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Email Marketing

Optimizing for Success



Online marketing often receives a questionable glance from the uninitiated. But the fact of the matter is that it offers genuine opportunities for organizations and individuals alike. Its success can be seen throughout the web, from the nationally known brand that has mastered e-commerce to the entrepreneur who makes a living promoting [affiliate partner products](#). The continuous explosive growth of the internet hints that the online marketing playground will only become more lucrative.



According to *Generations 2010*, a report published by Pew Internet & American Life Project, users of almost all age demographics are plugged into

the internet to some degree. The survey, which involves six generations of respondents, uncovered interesting trends on the different internet services preferred among age groups. Email came in as the most widely used service across all generations, topping out social networking, online banking, and even search.

EmailStatCenter.com anticipates that in 2011 brands will spend more money on online advertising than ever before. You have to wonder if they could do better and stretch their budgets further with something like [email marketing](#). In this manual we'll explore the advantages of using email campaigns to build brand recognition and consumer relationships, optimal strategy for online interaction, and how to reap the most reward from email tracking and analysis.

The Leading Authority on Email Marketing Metrics
EMAILSTATCENTER.com

Why Email Marketing?

Email marketing is one of the oldest forms of online marketing and it has aged well. In the midst of tweets, clouds, and androids, email has managed to stay relevant. And with **mobile mail** devices and the ubiquity of globalization, even more so. Whether you are promoting a product or service, drumming up support for a non-profit cause, or providing useful information, it can act as the vehicle that drives you and your ideal audience to one another.

Here are some reasons businesses are choosing email as their marketing tool of choice:

- **It's Affordable** - When compared to traditional techniques, email marketing can be considered cheap. With **direct mail**, you must have a budget for printing, postage and the delivery of your marketing materials. Email costs pennies to send, making it a surefire way to enjoy major cost savings.
- **It's Fast** - Email is incredibly fast in terms of delivery and response. An entire campaign that reaches thousands can be delivered in a matter of minutes. A compelling message can get your readers to respond quickly with the action you want them to take.
- **It's Focused** - Marketing via print, radio or TV can give you access to a large audience, but how many of them are really suited for your product or service? **Email marketing** offers targeting capabilities that make it much more focused than traditional channels. It gives you an easy way to create segments from your master list of contacts based on various criteria or interests, and engage individuals with communications they are most likely to respond to.
- **It's Simple** - You do not have to be a technical wiz to succeed at email marketing. The internet gives you convenient access to software, **email templates**, and a broad range of tools that make this venture easy enough for just about anyone. When your strategy is properly executed, your campaigns will contribute to managing themselves while freeing you up to plan the next move.



- **It Works** - Email marketing is just plain old effective. A well designed campaign can drive traffic, increase sales, and foster loyalty in your audience. And even though spam has tried its best to give the industry a black eye, email is still one of the most reliable tools available for creating awareness and building a brand's reputation.

Email marketing lends its power to organizations of all sizes but is an especially good fit for **small businesses**. This proven method gives you the ability to connect with your audience, provide the content they desire, and prosper for your efforts. As far as value and delivering a tangible return on investment, very few even come close.

Types of Email Campaigns

The diversity of online marketing has given the **email marketer** a fair share of campaign types to launch. Each has its own merits, and all can be used to effectively meet specific needs. Following are some of the most common types of email campaigns and the advantages they have to offer:

- **Newsletter Campaigns** - Newsletters and email marketing are a perfect match. Making a newsletter the center of your campaigns allows you to stay in touch with your audience at regular intervals, showcase your expertise to an audience hungry for knowledge, or conduct the level of marketing that converts prospects to customers. While the focus of a newsletter is generally to inform, it can be a powerful sales tool that helps boosts your profits.



- **Holiday Campaigns** - Holiday campaigns are great ways to show that your business has a human pulse and recognizes special occasions. Even better are the opportunities they provide to greet your audience with updates, personalized thank you messages, and themed offers.

- **Promotional Campaigns** - Email is the ideal platform for running promotions of all sorts. You could launch campaigns featuring weekly specials, monthly discounts, or huge spur of the moment sales designed to quickly move inventory. A finely tuned promotional campaign can serve as a testament to email's effectiveness as a sales channel.

As you can see, email marketing is fit for a variety of purposes, a reliable tool primed for generating sales, educating readers, testing new markets and much more. Bank on the tactic growing more diverse and useful as complementing technology continues to evolve.

Making the Most of Email Marketing

The key to using [email marketing](#) effectively is consistency. It is consistency that will keep you in front of your target audience and build the relationship necessary to achieve longevity in your market. Reaping the benefits of this tactic requires you to be consistent in multiple areas, including the following:

- **Value** - Email marketing can establish a deep connection with your audience, one that expedites frequent purchases and recommendations of your business to others. Yet this is only the case if you deliver value in return. Value could come in the form of discount coupons, exclusive sales offers, or helpful tips - whatever your audience will respond to.
- **Tracking** - One of the major perks email offers as a marketing tool is an easier way to measure results. If you have a good email service provider then you probably have access to reports that provide in-depth details of your campaign performance. This access will not mean a thing if you let them sit there and collect dust on your ESP's virtual shelf. Analyze your reports on a regular basis and you will know how you are performing and what it takes to get better.
- **Relevance** - As you delve deeper into the email marketing world, you will discover that relevance is often the word of everyday. This is all for very good reason because the less relevant your communications are, the greater chance you have of incurring [spam complaints](#). Your content must be homed into recipients' interests and preferences to keep them engaged and on your side.
- **The List** - Having a successful run with email marketing requires you to have the utmost respect for your [house list](#) and the people on it. This starts with following the rules of permission-based marketing: let people opt-in to your communications, allow them to confirm their interest, and swiftly honor all unsubscribe requests. Maintaining a [healthy email list](#) is often as simple as sticking to the best practices.

What Email Marketing Can't Do

As with most forms of marketing, [email marketing](#) is surrounded by a few misconceptions that if fully bought into can leave you with disappointing results. While there is no doubt that a nicely focused campaign can work wonders for your business, it simply cannot fix everything.

Following are some things email marketing can't do:

- **Guarantee Success Overnight** - Several businesses have made a living from email marketing. But do not assume that it will send your sales numbers soaring through the roof. It can be a long, grueling road, one filled with many twists, turns and frustration. Just remember that it can take time to warm up your target audience. Stick with it and you will be able to build relationships, foster loyalty, and drive sales.

- **Sway the Uninterested** - You could be marketing the most valuable product or service of its kind, but if your audience is not interested, your efforts are futile at best. It is highly unlikely that a deep discount on pottery will change the mind of someone who is looking for resources that help them start an online business. The point is that your content must be super-focused. Having permission doesn't mean you have their attention.



- **Fix a Broken Business** - When a business is struggling, its decision makers sometimes opt to ramp up the marketing efforts. This is practical thinking when you consider that the goal of marketing is often to generate the revenue needed to minimize the struggles. Unfortunately, [email marketing](#) cannot fix a business that is already down in the dumps. If your business is suffering from reputation damage or poor budget management, these issues should be addressed before choosing email as a crutch.

If you are considering a serious run with email marketing, you should take the time to figure out what is really going on in your business. Are you having trouble reaching your [target market](#), or are your satisfaction levels declining? Answering tough questions like these and clearing up existing issues will keep you from entering the game at a disadvantage.

Structuring Your Email Campaigns

Unfortunately, an alarming number of email marketing programs have absolutely no chance of producing desirable results. This is usually because they have no structure. The business owner or campaign manager fails to consider how aspects such as time, personnel and resources come into play. In short, they jump into the murky waters without a strategy that suits the business.

Let's have a look at some numbers showing the costly mistakes [email marketers](#) are making with their campaigns. The following statistics were obtained from the Benchmark Your Email Organizations report, a document published by research company Forrester that involves data from more than 250 million global email marketers:

- 21% of email marketers do not have a strategy to manage frequency.
- 40% of email marketers have no documented strategy or any formal plan to adhere to.
- Only 39% of email marketers measure their [return on investment](#).

These numbers reveal one common trend: many email marketers are failing because they are not prepared to launch effective [email campaigns](#). Success requires structure and sound strategy. The following three steps will help to assure that your campaigns are ultra-focused:



STEP 1: Define Your Objectives

Identifying your objectives is the first step in creating structure within your email campaigns. These objectives are dependent on your business and may include:

- Driving traffic to your website
- Promoting products or services
- [Promotional events](#)
- Brand awareness and reputation building
- Generating leads

STEP 2: Define Campaign Objectives

Email marketing is so versatile in its ability to accomplish a broad range of goals that it becomes easy to fall off track and try to conquer the world in a single campaign. Since this is nothing short of impossible, it is best to be realistic and only attempt to accomplish a small number of goals for each campaign. Maybe one campaign could be designed to increase subscriptions to your membership site, while another might be geared to build your following on social networks. It is all about staying focused and as relevant as possible.

STEP 3: Allocate Your Budget

With your strategy all drawn up, the only thing left to do is to consider your costs. Email marketing may be a low cost venture but it does require a budget. Additionally, there are aspects you often have to consider outside of a service provider or software solution. Perhaps you need a designer to customize the presentation of your emails, or a writer to produce captivating copy. Getting a budget together will help you determine what needs to be invested, and hopefully give you the motivation to track the return on that investment.



About Benchmark Email

Take powerful features by the dozen, sophisticated list management, hundreds of email templates, ultra-precise reports and dazzling email and video email. Now, package all that together for an extremely affordable price. Sound appealing? That's us.

There's a reason – or 100 – that more than 73,000 users trust us with their email marketing campaigns. With a second-to-none feature set, headache-free tools that make every campaign a snap and extremely reasonable price plans, we're the email marketing service for businesses of all shapes and sizes.

At Benchmark, we're more than email marketing experts, we're innovators. Our main aim is to perfect our email marketing service, but we also follow social networking, search engine optimization (SEO) and Web 2.0 just so our 100% Web-based software is completely compatible with the ever-changing Internet world.

No other service gives you this robust, standard range of features for just \$9.95 a month to start. Find out for yourself by enrolling in our free, 30 day trial at www.benchmarkemail.com/register.

Contact Benchmark Email

We welcome your feedback and would love to talk with you about your email marketing needs. Please contact us at the addresses below.

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