Email Content Architecture Strategies

CNX18

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Introduction

One of the benefits of Marketing Cloud are the tools for creative control and automation. Laying down a good email architecture foundation and strategy will enable you to move fast when it's time for a branding refresh or a new marketing automation or journey.

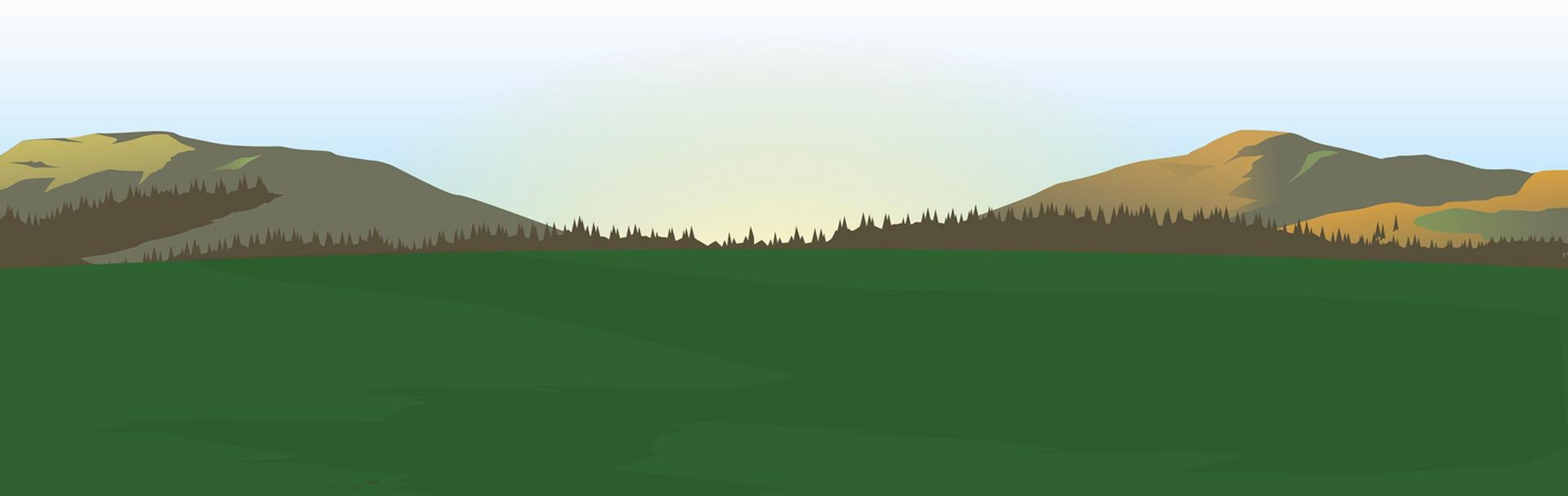"You learn the most when you screw it up the worst."
Adam Spriggs, Life Lesson #146
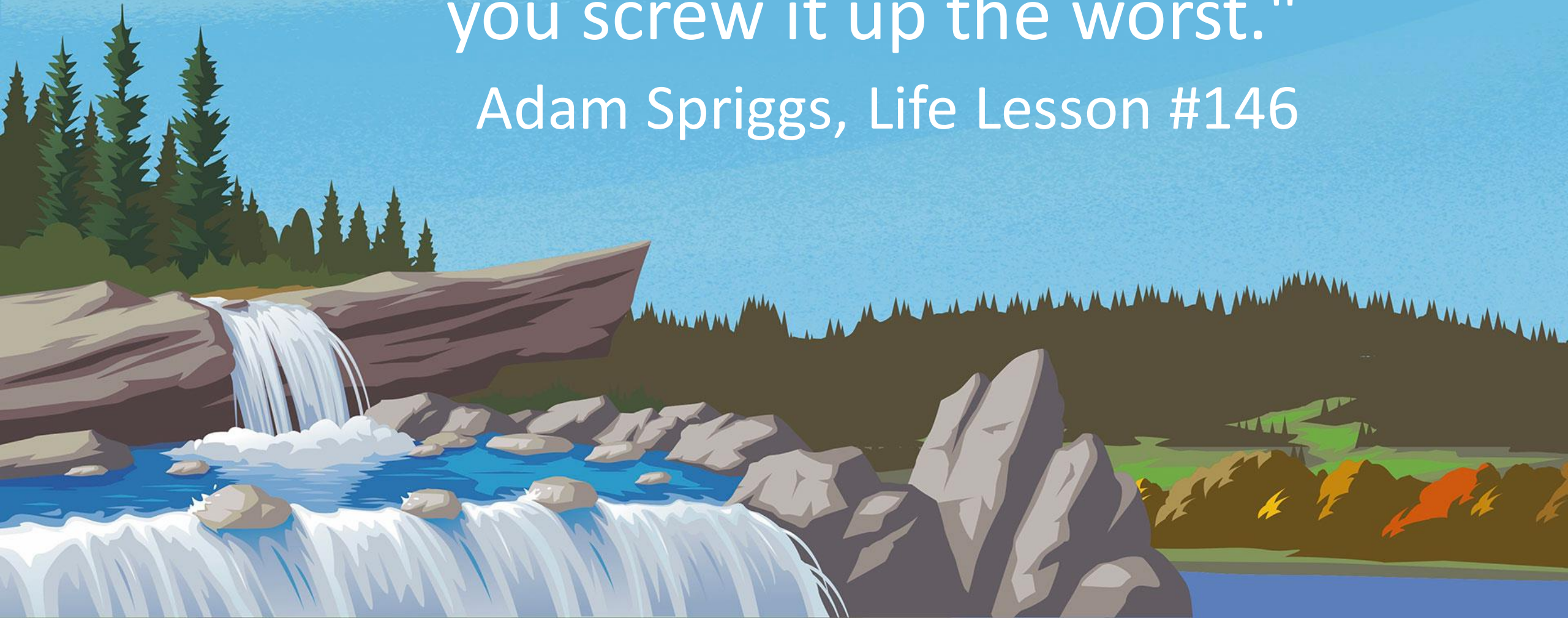
Goals

- Leveraging shared content to maintain consistency

- Minimizing the effort in implementing a creative refresh on a highly-dynamic email

Agenda

- Data model

- Templates

- Content Blocks

- Data Extensions

- Design updates

Data Model

- Think through your messaging and calls to action. Illustrate them.

- Identify the dynamic parts.

- Document the data sources.

- Map the dynamic components to the data sources. Draw lines.

Mapping

Templates

Templates offer you a way to protect common elements of your emails and provide a way to deploy changes to them methodically.

- Keep the template code minimal

- Templates don't update automatically.

- I recommend these content slots: **Init, Head, Body, Footer**

Template

```
1   <div data-type="slot" data-key="init"></div>
2   <html>
3 ▼ <head>
4     <style>
5       body, a, input {font-family:sans-serif;}
6     </style>
7     <div data-type="slot" data-key="head"></div>
8   </head>
9 ▼ <body>
10    <div data-type="slot" data-key="body"></div>
11    <div data-type="slot" data-key="footer"></div>
12    <custom name="opencounter" type="tracking"></custom>
13  </body>
14  </html>
```

salesforce

Content Blocks

Content blocks are the foundation for a flexible email architecture. The power of content blocks can be unlocked by referencing them by *key*.

- *Include* content blocks, don't copy them.

- Predefined content block types...mostly for simple cases.

- Choose HTML-only over Freeform content block types.

- Don't nest content blocks unnecessarily

- Be careful with updates – they're generally effective immediately.

Email, Coded

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%%=ContentBlockByKey("Init")=%%
%%=ContentBlockByKey("header")=%%
Hey, %%=v(@FirstName)=%%!

Are you enjoying our subscription?
Why not share it with your friends?

You'll get a %%=v(@DiscountPct)=%% discount
on your next month when
a friend uses this code:

%%=v(@ReferralCode)=%%

Refer a Friend

%%=ContentBlockByKey("referral-table")=%%

Best Regards,
The Limedash Team

%%=ContentBlockByKey("footer")=%%

Init Block

```
1   %%[
2
3   var @debug, @sk, @rows, @row, @rowCount
4
5   set @debug = 1
6
7   set @sk = AttributeValue("_subscriberkey")
8   set @rows = LookupRows("LoyaltyDemographics", "SubscriberKey", @sk)
9   set @rowCount = rowcount(@rows)
10
11  var @language
12  set @language = "unknown"
13
14▾ if @rowCount > 0 then
15
16      set @row = row(@rows, 1)
17      set @language = field(@row,"language")
18
19  endif
20
21▾ if @debug == 1 then
22    output(concat("<sk: ", @sk))
23    output(concat("<br>language: ", @language))
24  endif
25
26  ]%%
```

Banner

salesforce

```
1   %%[
2
3   var @imageKey, @imageKeyFallBack, @imageTag
4   set @imageKey = concat("limedash-header-", Format(Now(1),"MM","Date"))
5   set @imageKeyFallBack = "limedash-header-default"
6
7   set @imageTag = Image(@imageKey, @imageKeyFallBack)
8
9   ]%%
10  <a href="https://limedash.com">%%=v(@imageTag)=%%</a>
```

Data Extensions

- Managing email content outside of Marketing Cloud.

- Adding HTML to your Data Extensions increases the effort in doing a creative refresh.

- Link tracking for content from data extensions is limited.

- Can impact send performance.

- Be mindful of variable scope.

SubscriberReferrals

```
1  %%[
2  var @sk, @rows, @row, @rowCount, @i
3
4  set @sk = AttributeValue("_subscriberkey")
5  set @rows = LookupRows("SubscriberReferrals", "SubscriberKey", @sk)
6  set @rowCount = rowcount(@rows)
7
8▼ if @rowCount > 0 then
9
10   ]%%
11   <p>Your referrals</p>
12   <table border="1">
13▼    <tr>
14          <th>Name</th>
15          <th>Date</th>
16     </tr>
17   %%[
18   for @i = 1 to @rowCount do
19
20     var @referralDate, @referralName
21     set @row = row(@rows, @i)
22     set @referralName = field(@row,"referralName")
23     set @referralDate = field(@row,"referralDate")
24▼   ]%%
25▼      <tr>
26           <td>%%=v(@referralName)=%%</td>
27           <td>%%=FormatDate(@referralDate,"s")=%%</td>
28      </tr>
29   %%[
30   next @i
31   ]%%
32   </table>
33   %%[
34 endif ]%%
```

Design Updates

Simple changes?

- Just update your shared content blocks.

Complete overhaul?

- Start with the full HTML from the view-as-a-web-page source.

- Implement the design changes in the raw HTML

- Create new versions of the template, content blocks and email

- Breakdown the new HTML and update the template, content blocks and email based on the previous scripting

Questions?

Links

- This Slide Deck - http://bit.ly/CNX18-ECAS-PDF

- Google Doc - http://bit.ly/CNX18-ECAS

- The AMPscript Guide - https://ampscript.guide

THANK YOU