

Email Marketing Best Practices

10 Tips for Success

Did you know that 91% of consumers check their email daily and 44% of email recipients made at least one purchase based on a promotional email?

Email marketing is still one of the most powerful workhorses for marketers. Many studies report it delivers the TOP Return on Investment (ROI) of all marketing tactics.

Incredibly, there are still 18% of companies who don't deploy this tactic as part of their marketing arsenal.

Here's 10 tips on areas to focus on to insure your email marketing is successful and delivers top results.

1. Deliverability

Defined as the percentage of emails you send that reach the intended destination. Most Email Service Providers (ESPs) will provide these statistics although some only provide as an added service or part of top tier packages. A recent article published by InfoUSA estimates that 20% of permission based emails are blocked. Best practice: Watch these statistics in detail, target 95-99% delivered.

2. Timing and Frequency

How often should you communicate with your prospects? Most marketers overdo it. The number one reason people unsubscribe is because they receive too many emails. Consider the frequency of purchase and cycle time to conversion. Best practice: Ask prospects their preference.

3. Communication Timeline

How long should you continue to communicate? Given a proper understanding of the customer journey, you should NEVER stop unless the prospect unsubscribes.

What you communicate and the frequency can change based on what you know about the prospect or customer. Best practice: A lifetime.

4. Email Signup

Getting people to engage with you early in their customer journey is critical. It will allow you to build trust and provide value. Email signups should be prominent in your communications and provide strong reasons for doing so. Ask for only the minimal amount of information to start. You can always build on that knowledge later in the relationship. Best practice: Offer compelling reasons, ask early and often.

5. Unsubscribes

CAN-SPAM law dictates what you must do. Not following this law can result in a \$16,000 fine per email sent. Insure you have an unsubscribe option on all promotional emails. Using reputable ESPs will ensure you do this as these are often built in features. Best practice: Follow CAN-SPAM regulations.

6. Personalization

Leveraging what you know about your prospects and customers is, in my opinion, the biggest missed opportunity for email marketers. MyEmma reports that relevant emails drive 18 times more revenue than broadcast emails. Simply including the recipient's first name in the subject line will deliver higher open rates. With today's rich Customer Relationship Management systems (CRM), you have huge opportunity to deliver a more personalized experience that will improve your bottom line. Best practice: Do as much as you can; start simple and build.

7. “From” Address

This often-overlooked area is an opportunity to further describe yourself and the message, re-enforce the brand and improve open rates. This is also regulated by CAN-SPAM, so read up on those rules to make sure you comply. Remove extraneous words, use to extend your subject line and clarify your message. Best practice: Be short, personal and specific.

8. Testing

Virtually all of the major ESPs have basic testing built into their systems. Even the simplest changes in subject lines, to and from addresses and detailed content and imagery can have large impacts on performance. Create a testing calendar, accumulate your learnings and showcase to management. Best practice: Test everything!

9. Data Quality

Your emails are only as good as the data they are based on. Work closely with your IT team, audit your emails and anticipate the unexpected. Best practice: Document your data and test on yourself.

10. Metrics

Establish goals for your overall email program and by type. Know which metrics are available and which are most important based on those goals. Best practice: Establish KPIs and measure relentlessly.

Follow these basic best practices to improve your email performance today!

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