



Getting the Edge in Email Marketing

Five imperatives for successful email marketing

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Executive summary

Email marketing is the most overlooked marketing channel yet when deployed it can consistently deliver the best ROI against all mediums for the same message. As with all forms of marketing a clear focus on the desired outcome is required. Our white paper will help you understand your outcome, plan your campaigns and get the edge in email marketing.

Planning a successful email campaign

Why email?

Planning is essential before embarking on an email marketing campaign. Once you have established that you should be conducting marketing by email, you need to put plans in place that will dictate how it is going to work, what you are going to achieve, how long it will take and how much the campaign will cost from start to finish.

So why should you use email marketing? The answer is simple – it's cost effective, it's fast, it's measurable and it works! Email marketing delivers results that other mediums of advertising can't. The industry average click through rate per campaign is between 5 and 15%.

Campaign objectives

Before deciding to embark on an email marketing campaign, you must define what it is you are trying to achieve, whether it be customer acquisition/retention, brand building or cross selling to your existing clients. Brainstorming with colleagues is an excellent way to find out everyone's objectives.

Creating your email

During the planning stage, it is important to decide what offer the email you send is going to contain.

An offer can be anything from a special price on a product or service, entry into a competition, or access to privileged information not available elsewhere. Your offer should be tied to the

objectives of your campaign and always ensure your offer is appropriate to your target audience.

Growing your list

If you have an existing database of customer email addresses then you have an excellent starting point on the road to successful email marketing. If not, then don't worry as all is not lost. There are two ways of gathering email addresses to create a new list or add to an existing one.

The first is to grow your own list manually. This can be done by placing 'data capture' forms at strategic places on your website which allows visitors the opportunity to sign up to receive your email campaigns. You can also run offline campaigns – such as running a competition to win a gift voucher, bottle of champagne or something similar. Entrants must enter by placing a business card into a box whilst accepting that they will be marketed to.

The second option is to rent a list of opted-in email addresses. This can be a quick way of obtaining a prospect list, however the permission to communicate by email with the people on a rented list lies not with you, but with the list vendor.

Decide when's best to send your campaign

The final stage of planning a successful campaign is to understand the best time to send out a campaign to your target audience. For instance, sending out a campaign on a Friday afternoon at 5:00pm could have a detrimental effect on the success of your campaign. A high percentage of your recipients may leave the office earlier on a Friday to get home for the weekend. If so, the first time they will see your campaign is first thing Monday morning when they have lots of other jobs and emails to contend with.



Maximise the potential of your Email data

Building your database

To conduct a successful email marketing campaign, it is recommended to build your own list of opted-in email addresses, who agree to receive your marketing campaigns. It is important to give people a reason to subscribe to your mailing list and an effective way to combat this is to make people aware that by subscribing they will gain access to special promotions and discounts.

Capturing data online

To increase the number of people in this list you should take advantage of the traffic being directed to your site from other advertising mediums. Once visitors arrive at your site, a sensible approach is to find out who they are. Initially, you can ask them to leave their email address data and permission for you to market to them. Once you have this you can begin communication and find out more detailed information about them.



Renting data

It can take time to build your own database and if you are launching a new product and need to make people aware of it more urgently then there is the option to rent a commercial list of email addresses belonging to people who have opted in to receiving third party marketing emails.

One advantage of email list rental is you can choose your target audience quite carefully and have access to a large volume of email addresses very quickly.

Data legislation

In December 2003, the Privacy in Electronic Communications (Directive) Regulations 2003 came into force in the UK. These regulations are encapsulated in two rules;

Rule 1 (which applies to all B2B & B2C marketing emails):

- The sender must not conceal their identity, and
- The sender must provide a valid address for opt out requests.

Rule 2 (which applies only to B2C marketing emails):

- The sender cannot send marketing emails unless they have the recipient's prior consent to do so.

The second rule does however does have a few exceptions and is relaxed in the following circumstances:

- The recipient's email address was collected "in the course of a sale or negotiations for a sale"
- The sender only sends promotional messages relating to their "similar products and services, and
- When the address was collected, the recipient was given the opportunity to opt-out which they didn't take. The opportunity to opt-out must be given with every subsequent message.

Note that all three criteria above must be fulfilled in order for the exemption to be effective. These notes can be found at:

<http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk>



Creating high impact Emails that deliver results

Creating content for your campaign

Writing content for email is different to traditional print. You need to create a wow factor to grab the recipient's attention. Your content needs to be interesting in order to create a desire for the recipient to take action and respond.

The first thing the recipient will look at is the subject line. This will often determine whether your recipient reads or deletes your email, therefore the subject line has a big impact on the end result. Good practice is to keep the subject line short whilst ensuring you grab the recipient's attention. Ask your colleagues whether the subject line you are using would grab their attention.

The main content of each campaign should follow a similar path. Write for your reader – ask yourself what motivates them and what things they are interested in. Write your content to be scanned, not read. This can be helped by using bullet points. Keep the content short whilst making it obvious what you want the reader to do, with clear statements that can't be misinterpreted. Make your emails personal as the message is more targeted and will improve response rates.

Branding

Branding your email campaign is important as your recipient's should instantly recognise who the mail is from when they receive it. You should adhere to your brand guidelines as closely as possible, using your own corporate colours and fonts. This ensures that the trust you have built with your customers over the years is not lost on email marketing, and that the open rate of each campaign remains high.

Testing

Along with the subject line, you should consistently test all aspects of your campaign. After a number of campaigns testing different styles, different offers, different delivery times, you should be able to understand what delivers the

best performance for you and your customers. Once you know what works best, stick with it until it either stops working or until you find something that works better.



The ins and outs of Email broadcasting

Why spam matters

In today's society, Spam is a major problem for businesses and it causes considerable distress and time wastage. Many ISP's such as AOL and Hotmail use spam filters to route what they perceive to be unsolicited mail away from the intended recipients inbox. This can have a detrimental effect on the delivery success of your email campaign as it stops legitimate email from reaching someone who has requested to receive it. Email marketing providers such as eMailCampaigner can recognise the sort of content Spam filters look for to ensure that you can avoid your mail not reaching the intended recipient.

Email broadcasting – the options

There are three main options when deciding how to broadcast your email campaigns;

- Do it yourself (DIY)
- Use an Application Service Provider (ASP)
- Use a Managed Service Provider (MSP)



The main advantage of DIY broadcasting is having complete control over each email you send out. This also has its downside – you also have responsibility for ensuring that there are no hiccups and that everything runs smoothly.

It is usually the case that if you outsource your email broadcasting through the use of an ASP, you purchase a license to use the provider's platform. You then create your campaign through the provider's software before sending it out via their mail server. The major advantage of using this solution is that the client stays in control of the content, time of delivery and has access to real time reporting on each campaign. The client also saves on bandwidth costs and security implications when compared to DIY.

The final option is to use a Managed Service Provider (MSP). The whole campaign is then taken care of by the provider, from creative to analysis. The disadvantage here is you lose control over the broadcasting process and are reliant on a third party to deliver your message – all at a higher cost than the previous two options.

Improve delivery success

Improve your delivery success by avoiding content that looks like Spam – **especially in the subject line**. Using words and characters such as FREE! \$\$! in your subject line is certain to draw attention from Spam filters. Use relevant content and your delivery success will improve.

Pre broadcast

Aside from Spam, there are other factors to consider before you broadcast your email campaign. Are you sending your campaign at the right time? Draw on past experience to ensure you are consistent with the timings of your delivery. Have you checked your mailing list for incorrect spellings of names and domains? Ensure your database is in a good clean working condition. Ask a colleague to read through your content and check for spelling and/or grammatical errors before you send your campaign out.

Post broadcast

During the planning of your campaign, you mustn't overlook issues that will arise once you have sent your campaign out. Can your website cope with increased traffic? The last thing you want is for visitors to be directed to your site only to find that it has fell over due to high demand as this could have a serious effect on your brand. If you are running a large consumer based campaign and are hoping for an influx of incoming enquiries, can your call centre/sales team/customer support advisers cope with the extra volume?

Why and how you need to measure Email marketing

Measuring email marketing effectiveness

How do you know if an email marketing campaign has worked for you? Could you have achieved a higher return if your content had been different or if you had cleansed your list better? With email marketing, the measurement should begin before the start of your campaign.



Measuring delivery success

If you are outsourcing your broadcast, you will be able to monitor the number of emails that were delivered through the provider's reporting software. If you aren't getting a high delivery percentage then this will be due to a poorly maintained email address database or due to Spam filters deciding that your message is of an



unsolicited nature. By monitoring which of these issues is causing you the most problems, you can take action for before your next campaign to ensure this doesn't happen again.

Measuring the performance of your campaign

If you measure the open rate for one campaign as the number of emails opened compared to the total number sent then you must use this format to measure your next campaign. Only this way can you accurately compare both campaigns and improve on them.

You should also measure Open and click through rates, conversions, enquiries, unsubscribe rates and most importantly ROI.

Conclusion

This white paper should have given you an idea of how email marketing can work for your organisation. Remember, no matter what the size of your current email marketing database you can grow it with a number of different tactics. Also, make sure you don't short change your brand - keep your designs in keeping with the rest of your marketing and communications. Finally, measuring the success of your campaigns thoroughly will allow you to improve the results on your next campaigns.

eMailCampaigner - Helping you get the edge

eMailCampaigner™ is a practical solution to your permission based email requirements that helps you manage, create and monitor your e-marketing program.

Let us shown you how you can:

- **Dramatically reduce costs** through switching from direct mail to email marketing

- Use advanced reporting in real-time to **enjoy a faster sales process**
- **Increased profitability** with highly targeted campaigns
- **Reduce production time** spent creating projects with our friendly template system

Just some of the great brands that trust us to achieve their marketing objectives:



Call us on **0870 770 4990** to find out how we can help you meet your business objectives or visit www.eMailCampaigner.com to find out more today.

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