



PARTY SUPPLY

EMAIL MARKETING

FOREWORD

“I don’t know a lot about politics, but I can recognize a good party man when I see one.” – Mae West

As our lives become more hectic, it is even more important to set aside time for leisure and recreation, leading to a growing need for party supply businesses. Although this industry caters to fun and games, the party supply business shouldn’t joke around about applying the latest in promotional campaigns to successfully compete in the marketplace while reaching out to a new and larger category of customers.

Reliance on electronic communications has triggered an explosion in the availability and affordability of the latest generation of mobile web enabled devices such as smartphones, netbooks and tablets. Your customers are now accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. These mobile individuals are set up to immediately respond to promotional messages and have become prime targets for a professionally designed and implemented email marketing newsletter campaign.

This guide is intended to provide information to party supply business owners and managers and assist them in engineering precise email marketing approaches best suited to their customers and bottom lines. The unparalleled reach, impact, efficiency and affordability of email marketing is a powerful tool every party supply business can profit from with minimum effort and investment.

– Curt Keller, CEO, Benchmark Email

INTRODUCTION

This guide, *Party Supply: Serious Email Marketing Results in a Fun Business*, is meant to help industry business owners gain perspective on the modern state of **email marketing** to focus their online marketing strategy. The conclusions contained

within this report are intended to assist members of the party supply sector in sharpening their email marketing efforts by implementing these techniques:

1. Applying a social media and email promotional campaign to reach a number of new clients while upholding the adhesion and commitment of existing customers
2. Understanding legislation for online marketing efforts
3. Analyzing primary metrics and statistics to gain insight into the various strategies utilized by other party supply promotional managers
4. Activating a results-oriented email marketing strategy customized for your party supply business to achieve and sustain the maximum benefit

Owners and managers of party supply businesses of varying sizes from across the country were surveyed to compile the qualitative and statistical data found within this report. This statistical content acquired by this effort can be found in the Party Supply Email Marketing Survey section. The primary goal of this guide is to provide insight into your party supply marketing operations and the current condition of your email campaigns.

BACKGROUND

The party supply business sector encompasses a wide variety of different companies, facilities, products and services, covering everything between the basic sales of banners for child birthday party to everything you need for a huge wedding or Bar Mitzvah with hundreds of attendees. The party supply business sector is more diverse than other sectors; therefore, the following statistics on the utilization of email and social media marketing within party supply companies will tend to adhere closely to overall industry averages.

Smaller independent party supply businesses tend to have a much lighter adoption rate of **email marketing campaigns**.

Email and social media marketing is reasonably prominent in mid-size party supply businesses, and large party supply vendors and operations have implemented social media and email marketing as an integral part of their business practices.

PARTY SUPPLY BUSINESS EMAIL MARKETING STATISTICS

This guide summarizes recent research studies and surveys conducted on major party supply industry sources. The statistical information derived from these studies was correlated with the data obtained from the direct querying of party supply business managers and owners.

Party Supply Businesses that Engage in Email Marketing

Party supply businesses engage in **email campaigns** at a lower rate than other comparable industries. The uptake statistics for the party supply industry are as follows:

- 38 percent of owners and managers are currently engaging in email marketing
- 34 percent of owners and managers are not currently engaged in email marketing but plan to utilize it in the future
- 28 percent of owners and managers are not currently engaged in email marketing and do not plan to do so in the future

Party Supply Business Sending Frequency

Send frequencies for the party supply industry are typically monthly. Specific figures for the send frequencies for the party

supply industry are:

- 31 percent: greater than monthly sends
- 60 percent: monthly sends
- 7 percent: alternating monthly sends
- 1 percent: quarterly sends
- 1 Percent: seasonal/annual sends

Party Supply Business Content Type

Sixty-one percent of party supply business owners indicate a preference for exclusively sales content within their email missives, while seven percent prefer exclusively informational content. Thirty-two percent report a mix of informational and sales content is their preferred method.

How Party Supply Businesses Obtain Email Subscribers

The subscriber sources for party supply businesses are skewed heavily towards current customers. The primary sources of email addresses for collection are:

- Current client: 73 percent
- Web-derived: 18 percent
- Public promotional events: 6 percent
- Promotional results: 2 percent
- Purchased and supplied leads: 1 percent

Typical Party Supply Business Email Subscriber List Size

Party supply subscription lists tend to be either very large or very small, distributed respectively between large and small businesses. The following figures indicate the list size for party supply businesses:

- Less than 500 subscribers: 38 percent
- Between 500 and 1,000: 31 percent

- Between 1,000 and 3,000: 5 percent
- Between 3,000 and 5,000: 7 percent
- More than 5,000: 19 percent

Party Supply Business List Segments

The party supply sector is not competitively segmenting their subscriber lists. Only 21 percent of businesses are applying any form of **email segmentation**, while the remaining 79 percent do not segment their lists by demographic, geographic or behavior based categories at all.

Email Open Rates for Party Supply Business Campaigns

Seventy-two percent of all party supply business owners and managers are unable to state their **email open rates**, keeping them from being able to evaluate the progress of their campaigns. Of the 28 percent of party supply businesses monitoring their open rates ...

- 6 percent report an open rate of less than 15 percent
- 5 percent report an open rate between 5 and 25 percent
- 10 percent report an open rate between 25 and 40 percent
- 7 percent report an open rate of above 40 percent

Versus Industry Open Rates

Overall average industry open rates are somewhat lower than results from party supply businesses. The average open rate is 35.2 percent among party supply businesses and 25.3 percent among all industries.

Party Supply Business Subscriber Click-Through Rates

The industry knowledge of **click-through rates** is disproportionately low. Eighty-six percent of party supply business owners or managers could not report their click-

through rates. Of the remaining 14 percent ...

- 3 percent report a click-through rate of less than 5 percent
- 2 percent report a click-through rate of 5 to 10 percent
- 4 percent report a click-through rate of 10 to 15 percent
- 5 percent report a click-through rate of more than 15 percent

Versus Industry Click-Through Rates

The overall average industry click-through rates are at 4.3 percent - less than half the 8.8 percent rate for party supply business owners and managers.

PARTY SUPPLY INDUSTRY DISCUSSION

The party supply industry contains independent stores, national chain operations, online e-tailers, sections within other retailers like dollar stores, department stores, hypermarkets; as well as other forms of general merchandise brick and mortar retailers and the sizeable party rentals sector. National chain operations can carry thousands of SKUs and stretch over many thousands of square feet in prime mall or other retail space; tiny or even seasonal operations such as the shopping center kiosk stocking Halloween party goods or the New Year's Eve temporary retail outlet exists on the other end. These two extreme styles of party supply retailers seem to have little in common - except that both can boost their bottom lines with an **email marketing strategy**. Email marketing offers an even playing field for all the extremes in the party supply industry to compete and win over the loyalty of an actively seeking consumer base.

Within the core of every group of customers, there are particular characteristics that can be leveraged to benefit party supply businesses. These characteristics not only determine the types of party supply products and services these customers are in the market for, but also the specific

types of incentives that can motivate them through exposure to a coherent and professionally designed online marketing strategy.

Geography plays a significant role in an audience's demographic and disposable income parameters. A brick and mortar retail operation located in midtown Manhattan is much more likely to promote its NFL party offerings through the New York Jets or Giants Fan Party Kit of plates, napkins and cups costing upwards of \$70 than a Buffalo location, which would likely be better off to feature the Buffalo Bills party plastic plate set at \$1.99.

Demographics are just as important as disposable income in the determination of specific audience segments for your party supply business' email newsletter campaign. Young singles will be more likely to purchase sports, Valentine's and special event party supplies, while families will be more focused on birthday parties, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving and the holiday season. Gathering email addresses, especially if they are accompanied by some measure of personal information such as birth date, becomes a key factor in ensuring the success of any email marketing strategy.

It can be tricky to collect email addresses for your party supply store subscription list. Some of the situations where party supply businesses have been historically successful in obtaining new subscribers are:

- At community events
- At fairs, trade shows and expos
- At fundraising events
- At sports events
- At the customer service desk through a business card drop
- By sponsoring little league and other local teams
- By training staff to ask for the email address in person and on the phone
- Through exchanges set up with local caterers, party planners and other similar businesses in the event field
- Via a guestbook
- Via a website signup page

When building your subscriber list, it is essential to obtain clear, express and documented consent from the subscriber in order to send them information in an email campaign, as required by US legislation. Additional entries will provide you with greater opportunities to segment your list and boost sales for your party supply business.

Short Term Goals

An **email marketing newsletter** engineered by seasoned, savvy professionals in the online communications field can be anticipated to provide these types of results over the short term:

- Competitive advantage
- Customer participation in events and promotions
- Extension of online presence and authority
- New customers
- Location loyalty
- Location recognition
- Same quarter sales
- Word of mouth

Long Term Goals

Over the long term, party supply businesses can anticipate that launching an expertly designed and fully featured email marketing campaign will produce:

- Customer appeal via promotion of special services and discounts
- Expansion of customer base
- Facility loyalty
- Local and regional competitive advantage
- Higher traffic for a broader range of products and services
- Increased cooperation from suppliers and related businesses (equipment, fixture and supply wholesalers)
- Online authority translating to sector market leadership
- Year on year sales

The benefits of a long term email marketing campaign

conducted in a thoroughly professional manner will have an identifiable effect on every aspect of your business. There is no other customer-attracting opportunity, online or in any conventional form, that can approach the levels of impact and ROI like a properly implemented and well-designed email marketing campaign. The launch of a successful email campaign requires attention to the following important factors.

Implementation

Conventional and traditional forms of advertising such as radio, television, newspapers, magazines and Yellow Page listings are subject to a different set of legal criteria than email marketing. These differences are especially notable when considering how your party supply business' consumers are placed on subscription lists and their requests honored.

Compliance

Every party supply business has some form of customer data collection process. Once data is collected, clear, full and unequivocal permission is required from the customer before any of their personal information can be placed in your computer systems' emailing list.

CAN-SPAM Violations Are Serious

In the United States, the legislation determining what aspects of a business' email policies are legal is known as the **CAN-SPAM Act**. This law protects the right of any individual to be immediately deleted from an email subscription list upon their first notice. Any party supply business found in violation of this legislation opens themselves up to severe legal penalties and even prison.

Facilitate Unsubscriptions

All email marketing campaign sends must by law contain a clearly visible and easily accessible link to an unsubscription

page. Your party supply business must irrevocably act upon any subscriber removal request immediately, at the risk of legal sanctions.

Manage Bouncing Emails

Any email sent out by your party supply business, regardless of whether it is a personal or commercial reply or a campaign newsletter, is subject to one of the following three occurrences:

- Successful delivery.
- Delayed delivery due to your recipient's full inbox, network bottlenecks or other factors outside of your control. Also known as a soft bounce, in this case it is considered good email practice to attempt to contact the customer via any alternate means and make them aware of the problem.
- A hard bounce resulting from blocked or outright non-existent email addresses. Once you receive the notification from the Mailer Daemon that your email has undergone a hard bounce, any further attempts to resend to that address will raise a red flag for traffic routing ISPs. If identified as a spammer, your company will then be placed on a blacklist, making delivery of any future emails nearly impossible.

Privacy Policy

Copying a privacy policy from a commensurate competitor's website can lead to legal liability and penalization in search results. Do not ever copy a privacy policy. Instead, enlist an industry-specific business attorney to craft a distinct policy representing your online operations.

Segment Your List

If you are operating a party supply store in San Diego, your territory might encompass zip code 92179 where the average annual income is \$6,411. Just a few miles away, in zip code 92130, the median resident earns \$1,150,076 per year. Does it make sense to promote your tent party services complete with black tie and celebrity chef to prepare the seven course

gourmet tasting to the former group, or your sale on six for a dollar streamers to the latter? **Email segmentation** allows you to separate these groups and create specific newsletter content appealing directly to distinct needs and income parities.

Split Test Your Ongoing Content

The A/B split test is one of the most effective and widespread tests available to email marketers and allows you to determine how your customers respond to particular elements within a message. The effect of changing a single factor in an email, such as the image positioning or preheader, can be analyzed by reviewing the primary **email metrics** such as open and click through rates. By repeated A/B split testing analysis, you will be able to clearly identify the email elements that are most effective and utilize them to obtain the best results.

Capture Your Customer's Personal Data

Just like the rest of the population, most of your customers do not want to reveal any personal data unless it is absolutely necessary. By the very nature of the industry, the customers of party supply businesses are far less likely to want to reveal data such as birthdate than would the clients of an enterprise such as a medical or health facility. It thus becomes increasingly critical for the party supply owner or manager to provide incentives for subscribers to fill out the signup form in full and enter accurate data in each field. Every bit of information about any client who has agreed to receive your email marketing newsletters is critical, as each entry equals a new opportunity to further segment your list.

Analyze Your Customer's Behaviors

There are three primary subscriber types.

1. Customers who never open your emails and should be removed from your subscription list.

2. Customers who may open and read your emails but generally fail to respond to your call to action. These subscribers should remain on your list, as they may be responding to your business in other ways such as location drop-ins or by phone.
3. Customers who both read your emails and respond to your call to action. These subscribers are the most responsive from an email marketing perspective, and thus are extremely valuable as online clients.

Best Email Practice

Party supply businesses should strive to adhere to **best email practices**. Following these principles can help optimize the returns of your campaign:

- Compose preheaders and subject lines with careful consideration and care
- Use a modern email template that can handle video and the differing display capacities of browsers and web enabled mobile devices
- Provide multiple landing pages featuring specifically targeted content to synchronize with your segmentation efforts and A/B split testing

BENCHMARK AS YOUR PARTY SUPPLY BUSINESS' EMAIL MARKETING DEPARTMENT

Quickly & Thoroughly Renew Your Email Campaign Strategy

Your party supply business can obtain successful bottom line results by collaborating with the expert industry professionals at Benchmark Email. Benchmark Email is widely known as one of the leading email marketing service providers in the US, relied upon by over 73,000 satisfied business customers. Benchmark Email is now able to propose a **Party Supply Email Marketing** solution to make sure your integrated email and social media marketing campaign targets are fully reached or exceeded!

Return On Investment is the primary criteria for any business expenditure, and Benchmark Email's powerful Do It Yourself Web-based solution for party supply businesses features a simple and straightforward online interface and the most powerful email marketing and social media promotional infrastructure available. Engaging your customers through Benchmark Email's effective DIY solution will allow you to exactly determine the precise value of your email marketing's impact on your party supply business.

Choose to Have Benchmark Email's Renowned Marketing Pros Do It for You

The professional party supply business manager or owner knows when to delegate and subcontract work to experienced and knowledgeable experts. When it comes to your email marketing, you may choose to outsource work to the professional online communications experts at Benchmark Email. Your party supply business will reach and surpass the next level of email marketing by taking advantage of Benchmark Email's proprietary **We Do It for You Full Service Email Marketing** process. This proprietary and effective service will engage Benchmark Email's top experts to implement the functions of your email and social media marketing as if they were working at your own party supply business location.

The marketing pros at Benchmark Email will put into action powerful procedures to successfully meet your email campaign goals. They will offer custom-composed templates that integrate relevant and exciting graphics and Benchmark's **Real Time Email Reports**, which present you with a clear and simple perspective on your relevant historical and current

email performance metrics so you can understand how your campaign is progressing at each and every step along the way. Benchmark Email will ensure that your company is prominently promoted on the most frequented social networks, including posting your latest email message links on your party supply business' Twitter and Facebook accounts.

Benchmark Email's highly experienced promotional and communications professionals will direct every step of up to two completely separate email marketing and promotional campaigns on your party supply company's behalf. Additional campaigns can be run at the same time for a small surcharge. The range of their possibilities covers every aspect of your email campaign, including segmenting and focusing your subscription list to your exact specifications; implementing autorespond processes to provide literally instant replies to your customers 24 hours a day; and, through the establishment of customer feedback channels, Benchmark Email's professional communications concierges can compile a complete customer survey as well as compose and define specialized polls that will supply you with the client information you need to precisely target your entire online promotional campaign.

INDUSTRY STANDARD FEATURES

You can select between Benchmark Email's easy and capable Do It Yourself or the fully integrated We Do It for You service so your party supply business can obtain enhanced and powerful benefits, including:

Advanced Message Scheduling – Your email communications can be set up to be sent at any time and on any date. By applying **autoresponders**, Benchmark Email can schedule a series of timers that correlate with particular events such as the renewal date, birthday or any anniversary date of your choosing.

Comprehensive Video Integration – Benchmark Email’s sophisticated offerings include a video email process to embed videos directly into your email template while minimizing critical download file sizes.

Contact List Management – As your subscriber list grows, it becomes a time-consuming task to ensure each entry is up to date. Benchmark Email’s list management tools help you with segmenting and streamlining your subscription lists so that you can specify particular categories established on a series of demographic, behavior and gender qualifications, among others.

Delivery Assurance – Benchmark Email has nurtured relationships with all the major ISPs at the most critical Internet traffic points to ensure their delivery rate is unmatched by any other email marketing company.

Full Tracking Reports Incorporating Visual Graphs – Benchmark Email provides extensive **email tracking reports** featuring graphics, composed in basic language, so that the full extent of comprehensive statistics are simple to understand at a quick glance.

High Volume Plans – Should your party supply business’ subscription list contain more than 100,000 individual email addresses, Benchmark Email can accommodate you with our **dedicated server plans**.

Polls & Surveys – Benchmark Email can apply a variety of advanced surveying and polling methods to develop a custom-tailored range of customer participation forms. These sophisticated forms allow your party supply business to precisely target your segmentation methodologies according to the personal data provided by your subscribers.

Social Media Tools – Benchmark Email can make your content prominently visible on the most popular social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, in order to obtain the highest amount of “Shares” and “Likes.”

Templates – The professional graphic, programming, and

content experts at Benchmark Email have developed specialized **email templates** engineered to suit any variation of your party supply business' email marketing newsletter campaign. The professional and highly experienced designers at Benchmark Email can even create a custom template for your exclusive use.

Find Out How Your Party Supply Business Can Profit from Benchmark Email's Services

Benchmark Email's Do It Yourself package of services empowers you to make item by item determinations about which types of services your email marketing program will benefit from. If you select the We Do It for You package, which integrates every facet of an online promotional program, your marketing will be designed and managed by Benchmark Email's savvy professional masters. Regardless of which email service package you choose to adopt, your party supply business will be show clear and unequivocal bottom line results that could not be matched by equivalent investments in conventional media advertising.

Fun is a serious goal in the party supply industry, and one that requires firm control over the wide range of promotional avenues. Benchmark Email provides state of the art technological facilities and online communications experts to engender email marketing results that will have your entire business celebrating! So what are you waiting for? Check out Benchmark's **Email Marketing Services for Party Supply** businesses today!

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-tonone 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 FREE! With our Free List Plan 2,000 you can have up to 2,000 contacts and send up to 14,000 emails per month. Start today at www.benchmarkemail.com/register.

CONTACT US

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

Website: <http://www.benchmarkemail.com/>

Call: 800.430.4095 (USA) or 562.252.3789 (INT)

Email: sales@benchmarkemail.com