

# 5 TIPS FOR “WHITE SPACE” EMAILS THAT EDUCATE, ENTERTAIN AND ENGAGE

Most marketers understand that to break through the clutter, you must send emails that stand out. Yet while this may seem obvious, many marketing messages say little more than “buy-buy-buy.” For a high-volume retailer, that’s 150 to 200 hard-sell emails each year. Is it any wonder that many subscribers eventually tune out?

The answer isn’t necessarily to cut back on frequency. Instead, look for ways to make your messages more irresistible and drive engagement so that subscribers will pay attention when something does strike their fancy. One approach to consider: “white space” emails.

“White space” messages interrupt your stream of promotional email with content that’s intended to inform, educate and entertain. Make no mistake: These messages aren’t just saying, “Hi! How ya doin’?” Each one is part of your overall strategy to deepen your bond with customers and, ultimately, drive more revenue. Here are five “white space” messages to consider incorporating into your email mix:

## 1 Seasonal Tips

Add seasonal copy that not only promotes in-season products but also speaks to your customers’ time-sensitive needs. For sports retailers, it might be bicycle tune-up tips in the spring or sharing a ski-waxing video in the fall.

Example: Last September, the King Arthur Flour Company sent this email: “Fresh pumpkin tips: roasting seeds, making purée, and more.” The email is a great example of a helpful season tip — in this case, what to do with pumpkins outside of creating jack-o’-lanterns. The message includes a link to 50 delicious uses for pumpkin, including no less than 11 pumpkin pie recipes!

While the email shares helpful ideas and recipes, the net result is likely increased engagement and brand affinity toward King Arthur Flour and sales of ingredients to make the recipes.

50 best pumpkin recipes: [read the recipes](#)
800-827-6836  
[View this email online](#)


**KING ARTHUR® FLOUR**

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## PERFECTLY PUMPKIN

It's tempting to pick out a nice, big pumpkin at the farmers' market – but aside from creating a jack-o'-lantern, what do you do with it?



### MAKE YOUR OWN PUMPKIN PURÉE + ROASTED SEEDS

Pumpkin purée doesn't HAVE to come in a can. It's really quite easy to make your own – plus then you have the seeds to roast and enjoy, as well!

[See how it's done »](#)

### OUR #1 PUMPKIN RECIPE

★★★★★

“We make this [pumpkin bread] recipe at the bakery where I work... [It] yields a bread with a moist, smooth texture and a great flavor. It is a big seller at the bakery and I only hear good feedback from our customers.”

– 2, Indiana





### 50+ DELICIOUS THINGS TO DO WITH PUMPKIN

If you've got the pumpkin – we've got the recipes. Try delicious pumpkin scones, cake doughnuts, muffins, yeast bread, cheesecake... and how about 11 different pumpkin pie recipes?!

[See the recipes »](#) | [Pin the recipes »](#)

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**Moosejaw**  
JACKETS CLOTHING GEAR FOOTWEAR MOOSEJAW BRAND

**MOOSEJAW EMAIL**  
AND WHY YOU SHOULD READ IT MORE OFTEN

FOR EVERY FORTY EMAILS WE SEND, THREE PEOPLE SNEEZE WHILE READING THEM

83.6% OF MOOSEJAW CUSTIES PREFER FRENCHING OVER READING OUR EMAILS

WHAT OUR AVERAGE EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS EAT WHILE READING MOOSEJAW EMAILS

24% SUSHI, 18% CHEESE WHEEL  
12% KALE SMOOTHIE, 46% GUMMY WORMS

**FUN FACT**  
no. 27

Sometimes we hide secret messages about life, dolphin behavior and spicy seasonal recipes in our emails.

**TOP 5**  
MOST COMMON PHRASES FOUND IN CUSTY EMAIL ADDRESSES

1. BelayLover 2. SirSplifsAlot  
3. CheeseGuru 4. Meow 5. Mike

**CHECK US OUT. OR DON'T.**

SEND TO A FRIEND | HOW'S MY HAIR? | FIND A SHOP

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### 2 Personality and Humor

Every Moosejaw Mountaineering email reflects the anti-establishment sense of humor that infuses the company's entire marketing program. That same approach to humor might not work in your company's email programs, but that shouldn't stop you from adding some personality to your messages.

A recent Moosejaw email had a subject line saying, "First ever scratch 'n' sniff email." It's a typical white-space email from the outdoor sports retailer. This message was an infographic of made-up facts about its emails featuring offbeat categories such as, "What our average subscribers eat while reading Moosejaw emails." The results? "24% sushi, 18% cheese wheel, 12% kale smoothie, 46% gummy worms."

You don't need Jimmy Kimmel's writing team to draft these catchy emails. Just imagine what you would say to your typical or ideal customers if you were sitting with them at lunch.

You might share an employee's take on Groundhog Day, a personal note from your CEO on a recent customer interaction, an update on a trend or development in your industry, or a story about an awesome volunteer effort from store employees.

The key, however, is to make sure the effort is consistent with your brand essence and would be intended to bring a smile or good feeling to your subscribers.

### 3 User-Generated Content

People still buy frequently from other people, right? So, give people a voice in your emails and feature customers and influential fans.

Some sources: Glowing product reviews; interesting comments or pictures on your social media boards; letters to customer support; favorite recipes or photos showing a customer using one of your products.

Add a note to your emails asking subscribers to check out photos on your company Pinterest page or videos on your YouTube page and to share their own photos or videos. This email from King Arthur Flour, which invited customers to share their holiday baking experiences, resulted in more than 150 photos being posted to its Facebook page.

**KING ARTHUR FLOUR** SHOP RECIPES

*love and joy come to you,  
and to all your baking too...*

Here are some of the holiday goodies we've baked this season.  
What did you bake?

chocolate fruitcake

Please share your best holiday baking by **posting a photo to King Arthur Flour's Facebook page**

Note: you must be a fan of King Arthur Flour ("like") on Facebook to post your photo.



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### 4 Buying Tips

Providing subscribers with buying tips and guides can increase customer satisfaction (critical for high-consideration sales), reduce returns or complaints, and encourage subscribers to save your messages for future reference.

For example, this email from Nordstrom’s doesn’t just try to sell the recipient a pair of expensive jeans. Instead, the copy includes five product photos, each illustrating a different jeans cut: straight leg, skinny, boot-cut, etc. Each image and explanation also links to search results on the store’s site showing jeans in that style or cut from a variety of brands.

The result is an email that breaks through the constant selling messages and connects with customers who may find jean cuts confusing. For those recipients, the messaging provides real value beyond just “buy now.” The email can still drive sales – either immediately or in the future — but it sells jeans through education.



### 5 Product/Service Usage Tips

Your emails can show customers how to use your products more effectively, whether they actually own a related product, aspire to own it or have never seen it before.

For example, a wine retailer might share tips and videos on how to properly taste or store wines. An airline could share tips on selecting seats, how to get to the next status level more quickly or how to get into the TSA’s PreCheck program, as in this Delta email.

These emails can link to product pages where customers can buy the products (e.g., wine decanters and wine storage units from the above example). However, the emails should focus on the tips rather than overtly promoting the products or services.

Where do the topic ideas come from? Many will be pretty obvious, but others could come from asking your customer service reps or store associates, from product reviews and survey feedback, or from discussions in your customer community or Facebook page.

**Note:** Don’t confuse these broadcast messages with automated emails you send to follow up with customers who either bought or browsed specific products. For more about triggered messaging, read [“How to Turn Cart and Process Abandonment Scenarios into Revenue”](#) and [“15 Post-Purchase Emails That Build Loyalty and Drive Revenue”](#)





## Bonus Tip: Repurpose Content You Already Have

You may be thinking to yourself, “Sounds great. Where do I get all this great content?” That’s the best news: You probably already have it, or most of it, but you just might not realize it.

Check out these sources for content for your “white space” emails:

- Web copy and images
- Older broadcast, one-off campaigns
- Product copy
- Social media posts
- Product/how-to videos
- FAQs
- User/customer forums that you own
- Direct-mail assets
- Customer-service scripts or conversations
- Customer review/recommendation engines
- Survey results



If you’re seeing declining engagement and growing unsubscribes and list churn from pounding your subscribers with email, consider adding some “white space” messages to the mix.

Caution: Don’t just try one and move on. Make these value-added or fun messages a regular part of your email program.

For more marketing tips and tactics, visit [Silverpop’s Resources page](#).

Silverpop is a digital marketing software company focused on helping marketers transform the customer experience — increasing engagement and driving revenue. Silverpop makes this possible by using customer data and each individual’s behaviors to inform and drive every interaction in real time. [Watch our demo](#) to see our product in action, and [contact Silverpop](#) to see how we can help you accomplish your marketing goals for 2014.

