

13 e-mail marketing tips

Introduction

Today, E-mail is one of the most powerful mediums that you can use to talk to visitors, customers and prospects. Here I will discuss 13 best practices that you can use everyday in your email marketing activities. Used wisely and consistently, there's no doubt you'll see an increased response from your subscribers.

1. Avoiding the Spam Filters

To make sure your emails don't get flagged as spam -- and deleted before they even get to your subscribers -- avoid using words such as 'Free', '£££', 'Save', 'Discount', etc in both the subject line and the content of your email.

2. Maximizing Click-Thru Rates

Web pages and emails can contain a lot of text and graphics. This sometimes makes it harder to get your subscribers to perform a certain task - such as clicking on a link to see your special offers. So, if you're going to include links in your emails, make sure they are bold, blue and underlined.

3. The Power of Personalisation

Personalise your e-mails by including subscriber names. This can increase both your reading and click-thru rates by up to **650%**.

4. One-Click Unsubscription/Double Opt-In

You absolutely must have a double opt-in process, and a quick way to unsubscribe. The unsubscribe link should take the recipient directly to a page where they are then removed -- courteously -- from your mailing list. In some countries, these links are a legal requirement.

You should **always** use a double opt-in confirmation process: after your visitor enters their email address to subscribe to your list, you should then send them a "confirmation" email. This email should contain a link back to your email-marketing program, which will then verify that this visitor did indeed sign up to your mailing list.

5. Tuesday / Wednesday = Increased Response

Research shows that people are most receptive to e-mail communication midweek, on Tuesdays and Wednesdays - this means that they are more likely to read your content. We've experimented with this, and received the best results by sending out emails at around 2-3pm (GMT) on a Wednesday.

6. Repeat Email Communication

An auto responder is an email that is scheduled to be sent at a certain time interval after someone subscribes to your mailing list. Auto responders are a great way to automatically follow up with your subscribers or provide them with more information on your products/services. You can send e-mails at preset intervals to maintain interest and draw subscribers in.

7. Consistency is Key

By keeping the look and feel of your communication consistent, you help to maintain and strengthen your brand and your image to your subscribers. Create a template for your newsletter and whenever you need to create a new issue, use that template as the basis for each issue.

8. On Time, Every Time

When sending a regular email to your subscribers, always make sure that it's sent on the same day, at the same time. Your subscribers will come to "expect" your email to arrive in their inbox on the same day at the same time every week – making them more receptive to your content.

9. The Half-a-Second Subject Line/Preview Panel

Research shows that an e-mail has about half a second to catch the recipient's attention. In your subject line, try and specify a benefit that your subscriber can expect by reading your email. Similarly, popular e-mail clients now show previews of mail. Take advantage by including interesting content that will be visible in the preview panel.

10. The Free Bonus Hook-In

If you're looking to grow your subscriber list, create or source a product of value to your visitors (such as an eBook or discount coupon) and offer it to them for free when they subscribe to your newsletter. Set up an auto responder to send them the free bonus 1 hour after subscription.

11. Link-Click Testing

Experiment with different text, images and positioning for links. You can then compare the click-thru stats and see which one worked best. Now, when you need to send marketing emails in the future, you know that you will be sending the right mix of content and images that will attract the most sales.

12. Email-Based Learning

Add value to your website, build trust in your visitors, establish your credibility and collect more subscriptions to your mailing list by setting up an email-based learning course. Simply create a series of auto responders (for example, 5) containing unique content. Schedule the first one to be sent after 24 hours, the second after 48 hours, etc.

13. Always Sign on the Dotted Line

Always include a signature at the bottom of your emails, as it's one of the easiest ways to attract more traffic to your website. This signature should include your personal details, your company details, and an unsubscribe link. You can use your signature to link back to your website, and even to other products. Here's a sample signature:

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