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EMAIL MARKETING TRENDS YOU CANNOT IGNORE

Practices and Strategies for
Improving Subscriber Engagement



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INTRODUCTION: IMPROVE SUBSCRIBER ENGAGEMENT

The process of promoting your website or company through various social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter is a fairly new concept, yet it is becoming a powerful communication channel and marketing platform. Effective social media marketing works by attracting fans and then using creative, thoughtful and relevant email and online content that engages them on a regular basis.

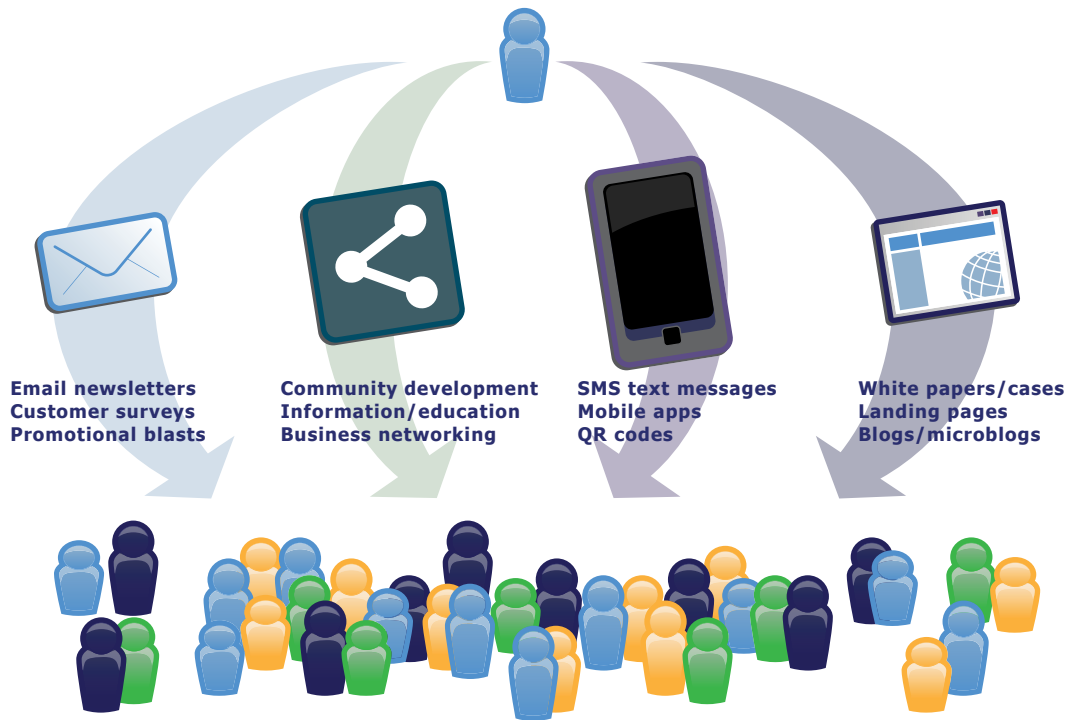
Using Social Media

Email marketing has been through a transition over the last five years, adapting to the arrival of social media and maturing to be a key channel for marketers. While many more organizations are embracing social media marketing, email still remains one of the most effective tools for ecommerce and subscriber engagement. However, in today's increasingly growing networked economy, improving customer relationships requires that you interact with them via multiple customer-facing channels.

Previously, when the industry spoke of subscriber engagement, we were referring to an "engaged subscriber" as one who opened, clicked or otherwise interacted with an email. This was a well-established engagement metric for email marketing. Today it's a little more complex, in that subscribers to your email program are not likely to be engaged with your business via a single channel. It's possible that segments of your subscribers are also members of your brand's social community: they may have "liked" your brand on Facebook and could be following you on Twitter. To measure true engagement at the subscriber level, you must aggregate data from multiple sources.

Challenged by constrained resources, marketing departments are being asked to do more with less, and to prove their value by how effectively they can generate actionable results for their company's bottom line. Developing and maintaining long-term customer relationships will be the lifeline of your business; and, due to the ever expanding access to information, fragmented media landscape, and power shift from brand to customer, customer expectations are driving multichannel integration.

Today, customers are being more cautious and selective with their spending dollars and they are significantly less loyal to any one brand or company. Customers have expectations that you will treat them uniquely and engage with them in ways that give them more control over the dialogue. When it comes to their online marketing strategies, companies must increasingly rely on interactive marketing solutions to deliver the right message to the right person at the right time.



**MAXIMIZE MULTIPLE ONLINE
CHANNELS AND TOUCH POINTS**

As customer communication evolves beyond email to include blogs, microblogs, social, SMS and mobile, you must integrate email with multiple customer-facing channels to increase engagement levels. Simply put, a single channel approach to customer engagement is not as effective as multichannel engagement. Meeting customer and subscriber expectations will be the key to maintaining long-term customer relationships and loyalty.

This white paper discusses seven trends for helping maximize email marketing success.

1. ENGAGEMENT: RAISE THE EMAIL MARKETING BAR

Observe your audiences' online activity so you can segment and serve them appropriately.

Now is the time to take your email marketing program to the next level, and move beyond the one-size-fits-all model. A company that treats all customers and prospects the same speaks to everybody, and thus nobody. Rather than using a "one size fits all" approach, identify the most likely targets for a product or service. Use email to get to know customers better, and then serve them more relevant content.

Instead of viewing customers as single-minded groups, all with the same wants and needs, consider how wants and needs might differ among them, and how those differences might influence their purchasing patterns and behaviors. The goal is to extract out of your database the "right people" (i.e., the ones that are interested in buying your product or service) and send the "right message." Then use dynamic content to create personalized email programs that evolve to match prospects and customers' needs and increase the relevance and impact of your emails.

A sporting goods store could segment its customer database by groups of like-minded customers and send email promotions based on categories such as **Apparel, Equipment** and **Accessories**.

They could further segment the Equipment category into smaller groups like: **Team Sports, Fitness,** and **Recreation**.

Drilling down even further, the Fitness Equipment segment could be divided into **Running, Aerobics,** and **Rock Climbing** equipment.

Segmenting for Consumers

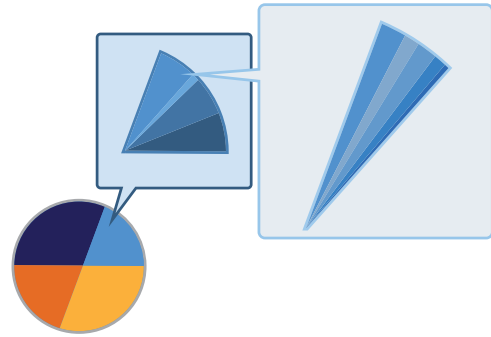
Deep market insight based on customer data is the key to a successful email campaign. Know what motivates your customers and target those who represent the best opportunity. Segmentation is the process of dividing a market segment into distinct manageable groups that are likely to behave in a similar manner or share a similar set of needs or characteristics, and selecting one or more groups to target with a distinct marketing message. "Research by MarketingSherpa has shown email segmentation improves results." ¹

By targeting your message, you increase the probability of them opening, reading and purchasing from you. The key is to select the appropriate variables for list segmentation, and ensuring that each segment receives a unique and personalized message that is relevant to their needs. Again, email marketing offers wonderful segmentation opportunities. If you are not segmenting your list and sending communications that are more relevant to your target audience, start doing so today. If you are segmenting your list already, try to find new ways to narrow your segments. The more segments you have, the more focused you can be about characterizing the various groups within your email list. See **Segmenting for Consumers** example.



SEGMENTATION

Start with a single attribute to divide your mailing list. Continue to subdivide until you reach divisions that include smaller groups of likeminded individuals expected to respond to your emails in similar ways, then send personalized messages that resonate with each group (e.g., subscribers interested in Message A receive Message A; and Message B is served to subscribers interested in Message B).



**HOW MUCH YOU SEGMENT IS
DETERMINED BY HOW MUCH YOU
WANT TO DRILL DOWN**

Which audience segments will be most receptive to what you have to offer?

Audiences are influenced in different ways by different types of content. If you sell numerous products, or are targeting more than one group, then it makes sense to profile your audience and divide them into small segments so that you can market specific products to specific groups, or create your message to suit the characteristics of the different segments.

Better profile targeting yields valuable data and, by learning more about your audiences' preferences, you can deliver timely and relevant information.

Understand the needs of customers at different levels of profitability

Let's take an airline for example. An airline may segment consumers by business travelers and leisure travelers; and these segments can be further divided into sub-segments (e.g., the Business Travelers may be divided into President's Club, Business Class, Priority Pass, Lounge Members, and so on, which can be further divided into various "benefit" segments like "fast check in," "entertainment," "preferred seating," etc. Although an airline may find that many passengers want all of these benefits, there are those passengers who consistently want "preferred seating" and will choose one airline over another because of this particular benefit.

If an airline finds a significant number of passengers want "preferred seating," then this is a valid segment to target, especially if the airline finds that this segment is a more profitable segment because these travelers are willing to pay more for "preferred seating" versus the leisure travelers looking for "cheap flights."

Effective segmenting will not only help you optimize your list by differentiating between profitable and less profitable customers, it will have a substantive impact on your bottom line, and put you ahead of your competition.

Nancy Porte, VP of Vovici, segments customers using sports analogies.

Champions

Clients who are completely likely to repurchase and recommend the brand to others.

All-Stars

Clients who are very likely to repurchase and recommend.

The goal is to make all-stars into champions by continuing to improve the quality of the products and services they use.

Players

Clients who are at least moderately likely to repurchase and to recommend.

The Bench

The rest of the clients. They are the most at risk of switching their business to other brands.

Knowing where your customers rank can help you target each segment with different strategies.

SOURCE

DownloadIncentives.com¹

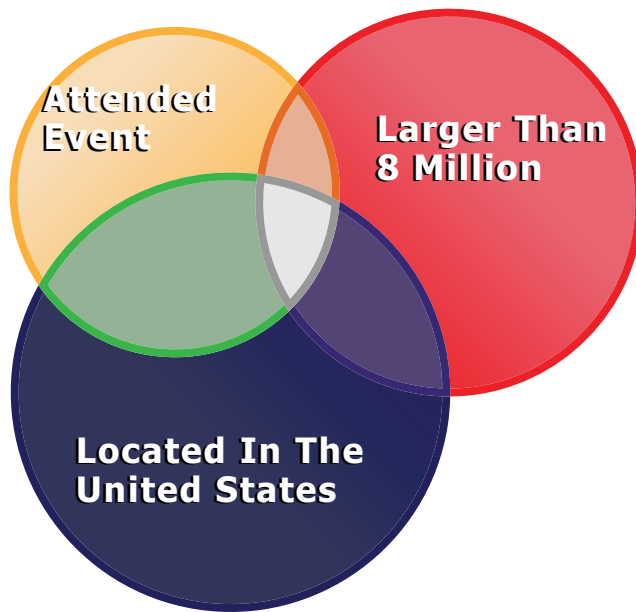
Do you know which segment your clients are in?

Many companies segment clients and prospects by simple demographic-based data. For example, size of company, title, location or geographical area. Unfortunately, using this method makes it difficult to align marketing messages with customer pain points or purchase stages. It would be better if B2B marketers improved their customer knowledge by differentiating between the types of customers they have.

Consider segmenting by business type (small business or large enterprises), industry (vertical markets that represent the best targets), relationship (install base or new prospects); buying stage (Is your customer or prospect actively seeking a solution? What is their sales cycle?); level of interaction (Downloaded a white paper? Attended a live webinar? Visited your booth at a tradeshow?); and individual role, function or title (key decision makers). With each customer or prospect, you may be selling your solution to three different individuals within an organization, all with different pain points and challenges. You have to look at each person involved in the buying process and build a profile for each influencer or buyer, because each needs to be marketed to in a unique way.

Segmentation can greatly improve the response of your email marketing campaigns, raising your open rate and clickthroughs, because the message is more aligned with the reader's interests and needs. Improved email campaign response translates directly into increased productivity, return on your marketing efforts and investment, and higher profitability.

Once you've segmented your list, you can stay relevant with your customers and prospects via ongoing communications that resonate with specific business challenges that these segments face. As you observe patterns and begin to know your audience more intimately, you will be able to respond with custom marketing messages and offers that quickly address their varying wants and needs.



Relevancy is the key to subscriber retention and engagement; and the key to relevancy is the ability to segment your list. If you break through the clutter and engage each subscriber with relevant information and offers, they'll continue to open, read and respond to your email messages.

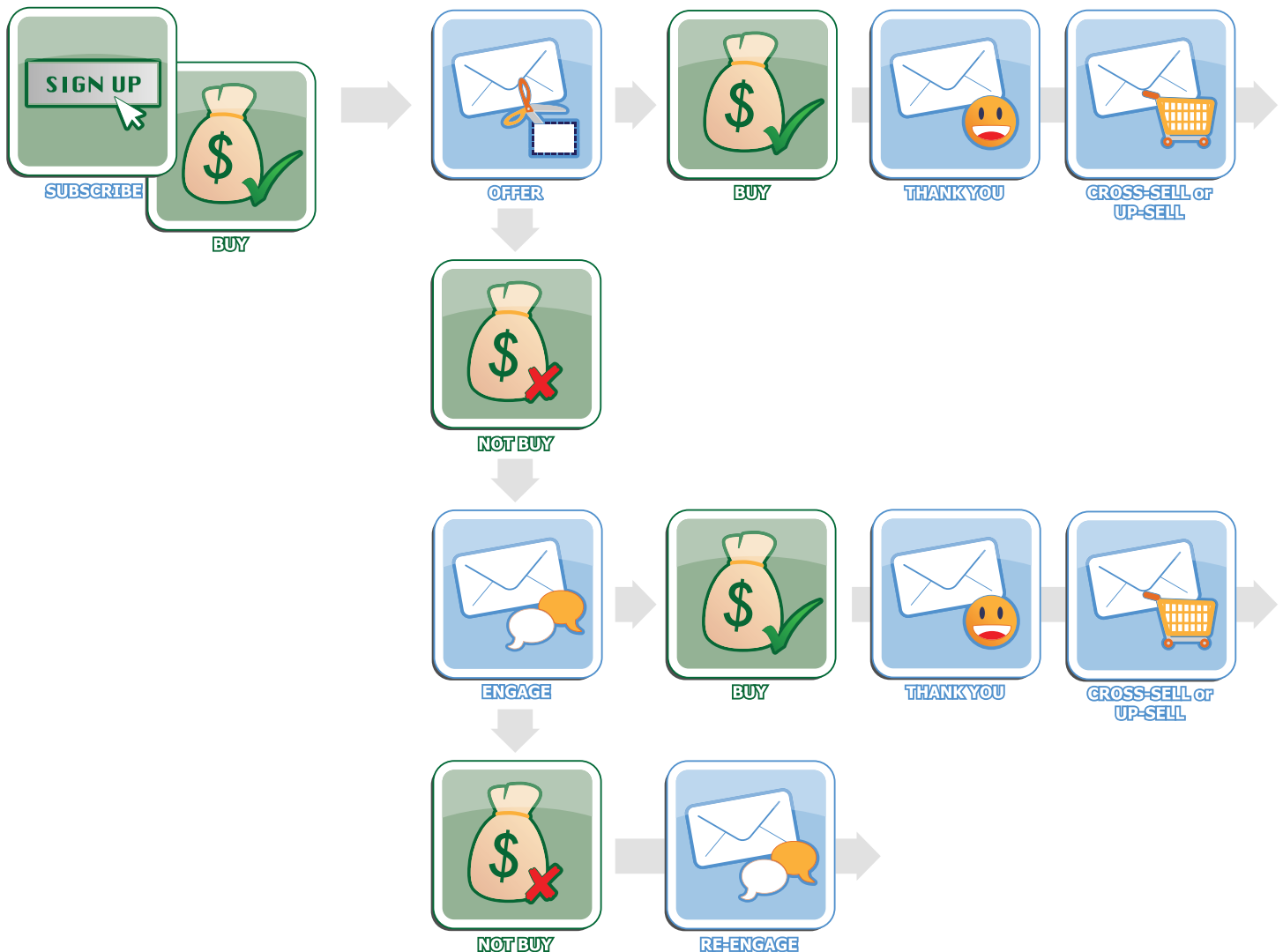
SEGMENTING BY BUSINESS

2. CONTENT IS KEY: MAKE IT MATTER

Triggered-messaging
enables additional
touch points between
you, your prospects,
and your customers.

Increase engagement through relevant targeted marketing communications driven directly by user behavior, profile or demographics — in real-time. Automating your emails is a great way to increase the success of your email marketing program, improve customer service and strengthen relationships.

As compared to other email campaigns, automated event-triggered messages are the most effective at driving revenues because they are immediate.



TRIGGERED MESSAGING

These “transactional” messages enable additional touch points that provide further value to customers, additional revenue, and customer data for your company.

Automation is the core component of total engagement. Without dozens or hundreds of customer relationship managers to deal with your client base, there would never be enough time in a day to reach out to your audience as richly as total engagement requires. A robust automation software suite provides you with the tools to answer questions and follow up on actions with a level of detail that would otherwise be impossible.

Event-triggered messaging is a powerful engagement method that allows you to create, automate, and measure one-to-one email communications with your audience. Welcome messages, birthday clubs, event reminders, shopping cart abandonment notifications, shipping confirmation, and follow up emails, etc., can all be scheduled in advance and deployed at the appropriate time.

Email drip campaigns are deployed automatically based on the activation of some type of trigger

Leads are qualified more quickly and may be nurtured through the sales cycle

Subscribers are engaged in personal, relevant email conversation

To increase relevance as you continue interacting with customers, supplement your broadcast email program with a selection of messages automatically triggered by demographic or preference matches or subscriber/customer behavior.

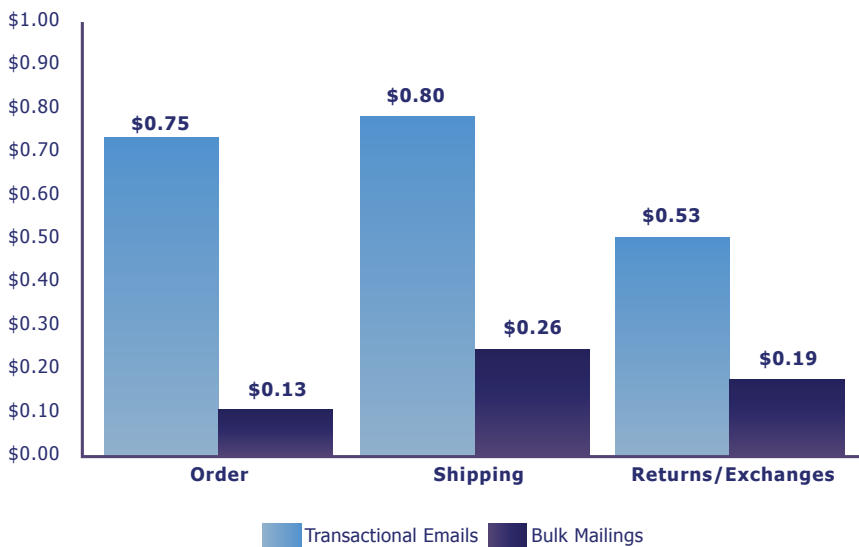
Despite its power, an automated campaign is only as smart as the plan created by its administrator. The selected triggers should be created according to a communications strategy that makes sense for the marketplace and the interests of the subscriber. Appropriate and timely behavior-based emails can improve relevance for the individual prospect or customer, increasing the probability and potential revenue from a sale.

A personal approach
raises engagement and
puts you in sync with
customers' needs.

Jupiter research found that behaviorally-targeted trigger email campaigns get 30% higher open and clickthrough rates and three times the conversion rates of broadcast email.²

Forrester Research predicts spending on email marketing to grow at a compound annual rate of 11 percent, to reach \$2 billion by 2014, email marketing automation is something every business should be embracing in order to maintain a competitive foothold in the market. Forrester added that unless email marketers increase message relevancy they will waste millions of dollars on messages and campaigns that are destined to be deleted or wind up in junk folders.³

Transactional emails have substantially greater revenue per email



SOURCE
Email Responsiblyⁱⁱ

Transform your generic, plain-text transactional email into highly branded and personalized messages capable of driving incremental revenue through relevant cross- and up-sell offers. Filter subscribers based on triggers and actions, such as a particular event in time (i.e., a certain date), or behavior (clickthrough action), or purchase, and market to them specifically based on that behavior. The result is that an email response to the segment will automatically be sent when the trigger clause(s) are met; these email responses can contain changeable content or static content, sent to the recipient immediately or over a period of

weeks, as soon as the event is "triggered" by the recipient. Once configured and automated, your email campaigns are executed without effort.

Look for opportunities to add event-triggered transactional (service) emails to enhance regular communications. Transactional emails can be sent in response to various customer and subscriber transactions. A B2B company can use event-triggered messaging for nurturing leads through the marketing and sales cycle.

According to David Daniels, VP and Research Director, Jupiter Research, "The average online retailer could generate \$500,000 annually by improving the delivery and cross-selling abilities of transactional email."⁴

Welcome emails

Welcome messages can be triggered when an action is completed (e.g., opt-in/registration, subscription signups, purchases, or some other activity).

Lead nurture/abandonment campaigns

Triggered messages can be sent to your customers or prospects based on their website behavior (e.g., shopping cart abandonment and win-back programs).

Cross-sell/up-sell opportunities

Optimize the marketing potential of transactional emails by combining customers' transactional data with the demographics you already have to deepen customer relationships and increase revenue by including relevant cross-sell and up-sell triggered campaigns based on their purchase profiles.

Examples of Transactional Email

How Does CAN-Spam Affect Transactional Emails?

CAN-Spam defines a transactional or 'relationship' message as any email that facilitates, completes or confirms a commercial transaction that a recipient agreed to enter into with the sender. It is said that no other message is as personal, relevant or anticipated and as a result, transactional emails generally see higher open and clickthrough rates. Transactional emails sent in response to a customer/subscriber transaction include:

- subscription signups
- renewals
- surveys
- payment receipts
- order confirmations
- shipping information
- warranty information
- delivery updates
- shopping cart abandonment
- bill payments
- event registrations
- PDF downloads

Since transactional messages do not fall under the CAN-Spam Act, you do not need to include an unsubscribe link. However, be cautious when adding promotional content to your transactional email messages. To be deemed a transactional message, your transactional content must be the primary focus of the email and it must be at the beginning of the message. So don't bury your transactional information within your promotional offer, and don't "force" your customers to read your sales copy in order to find their confirmation information.

All promotional copy must come at the end of the message and, ideally, it should make up no more than 20% of the message. This includes headlines, copy and graphics. If your message does fall into this category, it must follow rules issued by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) under the CAN-Spam Act.

3. CUSTOMERS EXPECT MORE: MOTIVATE THEM

Know your customers
and treat them
uniquely.

What matters most to your customers?

If you want to know how to increase your business, just ask your customers. Track customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction directly by surveying your customers. Ask them what they expect from you, what features of your product or service they most enjoy, what they think about your customer service, and what you could improve. Consider adding additional questions to gauge repurchase intention and the respondents' willingness or likelihood to recommend your brand to others.

Use multiple question types (radio buttons, check boxes, free form) for simple surveys. Make use of skip and branch logic to personalize each item on the questionnaire for more complex surveys. Skip logic allows each participant to automatically skip over items based on their

responses to previous questions. Branch logic lets you send participants along different paths based on responses to previous questions.

You reach people through different touch points and each offers an engagement opportunity. For example, whenever a business unit has contact with a customer, use a triggered email survey to continue the dialogue; or send a survey when someone unsubscribes from your list. A customer or prospect is much more likely to respond to a survey if they have just interacted with you, and surveys that are automatically emailed to people when a trigger or event occurs (transactional surveys) deliver better results.



**CUSTOMER SURVEY DATA
CAN BE USED BY ALL
FACETS OF YOUR BUSINESS**

You can capture unique and highly actionable data and address issues and pain points immediately by leveraging the information you gather (e.g., demographics, interests, habits, email frequency preferences, etc.) to enhance the relevance of your email campaigns. You set the criteria and the types of triggers are infinite. Just keep in mind that, to get the actionable data you need to improve your customer service, purchasing process, or user experience, a customer survey should not be self-serving (i.e., focusing on your wants rather than the customer's).

Triggered surveys give you rapid insight into your quality of customer care, your purchasing process, and ways to improve the user experience. When you can identify your prospects' and customers' needs and pain points, you can address them more quickly. By listening carefully to former and current customers, you can:

- Determine custom satisfaction, dissatisfaction and loyalty
- Gain insight into customer service care
- Identify opportunities for training employees
- Discover product and service enhancements
- Gather satisfaction metrics to identify loyal customers
- Improve work processes
- Become more customer-focused
- Understand customer needs and pain points
- Identify opportunities for innovation
- Plan marketing strategies

Surveys help you
understand exactly
how to engage
customers.

Engage customers through multiple online marketing channels (email, social media, mobile, and web) by integrating more interactive communication. Motivate them to respond to surveys and polls using offers, sweepstakes, and even games. Rewarding them for their participation ensures that they know your brand values their time and participation.

By gathering and analyzing real-time data on your customers' opinions and behaviors, you learn more about your customers and gain valuable insight for optimizing your email marketing programs. With actionable data, you can "delight" them by creating a one-to-one marketing strategy that values their preferences from how frequently they would like to receive your emails to the type of content they desire.

The best way to find out whether your customers are satisfied is to ask them.

Asking for current and former customer comments and feedback is one of the most important elements of doing business. It often provides unique insight into reasons for engagement (or lack thereof). Developing lasting customer relationships and customer loyalty requires an understanding of their needs. Listen to your customers, discover their pain points, and bring innovative solutions to market to address their issues. A successful feedback loop results in quality and actionable information.

4. RIGHT FREQUENCY: AUTOMATE YOUR STRATEGY

Gain insight from customer feedback, preference center data, and email metrics for factors that can help you set useful frequency parameters.

We can't tell you when and how often to send messages to your customers or subscribers — there is no universal "best" time or day to send email. However, we can tell you that if you capture the right data, you won't need one. The timing of your email is dependent on the action of the customer or subscriber. Subscribers that are reading your emails, clicking on the links to gather additional information, and converting are the customers and subscribers you can send emails to more frequently, but only if the emails contain relevant information that is anticipated and/or will be viewed favorably by the recipients.

To determine your optimal frequency, analyze your data. To mitigate the risks, carefully monitor the results of each send, not just the emails that your subscribers are opening and clicking on, but also the emails they are not reading as this could be a sign of fatigue. It is also important to monitor your open and click-through metrics along with the number of unsubscribes and complaints. While relevant emails have fewer unsubscribes and complaints, the increase in frequency could bump the numbers up a bit if the emails aren't directly targeted with new offers and specific information the recipients want.



KNOW WHO, WHEN AND WHERE
YOUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE

The average frequency in 2009 for US retailers was 2.5 emails per week and 11 emails per month giving an average of 132 emails per year.

SOURCE
Econsultancyⁱⁱⁱ

Value is as important as relevance. Even if you offer your subscribers relevant content, they won't take action unless it provides some value.

What are the best times to email?

The "ideal sending time" is complex and depends on many factors such as your industry, audience demographics and message. Considering more and more people check email on mobile devices numerous times throughout the day, it is questionable whether there is a single best time to reach them. In fact, a recent Nielsen study showed email by far the number-one mobile phone function. People may view your email on their mobile device while at work or on the road, but may not act on it until later that evening, or the next day.

How often should we send email?

It's important to find the right balance when it comes to sending email. Although you don't want to abuse the privilege by sending too frequently, it's also possible to send too infrequently. If you go for long periods without sending any email communications, and then you start sending regular blasts around a holiday, specific event or season, you may once again trigger unsubscribes or spam reports.

Although you must decide the right frequency for your particular business, try not to let more than a month go by without contacting subscribers, either with regular content relevant to your subscribers, transactional email, or with administrative requests, such as an invitation to update their preferences, product updates, scheduled training courses, new data sheets, and other service-related materials. Watch for trends. Declining response, open and clickthrough rates can be signs of list fatigue.

Don't focus so much on what the optimal frequency is; instead, focus on how you can deliver relevant content. Since your goal is to increase email relevance, you should use list segmentation to determine the content your subscribers want to receive, in order to send each prospect or customer the most relevant message at the right time. You should use this technique to determine what contact frequency is appropriate (e.g., while responses may be higher with weekly mailings for one group, another group may respond better when mailing frequency is bi-weekly or monthly; you can test sending a higher frequency to your most engaged members).

Email marketers can only influence people when they are engaged, and the aim is to keep them engaged, rather than as Matthew Kelleher puts it, 'battering the poor recipient into a state of disengagement, with too frequent irrelevant and valueless email.'

SOURCE
Econsultancy^{iv}

Generally, subscribers will not mind receiving emails from you if the messages are relevant. Frequency isn't just about how often you want or need to send your messages. It must take into account how often your subscribers want to hear from you. Each marketer will find that different rules apply for their prospects and customers. As your approach becomes more targeted, and your emails more relevant, you will begin to automatically establish the right frequency for each customer segment.

5. SOCIAL MEDIA: DRIVE THE CONVERSATION

Expand market reach, raise awareness, and build relationships via social media .

Email marketing is complementary to social media and, in today's multichannel environment, you can raise awareness of your brand and extend the reach of your online and email marketing efforts by incorporating social media into your overall marketing plan. Social media integration provides a way for your customers to share your email marketing content by posting it on the most popular social media sites like Facebook and Twitter.

Social Media's Influence on E-Mail Marketing According to US E-Mail Marketers, August 2009 (% of respondents)

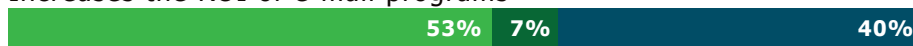
Extends the reach of e-mail content to new markets



Increases brand reputation and awareness



Increases the ROI of e-mail programs



Accelerates the growth of e-mail lists



Generates more qualified leads



I agree **I disagree** **I'm not sure**

Note: n-1,493; numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding

SOURCE
eMarketer^v

A new report from eMarketer shows how combining the strengths of email and social media can lead to better results.

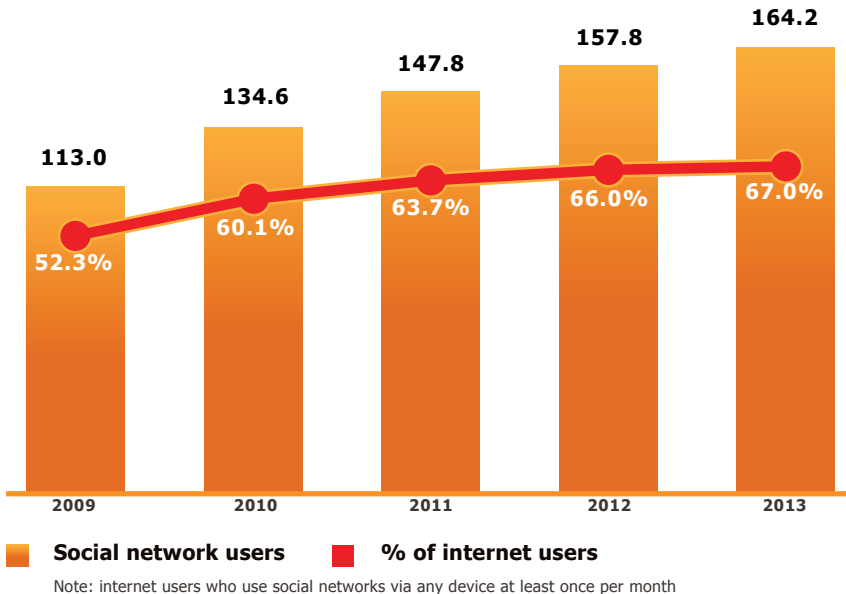
With the rise of digital technologies, informed consumers are increasingly using online, mobile and social media channels and they expect companies to listen and respond to them across all online channels.

It is predicted that in 2012, 66% of US internet users will use social networks on a regular basis, amounting to nearly 158 million people.

Increase your market reach and campaign response by setting viral triggers that cultivate customer engagement. A viral trigger is a piece of content that engages your audience and compels them to forward it to a friend. Make your web, video and email content shareable via email, blogs, micro-blogs, and social news, bookmarking and professional networks like Twitter, Facebook, StumbleUpon, YouTube, LinkedIn and other popular social networks. It's the most cost-effective and efficient way to spread the word to a broader audience.

US Social Network Users and Penetration, 2009-2013

millions and % of internet users



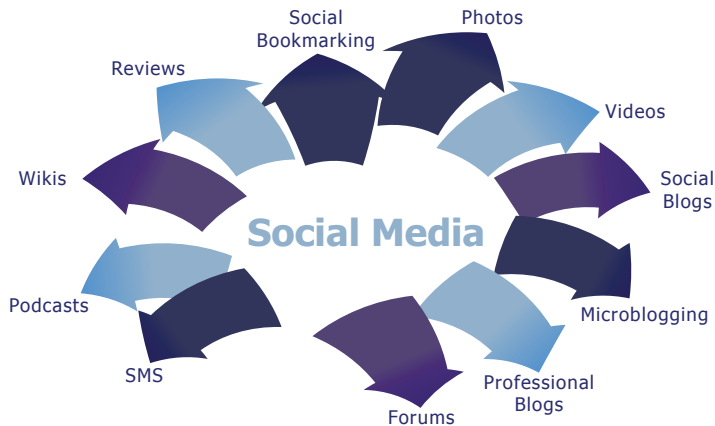
SOURCE
eMarketer^{vi}

“The number of visits to social networking tools like Facebook and Twitter has grown rapidly by 62% in the past year, and social network users are sharing personal recommendations more frequently.”^{5, 6}

Ramp up your engagement initiatives and make your campaigns easily shareable by adding sleek unobtrusive social media links/smart icons at the top of your email newsletters. By adding social icons at the top of your email, viewers can share your message and offers with their entire Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn networks. These links will help you extend your reach to a highly qualified audience of prospects. Relationship-based marketing is the most cost-effective way to grow your business; and social media is a relatively low cost touch point that can have a direct impact on sales and customer retention.

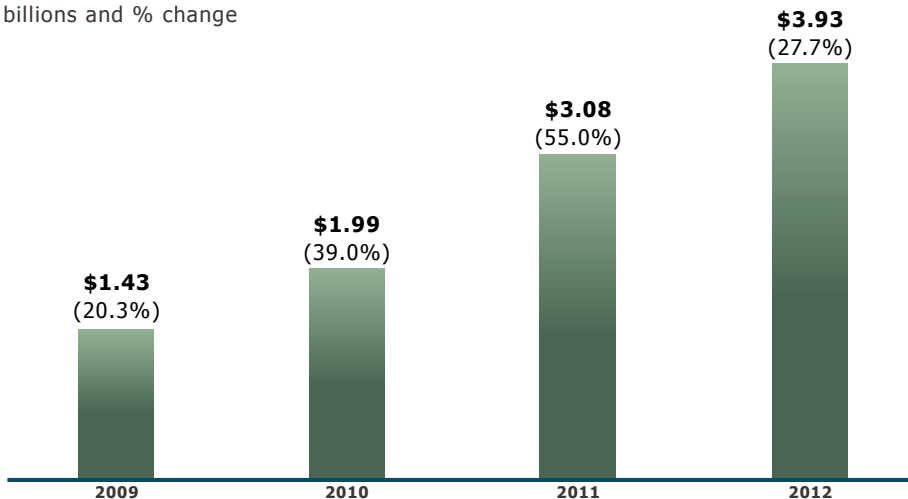
Digital content types that can go viral include photos, widgets, compelling offers, articles, and podcasts. If you have a loyal fan base, reach out and empower them with social sharing widgets. Be sure to include a ‘forward to a friend’ link in the footer of your email. It’s a great way to enable recipients to share your email with friends who might also be interested in your product or service. Beyond email campaigns, you can increase content reach by adding social bookmarking to your website. This enables visitors to bookmark key pages across their social networks.

A report on why consumers fan businesses on Facebook shows that 43% of Facebook users now "Like" at least one brand or official company page, and this number is growing at a rapid pace.⁷



**EXTEND YOUR REACH
WITH SOCIAL MEDIA)**

US Social Network Ad Revenues, 2009-2012
billions and % change



SOURCE
eMarketer^{vii}

Of these Facebook users,

38% "Like" a company so they can publicly display their brand affiliation to friends. This new trend is being referred to as "Social Badging" and it's a very powerful motivation for affiliation.

They want to display their connection to brands and organizations that they believe represent them, their personal beliefs, are "cutting edge", and say something unique or valuable about them.

33% say they "Like" brands to get future product updates.⁸

Additionally, a recent survey on the future of social networking, conducted by Pew Internet Research, revealed interesting statistics. Of those technology experts surveyed, 67 percent of respondents believe that those born in the 1980s and 1990s will be

"ambient broadcasters" on social networks in 2020. These users will continue to "disclose a great deal of personal information, in order to stay connected, and take advantage of social, economic, and political opportunities." Just 29 percent of respondents said that by 2020, Generation Y will have "grown out" of social networks, finding other interests to entertain themselves.⁹

58% of online users globally have created a social network profile

Web users spend on average five and half hours every month on social networking sites

Globally, brands will spend 3.3 billion dollars (USD) in social network advertising

SOURCE

Universal McCann Social Media Tracker^{viii}

Facebook Drives US Social Network Ad Spending Past \$3 Billion in 2011

eMarketer predicts that US marketers will spend \$3.08 billion to advertise on social networking sites this year. Spending will be up 55% over the \$1.99 billion advertisers devoted to social networks in 2010 and will rise by a further 27.7% next year to reach nearly \$4 billion.

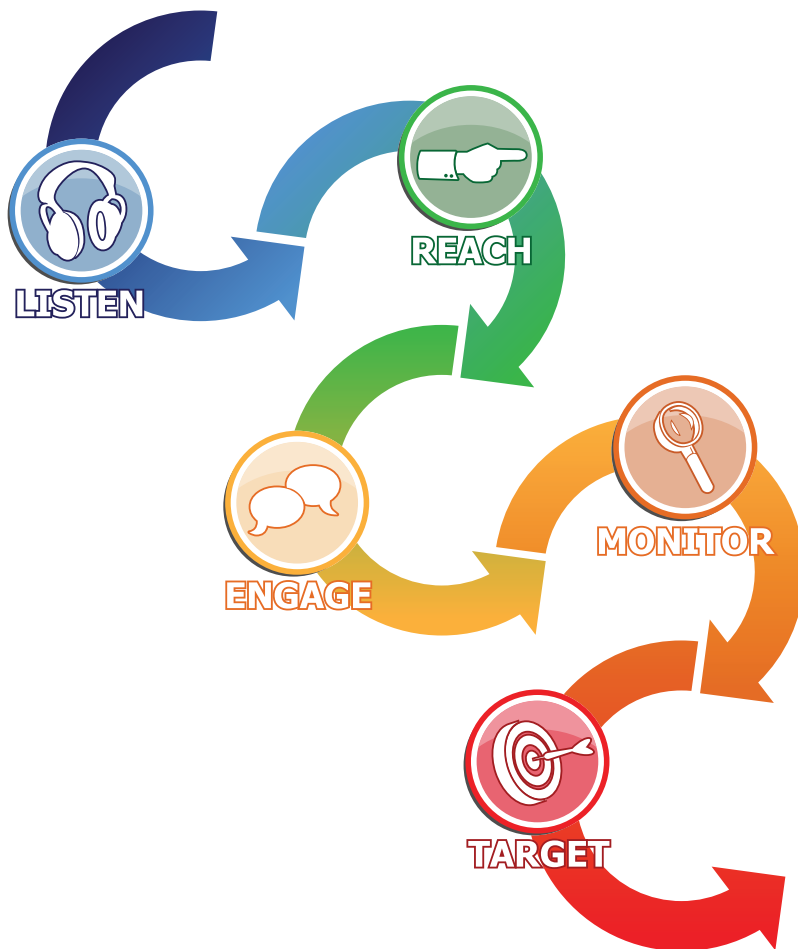
The 2011 forecast for US spending is \$1 billion higher than eMarketer's last estimate of US social network ad spending, made in August 2010. The primary driver of the change in projected spending is greater ad spending on Facebook, by far the biggest player in the space.¹⁰

6. INFLUENCE MATTERS: TARGET THE POWERFUL

You have the capability
to motivate brand
advocates
(a.k.a. Influencers) to
share your message
with others.
Use it to increase
engagement.

Advocates are your greatest assets. Companies large and small have customers who absolutely love their products or services. Identify key brand advocates within your database, connect with them one-on-one, and motivate them to spread your messages, share your offers, and recommend your brand via their social networks (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) and email. They are the same people who recommend your brand to their friends and family, and contribute to good ratings by posting positive reviews about your product/service. Get them to share it, in real time, with a broader audience of like-minded individuals.

This type of positive word-of-mouth-marketing enables you to expand your reach, grow your database, and generate more leads.



How do you find key brand influencers?

Listen

Search across social networks for people talking about your product, brand, market or services related to your target audience on Twitter, Facebook, blogs, email lists, online message boards, and other social communities. What types of conversations are they having?

Reach

Pay attention to your key influencers. Identify them by evaluating their depth and breadth of reach. How many friends, followers, blog subscribers, etc. do they have? How do they fit with your brand's identity? How long have they been in the social space? How often do they engage

HARNESS THE POWER OF
SOCIAL MEDIA

others and how do others respond? It's always smart to treat key social web influencers as a separate audience that requires special attention.

Brands that engage and develop relationships with consumer advocates enable their message to be spread naturally in the consumer's own voice, which carries a lot more weight than a brand-initiated message.

To further increase brand loyalty, be sure to reward those who drive your brand and thank them for participating in the campaign. You will not only encourage these advocates to generate more

content, you'll be creating goodwill.

Engage

What are their communication preferences? Directly engage prospects and existing customers in conversation through the channels they prefer.

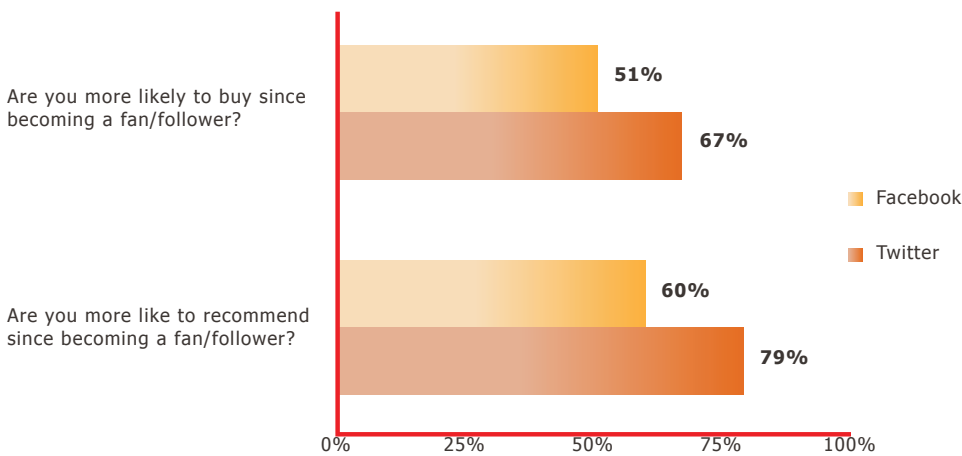
Monitor

Once it goes viral, track its impact for future remarketing, including brand impressions, clicks, chatter (both positive and negative), buzz, sentiment, database and relationship growth, re-tweets, etc. Use this data to identify areas for improvement and for future product development. If the chatter is negative, identify key influencers to help change the sentiment or address the issue.

Target

Deepen your relationship with your target audience. Understand what drives them based on their interests, lifestyles and buying behavior, and reach them where they gather online.

According to a study by Chadwick Martin Bailey, 67% of Twitter followers said they were more likely to recommend or buy products from brands they follow on social networking sites.¹¹



SOURCE
Chadwick Martin Bailey^{ix}

7. MARKETING IS MOBILE: BE ACCESSIBLE

The number of ways to reach consumers continues to increase with the popularity of the mobile Internet.

Embrace the mobile channel and include it in your overall marketing strategy. You can reach your subscribers on whatever days, and at whatever times they are most likely to respond and, once they've opted into your marketing program and are in your database, they can be segmented by demographic data, mobile platform, and activities and behavior such as favorite bands, events attended, and retail choices.

Among the various marketing trends and strategies that are predicted to become more prevalent in the coming year, two are consistently mentioned: the integration of mobile in the marketing mix (SMS) and a wider use of QR (Quick Response) codes. How does mobile marketing fit into your overall marketing strategy? Businesses that effectively integrate mobile into their marketing mix will benefit from deeper interaction with prospects and customers, build richer data sets, and diversify revenue streams.

Offer mobile coupons and incentives to potential mobile users to help drive people to participate in mobile text marketing campaigns in-store and online. This will allow you to deepen engagement with consumers who prefer to communicate via text.

When databases are fully integrated, and there is consistency across channels, your promotions can be personally targeted and delivered to customers in the manner they prefer. For example, limited time offers, using mobile text, can be sent to customers' mobile phones while they are shopping in your store.

An interactive email and mobile campaign system enables a real-time and flexible way for marketers to extend their brand and appeal to their target market. Whether they're at home or on the road, they'll receive text messages on their mobile device whenever you publish a new coupon, sale, promotion or announcement.

Mobile is a complement to other media

The adoption of mobile Internet browsing and application use to support other activities presents a compelling opportunity for content providers and advertisers alike. You can complement the shopping, viewing, and browsing experience on the mobile platform.

Mobile is critical for unplanned, impulse, time sensitive buys, when a PC is not available

56% use mobile devices to browse when they are not near a PC or laptop

45% use it for unplanned purchases and time-sensitive research

41% use it for impulse buys

SOURCE
Nielsen/Yahoo!*

The bottom line: The opportunity is now. Mobile text is a great way to reach interested customers, is cost-effective, and is a complement to other media channels. A mobile strategy will be very effective for reaching your customers while they are in your store and on your e-commerce websites.

Read more about this in our eBook, **Marketing is Mobile**.

CONCLUSION: ENGAGE YOUR SUBSCRIBERS BY PAYING ATTENTION

The latest email marketing technology allows you to deepen customer relationships, turn leads into sales opportunities, and move them forward in the buying process. Engagement metrics such as interest scoring, sales cycle analysis, and shopping cart abandonment comprehensively assess how effective your campaigns are at retaining your audience. Raising your level of engagement is the key to sales growth and the expansion of your business. When you engage people throughout the process, no matter where they gather on the web, you raise the level of participation and build trust. Listen, learn, and deliver targeted information to address their particular interests and needs, at the right time...consistently.

Maximize the power of email — as well as emerging channels such as social and mobile — take time to think about how these channels fit into your overall marketing strategy and objectives. What channels are best suited to build your brand, help deepen customer relationships, or engage your target market? Today's multi-channel environment brings more opportunity to segment and target a consumer and business-to-business audience. The right mix will help you reach that audience where they live, work, and play. It delivers your message through more relevant, immediate channels), nurturing prospects through the buying stages of awareness, consideration, and action.

Regardless of the tactic you choose, engagement with your subscribers will be a critical metric for your business to track. In fact, with ISPs like AOL, Yahoo! and Microsoft looking at factors like messages read and then deleted, messages deleted without being read, messages replied to, and even the frequency of receiving and reading a message from a sender to determine inbox placement, engagement is going to be a big driver in overall email delivery and program effectiveness.

Satisfy your customers and engage them with your content, community or brand, while simultaneously driving meaningful value for your business. Customers engage more deeply with companies that listen to their needs and delight them. Your customers are hungry for reward, status, achievement, competition and self-expression, and they'll go out of their way to engage with the businesses that give it to them.

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Net Atlantic, Inc. is an email, mobile text and social media marketing company that offers innovative technology and tools to drive sales for companies and organizations in a wide range of vertical industries. We help our clients, partners and affiliates to cost-effectively deploy email marketing solutions, mobile text marketing and social media tools to improve ROI with campaign deployment, automation, CRM integration, and consulting services.

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