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Email Marketing Best Practices: Focus on Your Audience

The days of mass email marketing, better known as spamming, are over. Internet service providers closely monitor email marketing activity and are prepared to cut off access to businesses that do not follow the guidelines. While that may present a problem for some, it greatly benefits those who use email marketing responsibly.

We could get into the specifics about what time of day and what day(s) of the week generate the greatest results but creating a successful email marketing strategy starts with much larger scale decisions. As with other forms of communication, the two most important things to consider when designing a campaign are: what message is being sent and who is it going to.

When looking at your audience, you will want to segment subscribers so that you are able to vary your message specifically for each group. Establishing a message that is focused on the audience will help safeguard your ability to get emails delivered over time and reduce the number of contacts that opt out of your communications.

It is always a good practice to establish the goals for your campaign prior to determining the message. If the goal is to educate or to nurture a prospect, then the message may not have a strong offer or call to action. If the goal of your campaign is to drive commerce, the message should be focused on creating action and have a strong offer or call to action.

As with direct mail, create your email list with the most profitable subscribers. To maximize the return from a campaign, use a subscriber's activity to further segment them into groups based upon what type of call to action is required to create a response. For example, if you are a retail business and know that one subscriber will make a purchase with a 20% off offer but another requires 30%, vary your messaging to maximize your profit from each subscriber. If you are a nonprofit organization and know that one group of donors will support a cause based upon financial need but another will support a cause based upon the lives that are changed, vary your message to tell the story that each respond to. As a business to business organization, vary your messaging to create the maximum number of conversions such as, knowing a free trial period will work for one group of clients while 20% your first year subscription works for another.

Targeting your subscribers with the right messaging at the right time will maximize your return on investment and keep subscribers active longer.



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