

email marketing: 10 quick tips

What makes a successful email marketing plan? Here are 10 quick tips to consider when launching yours:

1. Ask for permission.

Sending to people who want to hear from you is the best way to remain legally compliant, maintain a solid reputation, and generate great results. And with consumers becoming more finicky about what they read - and servers becoming more finicky about what they deliver - building a true permission-based list is more important than ever.

2. Get into the address book.

Want to know the secret to reaching the inbox? It's the Address Book. Get in there, and you're more likely to bypass any filters and show up just the way you want to. So remind your audience members to add you to their address book (or white list or safe senders list) every chance you get.

3. Give your emails style *and* substance.

The visual possibilities of HTML mean it's easier than ever to create emails that are attractive and enticing. Just make sure that in addition to creating emails that look great, you're also giving your emails enough substance to warrant sending them in the first place. Marry style and substance with the campaigns you send, and your readers will thank you (and probably buy something while they're at it).

4. Send with delivery in mind.

Before your emails can be read and responded to, they have to be seen. That's why we make sure your emails are sent in a way that's designed to ensure high delivery rates - through personalized delivery, sophisticated delivery policies, and ISP relationships. And it's why we offer you the tools to proof your campaign's content prior to send-off and see the complete results (good and bad) after it's out.

5. Use (really use) the subject line.

Arguably the most important single line of any email, the subject line is your two-second opportunity to catch someone's eye and convince them to stop and look. More

than one great email has been ruined because of a generic, vague or uninspiring subject. So craft your subject line with care, test variations whenever you can, and remember that those are the most important 5 to 10 words in your campaign.

6. Know your audience.

The key to creating appealing content is to really know the group to whom you're trying to appeal. Use your signup screens and database to collect information about out who they are, where they live, and what they like, and enlist your recipients' help to keep that information fresh and up-to-date.

7. Tailor your message.

Forget the old days of batch-and-blast. Today, it's about creating smaller, more targeted mailings based on your recipients' demographics, interest and more. The more timely, relevant and personal you can make it, the better.

8. Handle opt-outs immediately.

This is one thing you can't mess around with. The Can-Spam legislation grants you 10 days to handle opt-out requests, but in the world of email 10 days is an eternity. That's why our opt-out feature handles requests instantly and remembers those requests to prevent against accidental abuse.

9. Understand (and use) your results.

Tracking metrics like receipts, bounces, opens, clicks, forwards and signups is the first step to understanding what's happening to your emails. But those numbers are more than just metrics - they're your audience talking to you. Not with real voices, because that'd be weird, but through their actions (or inaction). Listen to what they're saying and then apply it to your future emails.

10. Experiment and adapt.

Like most things, email marketing isn't a one-size-fits-all proposition. So start with a basic plan, apply your philosophy and style, and adapt as you go.