

EMAIL MARKETING

MANUFACTURING



DISTRIBUTION



FOREWARD

“Agriculture, manufactures, commerce and navigation, the four pillars of our prosperity, are the most thriving when left most free to individual enterprise.” – Thomas Jefferson

Manufacturing and distribution business owners and managers face extreme competition at every phase of commerce. At a time when margins are being squeezed by ever-accelerating overhead costs, and natural disasters have disrupted global processes of JIT provision, manufacturing and distribution businesses must take every measure to drive sales and increase turnover volume. Experienced and knowledgeable manufacturing and distribution managers and owners are realizing older forms of media advertising cannot compete with the impact, power and immediacy of online communications - especially at a time when smartphones, tablets, netbooks and other mobile Web-enabled devices are swiftly becoming ubiquitous.

Unlike the old print and broadcast media, email and social network marketing is affordable even for the smallest of manufacturing and distribution businesses, generating profits on an elevated scale differentiating it from any other type or style of marketing. In 2009, the Direct Marketing Association published a wide-ranging survey of email marketing return on investment and concluded that for every dollar invested in an email marketing newsletter campaign, \$43.62 was returned. There is simply no competing with the reach and sales driving potential of email marketing.

Every type of manufacturing and distribution business can boost their bottom line by engaging prospects through the tremendous cost efficiencies inherent to email and social media marketing. This guide is intended to assist manufacturing and distribution businesses currently involved in email marketing campaigns to focus their strategies by concentrating on their core strengths, while working to convince businesses not yet

participating in email and social network marketing to grab a piece of this lucrative and expanding channel.

– Curt Keller, CEO, Benchmark Email

INTRODUCTION

This guide, *Manufacturing and Distribution: Building a Successful Email Marketing Presence*, contains an overview of the present state of **email marketing** for the use of manufacturing and distribution brand directors. The information in this report is designed to help members of the industry heighten their promotional efforts through the following tactics:

1. Enacting a **social media** and email visibility campaign that will draw in new customers while upholding the loyalty of current ones
2. Understanding online marketing legislation for the manufacturing and distribution business
3. Obtaining an overview of the approaches practiced by other manufacturing and distribution online communications marketers
4. Practicing effective online marketing customized for your manufacturing and distribution business to generate the greatest possible benefits

This guide is based on a representative industry sample of manufacturing and distribution businesses, and contains qualitative data and current statistics on instances of email marketing in this sector. Statistical data is available in the Manufacturing and Distribution Email Marketing Survey section.

The primary purpose of this paper is to provide information to help manufacturing and distribution brand owners to assess the current condition of their email marketing practices, and encourage email marketing campaign uptake within the industry.

BACKGROUND

The manufacturing and distribution business contains an assortment of diverse business units, ranging from multinational manufacturers with operations spread over several continents to small regional distributors where the owner of the business may drive their own van for deliveries. Because of this diversity, the combined industry email and social media marketing statistics may approach a median distribution; additionally, larger businesses may be more likely to utilize email marketing than smaller businesses.

EMAIL MARKETING STATISTICS

The statistical data contained within this report represents a representative variety of manufacturing and distribution businesses, arrived at through the direct querying of sector business owners and managers.

Manufacturing & Distribution Businesses that Engage in Email Marketing

Of the surveyed, the businesses participating in and not participating in email marketing are roughly equal, at 44 and 43 percent respectively. The remainder indicate a desire to employ email marketing in the future.

Manufacturing & Distribution Business Sending Frequency

Send frequencies for the manufacturing and distribution industry are as follows:

- 20% – more than monthly
- 45% – monthly

- 13% – bi-monthly
- 17% – quarterly
- 5% – seasonally/annually

Manufacturing & Distribution Business Content Type

Content types for the manufacturing and distribution businesses are:

- 19% – informational content only
- 37% – sales content only
- 44% – information combined with sales content

How Manufacturing & Distribution Businesses Obtain Email Subscribers

Subscriber sources for manufacturing and distribution businesses are derived from the following areas:

- 73% – existing customer base
- 12% – Web-derived subscribers
- 6% – promotional results
- 5% – purchased and supplied leads
- 4% – public promotional events

Manufacturing & Distribution Business Email Subscriber List Size

The list size of manufacturing and distribution businesses is considerably larger than for other industries: just 16 percent report less than 500 entries on their subscription list. 33 percent claim between 500 and 1,000; 34 percent report between 1,000 and 3,000; 11 percent state 3,000 to 5,000; and 6 percent show more than 5,000 email addresses on their list.

Manufacturing & Distribution Business List Segments

A scant 18 percent of all owners and managers report segmenting their lists, while 82 percent do not.

Email Open Rates for Manufacturing & Distribution Business Campaigns

Of the 45 percent of manufacturing and distribution business owners able to quote their [email open rates](#)...

- 3% claim less than a 15 percent open rate
- 17% report between a 15 and 25 percent open rate
- 18% state a rate between 25 and 40 percent
- 7% show an open rate of more than 40 percent

Versus Industry Open Rates

At 26.7 percent, the manufacturing and distribution open rates adhere closely to the all industries median of 25.3 percent.

Manufacturing & Distribution Business Subscriber Click-Through Rates

Sixty-one percent of manufacturing and distribution business owners and managers could not report a [click-through rate](#). Of the remainder: 19 percent showed a rate of less than 5 percent; 9 percent claim between 5 and 10 percent; 7 percent, between 10 and 15 percent; and 4 percent, a rate of more than 15 percent.

Versus Industry Click-Through Rates

As was the case with open rates, the manufacturing and distribution industry click-through rate of 4.9 percent is comparable to the all industries standard of 4.3 percent.

MANUFACTURING & DISTRIBUTION INDUSTRY DISCUSSION

Most manufacturing and distribution businesses are ill-equipped to provide their customers with white papers, educational newsletters, press releases, e-books, videos or blogs. These are the bread and butter of modern marketing and present a challenge for manufacturing and distribution businesses engaged in exclusively conventional promotions.

As a manufacturing and distribution manager, business owner or marketer, the fact is this: the majority of your customers are probably online this very minute. You don't have to hire additional staff or purchase expensive hardware to reach them, either. Any desktop computer connected to the Internet will allow you to interact with a capable, experienced, professional email service provider able to execute all elements of an **email marketing campaign** on your behalf.

One of the primary keys to achieving success through email and **social network marketing** is to understand conventional advertising is lost on a population that lives on computers and mobile Web-enabled devices. Many manufacturing and distribution businesses are applying the B.E.S.T. formula in order to comprehend and facilitate the creation of the type of content that engages an online customer base:

Behavioral – Acknowledge that everything you communicate to your customers must have an obvious purpose. Ask yourself what you want your customer to do: solicit contact, submit a form, sign up for an **email newsletter** or complete a survey? Ensure there is a clear and valid action you want your customer to take that benefits both your business and the customer.

Questions to ask: What action do you want the customer to take? How will you measure their reactions? How do you want the customer to feel? How can you facilitate their purchase?

Essential – Any missive you send must have a clear and necessary purpose for the prospect that circles back to your products and services but also finds a way to help them with a challenge or brings something positive to their interactive experience. How do rising energy costs affect them in relationship to your products and services? What tips can you provide to your customer to save energy, money, time and effort? What trends in your industry are likely to affect them? Think: information, education and entertainment.

Questions to ask: What does the purchaser need to know? How can my content be presented for maximum effect? What media works best for presenting this particular content?

Strategic – Though you want the customer to be delighted by your missives, remember that your primary purpose is to engage them in order to drive sales and traffic. Your online activities must be seamlessly integrated into your overall business plan.

Questions to ask: Does this email content fit into our overall strategies? Does this effort assist in reaching the company's strategic goals? Can we engage in this conversation without it seeming too much like a thinly veiled sales pitch?

Targeted – The best content is highly targeted to your prospects. You must determine the demographic, geographic and behavioral characteristics of your base and use those factors in your **email segmentation** and testing efforts. Capture their attention and their loyalty; speak in their language about topics close to their interests. Then dovetail this conversation into legitimate ways your products and services can fulfill those needs.

Questions to ask: Have you identified the customers you want to target? Do you understand their motivations? Can you put yourself in their position and view your offerings through their eyes?

Approaches to email marketing must vary from facility to facility, location to location and even time to time: manufacturing and distribution businesses need to implement a series of well

thought out procedures in order to keep a customer base motivated in a slow economy, taking into account high rates of unemployment, small business and personal loan financing and even the impact of natural disasters on consumers.

Fine tuning the content of your email marketing campaign to cater to the location of your business and your particular demographic and behavioral customer profiles can be critical to achieving success. Online communications experts know the best way to achieve innovative focus is to apply segmentation methodologies to your subscriber list. By separating out your email address entries according to demographic, geographic and behavior based categories, you will develop targeted content that fulfills the preferences and requirements of your customer base.

MANUFACTURING & DISTRIBUTION BUSINESS EMAIL MARKETING GOALS

Whether your facility is a small distributor or importer with limited warehousing space or a leading manufacturer comprised of multinational facilities and acres of robotic assembly lines, your **email marketing strategy** must be engineered to appeal to a steady flow of new customers from single order companies to main line clients. Each of these customers requires a particular type of information about your manufacturing and distribution business to inform them, educate them and assure their return.

Short Term Goals

An email marketing campaign expertly designed to meet the complete requirements of your manufacturing or distribution business, as well as your own individual preferences, can be

expected to provide these types of results over the short-term:

- Competitive advantage
- Customer participation in additional events and occurrences
- Enterprise loyalty
- Expansion of online presence and authority
- New customers
- Location recognition
- Same quarter sales
- Word of mouth

Long Term Goals

Manufacturing and distribution businesses may anticipate a long term, professional email marketing campaign will produce:

- Enterprise loyalty
- Expansion of customer base
- Competitive advantage
- Higher traffic for a broader range of SKUs
- Increased cooperation from suppliers and related businesses (transportation, equipment, fixture and supply wholesalers)
- Online authority translating to sector market leadership
- Trade media visibility
- Year on year sales

EMAIL SENDING BEST PRACTICES

A long term email campaign will have a clear effect on every aspect of any business. The full range of products and services your manufacturing and distribution business may provide is likely unknown to your prospects, and there is no other promotional opportunity that comes close to the impact and return on investment of properly implemented and well-designed email marketing. A successful campaign must take note of the following factors:

Implementation

Email marketing is different from placing a listing in the Yellow Pages or Thomas Register, or running an ad in trade magazines, newspapers, radio or television: the legal requirements for online advertising are much more strict, particularly concerning how a customer is approached and marketed to.

Compliance

Your manufacturing or distribution business should retain documented consent from clients prior to placing them on your subscription list.

Federal CAN-SPAM Law Violations Are A Crime

The US **CAN-SPAM Act** regulates email marketing and how businesses must interact with clients online. CAN-SPAM is “opt-out” legislation, requiring all commercial business units to immediately act upon a subscriber’s request to be removed from an email list serve. Failure to comply with this legislation opens up a business owner or manager to heavy fines and potential sentencing.

Make It Easy to Unsubscribe

Your manufacturing or distribution business must immediately comply with a customer’s request to be removed from your subscriber list. Additionally, every email you send must contain an easy to see, easy to enact link allowing the user to opt out of your online services (often known as an unsubscribe link).

Manage Bouncing Emails

When your manufacturing or distribution business sends out an email - regardless of whether it is a personal message, a business reply or an email newsletter - one of three different things will occur.

1. The send is delivered as planned.
2. The send is delayed due to a problem with your customer's email account or some network problem. This is called a soft bounce.
3. The send will be delivered because the email address cannot be found or has been blocked. This is called a hard bounce.

If your email bounces, you will receive a message from an Internet function called Mailer Daemon, informing you of the problem and explaining the reasons for the bounce. Soft bounces are an issue with the user's system, and it is suggested that you attempt to contact them via other means to alert them of the situation. In the case of a hard bounce, it is necessary to remove that user's address from your list: if you continue to send missives to a blocked address, eventually your address will be placed on a spam blacklist, and you will no longer be able to send any sort of email – business or personal – from your address.

Privacy Policy

It is important that you have a privacy policy drafted for your specific business unit. Though it may be tempting to visit a competitor's website and "borrow" their policy language, your privacy policy must be tailored to your specific online business activities in order to protect you from legal liability. Always contact an industry-specific business attorney and craft your own privacy policy.

Segment Your List

Segmenting your subscriber list will help expand your customer base and better serve your current clients. A customer operating a single corner store location has different requirements than a national chain purchasing agent: segment your list to create separate email campaign content for different demographic and behavior patterns. This ensures each category receives offers and information relevant to their

interactions with your manufacturing or distribution company.

Test Your Ongoing Content

The A/B split is a popular and effective test that allows you to determine how your customer base will respond to varying specific elements within an email. By changing just one parameter, such as the **preheader** or the subject line, and analyzing the open and click-through rates, you will be able to determine how your subscribers react to isolated changes. Their reactions and responses will allow you to craft a more focused email strategy for the future.

Capture Your Customer's Personal Data

Like many consumers, manufacturing or distribution clients may be hesitant to turn over their personal information to your campaign efforts. However, your business needs this data for critical segmentation efforts. Many manufacturing and distribution outlets have discovered the most effective way to retain this data is through incentivized surveys, which draw information from customers by providing discounts, personalized prizes or other items.

Analyze Your Customer's Behavior

Open and click-through rates are primary indicators of subscribers' behavior towards your manufacturing or distribution business. From these metrics, you will discover three types of consumers.

- Consumers who do not open your emails ever and should be removed from your list
- Consumers who may open your emails but never click through to your call to action and should remain on the list, lest they be engaging your business through other modes of communication
- Consumers who open your emails and respond to your call to action and should remain on your list; these are your most valuable clients

Best Email Practices

Manufacturing and distribution businesses should always strive to follow **best email practices**, including:

1. Preheaders and subject lines composed with great care
2. Updated **email templates** that can handle video and varying display characteristics to work on different browsers and Web-enabled mobile devices
3. Multiple landing pages featuring targeted content to dovetail with your segmentation efforts and A/B split testing

BENCHMARK AS YOUR MANUFACTURING & DISTRIBUTION BUSINESS' EMAIL MARKETING EXPERT

Comprehensively Renew Your Email Marketing Strategy

Benchmark Email is a widely renowned email marketing service provider with more than 73,000 satisfied clients. Join us today and engage our marketing pros to reach out to your customer base and exceed your online communication goals at a reasonable price and unbelievable ROI. After years of serving the email marketing needs of manufacturers and distributors, Benchmark Email is proposing a new **Manufacturing and Distribution Email Marketing** solution to ensure that your email and social media marketing goals are successfully delivered and integrated. Benchmark Email's powerful Do It Yourself

Web-based solution puts our award-winning email software in your hands.

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

Your manufacturing or distribution business can reach the next level of online marketing by taking advantage of Benchmark Email's proprietary **We Do It for You Full-Service Email Marketing** procedure. This service engages Benchmark Email's experts to implement the functions of your email and social media marketing as if they were working at your own company.

The email and social media promotional experts at Benchmark Email can engineer custom-designed templates for vibrant display on cross-platform devices; Benchmark's **Real Time Email Reports** are extremely easy to understand and provide you with a total perspective about current and historical campaign metrics, enabling you to make accurate determinations about how your campaign is performing. The online marketing experts at Benchmark Email will prominently promote your business on the most popular social media sites by posting directly on your Facebook Fan Page and publishing your email newsletter links through your Twitter account.

INDUSTRY STANDARD FEATURES

You can select Benchmark Email's powerful Do It Yourself or our We Do It for You service. Campaign features include:

Advanced Message Scheduling – Benchmark Email will set up your communications to be issued at any time or date you want by using advanced auto-responding technology. Set countdown timers keyed to any specific occurrences you wish, including renewal date, anniversary date or the customer's birthday.

Comprehensive Video Integration – Benchmark Email provides a state of the art email video process that allows for running times of any duration. This delivery system can incorporate educational and entertaining content while keeping file sizes to a minimum.

Contact List Management – Benchmark Email can implement advanced technologies to assist you in managing your entire **permission-based contact list**; this allows for segmentation processes that target subscriber categories based on geographic, demographic and behavior features.

Delivery Assurance – Benchmark Email is proud of its long history of collaboration with leading worldwide ISPs: it is these relationships that are responsible for our consistently high **email delivery rate**. Benchmark Email's remarkable delivery assurances are based on a policy of best practices and anti-spam features, ensuring your manufacturing or distribution business benefits from a stellar email reputation.

Expertise & Technology – The infrastructure operated by Benchmark Email has been engineered to be responsive, reliable and powerful - allowing for any format of email - including HTML, plain text and video - to be swiftly delivered to your customer's inbox.

Full Tracking Reports Incorporating Visual Graphs – Benchmark Email's extensive email tracking reports offer a comprehensible, graphic illustration of your **email marketing metrics**. Each data category is also explained in plain English - without resorting to convoluted technical jargon.

High Volume Plans – If your manufacturing or distribution business' email subscription list exceeds 100,000 addresses, Benchmark Email will activate technology to make your large-scale sends efficient and effortless.

Polls and Surveys – Benchmark Email's customizable surveys and polls allow your manufacturing or distribution business to target segmentation results according to the latest data provided directly by your subscribers.

Social Media Tools – Benchmark Email will promote you on popular social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter in order to tally up the most “Shares” and “Likes,” engaging your social media customers in the bilateral conversations in conjunction with familiar branding.

Templates – The highly experienced graphics, content and programming professionals at Benchmark Email have engineered hundreds of targeted templates to best represent your manufacturing or distribution business’ email marketing image. The designers at Benchmark Email can even create a custom-tailored template for your exclusive use.

BENCHMARK EMAIL UNDERSTANDS YOUR MANUFACTURING & DISTRIBUTION BUSINESS

In order to achieve success in your manufacturing or distribution business’ email and social media marketing campaigns, take into consideration the main vectors of potential subscriber email address collection:

- Community involvement and volunteering
- Concerts, sports and other mass events
- Holiday promotions
- Local and regional promotions
- Promoting word of mouth
- Supplier co-ops
- Sweepstakes and contests
- Team sponsorships
- Trade show and expo presence

Results

The powerful traffic results manufacturing and distribution businesses will benefit from while engaging in the premium level of Benchmark Email's package of services include:

- Cost / Benefit analysis
- Ease of information exchange
- Professional liaison
- Quick launch
- Scalability
- Sustainability

Analyze How Your Manufacturing & Distribution Business Can Profit from Benchmark Email's Services

Benchmark Email's Do It Yourself package is capable, powerful and comprehensive; the We Do It for You package incorporates every facet of an email marketing campaign by placing the entire job with Benchmark Email's professional marketing division. Regardless of which service selection you choose, your business will see a serious increase in bottom line results.

When you notice your shipping and receiving department is backed up because of a flood of new orders, you will be happy you entrusted your email and social media promotions to Benchmark Email's **Manufacturing and Distribution Email Marketing Service**. Your customers are waiting to read your message so they can be informed about the quality SKUs you are ready to ship 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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