

EMAIL MARKETING BEST PRACTICES

1. Avoiding the Spam Filters

To make sure your emails don't get flagged as spam -- and deleted before they even get to your database -- avoid using words such as 'Free', '\$\$\$', 'Save', 'Discount', RE:, FW:, Hello, Special Offer, Text in ALL CAPS, Exclamation points!! Avoid in both the subject line and the content of your email.

2. The Half-a-Second Subject Line

When your email arrives in your subscriber's inbox, you generally have about half a second to catch their attention with the subject line. After this, they will either delete your email or ignore it. In your subject line, try and specify a benefit that the subscriber can expect by reading your email. For example, instead of using 'Weekly Updates, use 'Tuesday is Family Night, July Fourth Events'

3. Day and Time Sent = Increased Response

Studies conducted by online research corporations have shown that the best days to send emails are Tuesday – Thursday. However, this varies greatly by audience. The highest email open rates occur in the afternoon and evening. The highest engagement rates occur between 8:00 PM and 12:00 AM. So, if you want people to reply, send later in the day. Studies also show that emails have the best chance of being opened within an hour after they arrive in your inbox. After that, the open rate drops to less than 5% after 4 hours. After 24 hours, that drops to less than 1%. Your best bet is to send emails closest to the time your subscribers are able to read them.

4. Frequency

Ideal frequency is once – twice per week. Keep in mind all of the other GT emails they might be getting (athletics, bookstore, college, Greek org. etc).

5. Don't Send People to Outside Websites

The purpose of these e-mails is to promote your Network/Affinity Group. Highlighting outside links is not ideal. Highlight the information at YOUR event and the only links you should have are for YOUR website.

6. Design to be read on phones

In 2014, between 40-60% of consumers are reading email on smartphones. We must design the emails to be responsive to that mobile experience.

7. Consistency is the Key

It is ideal to keep the look and feel consistent from email to email. By keeping the look and feel consistent, you help to maintain and strengthen your brand and your image to your subscribers. which again will make it easier to close sales when you need to.

8. On Time, Every Time

When sending a regular email to your subscribers, always make sure that it's sent on the same day. For example, every Thursday at 3pm. Your subscribers will come to "expect" your email to arrive in their inbox on the same day at the same time every week and are generally more receptive to read the content.

9. The Preview Pane

Put your most important information in the upper left quadrant. Research proves that the human eye scans email in an "F" pattern. Use this knowledge to your advantage by positioning your logo, headline, and key call-to-action at the top of your email. Be sure your primary message is above the fold.

Remember—your email design is only valuable if your subscribers can see it.