



Five Email Marketing Mistakes to Avoid

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Spam now accounts for over 90 percent of all e-mail traffic, according to a report released in 2009 from security vendor Symantec. This means that 9 out of every 10 e-mails is junk. So if you are using email blasts as a Marketing tool, you have your work cut out for you.

Spam filters & Junk folders are getting more & more sophisticated and will catch & delete in their net all kinds of emails...yours included! Now if you consider that 69% of people will delete an email on the subject line alone, you better think it over before you send one more email with a poorly written subject line.

So although (almost) everyone understands how to use email it doesn't mean that is the same as understanding email marketing. Not even close. As you are thinking about how to improve your email marketing efforts, make sure that you aren't committing any of these five mistakes.

1. A bad subject line will kill you email in its track

Your emails will be deleted, 69% of the time, based on the subject line alone. Use no more than five words, avoid using marketing speak or sales speak, avoid the words "free" or "sale" or "save money", those words will usually have your email end up in the spam folder. Instead, start with "Here are...", "This is...", "About your...". Make it compelling!

2. Wrong time of the day

People sit in front of their computer, with their forefinger positioned on the trigger, ready to click on delete in a rapid motion. This always happens first thing in the morning, to delete the junk they received overnight. So overnight emails or first thing in the morning might just be about the worst time to blast. Try instead to blast between 10am & 3pm. Weekends might be a bad idea as well, unless you promote products or services that people use on the weekend (i.e. Hardware store, Entertainment, Garden supplies, etc), all others should avoid the weekend period.

3. Too many pictures or just a large picture

This is one of the classics. First, over 40% of people have images blocked by default, so the effectiveness of images is questionable at best. Your images should add to the text, not dominate. All your images should have a description, also called "ALT tag" by geeks. This way, if your image is blocked, at least they will see text describing what the image is about. A header and maybe a small image with the text is my recommendation

Email marketing is NOT a medium to blast Postcards or Flyers in jpeg. Those should be sent via mail. Email marketing is mostly text, it's quick and to the point.

4. Not Having an Unsubscribe Option

Not only is it the law that you have a clear way to let people unsubscribe from your list, but it is the fastest way to end up on blacklists. You probably don't want to make your unsubscribe option too fancy and exciting. If it is eye catching then you will probably have a lot of individuals unsubscribe. This doesn't mean that you can avoid the unsubscribe option though. Again, remember it is the law.

5. Too much text is a recipe for disaster

People don't read on the internet. There are plenty of studies that have been done to prove this fact. People mostly scan content, look for bullets and focus on keywords. The proper structure is to start with an opening paragraph with one or two sentences max, then few bullets, a call to action (i.e. "click here to learn more" or "call us at 800...") and a signature. That's it! Remember that with email marketing, less is more.

Marketing Takeaway

Bottom line, make it personal to them, but in a way that doesn't sound like a marketing email. So the idea is to get Sally interested by what she will get out of your products or services.

Steer clear of gimmicks like "Enticing Ideas: Sally, Did You Catch the Wave?" This didn't have anything to do with Sally even though it put her name in the subject line. It was clearly a marketing message. No action was required on her part. There was no sense of urgency or compelling reason to open it. In two seconds it hit the delete trigger. Gone without reading more than the subject line. Don't let that happen to your emails.



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