Engagement

Multi-brand | SFMC Integration | Taxi Migration | Enterprise | AI in production

> "Built by experts who understand the intricacies of great email communication, Better Email gives us the flexibility and functionality to create accessible, on-brand campaigns at scale."
>
> Tara Knowles, Lead CRM Technology Developer, Co-op

ABOUT CO-OP

Co-op is one of the world's largest consumer co-operatives, owned by millions of members rather than shareholders. Founded in 1844 and headquartered in Manchester, it is the UK's most shopped convenience retailer, with a store in every postal area, and operates across Food, Funeralcare, Insurance and Legal Services. Around 56,000 colleagues serve its members and customers, and its CRM teams send more than 500 million customer communications a year through Salesforce Marketing Cloud Engagement, spanning five business units, each with its own brand identity and audience.

THE CHALLENGE

Co-op brought email development in-house in 2022 on Taxi for Email and built an Email Design System: a library of reusable modules and templates that could be combined into hundreds of variations. It worked. The team went from 800 unique creatives (campaigns) in 2022 to 1,400 in 2024, with lower agency spend, more control, faster delivery and more consistent output.

Three years on, the foundation was strong, but it was being asked to do more than it was built for. Limited support for code reuse meant every new feature and every round of maintenance took more effort than it should. The team was maintaining five separate design systems across its business units, even though they shared most of the same modules, so every change had to be made five times. The module library had grown to 46, while just 13 of them accounted for 90% of usage. Enhancements the team wanted to make were harder to implement than the design system approach promised, and with little visibility of Taxi's long-term roadmap, planning ahead was difficult.

THE SOLUTION

Co-op went to market with a formal RFP. When the team shared its pain points during Better Email's demo, Better Email built the capability they had asked for, segmentation set up directly inside the campaign, and showed it working two days later. Better Email went on to win on three things Co-op's evaluation team called out: a comprehensive product, a clear roadmap, and a collaborative approach. What decided it was the combination: a significant reduction in the complexity of Co-op's setup without giving up flexibility, plus capabilities the team had not been looking for, including Betty, Better Email's AI agent.

The migration. Co-op and Better Email planned a phased migration. Co-op backed up its existing code, reviewed campaign schedules and business priorities with stakeholders, and agreed defined timelines for user access, development, UAT and go-live. A discovery workshop in April mapped all five existing design systems, the Salesforce Marketing Cloud Engagement setup and the migration requirements, and chose Membership as the first business unit to move.

Rather than recreating five design systems, Co-op's in-house developers built one. A single Email Design System with reusable code references now serves every business unit, with brand guardrails that keep each brand's identity intact no matter who is building. The module library was rebuilt around what the team actually used: around 20 modules now deliver the same or improved capability that 46 did before. Four Salesforce Marketing Cloud Engagement integrations connect the platform directly to Co-op's sending environments, with one-click export into the right business unit.

Within six weeks of kickoff, the first campaign built in Better Email went out to 2.75 million members. Delivery finished one week ahead of the revised plan, with zero impact on customers.

Governance and control. Co-op and Better Email worked together to extend release management, role profiles and editing controls to fit a 27-person team spanning developers, campaign builders and campaign managers across multiple business units. Granular permissions mean each role sees what it needs, and audit logging gives the team oversight of every change. Co-op has since established a regular design system release schedule, so improvements ship on a cadence rather than when someone finds time.

A partnership. Over the rollout Co-op shared close to 100 enhancement suggestions. The majority have been implemented, including PDF support, link tracking, render testing, new input types, shared inputs and multiple content zones. In Tara Knowles' words, the most

positive surprise was how quickly feedback was understood and acted on: "Rather than feeling like a fixed product with a static set of features, the platform has continued to evolve in response to our needs."

> "An email development platform complemented by a highly proactive team that welcomes input and consistently applies a solution-oriented approach."
>
> Swarna Madhuri Wudali, CRM Technology Developer, Co-op

AI in production. Better Email's AI agent, Betty, has been part of Co-op's development workflow from day one: the in-house developers used her to build and iterate new modules from the start of the migration, recreating existing emails and modules and taking on smaller tasks such as drafting image alt text. Co-op's content guidelines stay in force, so copy and imagery remain human-made and Betty works inside the design system, not around it. Following on-site training at Co-op's Manchester head office, the wider CRM team began using Betty to assemble campaigns from approved components. Today 24 of Co-op's 27 users have worked with Betty, 20 of them in a single month.

THE IMPACT

1
Design system replaced five separate implementations

46 → 20
Modules maintained, with the same or improved capability

~100
Campaigns exported to Salesforce in a single month, 230+ since go-live

24 of 27
Users working with Betty, Better Email's AI agent

KEY RESULTS

- **More capability, less overhead.** The team has more flexibility in how emails are designed, personalised and segmented, while spending less of the day working around the platform.
- **One design system instead of five.** A single scalable Email Design System serves every business unit, and a module library cut from 46 to around 20 makes an update a change in one place.
- **Built for enterprise scale.** Personalisation and dynamic content that scale, and programmatic, API-driven configuration that lets the team operate consistently rather than building one-off capabilities per project.
- **Greater admin control.** Granular role profiles and permissions, better release management and editing controls, and audit logging, developed together with Better Email to fit how Co-op's team works.
- **Faster design system development.** The combined effect of rollout optimisation, Betty, a change-management process and a solution-focused partner: close to 100 enhancement suggestions raised during rollout, the majority implemented.
- **Wider team, faster handoff.** 20 people have built or exported campaigns since go-live, supported by comprehensive documentation for developers and end users alike. Half of all campaigns are exported to Salesforce within a day of being created, and a typical campaign needs just one round of changes before the final export.

REFERENCE CONTACT

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Better.

Better Email is a collaborative email design platform that helps teams create stunning, on-brand emails 9x faster. With an AI-powered Email Design System, real-time collaboration, and 1-click ESP integrations (Salesforce, HubSpot, Klaviyo, Braze, Adobe), Better Email empowers brands to scale email production while maintaining perfect brand consistency.

better.email