

EMAIL MARKETING WINNING PRACTICES

Unlocking Mailing Conventions for Effective Marketing Campaigns

In current digitally challenging world that puts a lot in stake, B2B companies continue to invest in multi-channel marketing to deliver relevant messages across any array of media channels; the email channel serves as a perfect medium to contact prospects and customers till today. It's far cheaper compared to others and in major cases have a much larger impact on immediate sales and long term relationships.

However like any other mediums it has its own set of challenges. When done correctly it can prove to be an extremely powerful tool for building relationships based on trust and value but when done wrong can easily erode a brand's equity and importance.

This whitepaper will aim to unlock various mailing conventions designed, used and propagated widely for effective marketing campaigns that will further guide you, your organization and your email marketing practices to achieve the best of all possible outcomes.

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Has your email marketing hit a plateau? Are you seeing the results that you want from your email marketing?

Every single day B2B marketers face a decision halt when they start to question the future of emails or “what new” aspects of email marketing. Very few actually do understand that originals are best, as they are the first, the unique and the one; similarly emails as the very original of direct marketing services prevails the features that best describes what it is and should be kept like the same.

The email-marketing channel provides its own challenges to getting that message delivered. Only a combination of technology, the right lists, best practices, and constant vigilance will result in favorable delivery rates for email marketing messages. The days of simple, open exchange are outdated, as email has become an increasingly complex medium, both through its widespread popularity and the variation that tends to go along with that kind of growth.

Introduction

Whether you are new at sending email campaigns to contact lists or are a seasoned veteran of email marketing your emails should aim to strike a fine balance between email publishers and recipients alike. Publishers want their messages to be delivered reliably and to be read, while recipients want their email to be free from fluff, filler and hype.

Therefore, understanding perspectives many of the winning practices follow here have withstood the industry’s own test of time, proving repeatedly that they work in favor of both the people who create email messages and the people who receive them. Moreover, in their attempt to keep harmony between publisher and recipient best practices help publishers accomplish their most important goals: keeping lists populated by active members, delivering mail without being inappropriately blocked by filters, and creating email content that’s opened and acted upon. Because they promote habits that meet or exceed most legal requirements, email marketing best practices also help publishers stay on the right side of ISPs and the law.

The Principle of Permission Based Email Marketing

There are two types of email marketing - one can either send unsolicited email promotions or send out emails only to person who have requested to receive them. Unsolicited emails are spam and should never be promoted.

Thomson Data pioneers in building and delivering lists that are permission based, used effectively everyday by thousands of organizations to build the value of their brands, increase sales and strengthen the relationships they have with their clients and subscribers. The key standalone point here is that these senders are only sending messages to persons who have requested to receive them.

Five Step Process of Permission Email Marketing

Start using permission email software

That allows you to easily create newsletters, automatically manage subscribes, unsubscribes, bounces, and view reporting statistics like opens and click through.



Decide on Type and frequency of email communication

You will be sending. Send at least a monthly newsletter or promotional messages according to type of product or service.



Add a sign up form to your web site

So you can start collecting subscribers and import any existing lists of subscribers that have already requested your communications.



Create a good quality email template

By using a template provided within the email software, having your in-house team create one, or using the custom design services of the email company.



Develop quality relevant content

For your newsletter or message and send it out to your list with sustained frequency.

Email Marketing - Winning Practices

Reviewing permission based email marketing let's explore the importance of sending permission based emails. We at Thomson Data have along with our specialists have chalked out practices that makes the difference between growing your list rapidly through word of mouth, increasing your sales, and building strong relationships and losing subscribers to list attrition, aggravating customers and getting your messages blocked before they even reach your recipients.

1. From Name and Subject Lines

While most email marketers have started receiving junk emails. As a result each of us have developed a ritual of scanning through our emails and start reviewing at the "From" field to see if they recognize the sender's name or email address. Then, only if they recognize the From Name do they look at the "Subject" field to see if it's of interest to them. This is why we recommend using a From Name that is either your organization's name or a well-known person within your organization—and to keep that name consistent with every mailing.

2. HTML or Plain Text, or Both?

Most clients today faces the problem of around 5% of email recipients either unable to view HTML messages or have turned this feature off within their clients.

To overcome the problem most marketers today send in a format called Multi-Part MIME, including Thomson Data. Multi-part MIME is a method by which one can send both an HTML message and a text message within the same document. When using Multi-Part MIME, you simply create your regular newsletter, announcement, or promotion as an HTML message and then create a separate text version. Then, when your message is sent, all the persons who can see HTML will see your regular HTML message and the 5% or so that cannot will receive the text version of the newsletter. Today's email clients can automatically detect a Multi-Part MIME message and display the proper message.

3. Emails – Time to Send

In email, marketing timing can decide emails being read and being trashed. Let's review few general rules of thumb we developed to decide the best time to send email messages:

1. Sending to Business recipients – Email Tuesday through Thursday, between 9:30 am and 3 pm
2. Sending to customers – Email Friday through Saturday, between 5 pm and 8 pm

4. Emails – Frequency

Balance the frequency of sending messages. Thomson Data has found out that either a bi-weekly or a monthly sending schedule produces better results again depended upon the type of newsletter and subscriber that you have. One strategy could be to find out a sign-up form that allows your subscribers to specify what mailing frequency they prefer. And can later specify the material sent to the end recipient.

5. Personalization

A powerful method of improving open rates and response rates is by message personalization. The process shall be to insert mail merge fields into your message and the best solution would be to buy email software that would automate the “from” field and you would agree a “Dear Subscriber” sound less exciting than “Dear John”.

6. List Segmentation

A list created by dividing the database by either interest or demography goes a long way to appeal the needs, wants of your consumer, and improve your sales results. Moreover, the effective segmentation begins with a sign-up form collecting all the initial information you will like to segment later.

7. Buying Lists against Building Lists

Any B2B marketer can vouch for the quality of email list as an important factor in guaranteeing any marketing campaign success. Similarly, a long debate has been continued to justify the act of building list against buying list. While building list would involve an extra burden of accumulating mailing list across industries.

While buying mailing list from reputed list service provider like Thomson Data would guarantee that the databases has been sorted, verified, updated, targeted and comply according to all industry regulations. Using such list ensures a timely and overwhelming ROI increasing effectiveness of marketing campaigns and issuing fast delivery of business strategy.

With this we come to an end of our journey of discussing issues that best affects email marketing, now let us tackle a more intricate issue of deliverability. Many marketers complain that they have purchased the best of mailing list but still their deliverability suffers. Well it's not always a list problem but how the list is being used that decides the future of any email sent.

Deliverability Best Practices

As the number of spams sent increases, ISPs have been forced to take extraordinary measures to protect their network and customers. According to AOL, spam is the number one complaint among its 27 million members and the ISP proudly announced that it has surpassed filtering 2.7 billion spams per day.

1. Reaching Recipient's Address Book

One unique step that Thomson Data preaches users to do is ask recipients to add their sending email address to their address book. Promoting the practice, we ask companies to add a single self-explanatory sentence like:

To ensure receipt of our emails, please add **xyz@yourcompany.com** to your address book. Thank You!

2. Can-Spam & Relevant Legislation

We as anti-spam supporter advise marketer to ensure complete compliance of the “**CAN SPAM Act of 2003**”, which can be referred online at:

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/buspubs/canspam.htm>.

The act strictly introduces opt-out lists while maintaining that all emails sent must provide a return email address or another Internet based response mechanisms that allows a recipient to ask you not to send future email messages that you must comply.

3. What are Blacklists?

A blacklist is a list of Internet Protocol (IP) addresses (the number that operates as an online address for your web server) that have been reported as sending unsolicited emails. In cases, as such we advise you to contact blacklist administrators and asking what the procedure to be removed is. In most cases if you can provide evidence that you are only sending messages to persons who have requested them, your sending IP address shall be removed within a few days.

You can check if you're sending IP address are on any blacklists at:

<http://www.openrbl.org> and <http://www.dnsstuff.com>

4. Terms to be alerted of

<i>Free</i>	<i>Act Now</i>	<i>All New</i>
<i>50% Off</i>	<i>Call Now</i>	<i>Subscribe Now</i>
<i>Earn Money</i>	<i>Discount</i>	<i>Double Your Income</i>
<i>You're A Winner!</i>	<i>Million Dollars</i>	<i>Opportunity</i>
<i>Compare</i>	<i>Removes</i>	<i>Collect</i>
<i>Amazing</i>	<i>Cash Bonus</i>	<i>Promise You Credit</i>
<i>Loans</i>	<i>As Seen On</i>	<i>Buy Direct</i>
<i>Get Paid</i>	<i>Order Now</i>	<i>Please Read</i>
<i>Don't Delete</i>	<i>Time Limited</i>	<i>While Supplies Last</i>
<i>Why Pay More</i>	<i>Special Promotion</i>	<i>Information You Requested</i>
<i>Stop</i>	<i>No Cost</i>	<i>No Fees</i>
<i>Satisfaction Guaranteed</i>	<i>Serious Cash</i>	<i>Search Engine Listings</i>
<i>Join Millions</i>	<i>Save Up To</i>	<i>All Natural</i>
<i>You've Been Selected</i>	<i>Excessive \$ or!</i>	

There is no hard and fast rule that using this term will get your message blocked, but as Thomson Data trusted partner, we suggest you to instead use synonym or rewording and make your best possible efforts not to use more than one of these phrases in the same email message.

5. Controlling Bounce Rates

On an average around there is around 10% of bounce rate and managing and reducing email bounces can be a crucial component of email marketing. Few tips that would help you reduce the number of bounces are:

1. Including subscription management links in your emails and encourage subscribers to update their information if it ever changes.
2. Use recommended email-marketing service (like Thomson Data) that will automatically remove hard multiple bounces.

3. Use the mail or phone to update the email address of anyone who is repeatedly bouncing.
4. Remove any abuse@ or postmaster@ “spam flag” addresses.
5. Consider using an Email Change of Address (ECO) services such as Return Path, Tower Data or Thomson Data.

Conclusion

Talking about the recipients of your mailings as a group does not deny the fact that each individual wants his or her personal preferences noted and respected. These winning practices shall demonstrate your respect, your respect for privacy, your respect for preferences and your respect for the privilege you’ve been granted to be allowed into the “privacy” of a person’s inbox. Subscribers who sent irrelevant mail too frequently will (rightly) feel the sender is at best careless and at worst contemptuous of their time and trust. They may show displeasure by unsubscribing.

Therefore to make the most out of your marketing campaigns Thomson Data advises you to follow the time tested email winning strategies, followed by increasing deliverability and open rates!!