ULTIMATE GUIDE TO EMAIL AUTOMATIONS

Everything you need to know to create automations that increase revenue while you sleep.

Investing a little bit of time to craft personalized, automated emails that send at just the right time are a key part of increasing customer engagement. This increased engagement all-around leads to happier customers, and, in turn, an increase in your bottom line. Bonus: once you take the time to set up automations, they run themselves! This guide breaks down each automation you need, giving you practical tips and the knowledge you need to implement email automations for your brand. Let's dive in.

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The Case for Automations

What's an email automation? It's simple.

Any email that automatically sends based on a trigger. The trigger can be anything, from someone signing up for your list or abandoning a cart, to entering a segment or not purchasing for a specific length of time. Once you set up email automations, a subscriber who fits the bill for any of these triggers will receive an email. If you want to get a little more complex, you can set a delay before the email sends. You can then add more delays, and more email steps, to create a high converting email journey.

Before we get ahead of ourselves – we're here to explain why you definitely need to consider, and ultimately, implement email automations:

Why automate?

We often hear that setting up email automations is intimidating, so we're here to blow away the smoke and take down the mirrors. In truth, setting up email automations isn't so different from sending an email campaign. And automations come with a huge plus – they bring in more

value over time because they're constantly running in the background.

Like a manual email campaign, it's important to know who you want to send to and what content they'll find the most engaging. From there, all you need to do is write your subject line, preview text, body copy, and design your template. Then set the journey to trigger when the email will be the most relevant to recipients.

> " Automated emails drive 320% more revenue per email than regular promotional emails. Plus, they run while you sleep, and do all the work.

Here's the kicker: automated emails drive 320% more revenue per email than regular promotional emails. The beauty of an email automation is the freedom you have after setting one up – all you need to do is check in with reporting and occasionally make small optimizations. Email automations run while you sleep: they're timely, they're engaging, and they work.

Automations can improve deliverability

Have you thought of how only sending larger email campaigns can have a negative impact on your overall email deliverability?

Automations let you send a smaller amount of email volume over your domain regularly. This is a great signal to ISPs that you aren't a spammer, as typical spam behavior is sporadically sending high volume email campaigns with ower engagement. Another bonus, email automations are usually triggered on subscriber actions (like signing up for a newsletter or abandoning a cart), so they typically receive higher than average engagement.

When a subscriber opens your email or clicks a link, that sends a message to their Internet Service Provider (ISP) like Gmail or Outlook that you're sending relevant email, which means a higher chance of inbox vs. spam placement in the future.

That's why leveraging automations can be so powerful in your email strategy. They help you email customers at exactly the right moments when they're most likely to open and click your emails.

Welcome Series

If you're still reading this, we're going to assume you're aboard the email automation train. Welcome! Welcome email automations prime your email for good deliverability and higher overall engagement, like we mentioned earlier. These automations trigger when subscribers first sign up for your email list, so recipients are a captive audience and ready to engage. They want to hear from you right away, with 74% of consumers expecting a welcome email when they subscribe to a brand's email list.

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Not only are welcome email automations expected, they boost your engagement with three times more opens, clicks, and revenue per email compared to regular promotional email campaigns. There's an average of 91% opens on welcome emails, making them a great way to start your brand's relationship with a new subscriber while improving your overall deliverability.

A single welcome email will give you a great foundation, but a welcome email series has more potential to engage subscribers long-term. Here's an example of a three-step welcome email series:

Email 1: Welcome to the list!

This first email can be sent as soon as the subscriber signs up. It's a great opportunity to share more about your brand and what subscribers can expect from your emails, whether that's first access to sales or insider info.

Keep your first email concise with a clear CTA to drive engagement. Include a "Confirm Your Subscription" button that links back to your website to increase engagement on this email and send the signal to ISPs that subscribers want to receive future emails from you in their inboxes.

Email 2: How we stand out

This email can be sent one week after your welcome email. Your brand has a lot to offer–it's yours, and it's unique. Use the second email in your welcome series to show subscribers why they should choose you over a competitor. What's your company's mission? What are your competitive advantages? This email is a chance for subscribers to connect with the story and persona behind your brand.

Email 3: See what customers are saying

This email can be sent two weeks after your welcome email. Sharing user-generated content (UGC) and reviews from customers are some of the most compelling ways to show how great your products are. Even better, it encourages other customers to share your brand online. Use the third email in your welcome series to convince subscribers who are on the fence about why they should purchase from your brand.

With a little bit of effort, your welcome series will have subscribers feeling fully acquainted with your brand. Focus on clear information and CTAs for each email to start your sender reputation with each individual subscriber off on the right foot.

New Customer Thank You Series

Let's get real for a second—new competition for your brand is popping up every day, and consumers are always looking for reasons they should choose one brand over another. Giving customers a reason to stay loyal is great for business, with repeat customers being 8% of the average store's base but accounting for 40% of its revenue! You definitely want to encourage new customers to stick around.

One of the easiest ways to up your repeat customers is by saying thanks. Think of the last time you received a 'thank you for purchasing' email from a brand—it probably made an impact!

Here's an example of simple a new customer thank you email series:

Email 1: You mean a lot to us!

This email can be sent anywhere from one hour to one day after a customer makes their first purchase. It's your opportunity to thank customers and let them know how

important they are to your business. Let them know that they're what keeps you going and ask them for feedback.

Email 2: Free shipping, on us

This email can be sent two weeks after a customer makes their first purchase. To incentivize further purchases, offer free shipping on their next purchase or share information about your referral program.

Email 3: 15% off for our new favorite customer

This email can be sent four weeks after a customer makes their first purchase. Make your customers feel cared for and get them ready to make their next purchase from you with a coupon for 15% off.

Setting up a new customer thank you email automation is one of the best ways to add a personal feel to your email marketing and help you differentiate yourself from other similar brands. Because honestly, nothing makes customers feel appreciated more than a little thank you! Making a point of letting customers know how much you care takes a little effort, but definitely doesn't go unnoticed.

Abandoned Cart Series

Over the past few years, abandoned cart rates have steadily risen, with an average of 75% carts abandoned in 2018. That's a lot of potential revenue lost (two to four trillion dollars a year!) that you can recover with a simple abandoned cart email automation.

> " Abandoned cart rates have steadily risen, with an average of 75% carts abandoned in 2018. That's two to four trillion dollars a year marketers could potentially recover by leveraging abandoned cart automations.

Abandoned cart automations are sent when a subscriber adds a product to their cart without completing their purchase. With an average open rate of 43%, click-through rate of 20%, and conversion rate of 10%, abandoned cart automations are a prime example of how you can leverage automations to boost engagement while improving deliverability.

To optimize for conversion, you can create an abandoned cart email series, where your automation sends multiple

emails over a period of time. Setting up a three-step automation has been proven to bring in 69% more revenue than a single-step abandoned cart automation.

Here's an example of a three-step abandoned cart email series:

Email 1: You left something in your cart!

This email can be sent three hours after a customer abandons their cart. It can be a simple reminder that includes the items the customer abandoned. Most ESPs will have template blocks that let you dynamically insert the abandoned items that a specific subscriber left in their cart. You can also include a cart recovery URL that will take the recipient right back to their cart for convenient check out.

Email 2: Still not sure? Check out these reviews

Send the second step in your abandoned cart series one week later with social proof in the form of reviews or UGC that shows customers using your product. If a subscriber is on the fence, hearing from other customers can be the best way to convince them to make a purchase. This email is also a great place to reiterate quality guarantees, warranties, or free returns.

Email 3: Complete your purchase for 15% off!

This third email can be sent two weeks after the subscriber abandoned their cart if they still haven't made a purchase. Offering a discount or other incentive to purchase (like free shipping) is an effective way to get subscribers to take the plunge and finally complete their purchase.

Try setting up a one-step abandoned cart email to test out what works well from your brand. Once you feel the first step is performing well, play around with adding subsequent steps that include further incentive to purchase!

Browse Abandonment Series

The sister to the abandoned cart email, browse abandonment emails are sent when a subscriber browses your store without adding items to their cart or making a purchase. They're not brought up as often, but browse abandonment emails are a powerful tool for recovering revenue that otherwise would be lost.

People who browse without making a purchase account for an average of 39% of your customers, whereas only 12% add products to their cart. To put it another way, you're losing out on potential revenue from 27% of your customers by not setting up a browse abandonment email!

To no one's surprise, browse abandonment emails average great engagement: a 37% open rate, a 14% click-to-open rate, and a 12% conversion rate. For every 1,000 visitors that leave your store, you could be making an additional six sales by sending a browse abandonment email.

Why wait when you could be recovering sales? Here's an example of a two-step browse abandonment email series:

Email 1: You have great taste

This email can be sent one day after the subscriber browsed without making a purchase. Have fun with the subject line– being a little cheeky is better than coming off creepy! In this email, you can include some of the items the subscriber was looking at with a browse abandonment block from your ESP. You can also include a section of other recommended products, for example, your best sellers.

Email 2: An offer for what you were eyeing

If the subscriber doesn't bite after receiving your first email, you can send them a second email one week later. This email can include an incentive to purchase, like a discount code or free shipping. Include a link to relevant items and reiterate any value adds you offer, like free returns or a lifetime warranty.

Browse abandonment emails are an easy way to remind online shoppers that they were checking out your store. Having fun with subject lines and including incentives to purchase are great ways to solidify your brand in a customer's mind while also converting sales that would otherwise be lost.

Customer Winback Series

Surprise: an average of 66% of email lists are inactive. Though it's easy to treat these inactive subscribers like everyone else on your list, continuing to send marketing emails to them will damage your deliverability. But don't say goodbye just yet! Winback emails can help you re-engage past customers, saving you time and money.

If a subscriber has received 10+ emails from you without opening any of them, the chances that they'll engage in the future are slim. Enter winback email automations: 45% of subscribers who receive a winback opening a subsequent message. That's 45% of your unengaged subscribers (that are currently negatively affecting your deliverability) that could be brought back with a relevant email.

You can trigger your winback email on the last time a purchase was made (e.g. 90 days) or after a certain level of inactivity (e.g. after a customer hasn't opened 10 emails in a row).

Here's an example of a three-step customer winback email series:

Email 1: We miss you!

This first email can be sent as soon as a subscriber is deemed inactive. The content can be pretty simple–remind the subscriber why they may have subscribed in the first place. Do you send behind-the-scenes info about your brand? First looks at new arrivals? A heads-up on sales? A winback email is the perfect place to reiterate what you have to offer, and to let past customers know you want them back!

If you have a preference center where subscribers can specifically choose what you email them, this is a good time to link it. Let subscribers choose to receive emails less frequently or only subscribe to the lists they care about.

Email 2: Would 20% off win you back?

This second email can be sent anywhere from one week to three months after the first one, depending on your brand and email cadence. Some of your inactive subscribers may only purchase from you when there's a sale or discount available. Since retaining a past customer is five times **less** expensive than converting a new one, it's worth adding a meaningful discount here.

Email 3: Is this goodbye?

This email can be sent anywhere from one week to three months after the second, depending on your brand and email sending cadence. It's up to you what you include in this email. You could offer a higher discount or add messaging along the lines of "Do you still want to hear from us?" with an explicit CTA to unsubscribe.

Don't be afraid to let go of inactive subscribers here. Unengaged recipients have stopped purchasing from you, and if you continue to send to them, you'll end up in the spam folder and further damage your deliverability to the subscribers who actively engage with your emails. If they don't open or click this third email, it's a good idea to move them into a segment that you no longer email or explicitly unsubscribe them in your CRM.

Winback email automations are one of the most powerful automations in this list–they take care of winning back inactive customers for you, while automatically churning your list so you don't damage your deliverability. While it can feel like a loss to say goodbye to unengaged subscribers after they've gone through your winback with no response, think of it as a positive for your brand. Now you can spend more time engaging new subscribers who are excited about what you have to offer, while also taking care of your active, engaged customers.

Considerations and Next Steps

Running email marketing for a brand is no joke. We know you have a million other things to consider in your day-to-day, from email campaigns, to larger strategy, to other facets of digital marketing. To lend you a hand, we've included some things to think about while setting up automations.

1. Transactional emails

Take an inventory of the transactional emails you send, whether they're from your ecommerce platform or sent internally. Order confirmations, shipping and delivery notices, or emails asking for reviews all have the possibility of colliding with your email automations. Consider these when setting the delays for your automations.

For example, if you know a customer will receive an order confirmation within one hour of purchase, you can delay your new customer thank you email to send anywhere from two hours to one day after their purchase, depending on how often you feel comfortable sending emails.

2. Mixed messages

You may also have subscribers entering multiple email flows at once. A subscriber could receive promotional emails at the same time they've signed up for one of your lists. It's up to you whether or not you send other marketing emails to new subscribers entering a welcome series or inactive subscribers entering a winback series. You know what's on par for your brand, so you have full control of what you send!

3. Bandwidth

Creating multiple emails for each automation can definitely seem intimidating at first. If you don't have the bandwidth to create that many emails or the time to get them all approved, don't be afraid to test out one step for each automation. After seeing how they perform, you can build out the rest of the series with what you've learned!

Next Steps

Once your email automations are officially running, keep an eye on them over the first few weeks to see how subscribers are engaging and where you can optimize. If you've built a full series, there could be a specific step that outperforms the rest, or there could be one that's underperforming. These factors are unique to every brand, so keep your eyes open

and don't be afraid to make updates whenever they feel right. You know your audience best!

Aside from setup and these tweaks, your automations will run smoothly by themselves. Because they're triggered by subscriber action or inaction, you never have to worry about them sending at the wrong time, being irrelevant or unengaging. It's guaranteed that taking the initial time to set up a suite of email automations will pay off. Not only does regularly sending smaller amounts of relevant email drastically improve overall deliverability–your customers will be nurtured at the right points in time, and ultimately be encouraged to buy more and more often!

The Impact of Automation
An Infographic

Automated emails are shown to **drive 320% more revenue per email than other promotional emails**. From welcome to winback emails, here's why you should leverage automations in your email strategy.

✉ WELCOME EMAILS

3x more opens, clicks, and revenue
per email compared to regular promotional email campaigns

91% average open rate
making welcome emails the highest engaged email of all marketing emails for brands

74% of consumers expect one
right when they subscribe to a list

💬 NEW CUSTOMER THANK YOU

Repeat customers are responsible for 40% of the average ecommerce store's revenue

which, on average, is created by only 8% of its customers

🛒 ABANDONED CART EMAILS

2 to 4 trillion dollars of revenue

is lost every year from abandoned carts

43% average open rate

20% average click rate

3-step abandoned cart automations bring in 69% more revenue

compared to a single-step abandoned cart automation

10% average conversion rate

👁 BROWSE ABANDONMENT EMAILS

an average of
39% of your customers
browse without making a purchase

37% average open rate

12% average conversion rate

for every 1,000 visitors that leave your store, you could
make an additional 6 sales
by sending a browse abandonment email

♥ WINBACK EMAILS

it costs 5x more to get a new customer than to retain one

45% of subscribers open a subsequent message
when they receive a winback campaign

Interested in how Hive can help
power your email automations?

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so you can sell more stuff.