

Cold Email Guide for Tariq

A practical guide to improving Afida's cold outreach emails.

Part 1: Real Email Reviews

This section analyses actual emails and shows how to improve them.

Email #1: The Short Template

The Original:

Hi Laurent

I'm Tariq from Afida.

We supply a variety of eco-friendly products to bars, restaurants and hotels within the UK.

One product in particular we have just brought to market is a Bamboo Fibre Straw.

Our Bamboo Fibre Straws provide the same convenience and functionality as plastic whilst being entirely biodegradable.

Colour = Natural Bamboo & Black

Would you like a free sample?

Please find our brochure attached for more info on the straws and all other products.

Kind Regards, Tariq

Issues Identified:

Problem	Why It Matters
No personalisation	Reads like a template - easy to ignore
Weak opening	"I'm Tariq from Afida" focuses on you, not them
No urgency	No reason to respond today vs. never
Features, not benefits	"Same as plastic" - so what? How does it help them?
Passive CTA	"Would you like...?" is easy to say no to
Dated phrasing	"Please find attached" feels formal and impersonal
Attachments	Often trigger spam filters in cold emails
Random formatting	"Colour = Natural Bamboo & Black" feels like a spec sheet

Rewritten Version:

Hi [First Name],

With the plastic straw ban now in effect, I'm guessing you've tried paper straws - and heard the complaints about them going soggy.

We've just launched Bamboo Fibre Straws that solve this. They're fully biodegradable but don't disintegrate in drinks like paper does. Several [city] bars have already switched.

I'd love to send you a free sample pack to try - just reply with your address and I'll get it posted tomorrow.

Email #2: The Kitchen Sink

The Original:

Hi Laurent

I hope you're well!

I wanted to introduce you to Afida - we specialise in eco-friendly packaging that doesn't compromise on performance, design, or sustainability.

We're excited to share our brand new Bio-Fibre Straw, a revolutionary alternative to traditional paper and plastic. It's stronger, lasts longer in drinks, and is 100% compostable. It's a true game-changer for environmentally conscious brands — and we'd love to send you a free sample to try for yourself.

In addition to straws, we also supply a wide range of custom-branded and unbranded sustainable packaging, including:

- Coffee cups
- Food containers
- Napkins
- Paper bags
- Pizza boxes
- And more

We offer competitive wholesale pricing, flexible MOQs, and in-house design support to help bring your packaging to life.

If you're interested, I'd be happy to provide a tailored quote or send over some visuals of our work with other brands.

Looking forward to hearing your thoughts.

Kind Regards, Tariq

Issues Identified:

Problem	Why It Matters
Way too long	~180 words - should be under 100. Won't get read on mobile
"I hope you're well"	Filler that signals template email
"Revolutionary" / "Game-changer"	Overused marketing-speak that triggers scepticism
Product list mid-email	Makes it feel like a catalogue, not a conversation
No personalisation	Nothing specific to the recipient
Weak ending	"Looking forward to hearing your thoughts" is passive and vague
Multiple CTAs	Quote OR visuals - pick one
Excessive line breaks	Makes it look unprofessional

The Core Problem:

This email tries to say EVERYTHING in one go. This comes from fear of missing an opportunity, but it backfires:

Tariq's Instinct	Reality
"If I mention all our products, they'll find something they need"	They'll skim and forget

"More information = more professional"	More information = less likely to read
"I should explain everything upfront"	First email's only job is to get a reply

Side-by-Side Comparison:

Original (~180 words)	Rewritten (~65 words)
Hi Laurent	Hi Laurent,
I hope you're well!	
I wanted to introduce you to Afida...	Our Bio-Fibre Straws outlast paper by 3x and compost in 90 days - customers get a better experience, you stay sustainable.
[Long paragraph about straws]	
[Product list]	We also do cups, containers, and custom-branded packaging if you ever need a one-stop supplier.
[Services paragraph]	
If you're interested...	Can I send you a free sample pack to try?
Looking forward to hearing...	
Kind Regards, Tariq	Cheers, Tariq
	PS - Happy to share examples of branding work we've done for other [bars/restaurants/hotels] too.

Words to Avoid:

These trigger scepticism - let the product speak for itself instead:

- **✗** Revolutionary
- **✗** Game-changer
- **✗** Excited to share
- **✗** Cutting-edge
- **✗** Best-in-class
- **✗** Innovative solution

Better approach: Use specific claims like "outlasts paper by 3x" or "composts in 90 days"

Pattern Across Both Emails

Both emails share the same core issues:

Issue	Email #1	Email #2
Too long	✗ Borderline	✗ Way too long
No personalisation	✗	✗
Features over benefits	✗	✗
Passive CTAs	✗	✗
Trying to do too much	✗	✗

The fix: Pick ONE product (straws) and ONE offer (free samples) for initial outreach. Everything else comes in follow-ups.

Part 2: Key Principles for Cold Outreach

The Golden Rules

1. Lead with their problem, not your product

- Bad: "We make eco-friendly straws"
- Good: "Tired of customers complaining about soggy paper straws?"

2. Personalise every email

- Mention their venue name
- Reference something specific about their business
- Show you've done your homework

3. Keep it short

- Under 100 words ideal
- 3-5 sentences max
- Mobile-friendly (most people read on phones)

4. One clear call-to-action

- Don't ask them to read a brochure AND request samples AND visit your website
- Pick one thing you want them to do

5. Make the CTA easy

- Bad: "Would you like a sample?"
- Good: "Reply with your address and I'll post samples tomorrow"

6. Follow up

- Most responses come from follow-ups, not the first email
- 3-4 follow-ups is normal and expected
- Space them 3-7 days apart

Part 3: Email Templates

Version A: Problem-Agitation-Solution

Subject: The soggy straw problem

Hi [First Name],

Paper straws look great on an Instagram post. Less great when they're collapsing into a customer's G&T.

We've just launched Bamboo Fibre Straws - they're fully biodegradable but hold up like plastic. No sogginess, no complaints.

Can I send you a free sample pack to try?

Cheers, Tariq

Best for: Venues you know use paper straws currently.

Version B: Social Proof Lead

Subject: What [Local Area] bars are switching to

Hi [First Name],

A few [Manchester/London/etc.] venues have asked us the same thing recently: "Is there an eco straw that doesn't go soggy?"

Our Bamboo Fibre Straws are the answer - biodegradable but with the durability of plastic.

Happy to send a free sample if you'd like to try them?

Tariq

Best for: When you have existing customers in their area to reference.

Version C: Direct & Ultra-Short

Subject: Free straw samples for [Venue Name]

Hi [First Name],

We make biodegradable straws that don't go soggy.

Can I send you a free sample pack?

Tariq Afida

Best for: Busy decision-makers who prefer brevity.

Version D: Regulation Angle

Subject: Quick question about your straws

Hi [First Name],

With single-use plastic straws now banned, most venues have switched to paper - and most customers hate them.

Our Bamboo Fibre Straws are fully compliant, biodegradable, and don't disintegrate mid-drink.

Worth trying a free sample?

Tariq

Best for: Venues that might not be aware of regulations or recently opened.

Part 4: Follow-Up Sequence

Send these as replies to your original email (same thread).

Follow-Up 1 (3-4 days after initial email)

Subject: RE: [Original Subject]

Hi [First Name],

Just floating this back up - happy to send a free sample pack if you'd like to try our bamboo straws.

No pressure either way.

Tariq

Follow-Up 2 (7 days after initial email)

Subject: Still interested?

Hi [First Name],

I'll keep this short - if soggy paper straws are frustrating your customers, our bamboo alternative might be worth a look.

Here's a 30-second video showing the difference: [link]

Let me know if you'd like samples.

Tariq

Note: Create a short video comparing paper vs bamboo straws in water.

Follow-Up 3: The Breakup Email (14 days after initial email)

Subject: Should I close your file?

Hi [First Name],

I haven't heard back, so I'm guessing the timing isn't right.

No worries at all - I'll stop reaching out. If you ever need eco-friendly supplies down the line, just reply to this thread.

All the best, Tariq

Why this works: The "breakup" email often gets the highest response rate. It triggers loss aversion and removes pressure.

Part 5: Personalisation Tokens

For each email, customise these fields:

Token	Example	Where to Find
[First Name]	Laurent	LinkedIn, venue website
[Venue Name]	The Olive Branch	Google Maps, their website
[Local Area]	Manchester	Their address
[Specific Detail]	"your rooftop bar"	Instagram, Google reviews

Even one specific detail dramatically increases response rates.

Examples of Good Personalisation

- "I noticed you recently opened a second location..."
- "Saw your cocktail menu features a lot of highballs..."
- "Your sustainability page mentions reducing plastic..."

Part 6: A/B Testing Strategy

Test one variable at a time to learn what works best.

Week	Test	What You're Measuring
1-2	Version A vs B	Open rate + reply rate
3-4	Winner vs C	Is shorter better?
5+	Winner vs D	Does regulation angle work?

Sample size: Send at least 50 emails per variation before drawing conclusions.

What to Track

- **Open rate** → How good is your subject line?
 - **Reply rate** → How good is your email body?
 - **Sample request rate** → How good is your CTA?
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Part 7: Quick Wins

Timing

- **Best days:** Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
- **Best times:** 9am - 11am
- **Avoid:** Monday mornings, Friday afternoons, weekends

Format

- **Use plain text** - HTML templates feel like marketing; plain text feels personal
- **No attachments on first email** - Link to online resources instead
- **Keep paragraphs short** - 1-2 sentences max per paragraph

Subject Lines That Work

- Questions: "Quick question about your straws"
- Curiosity: "What [area] bars are switching to"
- Direct: "Free straw samples for [Venue Name]"
- Problem-focused: "The soggy straw problem"

Subject Lines to Avoid

- ALL CAPS
- Excessive punctuation!!!
- Clickbait that doesn't match the email
- Generic: "Great opportunity" or "Partnership proposal"

The Power of PS

People always read the PS. Use it:

PS - The samples are on us, no strings attached.

Tools to Consider

- **Mailchimp** - Email tracking, templates
 - **Lemlist** - Cold email automation
 - **Apollo** - Finding contact details + sending
 - **Hunter.io** - Finding email addresses
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Part 8: Common Mistakes to Avoid

Mistake	Why It's Bad	Do This Instead
Sending the same email to everyone	Feels spammy, low response	Personalise each one
Giving up after one email	Most responses come from follow-ups	Send 3-4 follow-ups
Writing long emails	People don't read them	Keep under 100 words
Multiple CTAs	Confuses the reader	One clear ask

Talking about yourself	They don't care about you	Focus on their problems
Attaching files	Triggers spam filters	Link to online content
Using "Dear Sir/Madam"	Impersonal and outdated	Use first name
Sending from noreply@	Can't reply even if they want to	Use personal email

Part 9: Tracking Your Results

Keep a simple spreadsheet:

Date	Venue	Email	Version	Opened?	Replied?	Sample Sent?	Order?
15/01	The Crown	john@crown.com	A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Pending
15/01	Bar 42	sarah@bar42.com	A	Yes	No	-	-
16/01	Olive Branch	mike@olive.com	B	No	-	-	-

This helps you:

- See which versions work best
- Know when to follow up
- Track your pipeline

Summary: The Perfect Cold Email

Subject: [Curiosity-inducing, relevant to them]

Hi [First Name],

[One sentence about their problem – show you understand]

[One sentence about your solution – focus on benefit to them]

[One clear, easy call-to-action]

Cheers,
Tariq

PS – [Reinforce the offer or add urgency]

Total length: 3-5 sentences, under 100 words.

Next Steps for Tariq

1. ☒ Pick 2 versions to A/B test this week
2. ☒ Create a list of 50 venues with personalisation notes
3. ☒ Set up tracking spreadsheet
4. ☒ Schedule follow-ups in calendar
5. ☒ Create the 30-second straw comparison video
6. ☒ Review results after 2 weeks and iterate

Good luck! 🚀