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Email Marketing Best Practices

By Brandon Milford

Permission-based Email Marketing is one of the most powerful ways to build your business. As a business owner you realize the importance of staying in front of your customers and prospects. By deploying a timely e-newsletter to touch base with your customers and prospects, you stay fresh in their minds, build credibility, and keep the communication channel open by eliciting product and/or service enquiries from your recipients. This will lead to repeat purchases and higher conversions. Below are a few pointers in ensuring that your permission-based email marketing campaign is a true asset to your company.

Building Your Lists

There are a number of ways to build your opt-in list of subscribers. Below I have compiled a list to help you get started.

1. If your business has a physical location ask visitors to fill out a card giving you permission to contact them via email with product/service updates.
2. Include a sign up form on your website. Most permission-based email marketing software programs will include a tool allowing you to create a sign up form. This allows you to easily capture the email addresses (and any additional information) from your website's visitors.
3. Always advertise your newsletter. For instance, include a short line on the back of your business card that reads "Receive Additional Tips and Industry News Each Month In Your Inbox. Sign up for our Newsletter at www.yourwebaddress.com". This will lead people to your website and into becoming a subscriber to your newsletter.
4. The greatest way to build your list is by concentrating on the quality of your newsletter. By releasing an informative newsletter that people find valuable they will share this information and the source, further growing your list of subscribers.

Providing information about your e-newsletter

Email Marketing Best Practices

It is important to inform your potential subscribers on how often they can expect to receive emails from your company and what type of information they can expect from these emails.

Quality Over Quantity

By writing quality content your recipients will look forward to receiving your e-newsletters and will look to them for knowledge in your industry. This will build further credibility for your company and encourage the recipients to forward the message to a friend. Sending your e-newsletters too frequently will annoy your subscribers and can lessen your credibility. From a design aspect, be sure that the newsletter is reader-friendly. Do not use Flash, brightly colored text, extra large font, or all caps. For an HTML based newsletter, create a header that coincides with your company's colors and/or message. Next, create a simple 1 or 2 pixel border along with a matching footer. As far as content, break down your message into nuggets of information. Remember, very few subscribers are going to read your

newsletter if it is the length of a novel. Break down your message into short paragraphs and use bulleted items to condense and stress important points.

Keeping your message out of the SPAM folder

The following items are critical in preventing your message from being blocked by SPAM filters:

1. Try to use font sizes that are smaller than +2 or +3.
2. Bolded, red font will also add to the likelihood that your message could be considered SPAM.
3. Use a Permission-based email marketing software that allows the sending of multi-part MIME messages. Simply put, this will allow you to send out both an HTML and text-only version of your e-newsletter. The software will detect whether the email client can accept HTML based messages, if not, the email client will accept the text-only version.
4. Avoid using all caps; especially for words such as "FREE"
5. Do not type out any currency denominations in the millions. Example: \$10,000,000.
6. Avoid using text such as "click below", "click here", "free money" etc...
7. Obviously, always be sure to include a Subject with your message as well. However, avoid using an exclamation mark or all caps in the subject.

Frequency of Sending

As a rule of thumb, always place yourself in your subscriber's shoes. Don't inundate them with so many newsletters that your message becomes "watered down" and loses all credibility. Again, always place quality over quantity. I hope these tips help you in your permission-based email marketing efforts. There is no more powerful way to convey your message as a company and build credibility

than with permission-based email marketing.

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3 Essential Tools for Email Marketers

By Jinger Jarrett

3 Essential Tools for Email Marketers by Jinger Jarrett

Marketing your business with email is an art.

It's very easy to get accused of spamming nowadays. Add to that the filters ISPs are using, and your message may not get through.

If you do it right, email marketing can become a very effective method of marketing your business.

Before you consider this method, there are three tools I consider absolutely crucial to your success.

1. Educate yourself.

Get accused of spamming and you could destroy your reputation forever.

Learn everything you can about email marketing and implement those strategies in your marketing campaign.

Here are two sites you can use to educate yourself about email marketing:

Email Results – <http://www.emailresults.com/> – This site offers a newsletter, a directory of lists, and plenty of articles.

Email Education – <http://www.emaileducation.com> – Also offers articles to help you learn how to use email to market your business. You'll also get information on the latest

trends in email marketing as well as the latest news.

2. Email Formatting Utility

Once you've written your email, you want to make sure it looks professional.

Check for spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. Make sure it is easy to read.

You can use this utility to format your emails to the right width. It's not perfect, but it will save you plenty of time because you can format your text at different widths. Overall, it does a very good job.

<http://www.jbmckee.com/formatit/index.htm>

3. Anti-Spam

Before you send your message out, you want to check to make sure it can get past the filters frequently used by ISPs.

There's a simple and easy way to check your message. SiteSell.com has created a new feature called Spam Check.

Basically, you can send a your email as a test message and find out how the filters rank it. Then, you can make changes to your email before sending it to your list.

<http://spamcheck.sitesell.com>

Email marketing is a time consuming process. Done right, it can be a very lucrative tool in your marketing arsenal. These tools will help you make your email marketing efforts more effective.



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