

ULTIMATE
GUIDE TO
EMAIL
MARKETING



This isn't your average email marketing 101 guide.

It's a playbook of best practises we've learned from being in the email industry for the past 3 years, and it's everything we think you need to know to be an effective email marketer. You ready?



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Deliverability

Deliverability can make or break your email strategy - it affects whether your customers see your emails. The key to healthy deliverability is simple: continuously send good emails to people who want to see and engage with them. Let's break down why:

“Your sender reputation dictates deliverability.

Your sender reputation dictates deliverability. This is what ISPs like Gmail and Outlook keep track of overtime to decide whether they'll filter your emails to the inbox or spam. Your sender reputation is built on an IP and domain level, and is based on your sending frequency and subscriber engagement. To ISPs, the ideal sender is one that sends fairly frequently, but more importantly, one whose emails are consistently engaged with.

Tip: We recommend isolating different types of email on unique subdomains, especially if your brand sends a high volume of email. This eliminates the risk of a mistake getting your main domain blacklisted by ISPs, and ensures the deliverability of your marketing emails (promotions, new

releases, etc.) don't hinder that of your transactional emails (think: order receipts, shipping notifications, password resets).

To build a strong sender reputation, you need to send good emails, all of the time, to people who care. That's why it's best practise to **think about deliverability as a holistic part of your email strategy** - everything from segmenting your list to the design of your emails impacts it.

Key Takeaways

For healthy email deliverability

- Build a strong sender reputation by sending frequent emails that receive high engagement
- Eliminate risk by separating out your reputation on subdomains

Segmentation

Tailoring your email experience by sending targeted and relevant emails will not only help you build a stronger sender reputation, it will help transform your subscribers into long-term customers. No matter the industry you're in, you should think about the basis of your segmentation strategy in terms of subscriber engagement levels.

Actives

Your most active subscribers are those who continuously engage with your emails. They're who you want to be sending your core campaigns to, because they've expressed an interest in hearing from you and are the most likely to open and click your emails.

New Subscribers

You want to treat new subscribers differently - this is your chance to educate them about your brand, and it's your best time to get them to engage and convert. Think: sending a welcome discount code or an email highlighting your best selling products.

At Risk

When your subscribers haven't opened an email recently,

chances are they'll need a reason to re-engage with your brand. Your typical email campaigns won't work to win back this group - they've already been un-engaged for some time. Consider sending an exclusive deal they can't pass up.

Inactives

Subscribers who haven't engaged in a while are likely to never engage again. You'll want to set an intentional strategy to win back contacts in this segment, because they'll fully lose interest if you send them an irrelevant email.

Invalid

These are contacts who have unsubscribed from your email list or have been marked as invalid (bounced, undeliverable). You never want to email this segment.

In addition to segmenting by engagement levels, you can segment based on industry:

Ecommerce

Treat your customers differently based on their purchase behaviour. Create segments for your high value customers and those who only buy when there's a sale. You should also segment based on behaviour, like cart or browse abandonment, so you can recover lost revenue when the timing is right.

Events

Segment your attendees by demographics and interests. Data like location, music preference, and purchase tier (think: VIP or GA buyers) helps you send more targeted email, so you aren't sending irrelevant events to your whole list.

Key Takeaways

For smart segmentation

- Your email sending strategy should be based on subscriber engagement - sending core campaigns to active subscribers, and intentionally designing campaigns for the other engagement segments
- You should also segment based on your industry, whether that means purchase behaviour or preferences

Email Design

Your emails should be designed with a goal in mind, whether that's to educate subscribers about your brand or to get them to click and make a purchase. Having a goal will help you create visuals and write copy that drive engagement, while preventing you from falling into the trap of 'just updating your subscribers'. Remember that your emails should always align with your brand, so that you build a consistent brand experience for your subscribers.

Here are a few best practises to think about:

Subject Lines

Your subject line is the first thing subscribers see, and it's your one chance to convince them to open your email. We recommend keeping your subject line less than 50 characters so that it doesn't get clipped for subscribers reading on mobile. Don't be afraid to use emojis! They can help your email stand out amidst text in the inbox - just be strategic so you don't accidentally get mistaken for spam.

Clear and Concise CTAs

Every email should have at least one CTA - remember your

goal is to engage subscribers and get them to click through. This could mean linking to a cart they recently abandoned, or driving them to click and claim a promo code. These buttons should be large enough that they stand out in your email. We recommend using only 1 to 2 CTAs (anything more deludes the purpose of your email and can be overwhelming).

Captivating Visuals

Research shows that imagery increases a person's willingness to read by 80%. Using photos or, even better, interactive content like GIFs, will capture your subscribers' attention, help you stand out from competitors' emails, and increase engagement.

Optimize for Mobile

Last year, Litmus' trend report found that 46% of all emails were opened on mobile. We expect this number to continue increasing. Optimizing for mobile is often an afterthought for marketers, but as more subscribers check their email on their phones, you need to make sure your emails don't look broken. A poorly formatted email is an easy way to lose a subscriber's trust and decrease their long-term engagement with your brand.

Design for Your Segments

There's no point in building a segmentation strategy if you

don't design emails differently for each segment. This looks different for every brand, but the key is that you should at least tweak content and copy for each segment. You can use the same template, but think: what messaging will most likely get this segment to open and engage?

Key Takeaways

For good email design

- Your emails should always have a CTA to help subscribers accomplish your email's goal, whether that's to learn more or complete a purchase
- Keep your design (subject line, visuals, and copy) focused on achieving your email's goal to keep conversion high

Email Automation

If you were to remember only one thing from this guide, it's this: **you absolutely need to have automations set up.** They're the easiest way to engage your subscribers at every step of the customer journey, without you having to worry about sending emails at the right time.

Automations send emails based off triggers (usually an action, like signing up or abandoning a cart) to better engage customers. Because they're unique to each customer's actions, they're more personalized, and generate 320% more revenue than non-automated emails. Let's dive into the types of automations you need to know:

Automations for Every Industry

Welcome

Welcome emails do just that - welcome new subscribers to your email list. They get 3x more opens, clicks and revenue per email compared to regular promotional email campaigns, making them a must-have automation. Brands typically set up a series of welcome emails to educate subscribers, share their values, and often include a discount code to encourage a purchase.

Thank You

Showing subscribers your appreciation will go a long way in building your brand relationship with them. A personal note from your founder can have a lasting impact.

Winback

You want to design winback automations to re-engage subscribers who fall into your at-risk and inactive segments. The goal of these campaigns is to peak the interest of subscribers who have not engaged in a while again - try using enticing copy or an offer that your subscribers can't pass up.

Automations for Selling Stuff

Abandoned cart

Marketers lose about two to four trillion a year from abandoned carts - that's a lot of revenue you could recover with a simple email journey. These emails trigger when a customer adds products to their cart but doesn't complete their purchase.

Browse abandonment

The sister to the abandoned cart email automation we all know and love - browse abandonment emails trigger when customers browse a particular item without adding it to their cart. Approximately 39% of online shoppers browse without

ever adding an item to their cart or following through with their purchase - that's a big chunk of your customers you could be recovering revenue from). These automations are a powerful way to remind customers of products they're interested in—with an 11% average conversion rate, it's a no brainer to recover revenue you'd otherwise lose.

Thank new customers

It's important to show customers you care, especially when they've taken the leap and made their first purchase with you. You can set up an automation to send customers a thank you as soon as they make their first order. Post-purchase thank you emails can increase customer retention by 10%.

Key Takeaways

For automations you need to set up

- You can't beat the relevant timing of automations - they're must-haves to actively engage customers throughout their journey with your brand.
- Take the time to set up a good set of automations that work for your brand. Once they've been tested and tweaked, they'll run worry free.

Reporting

A good email strategy constantly evolves based on past performance. Knowing what metrics to look for helps you understand your subscribers and makes it easier for you to send engaging emails. Here are metrics you should keep an eye on:

Engagement segment performance

Watch how subscribers are moving in and out of your engagement segments for insight into which campaigns are effective, and which need some work. For example, if your subscribers often move from the active segment to at-risk, but are easily won back with your winback email, you may want to rethink your core email campaigns. All of your subscribers were interested in your brand at some point, but if they don't receive what they're looking for from you, you'll see them slipping into inactives.

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Learn which CTAs work best with link click reporting

When talking about email design, we mentioned how important CTAs are for driving your email's goals. Use link click reporting to see what CTAs your customers click on to design future emails for better engagement. Ask yourself questions like what button copy drove the most clicks? and what CTA placement lead to the highest conversion?

See which campaigns perform best

You should know what types of marketing emails resonate best with your subscribers, in both your campaigns and automations. Whether it's time-sensitive promotions, new arrivals, or a specific email in your browse abandonment automation, pinpointing your star campaigns will help you shape your email strategy to drive more revenue.

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Declining engagement means rethinking your strategy

If you're seeing a steady decline in your open and click rates, there's a good chance you need to rethink the types of emails you're sending. Your content may no longer be what your subscribers are looking for, or your email design may be ineffective.

Key Takeaways

For metrics you need to know

- Knowing how your campaigns and automations are performing is helpful from a benchmarking perspective, but what really makes reporting effective is when you use the insights gained to improve your email strategy
- Don't be afraid to find what's working, acknowledge it, and try recycling those tactics to improve engagement

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