



MARKETING | 7 MIN READ

How to Create an Email Newsletter [Checklist]



Written by Ginny Mineo

@ginnymineo



When starting an email [newsletter](#), you're juggling a lot of balls in the air at once.

You have to worry about proofreading the copy, creating compelling calls-to-action, designing the email to work for multiple inboxes *and* devices, avoiding any spam triggers, and brainstorming clickable subject lines -- all while staying within the confines of email law (yes, there is such a thing).

Oh, and if you mess any of your email up, there's no undoing it once you send it to your subscribers.

[Click here to download our free lookbook that's packed with our](#)



If you want to make sure you won't miss any steps when making a newsletter, keep reading. Inspired by [a blog post](#) from former leader of HubSpot Academy, [Mark Kilens](#), we pulled together a completely updated and comprehensive checklist for anyone looking to send an email newsletter.

If you're sending newsletters, bookmark the following steps in your browser, or print it out and hang it up next to you. You don't want to miss out on these crucial steps.

EMAIL NEWSLETTER EXAMPLE LOOKBOOK

Get inspired by our collection of Email Newsletter examples.

Fill out the form to access the example guide.



Hi 👋 What's your name?

First Name

John

Last Name

Smith



How to Create an Email Newsletter

Here are 12 steps to create the best email newsletter for your business or personal goals.

Step 1: Figure out your newsletter's goal.

Before you start drafting a single word, make sure you're fully aware of the newsletter's goal and how it fits into [your larger content strategy](#). (Have one in place? Go ahead, skip to the next section.)



Keep in mind your goal should be something beyond "how many people opened it." Instead, it should be more closely tied to your overall business goals. Your email's open rate can give you an indication of the newsletter's performance, but it shouldn't be the only number you care about each month. [Here are some email marketing metrics to consider.](#)

Step 2: Gather your content.

Once you have a goal for your newsletter, you'll find content for it. Depending on how early you set your newsletter's goal and how often you plan on sending this newsletter, you could be able to actively or passively find content in the time between two email sends. **Active** means you're going on the hunt for content that'll solve a specific goal. **Passive** means that you'll randomly stumble on it when browsing for other content, but realize it could fit in nicely.

When I put together newsletters, I tended to do a lot of active searching ... but I could've saved myself a lot of time if I were passive. Since I knew a newsletter needed to be sent each month, bookmarking links throughout the month would've been a great timesaver. Instead, I usually spent several hours clicking the "Back" button on my blog, hunting for content.

However you like to gather content is up to you, but great places to look for content are your company's blog, social media accounts, lead-generation content, internal newsletters, and training documents.

Step 3: Design your template.

Make sure you've got an idea of how your newsletter will look before writing copy. That way, you'll know exactly how much space you have to promote a piece of content -- there's few things more frustrating than trying to squeeze copy into too tight a space.

Your template doesn't have to be flashy or anything -- even newsletters with minimal text and color formatting will look great. The design just needs to make it easy for your recipients to read, scan, and click elements of the email. This means it should be mobile-friendly, too. According to [data from Litmus](#), most people (46%) opened their email on a mobile device in 2018 -- nearly 30% higher than email opens on desktop.

If you want to get some inspiration for great email newsletter design, [check out this post](#). I'd also recommend looking into pre-made templates if you're not familiar with designing emails -- it can save you a lot of heartache down the road. If you're a HubSpot customer, you'll have a bunch of pre-made templates in the [email tool](#).

Step 4: Set your email newsletter size.

Unfortunately, email newsletters don't size themselves when you send them to subscribers.



Most providers will default your email **newsletter size** to **600px wide**, with email body padding another **30px wide** on all sides. And when this happens, the content inside your newsletter might not survive the adjustment. Therefore, it's important to ensure your newsletter design fits inside that universal 600px width.

What about height? Ultimately, your email can be as high (or, rather, as long) as you want it to be without the email client distorting its design. However, people are much less likely to click through to your website if the email goes on forever -- and email clients with sensitive spam filters might take notice as well. As a general rule, try not to make your email recipients scroll for more than a second before reaching the end of it.

Step 5: Add in your body content.

Next up: filling in the template with words and pictures. This will be the meat of your email newsletter, so spend time perfecting it. Most people keep the copy short and sweet to encourage clickthroughs, though some notable newsletters take the opposite approach. **This post can help you with email newsletter copy if you need it.** Be sure to add in some images if they can help support your copy.

Don't forget to edit your email thoroughly -- maybe even send it on to one of your teammates for a once-over. Remember, once you send the thing, you can't fix those embarrassing typos like you can with web content.

Step 6: Add in personalization tokens and smart content.

The best email newsletters I get feel like they've been written personally for me -- like a friend actually took the time to put together a newsletter with things *only I* would like. I open them, I click on them, I share them ... pretty much every time.

If you want your newsletters to feel that personal, you should do three things:

1. Segment your emails and choose content that group of people will love.

2. Add in **personalization tokens.** If your marketing software supports personalization, this is a really easy thing to implement that could have big results for your conversion rates. That being said, only add in a *few* personalization tokens -- you don't want to creep out your email recipients. ;)

3. Add in smart content. This is content that shows one thing to one part of your audience and one thing to another. An example would be a Smart CTA -- your leads would see a CTA for talking to your sales reps and your customers would see one about getting tickets to a customer-only event. Neither audience would want to see the other audience's CTA, so smart content will show only



Your audience may like different things, but **we've found** that having a sender name from a real person increased opens and clickthroughs. Try running an A/B test to see if it works for you, too. Whatever you choose, make sure it's something recognizable so recipients aren't confused as to why they're receiving your email.

Subject lines are a little trickier. Lots of things can help you put together a **click-worthy subject line**, including brevity and an immediately actionable value proposition. That being said, **some really great marketing emails** have been sent with the subject "Hey." Use the subject line best practices as a jumping-off point, then run your own A/B tests to see what your audience loves.

Step 8: Support your newsletter content with alt text and plain text.

At this point, you'll have the email *pretty much* ready to go. While going through the steps above, I'm guessing you forgot two absolutely crucial things (I know I forget them almost every time I make an email): the alt text and plain text.

Alt text is the text that appears when a picture isn't loaded. Since not all email providers load images properly, you have to make sure the alt text is there so your recipients know what they're looking at. If you're including a CTA that's an image, your conversion rates will definitely suffer without alt text.

Some email clients also won't display HTML properly, which is why you need to make sure your emails look great in plain text. Make sure the links are easy to click and that it's clear what the email is about without the photos.

Step 9: Make sure you're legally compliant.

Before you hit "Send," be sure that your emails are all good from a legal perspective. The two biggest laws you need to worry about? CAN-SPAM and GDPR.

CAN-SPAM requires that you have a footer in your email with your address and an easy way to unsubscribe from your emails if they don't want to receive them anymore.

GDPR is a similar but more comprehensive privacy law that passed in Europe in 2018, requiring (among other things) that email marketers only send newsletters to those people who have manually opted in to receive them. In other words, wherever on your website you collect email subscribers, you cannot automatically check the "opt-in" box for them if these recipients live in Europe. They must deliberately check this box themselves.

Step 10: Test different browsers and email providers.



popular browsers and email providers.

If you have HubSpot, you [can test emails for different providers](#) in the tool. If you don't, check out [Litmus](#), or create a bunch of fake email accounts and test everything manually.

Step 11: Send your email.

The moment of truth! Having made sure all your email recipients have subscribed to receive this email, and your email has all the branding and legal compliance it's worthy of, it's time to click send. Then, wait for the data to roll in.

Step 12: Analyze and iterate.

Fast-forward a few days: The data's in. How did your newsletter do? What do you do next?

Check to see how your email newsletter performed on the goals you set back in step one. See which parts of your email got the most clicks, and which parts of the newsletter contributed most to your goal. If you have [closed-loop analytics](#), measuring this all will be pretty easy.


Once you have that data, you have a direction to go in for your next email newsletter send. Whether your next send is in a day, a week, a month, or a quarter, you'll have insights to make the next newsletter even better.

What other tips do you have for creating successful email newsletters? For more inspiration, check out these awesome [newsletter examples](#).

FREE NEWSLETTER COLLECTION

Check Out HubSpot's Email Newsletter Lookbook

[Download Now](#)

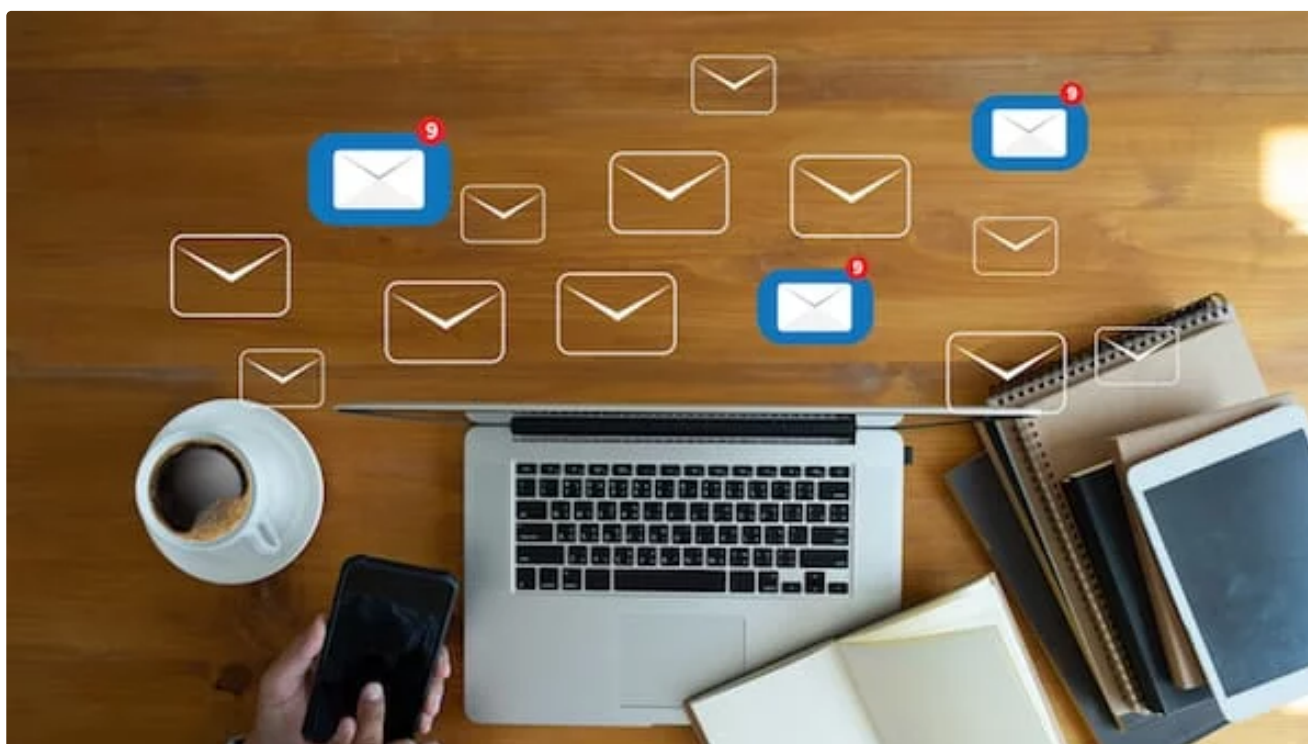
A graphic of a tablet displaying the HubSpot Email Newsletter Lookbook. The screen shows a collection of various email newsletter designs, with the title 'HubSpot Email Newsletter LOOKBOOK' prominently displayed at the bottom of the screen.

Originally published Feb 5, 2019 11:15:00 PM, updated January 24 2020

Topics: [Email Newsletters](#)



Related Articles



15 of the Best Email Newsletter Templates and Resources to Download Right Now

MARKETING | 11 MIN READ





How to Create an Email Newsletter People Actually Read

MARKETING | 11 MIN READ



17 Email Newsletter Examples We Love Getting in Our Inboxes

MARKETING | 14 MIN READ



Increase Your Traffic



Connect With Leads



Close and Manage Leads



Support and Tools



Contact HubSpot Support



English

Deutsch

日本語

Español

Português

Français

Legal Stuff

Privacy Policy



Copyright © 2019 HubSpot, Inc.

