



EMAIL MARKETING BEST PRACTICES

Email marketing is a go-to tool for building your brand's loyalty and trust. Use it to build relationships with prospects, leads, current customers, and even past customers.

Keep the following in mind when using email marketing:

- Have a clear message and goal in mind. What do you want your recipients to do? Make sure you have a clear call to action (CTA).
- Know who your audience is.
- Build your own list. Do NOT purchase an email list.
- Get to know, and adhere to, the [CAN-SPAM Act](#), which establishes requirements for commercial messages, gives recipients the right to have you stop emailing them, and spells out tough penalties for violations.
- Familiarize yourself with the [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#), which went into effect on 25 May 2018.
- Asking permission with a double opt-in system is the best way to ensure you have a good relationship with your customers.
- Focus on your subject line; it's the first point of contact and must entice your audience to open the email.
- Testing is essential. Make sure your words are spelled correctly and that links work properly.
- Test also how your email appears on mobile devices, since most people will view it that way.
- Balance your live text with images so there's a good ratio. This is important to avoid getting snagged in spam folders.
- Respect unsubscribes. It is a part of the email cycle and helps to keep your list viable.
- Track your emails and use metrics to monitor success.

Be creative, informative, and engaging and you will have tremendous success using email marketing.

SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES

Social media marketing is not just about branding and reputation, it is now being used for business development. If you're not actively engaging your customers on social, you need to be. In 2015, 60% of US companies were using social platforms for lead generation, and that percentage is expected to cross 90% by 2018.

Keep the following in mind when using social media:

- **Get personal:** Personalization is huge in social media marketing. Social media marketers use social analytics to create content that is more relevant for the targeted audience.
- **Optimize user generated content:** You always want to create and share content that is going to be useful and engaging but thinking of new content ideas can take time. Save yourself by reviewing comments, building conversation, and listening to your audience.
- **Use the right frequency:** There is a fine line between too many posts and too few posts. Striking the right balance is a real art, and it's hard to perfect. According to HubSpot, you should experiment with your frequency. Companies with 1-200 followers receive (on average) 100 clicks per post when posting 1-5 per month. Comparatively, when they post 31-60 posts per month they were closer to the 35 click mark. Analyze what works with your audience, track the metrics, and make necessary changes to optimize performance.
- **Use video:** Video is the dominant marketing channel right now and that won't change in the future. Whether you are using Facebook, Twitter, or any other social media platform, look at ways you can use video content. Video attracts more interest, and is more likely to be shared. Video offers a succinct way to deliver information, create an emotional connection. HubSpot estimates in 2018, over 60% of your audience will prefer to digest content via video.
- **Explore what paid ads can do:** Organic reach is dwindling. Platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram are cracking down on companies who are using certain methods (like encouraging people to tag people). Just like Google and search engines, social media platforms consistently change their algorithms to ensure companies are not taking advantage of users.
- **Create content people want to share:** In a paper titled "What Makes Online Content Viral," market researchers examined around 7,000 New York Times articles posted over a period of three months to see what characteristics the most shared articles had in common. One of the major findings was that content that had a high emotional arousal, stirring up strong feelings of joy or strong feelings of anger, were more likely to be shared. An earlier study, from the New York Times Customer Insight Group, found that people have a natural urge to share what they find online. Two thirds of the people in the NYT's study stated that they feel they need to share information that they personally find valuable, useful, or helpful.

HANDY MARKETING TOOL RESOURCES



[MailChimp](#) is a reliable, reasonably priced, and intuitive tool to manage email marketing and automation.



[SumoMe](#) helps you gather email addresses from your website visitors, add social sharing to your pages, and offer metrics – at a fraction of what other similar services charge.



[SubjectLine.com](#) is a free rating tool to evaluate your email subject line. Although it's designed to help you build out paid advertising campaigns,



[Google Keyword Planner](#) is an invaluable marketing tool to help you determine traffic levels for different search terms. If you're trying to figure out what search terms you should target and how your audience is searching for things, this is the place to start.



[HubSpot](#) offers more advanced marketing automation, and is helpful for landing pages, blogging, and email marketing. It has an excellent CRM baked into the entire system as well.



[BlogMutt](#) is the simple, cost-effective blog writing service for marketing agencies and businesses.



[Google Search Engine Optimization \(SEO\) Starter Guide](#) is a great guide that will hopefully make it easier for search engines to crawl, index and understand your content.



[Frontify](#) allows you to create a custom brand manual that fully represents your brand. Easily edit and share your Style Guides with your internal and external stakeholders. It also includes a media library where you can store and share your media assets.



[Hootsuite](#) is a great social media monitoring tool. You can track your social media mentions and also manage your responses, all from one platform.



Everyone loves stickers, and [Sticker Mule](#) is an industry favorite go-to vendor.



You can really make [Trello](#) into anything you want: project manager, task list, Kanban board, and more. Trello lets you work more collaboratively with boards, lists, and cards that enable you to organize and prioritize your projects.



On [Upwork](#) you'll find a range of top freelance talent, from programmers to designers, writers, customer support reps, and more.