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**Top Ten Features of an Effective Email Signature**

**By Tara Kachaturoff, Executive Coach**

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Your email signature is more important than you might think. At first consideration, you might see your email signature in its traditional role - just your name - identifying you as the sender of an email. At its best, an email signature can play a strategic role in your marketing effort as yet another way to reach out and make connections with current and potential clients.

An email signature should be considered as a part of your branding initiative. Each component part, from your name to your address, from your website to the color and type of font you use, should be thought about and arranged appropriately to communicate who you are to the world. Everything should have a consistent look and feel. And, most importantly, it should contain a variety of ways to contact you. Make it easy on your email recipients. People are busy; when they need or want to contact you, make sure they can find the information quickly and effortlessly. Otherwise, you risk the possibility that they will close out your email thinking they will get back to it at a future time which ends up never materializing. Or even worse, they will contact someone else who has provided their information in a more useful presentation. Consider some of these features which make for an effective email signature and make sure yours passes the test.

**1. What's your name?**

Put your name first. Use your first and last name as people usually address you, using any nickname between the two, if appropriate. For example, one might write, Nicholas "Nick" Parker. Include any titles that you might use either before or after your name. You might want to include the initials of any professional designations that you have like CPA or CTM, which stand for Certified Public Accountant and Competent Toastmaster. Avoid putting initials that represent your masters or bachelor's degrees as these are names of degrees not professional designations and it makes you appear unprofessional. The only exception to this is if you have a PhD. Even with that designation, you can precede your name with Dr. and eliminate the PhD after your name. If you have a number of professional designations, only include the most relevant ones. Too many initials can detract from your name and make the presentation appear tacky. You might also want to include your email address directly below your name. While most people will merely respond to your email by hitting reply, others will want to

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click on an email link. And, sometimes, your email might be sent out under another name (alias), but any replies should be made specifically to you. In that case, it's important to make sure that recipients can contact you easily and directly.

### 2. Who do you work for?

Make sure you include your company name. It's amazing how many emails I receive that have a name and contact information, but they fail to list their company name. While I could search around for the company's name or figure it out from the email address, it's not always that straight forward or obvious. Don't make readers guess at who you represent or work for. People are busy and they can easily receive hundreds of emails per day. If you want them to know you, then make it easy by providing the information in your email signature.

### 3. Where are you from?

By all means, include an address, complete with a zip code. Even though we operate in this wonderful world of technology, sometimes there is an occasion to send something to someone via snail mail. There is no bigger waste of time than having to search around the internet for an address for a company. And, even if you do find an address, many online white pages don't include the zip code, so you have to do even more research. The easier you make it for someone to contact you, the higher the odds that they will.

### 4. Where on the web?

If you have a website address, make sure to include it. While it's nice to list it cleanly as [www.mycompanyname.com](http://www.mycompanyname.com), not all web browsers will be able to click on that link and be directed to your website. To mitigate that problem, try listing your company as <http://www.mycompanyname.com>.

### 5. Just the fax, ma'am.

Include your fax number. Sometimes computer technology can fail us and we need another way of communicating. If you don't have a fax number, you can get an internet-based fax through [www.callwave.com](http://www.callwave.com), [www.efax.com](http://www.efax.com), or [www.faxaway.com](http://www.faxaway.com). Windows XP actually includes a fax in its operating system.

### 6. Call me any time.

Make sure that you include all the telephone numbers at which you can be contacted. Write them out completely as they should be dialed. You might include your office, home, cellular and pager numbers. I like to see numbers separated by periods rather than dashes as it looks more professional, but use whatever style you find pleasing.

### 7. Tag, you're it!

You can include a tagline to help people remember who you are. In fact, you might already be using

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one as part of your company name. For example, you might be a professional IT services company and your tagline might be...We get IT done. Place your tagline after your company name if that is how you represent yourself to the business community. Make sure it is used consistently - presented in the same way on your company letter head and business card.

### 8. Color me memorable.

There are a couple of things to consider when it comes to color selection. First, don't use email stationary or colored backgrounds, either with or without designs. They are difficult for anyone to read and even more difficult if they contain watermarks (background designs). It is best to use black or dark blue text on a white background. It's easy to read and doesn't strain the eyes. If you want to add other colors, be careful. They can make your email signature look unprofessional. If you want to emphasize something, you can use italics or underlines or another color of your choosing. Use non-traditional colors sparingly.

### 9. Fonts for all occasions.

Use a type font that is easy to read, like Arial, Times Roman, or Verdana. Avoid wild looking fonts, like scripts or others that look like handwriting. These fancy fonts don't go over well with readers. Avoid the comic sans font which appears immature or childish. Readers will ignore what isn't attractive or what they can't read with ease. Make sure you don't set yourself up to be ignored because you want to appear unique by using fonts that make you fumble. Also, make sure the font is large enough to read. Use size 10 or better. Anything smaller can strain the eyes.

### 10. The special of the day is...

Your email signature is a great way to showcase something special that is going on in your business. Add a line at the bottom where you can highlight a special event like an upcoming lecture, seminar or workshop. Include the name of a new book, e-book, or e-course that you've published. Make a reference to a free report or article that you're offering. Make sure you provide a link which can take the reader directly to the product or service. For free products, simply embed a link to an auto responder so that the information will automatically be forwarded to them when requested.

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## **Viral Marketing with Your Signature File**

### **By Megan Corwin**

Computer viruses are usually a bad thing. They can compromise your security, delete necessary files, and give your PC trouble. Viruses wreak havoc quickly often because they are forwarded via email and eventually reach thousands of computers.

But what if you could harness this contagiousness – in a good way?

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You can! Add a signature file to your emails. A signature file is quick and easy to make, but the potential to reach many eyes is great.

How to set up a signature file:

I use Microsoft Outlook, but most email programs have a similar signature feature. Under the Tools menu, choose Options then Mail Format. At the bottom of the Mail Format menu, there 'Signature' button. When you click on the button, you are provided a text box to create your signature, then click on the 'New' button, and you will be guided to creating you signature file.

Keep your signature limited to only a couple of lines. Otherwise, it will scream advertisement and people will automatically ignore it. Remember, subtle is the key.

Start out with your name and website address, then add a tagline or your latest sale or giveaway. There must be a reason for the recipient to click through to learn more about your business.

Here's a sample:

---

Megan Corwin  
Online Marketing Coach  
Become a member of the

community and list your business free.

---

Have your signature file populated on every email you generate. You never know when someone will forward your email on to a friend or colleague, so make sure it is there.

Go ahead and spread your good germs!

Megan Corwin has combined her marketing and web site development skills with her love of Internet surfing to become an online marketing coach. With over eight year's experience developing software

and marketing for a software company, she enjoys sharing her talents with small business professionals to help them enhance their online presence.

Become a member at

, the fastest growing community for online marketing

information for the work at home woman.

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Affiliate Marketing And Promotional Materials  
Internet Promotion: Email Signatures  
E-Sigs That Work – by June Campbell  
They Took Minutes to Fix and Yielded Huge Results...

Email Spider Software  
Pure Profit Software  
Collectible Manager Pro Software  
Postcard Collector Software  
Instant Email Scramble



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