



OPTOMETRY & OPTICIAN
EMAIL MARKETING

Benchmark
EMAIL

FOREWORD

“It is necessary to keep one’s compass in one’s eyes and not in the hand, for the hands execute, but the eye judges.”

– Michelangelo

Sight is a sense easily taken for granted, at least until it begins to fail. Optometry and optician businesses serve billions of people around the world who wish to protect this most valuable sense. Technology has provided enormous advances to the optometry and optician industry, encouraging its growth to the point where business owners and managers face constantly increasing competition to provide the most state of the art services.

Optometry and optician businesses are looking for a way to reach new customers and continue cultivating the loyalty of their existing base. Email and social network marketing utilize mobile Web-enabled electronic trends to reach and motivate millions of customers at any time of day or night.

The following report provides valuable data to optometry and optician businesses in order to assist them in creating and implementing the exact form of email marketing campaign that will best benefit their customers as well as their bottom line. The email marketing model is unlike any form of conventional media: promotional communications can spark a bilateral one-on-one conversation between your company and its customer base to build trust, loyalty and commitment in a way unmatched by other mediums.

– Curt Keller, CEO, Benchmark Email

INTRODUCTION

This report, *Optometry and Optician: Focus on Your Customers with Email Marketing*, contains a practical perspective on the current state of **email marketing campaigns** for optometry and optician businesses. The information in this guide has been

designed to assist owners and managers of optometry and optician businesses in streamlining their promotional reach and effectiveness through these procedures:

1. Creating and implementing an email and social network marketing campaign designed to reach a new base of clientele for your optometry and optician businesses while reducing the turnover of current customers
2. Understanding the legal and ethical standards that apply to your business' email marketing activities
3. Gaining perspective on relevant statistical and metric determinants and the varied approaches being currently incorporated into the online promotional strategies of optometry and optician businesses
4. Drawing on strategies tailored to the needs of the optometry and optician manager or owner in order to improve profits through efficient marketing techniques

This report contains analyses on an extensive collection of recent statistical reports and qualitative data submitted by a representative sample of optometry and optician businesses. This information is available for your review in the Optometry and Optician Email Marketing Survey section.

The key objective of this guide is to supply optometry and optician business owners, managers and marketers with the information they need to decide if **email marketing** should be part of their marketing strategy, as well as a guide to implementation.

BACKGROUND

The optometry and optician sector encompasses a wide variety of businesses, facilities, products and services, covering everything between professional medical ophthalmologists to discount optician outlets in department stores. The sector also incorporates multi-national frame and lens manufacturers and worldwide e-tailers of both eyeglasses and contact lenses: any

discussion of email marketing within the optometry and optician industry has to take into consideration both small business and large-scale corporate manufacturing concerns. Optometry and optician business services are utilized by every demographic and income group, from pediatric eyeglass fittings to high fashion prescription sunglasses. This spectrum of costs and age group effectively qualifies this industry as horizontal. Demographics and psychographics are not limiting factors in determining a potential or current client base.

There are countless variations on how optometry and optician business owners and manager design and manage their email and social networking strategies. Multi-national manufacturing operations commit massive resources to their email marketing and **social media** promotional efforts; smaller, more local businesses - such as opticians and optometrists - may not yet engage in email and social network marketing at all. Email subscription list size varies greatly within the industry, from just a few hundred addresses to upwards of thousands.

OPTOMETRY AND OPTICIAN BUSINESS EMAIL MARKETING STATISTICS

Major industry studies and surveys are the basis for this guide, and the statistical data contained within comes from a representative, reputable sample of optometry and optician businesses. Data was analyzed in conjunction with answers received from the direct questions posed to US optometry and optician business owners and managers.

Optometry and Optician Businesses Engaging in Email Marketing

Forty-nine percent of optometry and optician business owners

and managers report current participation in email marketing campaigns; 30 percent report intentions to engage in future email marketing campaigns and social networking; 21 percent state no plans to engage in email marketing now or in the future. Local, smaller businesses may be less likely to utilize this form of marketing, while large-scale and national businesses have an increased instance of engagement.

Optometry and Optician Business Sending Frequency

The send frequency of optometry and optician businesses is roughly split between monthly (41 percent) and more often than monthly (49 percent) missives, indicating flexibility in the timing of email sends. Other frequency figures are: eight percent - every two months; one percent - quarterly; and one percent seasonal or annually.

Optometry and Optician Business Content Type

Forty percent of optometry and optician businesses tend to prefer email content containing a blend of sales messaging and information; 51 percent typically send exclusively informational content; and nine percent send focused sales content.

How Optometry and Optician Businesses Obtain Email Subscribers

Subscriber lists are overwhelmingly comprised of current customers (69 percent). More figures include:

- Web derived: 17 percent
- Public promotional event resultant: 10 percent
- Promotionally resultant: three percent
- Purchased and supplied leads: one percent

Typical Optometry and Optician Business Email Subscriber List Size

List size illustrates the range of business sizes within the sector, though most businesses were distributed within the mid-range. Business subscriber figures include:

- 24 percent: less than 500
- 18 percent: 500 – 1,000
- 16 percent: 1,000-3,000
- 17 percent: 3,000-5,000
- 25 percent: more than 5,000

Optometry and Optician Business List Segments

Only 39 percent of surveyed optometry and optician businesses currently enact **email segmentation** procedures, while 61 percent do not segment at all, to the detriment of their client base outreach.

Email Open Rates for Optometry and Optician Business Campaigns

Fifty-five percent of the surveyed optometry and optician business owners provided **email open rate** data. Of that percentage, open rates are as follows:

- 5 percent: less than 15 percent
- 8 percent: 15 to 25 percent
- 24 percent: 25 to 40 percent
- 18 percent: more than 40 percent

Versus Industry Open Rates

Open rates for optometry and optician businesses are considerably higher than other industries, at 36.1 percent compared to 25.3 percent all industry average.

Optometry and Optician Business Subscriber Click-Through Rates

Three out of five surveyed optometry and optician business owners or marketers did not know the **click-through rates** for their email marketing campaigns. Of those who were aware of this critical metric: nine percent state a rate of less than five percent; 13 percent report between 5 and 10 percent; fourteen percent claim 10 to 15 percent; and five percent show an impressive rate of more than 15 percent.

Versus Industry Click-Through Rates

Industry click-through rates are high within the optometry and optician sector at nine percent. This compares very favorably with the 7.9 percent rate claimed by the food sector, and is more than double overall industry averages of 4.3 percent.

OPTOMETRY AND OPTICIAN INDUSTRY DISCUSSION

The optometry and optician sector contains a wide spectrum of business models, from multi-national corporate frame and lens manufacturers or contact lens e-tailers to the local optician businesses; additionally, employees range from doctors, store clerks, distributors, manufacturers and researchers, among many others. A few main optometry and optician business categories include:

- Optometrists
- Opticians
- Ophthalmologists
- Certifying Associations
- Medical Schools
- Contact Lens Manufacturers
- Lens Manufacturers

- Frame Manufacturers
- Sunglasses Manufacturers
- Lens, Frame and Contact Lens E-tailers
- Optical Engineers
- Optical Equipment Manufacturers
- Safety Glasses Manufacturers
- Laser Keratotomy Practitioners
- Eye Surgeons

This sector includes – but is not limited to - optometrists, opticians, contact lens manufacturers, lens manufacturers, frame manufacturers and sunglasses manufacturers. There are also categories of optometry and optician businesses that cross over into other sectors, such as medical schools and eye surgeons; lens, frame and contact lens e-tailers; optical engineers and equipment manufacturers; certifying associations; and safety glasses manufacturers. All of these belong in the optometry and optician sector as well as others.

Vertical categories within the optometry and optician sector necessitate specific profile information about campaign customers and subscribers. Demographic, geographic, income, behavior and personal background knowledge of customers will help email marketers accurately configure content for the subscriber lists, and help businesses achieve the desired outcome.

For example, the ideal online communications strategy utilized by an optical equipment manufacturer should differ from that of a local optician. Strategies used in the first case would be ineffectively targeted in the second; sensitivity to and an understanding of the type of subscriber you are targeting, in conjunction with knowing what customers are seeking from your optometry and optician business, is critical to the success of your **email marketing plan**. Proposing the wrong product or service to a particular segment is not just a waste of time and effort: it can also alienate the subscriber.

Only after a subscriber's preferences are identified can a successful targeting strategy be determined and implemented. Membership in an elite club offering private events, special discounts, unique frames, rare accessories, offers on quality

or high index lenses, prize draws, access to other particular facilities, etc., can be leveraged to motivate your **email marketing newsletter** subscribers. Gathering new subscriber addresses can be difficult, but growing your list is necessary to growing your business and furthermore segmenting your clients into useful, targeted groupings. Some situations and places wherein optometry and optician businesses successfully gather email addresses include:

- At community events
- At health fairs, trade shows and expos
- At sunglass-oriented events such as fashion shows or outdoor 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
- From collaborative local businesses in the health and safety field
- In department store and mall kiosks
- Via guestbook
- Via website signup page

Every subscriber address must be accompanied by clear and documented permission from the client to receive your missives. Following these legal and ethical guidelines will help your list increase steadily. More importantly, when utilizing focused segmentation procedures, your campaigns' accuracy and effectiveness will continue to grow as well.

OPTOMETRY AND OPTICIAN BUSINESS EMAIL MARKETING GOALS

Whether your optometry and optician business style and concept targets a customer base as wide as your town's entire

demographic profile or you are directing your promotional efforts to medical professionals specifically engaged in the vision sector, your email marketing strategy must be tailored to ranging customer interests. Each subset of clients should receive the content best suited to their needs in order for you to retain their loyalty and repeat business.

Short Term Goals

An email marketing newsletter campaign designed to meet the overall requirements of your particular optometry and optician business will provide these short term results:

- Acquisition of new customers
- Customer participation in additional events and occurrences
- Extension of online presence and authority
- Location loyalty
- Location recognition
- Same quarter sales
- Word of mouth

Long Term Goals

Optometry and optician businesses may expect a comprehensive and professional long term email marketing newsletter campaign to produce:

- Expansion of customer base
- Competitive advantage
- Higher traffic for a broader range of products and services
- Increased cooperation from suppliers and related businesses (information, fixture, equipment and supply wholesalers)
- Loyalty to the business
- Online authority translating to sector market leadership
- Trade Media visibility
- Increased year on year sales

An effective and powerful email marketing campaign will benefit every facet of your operations. The full range of your optometry and optician business' services may not be currently evident to your potential customers: they may know

the location of your outlet, but they may not know you offer additional services such as serial tonometry, gonioscopy, extended ophthalmoscopy, gross visual field testing, fundus photography or retinal integrity evaluation.

Review the following critical factors to arm your business with an understanding of **email marketing best practices** and standards:

Implementation

Email marketing differs greatly from traditional modes of advertisement, and requires adherence to more strictly regulated legal guidelines, as outlined below.

Compliance

Every email address entered on to your subscription list must be accompanied by explicit, documented permission from the addressee. Not obtaining and documenting this client permission violates federal email marketing standards, which require direct and unequivocal approval from address holders.

Federal Email CAN-SPAM

The **CAN-SPAM Act** regulates email marketing in the USA and outlines clear standards of business for all forms of online marketing. This form of legislation is called “opt-out,” as it requires immediate compliance when any subscriber requests removal from an email subscription list. The US federal government considers violations of CAN-SPAM extremely serious issues; violators are subject to fines and, in some cases, incarceration.

Make It Easy to Unsubscribe

It is legally required that every email within your email marketing campaign contains a clearly identifiable and functional “unsubscribe” link. Once a client requests to be

removed from your list, it is mandatory by law to delete them at first notice and wipe their personal data from your system.

Manage Bouncing Emails

All sent emails result in one of three conclusions:

1. Success (delivered as intended)
2. Soft Bounce (delayed due to a full inbox or internal Internet traffic issues)
3. Hard Bounce (impossible to deliver as the email address does not exist or has been blocked)

When an email bounces, and Internet facility called Mailer Daemon will notify you regarding the delivery issue. A soft bounce is not within your control, though good practice urges businesses to inform clients of soft bounces through another mode of communication. A hard bounce is more serious: if you continue sending missives to that address, eventually ISPs will label your emails as spam. Once you have been identified as a spammer, your address is placed on a blacklist, making it impossible for any of your email messages to go through.

Privacy Policy

It may be tempting to copy and paste a competitor's privacy policy onto your own website, thinking that since you have similar business operations your policies need not differ. However, not only does this action create duplicate content that will penalize your business in search engine operations, it also opens you up to legal liability. To avoid these issues, employ an industry-specific lawyer to craft a privacy policy tailored to your business' online activities.

Segment Your List

Your customers vary widely: a family will require a very different set of services than a senior citizen couple. It would be futile to promote geriatric optometry services to the former or pediatric

eye exams to the latter. Segment your client list and create distinct email marketing newsletters for each segment based on the variations in your client profile.

Test Your Ongoing Content

Continuous testing of your email marketing newsletters will increase the success of your campaign. One of the most popular ways to confirm the effectiveness of your content is known as an A/B split test, wherein identical content is sent to a specific segment of your email subscriber list with only a single element modified (such as the content of a paragraph, the position of a link, or the **email subject line**). By analyzing how these two different email sends performed, insight into your subscribers' preferences may be gained and allow you to refine your marketing strategies.

Obtaining Your Customer's Personal Data

It is tough to get customers to divulge the personal information you need to segment your list, yet it is important to glean as much data as can be derived from your prospects without alienating them. Incentivized surveys and participatory polling forms can help along the process.

Analyze Your Customer's Behaviors

Metrics like click-through and open rate are the primary modes of analyzing the success of your email marketing campaign. After implementing and analyzing these tools, you will discover there are primarily three types of subscribers on your list:

1. Those who never open an email, and should be deleted from your list.
2. Those who read but don't act on your emails. These email addresses are best left on the list, as they often opt to interact with your optometry and optician business in the future.
3. Those who open and click on emails. These subscribers

are your most lucrative email prospects, as they directly respond to your calls to action. Composing custom content for these types of clients will provide you with a powerful segmentation opportunity.

Best Email Practice

Best email practices should be incorporated into all of your email marketing newsletter campaigns. Subject lines and preheaders should be precisely crafted; your email template's cross-browser display capabilities must be on a variety of PCs and mobile devices through emulators or other simulation means; and it is also strongly recommended that you create multiple landing pages to dovetail with your segmentation and ongoing A/B split testing efforts.

Email Metrics

Nearly three of five surveyed optometry and optician business owners and managers are not aware of their click-through rates; less than half were unaware of their open rate performance. Without implementing and analyzing these critical **email metrics** and their data, your email marketing campaign does not have the opportunity to achieve its greatest success potential.

BENCHMARK AS YOUR OPTOMETRY AND OPTICIAN BUSINESS' EMAIL MARKETING EXPERT

Swiftly and Comprehensively Refresh Your Email Marketing Strategy

Collaborate with the highly experienced industry pros at Benchmark Email to reach out to your optometry and optician business customers efficiently and cost-effectively. Benchmark Email is one of the most highly experienced email marketing service providers, relied upon by over 73,000 satisfied individuals and businesses across the world. After years of supplying optician and optometry businesses with our services, Benchmark Email is now highly qualified to offer a comprehensive and complete **Optometry and Optician Email Marketing Solution**, ensuring your integrated email and social media marketing efforts are fully achieved.

Return On Investment is one of the primary metrics of any email promotional strategy, and the advanced features integrated into Benchmark Email's effective DIY Web-based solution for optometry and optician businesses incorporate a straightforward online interface readily accessed from any computer. This interface allows total control over the most advanced email promotional and social media applications available anywhere.

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

Sometimes it's best to delegate operations to the experts. Choose a hands-off approach by subcontracting your email

marketing campaign project to the experienced professionals at Benchmark Email. Your optometry and optician business can take the next critical step in your online promotional strategy by participating in the **We Do It for You Full Service Email Marketing** process, a service where top pros at Benchmark Email take on the functions of your own direct email and social media communications. All you need to do is to provide your subscriber list along with a description of the primary factors you want to publicize in your email marketing campaign and the professional Benchmark Email experts will get your campaign implemented and active in short order.

Benchmark Email's experienced online communications and promotional professionals will manage every aspect of up to two separate email campaigns for your optometry and optician business. You may even choose to launch additional email marketing at the same time, for a token surcharge. Benchmark Email's services will cover every marketing aspect of your campaign, including streamlining and segmenting subscriber lists to your precise specifications and engineering advanced auto-respond functionalities. Through the creation of client feedback channels, our consummate pros can produce a thorough and exhaustive prospect survey to define the total range of your subscribers' characteristics, allowing you to precisely focus your marketing efforts.

INDUSTRY STANDARD FEATURES

When you choose Benchmark Email's easy Do It Yourself or the fully comprehensive We Do It for You service, your optometry and optician business can benefit from these advanced features:

Advanced Message Scheduling – Your email sends can be scheduled to send at any date and time of your choosing. Benchmark Email can apply highly sophisticated **autoresponding** functions correlating to specific events, such as renewal date or a birthday.

Comprehensive Video Integration – Benchmark Email offers an advanced video email solution that provides for video productions of any duration relevant to your optometry and optician business' newest specials, events or innovations. Any audio-visual format of relevant content can be easily delivered to your clients while keeping file sizes to a minimum.

Contact List Management – Benchmark Email can implement advanced technologies to assist you in managing your entire subscription list. This allows for segmentation processes that will significantly boost the targeting of your subscriber categories based on geographic, demographic and behavior features.

Delivery Assurance – Benchmark Email has a long and distinguished history of collaboration with leading ISPs. These relationships underlie our elevated delivery rate and reliable delivery assurances based on a commitment to best practices and exhaustive anti-spam features, ensuring your optometry and optician business will benefit from a spotless email reputation.

Expertise & Technology – The technical infrastructure devised and operated by Benchmark Email is unsurpassed and allows for any form of email - including plain text, HTML and video - to be promptly delivered to your customer's inbox.

Full Tracking Reports Incorporating Visual Graphs – Benchmark Email provides comprehensive **email tracking reports** featuring clear and attractive graphics, as well as easy to understand language, so that the relevant statistics can be grasped at first glance.

High Volume Plans – If your optometry and optician business' subscription list contains more than 100,000 individual email addresses, Benchmark Email can engineer a series of advanced delivery technologies to ensure your large scale sending jobs are handled as efficiently as possible.

Polls & Surveys – Benchmark Email prides itself on specialized know-how and tools for modern and efficient surveying and polling, allowing users to create tailored subscriber

participation forms. These advanced forms will allow your optometry and optician business to target your segmentation results according to the latest data provided by your subscriber.

Social Media Tools – Benchmark Email can implement and manage your entire **social media strategy** by providing thorough integration on leading sites such as Twitter and Facebook, ensuring your promotional messaging will be “Liked” and shared among the widest possible social cliques.

Templates – The professional content, graphics, programming and promotional experts at Benchmark Email can offer you hundreds of customizable email **templates** designed to integrate any form of graphics or video. If you have particular requirements for your optometry and optician business, the professionals at Benchmark Email will create a custom email template for your exclusive use.

Find Out How Your Optometry and Optician Business Can Profit from Benchmark Email’s Services

Benchmark Email’s Do It Yourself package of services enables you to take direct control of your email marketing program and select and manage the types of services that you believe will have the greatest impact on your optometry or optician business. You may also choose to adopt the We Do It for You package, wherein your campaign is engineered and managed by Benchmark Email’s seasoned experts. Regardless of which email service package you select, your business will see bottom line results over a short period of time that can not be matched by any other mode of advertisement.

Your optometry or optician business assists your customers in seeing clearly: Benchmark Email will help focus your gaze with our fully-featured **Optical Industry Email Marketing**. Let us show you the clarity of efficient, easy email 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.

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