



## Email Marketing Best Practices

The design and layout of your emails are critical to pulling your reader through the email and motivating them to take action. Your email marketing communications are also a key brand touch point of your company and should directly reinforce your company's brand personality and essence. We highly recommend that you utilize the services of a designer experienced in the email marketing environment.

Overall, a well-designed email campaign is easy to read, it's simply designed, it's scannable, and it's professional looking. Next to that it should be inviting and professional, represent your company, and show readers that you value them and appreciate the time they are taking to read your message.

### General Best Practices:

- *Think of E-mails like a billboard that people read at 60 miles per hour.* How can you make sure they are getting the message clearly?
- *People won't read an email at all if it is not relevant to them.* Targeted E-mails (segmented lists) perform better than email blasts.
- *How does your message communicate visually?* People don't read every word of an email. (Do you?)
- *What do readers get from reading your message?* Define the value much like you would a positioning statement and use it to drive your content, creative, frequency and segmentation strategies.
- *Set your messaging goals.* How will you measure success?
- *Provide contact information.* Allow respondents to get in touch with you directly. Give them multiple ways to reach you to ask questions, send comments or alert you to a problem.
- Clean design
  - Keep the width of your email design within 600px.
  - Limit the number of fonts you use as a means of keeping the communication easy to read.
  - Use color sparingly for emphasis.
  - Use white space as a resting place for your eye. It's a part of the design and it helps the reader. If your email is completely filled, it's just visual noise.
  - Make sure your images and copy complement each other, that they are related and that the image supports your message.
  - Link to rich media and interactive forms.

Subject lines: Many readers determine if they are going to open an email based exclusively on the subject line.

- Short – 6 words or less (between 40-60 characters) is ideal. When your E-mail arrives you generally have about a second to catch the reader's attention. After that they will delete the E-mail or ignore it.
- Specify a benefit that the subscriber can expect by reading your E-mail.
- Inform and intrigue the reader. Provide actionable information that accurately represents the message's major content

Preview Panes: Design for the preview pane by aligning critical information to the left.

- Make sure your logo and critical content are visible within the preview pane without scrolling through the entire email.
- Nearly 69% of at-work email users typically view emails in their preview panes (*MarketingSherpa 2007*).

### Images:

- Consider your images blocked by default. Readers must opt-in on each email to display the images (though some may allow readers to set their preference).
- Make sure your email design still gets the point across even when images are not displayed.
- To avoid completely losing the message on an image when images are blocked, fill out the ALT attribute for each of your images.
- Always add the height and width to the image to ensure that the blank placeholder image doesn't throw your design out.
- Don't design HTML emails that are nothing but one big image. Recipients won't see anything (and spam filters can't read any content, so they'll assume it's spam).

Your success is our success! Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have.