Ethical email language

The end goal of an email marketing campaign is to achieve your business objectives and marketing goals. To do that, you need to create emails customers want to open, read, and engage with. One important way to run a successful campaign is to ensure that you're conducting ethical email marketing. Ethical email marketing means creating strategies that bring true value to your audience, while maintaining the moral principles your business subscribes to. There are many considerations when writing emails in an ethical manner, but one is to choose your language carefully. This reading covers how to conduct ethical email marketing by using appropriate language.

Use ethical language

As an email marketer, the language you use affects how your communications are received—you never want to use language to scam or spam users. Emails that don't follow ethical marketing language may be caught by spam filters, and that means they may never reach customer mailboxes. Even if they do get through, they may create negative feelings in readers, causing them to distrust your company and its tactics. This can put your brand's voice and integrity at risk. If your words come off as manipulative, exaggerated, unethical, or desperate, your brand's voice and integrity may be at risk.

Use trustworthy and honest language

Your subscribers should always feel like they can trust you. Using genuine language in your brand's voice builds trust with your audience. Make a point to select phrasing that's conversational and that makes your customers feel comfortable. Consider excluding words and phrases that are time-sensitive. A simple "10% off inside" will do more to entice readers than something like "URGENT: Act Now."

Some examples of words that will be flagged by spam filters are:

- Act now
- Apply now
- Urgent
- Exclusive deal
- Important information regarding
- This won't last

Be truthful about what you're offering

Choose phrases and words that indicate exactly what the email offer is. If it's an extra 50% off sale items, state that. Your audience doesn't want to feel like you aren't telling the whole story.

So if you're using words that are very exaggerated, or hyperbolic, the emails may not even make it to your audience. And, if the emails do make it there, you don't want to risk having them feel like they were tricked by you.

Some examples of hyperbolic phrases are:

- Best offer ever
- Fantastic deal
- Free money
- No catch
- No fees

These are phrases you should generally avoid so that your customers don't feel tricked or misled.

Use language that adds value

Use words that add value of some kind, so your audience has a reason to open and engage with your email. Your audience never wants to feel like you are begging them to open an email or make a purchase—that's why it's best to avoid desperate language. Using a phrase like "we think you'll like this" or "we made this with you in mind" reminds the readers that these emails are for them, and they should enjoy them.

Avoid phrases like:

- Please read
- We need your help
- You need to see this

Key takeaways

Most people don't intend to send spam emails, so when emails end up in spam folders, it can be frustrating. Save yourself that frustration by using trustworthy and honest language; being truthful with what you offer; and using language that adds value. And if you aren't sure whether you are choosing the most ethical language, test some things out! Then, analyze your results to see what your audience responds well to.

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