



# Email Marketing Best Practices

2019

Trends come and go, but  
the best ones often stay

# Table of Contents

<i>1: Introduction.....</i>	<i>01</i>
<i>1.1: Create multiple opportunities for email sign ups.....</i>	<i>02</i>
<i>1.2: Build an email preference center.....</i>	<i>03</i>
<i>1.3: Check for compliance.....</i>	<i>04</i>
<i>1.4: Re-engage the unengaged.....</i>	<i>06</i>
<i>1.5: Build Strong CTA.....</i>	<i>07</i>
<i>1.6: Dedicated IP address.....</i>	<i>09</i>
<i>1.7: Personalize the content.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>2: Summary.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>3: Best Practices Checklist.....</i>	<i>12</i>

# 01: Introduction

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For most companies today, customers are driving the complex and long buying journey that requires the right management and nurturing. Marketers need to connect with the audience with highly personalized communication while staying on budget i.e delivering customers highly researched, specifically targeted product recommendations, wherever they engage with them. As a digital marketer, he will eventually be successful in delivering ROI and revenue back to the business. While social media has become a popular way for small businesses to communicate with their audience, brands sometimes just can't get the organic reach they are looking for through these channels. Email is the currency of the web, and anybody who is online has an active email address. So when it comes to connecting with your prospects and customers, there's no channel with a wider reach than email.

What's more is that 80% of the consumers actually prefer to communicate with brands through email. In fact, A recent study by MarketingSherpa found that 67% of organizations increased their budgets for email marketing last year, and one-fifth of businesses are increasing their email marketing budget by more than 30%.

However, plowing money into marketing doesn't guarantee a return. Email marketing has changed dramatically in the last few years. Social media, mobile devices, privacy legislation and marketing automation are just some of the key items that are becoming more popular in the marketing world. Keeping up-to-date on email marketing best practices enables you to continually improve your program and reap a growing return on investment. But that can be easier said than done if you're also responsible for maintaining the day-to-day details of your company's email program.

To help, we've compiled our top tips and lessons in the form of email marketing best practices to ensure you stay at the top of your email game -

- 1.1 Create multiple opportunities for email sign ups
- 1.2 Build an email preference center
- 1.3 Check for compliance
- 1.4 Re-engage the unengaged
- 1.5 Build Strong CTA
- 1.6 Dedicated IP address
- 1.7 Personalize the content



# 1.1: Create Multiple Opportunities for Email sign ups

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Promote your email sign-up on your website, blog, landing pages, webinars, “thank you” pages (after users have filled out a form), as well as at any live events. Most importantly, communicate what they are signing up for when they submit their email address. Building your subscriber lists the right way will ensure that email engagement remains high and your emails get in front of the eyes that matter.



**Embed a data capture form instead of a link to a signup page.** A link to your signup page means clicking away from the main site, inputting personal info, and confirming. These multiple steps add up, as every extra click decreases your chance of fresh signups. Instead, make it as easy as possible and put the data capture form right on your page, be it in a sidebar, header, or footer.

**Add a newsletter signup option to the comment box.** Many commenting sections require that users input their email address in order to add a comment (done mainly to prevent spam). Since they're already adding their email, why not add a “signup for our newsletter” checkbox alongside it? Any place where users are already inserting their email address is a great opportunity to add a subscriber checkbox to opt into your email list.

**Add signup options to your social media accounts.** Some social media sites make it easy to add a newsletter signup option on your social network page. Facebook has numerous third-party apps that let you add custom tab options, such as an email signup!

**Make gated videos -** While you are promoting small product videos through multiple social channels, you can make your content little interactive. You can collect the details by asking questions or put a signup option while streaming a particular video.

Everyone knows the old saying – the more email subscribers you have, the better you feel, so get folks to signup, and give them a good deal!

# 1.2: Build an email preference center

Email preference centers are used as a way for customers to manage their emails by giving them a choice of what they subscribe to and how often they receive emails. Having a preference center for your recipients is so important because it gives them an option. Instead of your customers thinking that the only way to reduce the number of emails they receive, or to change the content of their emails is to unsubscribe, they are given the choice.

This will still leave room for marketing opportunities and they receive the content they're interested in, which is another win-win.



***"54% of respondents unsubscribed from emails because the emails came too frequently and 49% of respondents unsubscribed because the content became repetitive or boring over time."*** -Hubspot

Preference centers are a way to avoid violating this law and can also give you a deeper view of who your customers are. However, it's difficult for many companies to implement them. Creating a preference center is much more complex than creating a list of questions, and if that's all you do, chances are your preference centers will not produce the results that you are hoping for.



# 1.3: Check for compliance

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## GDPR: Protecting EU consumer data

GDPR, which imposes strict data protection within the European Union and limits the export of personal data outside of it, goes into effect on May 25. This is important news for email marketers who do business in the EU, even if they are not based in a member country.

1. Create different GDPR email opt-in campaigns for each tagged group/segment
2. Creating valid reasons WHY your prospects should opt-in is going to be imperative
3. Split test the campaign creative/messaging and format into segments based on tag and vertical/niche filters
4. Add as much personalization within the email as possible
5. Design an opt-in message which must include links to your privacy and cookie policies
6. Optimise your emails for mobile (54% of emails are opened on mobile devices)
7. Create a simple HTML opt-in box/button, which integrates into the body of all outbound emails
8. You will also need to add an unsubscribe link in your emails

### Like any email campaign, split testing is key.

1. Develop at least two variations to test and iterate on the most successful version for follow up Permission Passing Campaigns.
2. Segment your list and send one version to each segment
3. Things to test in an A/B split test include - email formats, subject lines and the general tone and content of the messaging.
4. For optimal results, only test one difference at a time. This will enable you to discern whether or not the element that has changed from one version to the other has been effective
5. Depending on how large a database you have split the test into groups of 200-500.
6. Analyse 'open rates', 'click-throughs' and ultimate opt-ins
7. Send the best performing Variation to the bulk of your list, or run a few more Split Tests on smaller segments until you feel confident you've struck on the winning formula

## CAN-SPAM: Keeping inboxes free of unwanted messages

Consumer's don't like SPAM. Email marketers don't want to be labeled as "spammers." Viewed in the light of those statements, compliance with CAN-SPAM is a win for both parties.

# 1.3: Check for compliance

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Here are seven easy ways to make sure you aren't spamming:

1. Provide an unsubscribe option.
2. Honor opt-outs within 10 business days.
3. Use legitimate "from" email addresses.
4. Don't use deceitful subject lines or headers.
5. Display your mailing address.
6. The message should contain at least one sentence.
7. Monitor your messaging (especially if you contract this out).

# 1.4: Re-engage the unengaged

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**Define what an unengaged recipient is to your company** - With that in mind, segment out anyone who has not opened your email for the past 90 days or 10+ campaigns.

**Figure out the ideal time to message them** - Don't forget that your subscribers are human; insert yourself into your consumers' minds and think of when they most likely will want to engage with you.

**Decide if you will silently let these unengaged customers leave your lists**, or if you will send them a final permission pass or win back reminder, asking them if they would like to continue to receive mail from you.

**Collect and analyze consumer engagement data** - Watch your engagement, deliverability, and list integrity improve.

**Remove the fluff** - At the end of the day, if your attempts at re-engaging a subscriber haven't worked, the best choice is simply to let them go. You'll save money by sending out fewer emails.





# 1.5: Build Strong CTA

Call-to-Actions (CTA) are often the most neglected, but most critical piece of content marketing. As a prime email engagement tool, your CTA determines if your email drives a response. Whether it be to make a purchase, download a whitepaper, or share your content, your CTA has one responsibility— to generate a click.

## Use action-oriented text

They're called "calls to action", so be sure to use striking, actionable text to draw readers in. Skip boring words (like submit, enter, and even click here) in favor of more compelling verbs (e.g., get, read, and try), and couple those with text relating to your specific offer. Here are some examples:

1. Read the eBook.
2. Reserve your spot.
3. Download the whitepaper.

## Make your button text large and legible

Your call to action button text should be large enough to read easily, but not large enough to be considered obnoxious.

Users often have a distaste – conscious or subconscious – for threateningly large lettering. So be sure your button text is big enough to draw attention, but don't go overboard.

## Keep it short

We've already mentioned including large, action-oriented text, so this one seems like a no-brainer. If you've got large, actionable text, you'll need to keep the copy short. Two or three words is best but no more than five or six. words is best but no more than five or six.

## Try using the first person

Unbounce shared a study showing that changing button text from the second person ("Start your free trial") to the first person ("Start my free trial") resulted in a 90% increase in clicks. Those results are dependent on products and personality, but numbers like those certainly warrant a test.

So go for it. Try changing your CTA button to the first person – Reserve my spot! Get my eBook!



# 1.5: Build Strong CTA

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## Create urgency

Including a sense of urgency in your call to action buttons helps garner those high click-through rates. Even just adding the word “now” builds some urgency – “Don’t just do it: do it now”. Here are some examples of button text with extra urgency.

1. Start Today!
2. RSVP now (only 8 spots left!)
3. Get it now

## Keep it above the fold

You’ll want to make sure to have a call to action button near the top of your email so users never miss it. It increases the scanability of your emails and calls attention to your main message or offer.

Vital information – like your CTA – should always be above the fold.

# 1.6: Dedicated IP address

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A dedicated IP address is your own private IP and is associated with your website alone. A dedicated email marketing server gives you the freedom and resources to scale your campaigns at any time. If your sender reputation is vital to your business and if you want to ensure email deliverability, then you should consider getting a dedicated IP address.



Dedicated IPs are ideal for companies that send a lot of email on a regular basis, for example, more than 100 thousand messages a week. In addition, because you're the sole influence on your sender reputation, you need to be confident that your email list is fully permission-based and engaged. If you have higher than average hard bounce rates (3% or above) or irregular sending volumes, you might do better on a shared IP. The good news is most email service providers can talk through these options with you and help you decide what's best for your company.

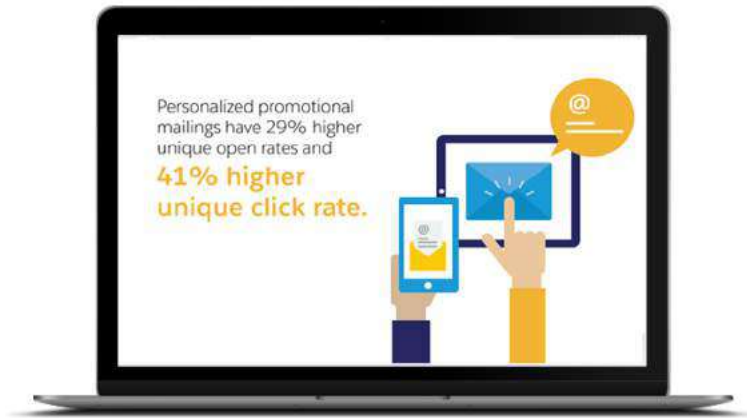


# 1.7: Personalize the content

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According to a survey, the best way to improve email personalization is through using email list segmentation. While many marketers feel that email personalization can be challenging, having the right marketing tools in place will allow you to automate email campaigns in a segmented and personalized way.

Creating different segmented lists enable you to develop dynamic content for each target audience you want to reach. Different contacts need different things depending on a number of factors.



Collecting relevant data about your subscribers is the first step to segmenting relevant email lists and obtaining quality contacts. One of the best ways to do this is through your signup forms when someone wants to receive newsletters or learn more about your company.

You can take the personalization to the next level by using predictive intelligence - and tailor offerings and communications based on past interactions & activities. Social data is one source of providing this predictive analysis, particularly social data that is structured. Predictive personalization is a much more recent means of personalization and can be used well to augment current personalization offerings.

[>>>Get Started with Marketing Automation Support & Services\( MASS\)<<<](#)

If you're interested in putting all of these tips into practice, check out our full-featured marketing email service, Marketing Campaigns. With a flexible workflow, powerful list segmentation, and actionable analytics, Marketing Campaigns helps you build meaningful relationships with your recipients at an affordable price.

# 2: Summary

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**Email isn't about selling.** Receiving marketing materials is a side effect of our dependence on email.

Despite all you've heard about email as a channel, it's just a platform for communication. It's a great place to learn about what your leads and customers want and provide helpful cues.

Hold yourself to the highest standard when it comes to sending marketing emails. Focus on identifying pain points in the customer lifecycle and using email as an extension of your product or service.

The more helpful you are, the more you'll be rewarded.

Email is an incredibly efficient way to market to your audience. Unlike the visitors who wander onto your site from search engine traffic, your email list is filled with subscribers who intentionally opted-in to hear from you on a regular basis.

Don't get caught up in a numbers game. Whether your email list contains 10 people or 10,000, you can launch a successful email marketing campaign.

# 3: Best Practices Checklist

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## Marketing and Transactional Email Best Practices Checklist:

- ✓ Customize the "From" line.
- ✓ Attractive and short (60 Characters) subject lines.
- ✓ Address readers by the name.
- ✓ Branding of the company.
- ✓ Personalization of content.
- ✓ Test the content.
- ✓ Deliver a strong call to action.
- ✓ Check for the version (HTML and plain text emails).
- ✓ Make it easy to unsubscribe.
- ✓ Pre-populate customer information.
- ✓ Disclose the location of the sender.
- ✓ Personalized landing page and "thank you" page.
- ✓ Check your links to ensure they're working and being tracked appropriately.
- ✓ Confirm that no images are broken and ALT text is in place.
- ✓ Verify that calls-to-action are easy to identify and interact with.
- ✓ Ensure your message renders well across mobile, desktop, and webmail environments.
- ✓ Run a Spam Filter Test to ensure email authentication records are in place, and get a reputation check of your IP addresses and domain names .