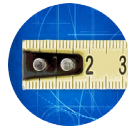




Expert's Guide to Email Marketing

 **Net Atlantic**

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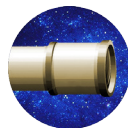
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You're an email marketing expert. You've been at this game a long time.

You've done the batch-and-blast thing. You know how to segment your list to get better results. And you know that getting more in-depth metrics and stats from your campaigns is the key to your future success.

It goes without saying that you've moved past entry-level solutions. In fact, the distance between you and the majority of the email marketing community is getting wider by the day. And continuing to run the same old entry-level programs is no longer getting you the results you want.

Simply put, you know more, and you're ready to do more.

So how can you adapt your email strategies and campaigns to meet those ever-increasing customer expectations – all while growing your subscriber list and bringing in more revenue?

This guide will help you evolve from basic email marketing to the more advanced strategies and techniques you need to succeed.

Inboxes are crowded these days. We'll help you rise above all the "noise" and stand out so you can achieve your goals now and into the future.

Ready to graduate to expert email marketing? Read on!



1. GETTING IT RIGHT AUDIT YOUR EMAIL MARKETING STRATEGY

Audit your email marketing strategy

“Audit” – not everybody loves to hear that word, but it can be your best friend.

If you send regular email campaigns, it’s a good idea to check out the soundness of your strategy every once in a while. A complete audit of your email sending tactics and practices will help identify problems with your lists, your content, your segmentation, your schedule, and your campaigns.

It’s also a good idea to run an email marketing audit if you notice your response rates dropping, such as opens and clicks, or if you see a rise in unsubscribes and bounces. The audit can reveal where the problems might be.

Even if there is something going on that you can’t control, like regular policy changes made by ISPs, the audit can help identify whether you have a serious problem or just need to adjust your strategy.

To run an email marketing audit and keep your campaigns humming, follow these simple steps below:

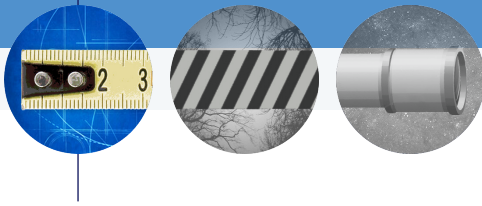


When building lists...

- Make sure your list members consist 100% of known opt-in subscribers
- Suppress unsubscribed list members to avoid sending them email
- Tell your subscribers what kind of email they will receive, and how often

When managing segments...

- Segment your list by demographic info (region, role, industry, client status, etc.)
- Also segment by behavioral info (purchases, downloads, clicks, views, etc.)
- Create dynamic segments that automatically update when list members take action
- Automate your campaigns to send sequenced messages following actions



1. GETTING IT RIGHT AUDIT YOUR EMAIL MARKETING STRATEGY

When creating content...

- Personalize messages using dynamic content like merge fields and content blocks
- Use a subject line that quickly and clearly describes the message and action
- Include social media tags, archives, and forward requests to help campaigns go viral
- Include a clear call to action in each email message
- Send email when you have something important to say, not out of duty
- Include informative content as well as the typical sales-oriented information
- Is your email interesting? Would you want to get it and read it? Really?

When sending mailings...

- Use a 'from' address that readers can reply to and get the right person
- Create a calendar for all of your projected outgoing mailings
- Automate your campaigns to send sequenced messages following actions
- Test all the links in your email, with different email readers
- Send test messages to yourself and others in your organization
- Run split tests to evaluate message variables like subject lines and calls to action

Download our [Email Audit Checklist](#) and see how it can help improve your campaigns! Also, let us know what we missed – we're interested in hearing your thoughts on how to run a good email marketing audit.



1. GETTING IT RIGHT TRACKING THE RESULTS

Tracking the results of your email newsletter efforts

It's all about response

There are many tools available, both simple and high tech, to track responses from your email newsletters and email marketing promotions. Whatever happens, it is important to both **generate** and **track** response to your email newsletters. Here are some things to think about:



- **Email replies** Be sure to use a good, valid mail-from and reply-to address. People will often reply to your email newsletter with requests for more information, requests for pricing, and other requests. As a result, you should monitor and reply to people who email you back as promptly as possible.
- **Telephone responses** Your email newsletter will likely result in telephone responses. Naturally people will call about the topics addressed in your newsletter, but often your newsletter will remind your clients, prospects and vendors that they needed to contact you about something else, or something related. Be prepared for phone calls after your mailing goes out.
- **Web site traffic** Your email newsletter, with links back to your web site, will prompt people to visit your web site, and they will! Make sure your site is current and timely, and addresses information that your visitor will be looking for. Check your web site traffic software to see actual unique visitors (people), which web pages they went to, and if anything was downloaded.
- **Web site orders** If you have an online store or other online ordering capability, test it in advance to be sure all is working okay, and that it is easy to find and submit an order. Test it out!



1. GETTING IT RIGHT TRACKING THE RESULTS

- **Requests for additional information** Although you may already have some of your prospects contact information and they may already have some information about your products and services, people love to fill out forms! So expect people visiting your site to request even more additional information. This may be a good time to offer a premium giveaway to generate response. A free CD, free download, free USB pen drive, etc. can help generate response. Simple, but it works!
- **Requests for demo, test drive, or beta test** Make an attractive offer, and let your prospects try out your services. If you offer a quality product or service, it will speak for itself.

Additional tracking methods:

- **Tracking email newsletter opens** Your Email Service Provider (ESP) should be able to easily track who opens your email newsletter. Typically this information can easily be viewed or downloaded, with email addresses included. Thus, it can be easier to see if you have used a good Subject Line in your email newsletter, and which prospects or clients are most interested in your services.
- **Tracking referrers** Your Email Service Provider (ESP) should have the ability to easily track referring clicks from people who open your email newsletter and click on a particular hyperlink in the newsletter.
- **Track in-store visits** If you are a retail company with a reasonable amount of foot traffic, you should monitor to see if there is an increase in the traffic to your store as a result of your email marketing efforts.

Additional topics

- **Segmenting** Use segmenting to send email to just a certain segment of your subscribers, members, clients, vendors or prospects. Track responses based on which segment you send to.
- **ODBC database synchronization** Synchronize the sending of your email through your ESP with your own in-house database with ODBC database connectivity.



1. GETTING IT RIGHT ROI

ROI: Using email marketing as part of your multi/omni-channel campaigns

Follow best practices to capture ROI:

- **Properly target your email marketing**

Make it personal by addressing the recipient by name and delivering relevant, timely content.

- **Create a strong subject line**

Grab the recipient's attention with a subject line that inspires them to open the message.

- **Tell the reader what to expect**

Start your message with a short statement of what the recipient will learn or how the message will make their lives easier.

- **Include a compelling call to action**

Make sure your recipient knows what to do after consuming the material.

While it's important to diversify your content marketing efforts, there are certainly good reasons to focus on email to get the most ROI bang for your buck. Email boosts engagement, nurtures leads and converts sales—even across multiple channels, which can be difficult to master. Few other online marketing tools are such proven winners in an omni-channel environment, so it's time to align your efforts with best practices and take advantage of the ROI opportunities with email.



1. GETTING IT RIGHT 14 EASY WAYS TO ENGAGE YOUR CUSTOMERS

No Excuses! 14 Easy Ways to Engage your Customers

One of the biggest challenges marketers face is creating an ongoing dialog with their customers. They get caught in the trap of only sending emails to their customers when they have something new to sell. The truth is, continuous email engagement with your customers is key to building relationships and keeping your company front of mind. How do you create that ongoing dialog? What can you say that will make it easier for you to engage your customers with email?

[Pat Friesen](#), author of *The Cross-Channel Handbook*, offers [31 reasons to send email and direct mail](#). Here are our 14 favorites:

1. Thank you. These are two of the most powerful words in the English language. Say thank you for a recent purchase, product review or XX years of loyalty.



2. We goofed. Watching our politicians reminds us it's better to admit you made a mistake than to hide in silence. People appreciate your honesty when you say, "We goofed."



3. Good news. The more relevant the news is to your reader, the more lasting the impact it will have. And make sure to give your advocates an easy way to share it.

4. Do a friend a favor. Yes, it's true, "Birds of a feather flock together." Ask advocates for referrals.

5. Happy, happy, happy! Send wishes for a Happy Valentine's Day, Happy Easter, Happy 4th of July, Happy Holidays, Happy New Year, Happy Halloween, etc.

6. We want you back. Because it's more cost-effective to reactivate an inactive customer/member/donor than to prospect for a new one, tell your inactives you've missed them and give them a good reason to return.



1. GETTING IT RIGHT 14 EASY WAYS TO ENGAGE YOUR CUSTOMERS

- 7. Birthday.** Traditional birthday cards still are seen as more personal than e-cards, but both are welcomed!
- 8. Announcement.** Tell your customers about new products, new people, new services, new store hours, new partners or new lower pricing.
- 9. New and similar.** Amazon is a master at cross-selling by keeping customers informed of new book releases that are similar in topic and/or author to customers' past purchases.
- 10. Celebrate Third Thursday** ...or First Friday or any other reoccurring day of the month. Turn it into your organization's special event celebration to offer sale prices, focus on little known facts about your products or unique customer reviews.
- 11. Welcome.** A first-time buyer is a trier. Transform that trier into a multi-buyer with a special welcome note and offer.
- 12. We value your opinion.** Everyone has an opinion, and most of us enjoy sharing them. So give your customers the opportunity to engage with you by sharing theirs.
- 13. 'Introducing ...' is a powerful word.** It implies something's new, sounds a bit social and sets up the start of a relationship.
- 14. Success story.** Share a success story, case history or series of customer reviews. People love to read stories.



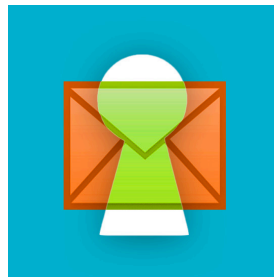


2. POTENTIAL PITFALLS SENDER SCORE AND WHY IT MATTERS

What is a Sender Score and why does it matter?

For your eye-catching [calls-to-action](#) to get clicked on, your carefully crafted and targeted content to get read and engaged with and, heck, your messages even opened altogether, your email needs to first make it into the inbox. And it makes total sense: in order for your email to get interacted with, it needs to get to where it needs to get to in order to be interacted with there. Pretty basic.

But, sadly, there may be times when your mailings don't get too far past the clicking of the send button, when their handshake with a recipient ISP gets refused outright. There may be other times when your messages



Your sending behavior—paired with how recipients respond to your messages—plays a huge part in determining whether or not anything you send makes it to your recipient inboxes.

manage to get past that checkpoint only to wind up in your recipient's [spam or junk folder](#), unseen, unread and, well, unfulfilled. In either scenario described, the conclusion isn't a good one – the email fails to make it to the intended inboxes. And this might be happening frequently and not simply the odd, occasional occurrence. As an email marketer, that's pretty bad news.

[Deliverability](#) is a bear and whether or not it goes poorly for you it should always be a genuine concern. Many factors contribute to your deliverability numbers but, above all, your reputation as an email sender has the most critical impact. Your sending behavior paired with how recipients respond to your messages plays a huge part in determining whether or not anything you send makes it (or, more frighteningly, will ever make it) to your recipient inboxes. Yes, it's that big a deal.

How, then, do you gauge your sender reputation?

One surefire way to learn how you're conducting yourself as an email sender is to find out what your Sender Score is. A service of [ReturnPath](#), Sender Scores grade the reputation of outgoing mail servers based on data collected from 60 million or so inboxes from big-time ISPs like



2. POTENTIAL PITFALLS SENDER SCORE AND WHY IT MATTERS

Comcast and BellSouth. Specifically, the Sender Score is a grade of how a particular IP address of an outgoing mail server ranks as compared to other such IP addresses by looking at metrics important to email providers, things like sending volume, spam complaints, rejections, inclusion on public blacklists and email engagement. Pretty serious stuff.

The higher your Sender Score is on a scale from 0 to 100, the more trustworthy you are as a sender. Scores of 90 and better mean you're doing great. Congrats! If your Sender Score falls somewhere between 70 and not quite 90, that means you're doing alright but something's amiss.

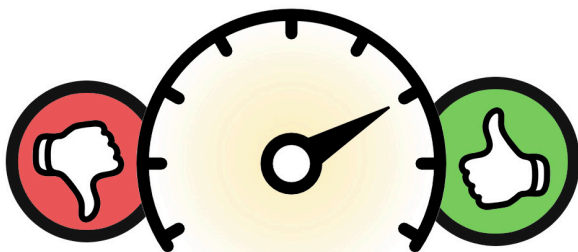
At the very least, scores above 70 generally have filtering applied to individual email messages and campaigns as opposed to performing email filtering at the IP address level. So, there's that.

A Sender Score of less than 70, though, will see the aggressive filtering of emails coming from your particular IP address, landing your messages in the junk folder pretty consistently. 50 and below and, well, you're pretty much labeled as a spammer. Sorry.

Staying on top of how your [Sender Score](#) is doing (and, by extension, how your sender reputation is

looking) is paramount as mail servers will often look up your score before deciding what to do with messages that they receive from you. And even if an ISP doesn't check your Sender Score specifically to determine whether or not your messages and content are trustworthy enough to be delivered, they will still look at pretty much the exact same metrics that ReturnPath does in determining your reputation. Bottom line: it's in your best interest to keep an eye on your Sender Score.

While there are a variety of tools and resources out there to help make your email marketing efforts all the easier to execute (features like email automation, WYSIWYG editors, and dynamic content blocks), one of the biggest hurdles email marketers, big or small, still have to contend with is the matter of just getting into the inbox. Equipped with the insight gained from understanding your Sender Score (and how to improve it), though, you can jump this obstacle and get in there and get your email opened, your content read, and your calls-to-action clicked on.



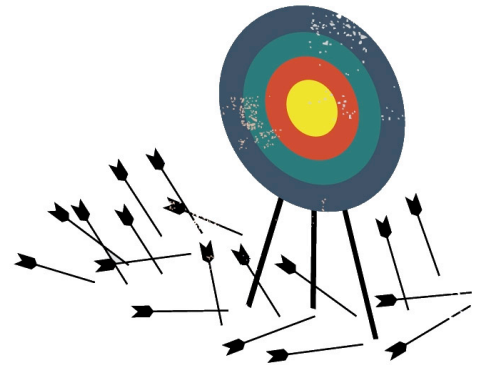
The higher your Sender Score is on a scale from 0 to 100, the more trustworthy you are as a sender.



2. POTENTIAL PITFALLS ARE YOU MISSING THE MARK?

Is your email campaign missing the mark?

To achieve success, targeted email marketing campaigns take time and patience. Many marketers make the mistake of thinking that they can just blast out emails to everyone on their email list. However, a well-planned marketing campaign should take place before you hit the send button.



Ask yourself a few simple questions:

- Is the content *relevant* to my subscribers?
- Does the email *look good*?
- Does it reflect a *positive image* of my brand?
- Am I getting the *right message* to the *right subscriber* at the *right time*?
- *Would I respond* to the message if I got it?

To answer these questions, you'll want to:

- develop an understanding of your audience;
- consider the types of messages they would likely respond to; and
- determine when and how frequently the messages should be sent.

In this article, I'll discuss what makes an effective campaign and how you can optimize your campaigns through testing.



2. POTENTIAL PITFALLS ARE YOU MISSING THE MARK?



When planning your email campaign, follow these 16 critical techniques to help you hone in on your target and get the results you want:

1. Update your email list to keep it accurate

Don't worry about the size of your list. The quality of your list is more important than quantity. Focus on building a list of interested, [engaged subscribers](#) by offering your subscribers real value with unique and interesting content. List quality is what drives ROI.

2. Write a compelling subject line

The [subject line](#) of your email is the first thing a recipient reads. People who get a lot of email scan the subject line in order to decide whether to open, forward, save, or delete a message. A good subject line will help your email stand out from the crowd. Since your message isn't the only one in your recipient's inbox, take a moment to review the subject line to ensure it accurately reflects the content.

3. Use welcome emails

A [welcome email](#) is the best and most important way to introduce your company and services to new subscribers. It should be sent immediately after sign-up, so you're still top of mind. Be sure the content adds value and include links back to your website (e.g., opportunities to purchase, donate or subscribe).

4. Provide helpful links

Providing helpful links makes it easier for recipients to act upon your offer. Backlinks guide recipients to where you want them to go next along the conversion path. They can include coupons, buttons, or additional relevant information that will entice them to go to your website. As an added benefit, you can [track recipient engagement](#) (opens, clicks, forwards, shares, etc.) so you know what is interesting to them. Ensure that all links for completing a form, transaction, or download are working properly, and double check that you are giving the correct date for an event, the correct pricing, and the correct product information.



2. POTENTIAL PITFALLS ARE YOU MISSING THE MARK?

5. Keep the message focused

Keep your message focused and clear and speak directly to the offer(s). Put only one or two offers in each campaign, and link each offer back to your website. If your email contains multiple messages that are only loosely related, split them up into two campaigns.

6. Design strong creative

Avoid creating messages that are entirely images, and [use images sparingly](#). Since many email clients block images in emails, the recipient has to voluntarily click to download images. Although there is no hard and set rule as to what a safe ratio is, a good rule of thumb to follow is for every image you want at least one paragraph of text. Add an enticing line or two explaining what is in the email and don't forget to add title tags to your images. **Basically, key content should be displayed even with images blocked.**

7. Have a clear call-to-action

A [call to action](#) (an action that you want the recipient to take) should be prominent without having to scroll. Whether it's getting them to register for a webinar, clicking on a text link to get additional information, or responding to an event invitation, a call to action should be prominently displayed and the text should be relevant to the action taken (e.g., Download Whitepaper; Request Demo; Submit Form).

8. Avoid spam triggers

Generally speaking, [spam filters](#) look at a long list of criteria to judge whether or not your email is junk. They include specific words and characters in the subject line, low text-to-image ratios, repeated use of ALL CAPS and exclamation points, and repetition of target words within the body of the email.



2. POTENTIAL PITFALLS ARE YOU MISSING THE MARK?

9. Target your audience

Move beyond the one-size-fits-all model. Today's organizations must gain a better understanding of their [target audience](#). Those who 'spray and pray' with untargeted, mass "email blasts" will see diminishing returns and a negative impact on opens, clicks, conversions and unsubscribes. 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 content (personalized messages) they're likely to read and respond to.



A company that treats all customers and prospects the same speaks to everybody, and thus nobody.

10. Segment your customer list

[Segment your email list](#) to deliver tailored email content to your subscribers so they feel like you understand them and are working to serve their needs. By implementing segmentation tactics, you will increase subscriber satisfaction and retention, and drive results.

Start by dividing your list into smaller groups of people who share certain characteristics and send each group a focused, targeted and personalized communication. **Segmenting your list allows you to stay relevant with your subscribers** via ongoing customer-centric communications that resonate with specific interests or business challenges that these segments face.

11. Proofread for typos

If you're about to deploy a campaign to dozens or thousands of people, take an extra minute or two before you hit "send" to ensure that you've caught all typos and grammatical errors. Send a draft around to colleagues as a double and triple-check.



2. POTENTIAL PITFALLS ARE YOU MISSING THE MARK?

12. Test before you send

First impressions count, so be sure to test your campaign before sending it out to subscribers and potential customers. Send an email to yourself and to all of your test email accounts. Do all your links work? What does the email look like in the most popular email clients (Outlook, Hotmail, Apple Mail, Yahoo! Mail, Gmail, etc.)?

13. Establish the right frequency

Another key issue is [sending frequency](#). Frequency isn't just about how often you want or need to send your messages. Generally, subscribers will not mind receiving emails from you if the messages contain useful, valuable content. Subscribers that read your emails, click on links, and convert to customers are the ones 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. Since email campaigns with stale content will turn your readers off (leading many to opt out), it's important to establish the right frequency. Schedule your send dates to coincide with new information worth sharing.

14. Measure performance

Engagement-based deliverability metrics, like open rates and clickthroughs, are increasingly important for email campaigns. Engagement metrics such as interest scoring, shopping cart abandonment and sales cycle analysis comprehensively assess how effective your campaigns are at retaining your audience. [Raising your level of engagement](#) is the key to sales growth and increased response.

15. Integrate with other channels

As customer communication evolves beyond email to include blogs, social, SMS and mobile, consider integrating email with multiple customer-facing channels to increase





2. POTENTIAL PITFALLS ARE YOU MISSING THE MARK?

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.

16. Optimize for results

It's impossible to hit the mark each time. What worked last year or even last month may not work with a current email campaign. By actively using [multi-variant testing](#) to understand your audience you obtain a fresh perspective and can improve your results by incorporating "lessons learned" into future campaigns. As you gather more actionable data, you can continually test different variables such as: offers and incentives; timing and frequency, email creative, audience segments, subject lines, landing pages, and message content, including images.

These are just a few tips I have put together on this topic. **Most importantly, be sure that your content is relevant, useful and timely for your subscribers.** If you follow these tips, chances are your email campaigns will be successful!



2. POTENTIAL PITFALLS WHY IS MY EMAIL MARKED AS SPAM?

Why is my email marked as spam?

It's every email marketer's worst nightmare. They spend days, or even weeks working on a perfect email design, layout, length, and subject line. When they find out from their customer or prospect that the message ended up in their spam folder, it causes extreme frustration.

If you've found yourself in this situation, you aren't alone. Of the billions of emails that are marked as spam on a daily basis, many of them are well-meaning marketers who simply made a few mistakes with their email campaign.

Common reasons for not reaching the inbox – and how to fix them:

▶ You aren't building email engagement in your subject line

It's astounding how many marketers are still using the antiquated, "Act Now!" method in their email subject lines. Your subject line shouldn't be used to express the great savings of your current offer, or how your prospect only has 2 days to purchase before it is lost forever.

Instead, you should be [building engagement](#) so that your recipient is interested in what you have to say before they even open the email. Try using your subject line to ask a quick question of your readers, or provide them with a shocking or uncommon statistic to hook their attention and get them to open the message. However, remember to never use an excessive amount of exclamation points or lots of capital letters in your subjects; this is a great way to end up in spam filters. Let your content build excitement, not the punctuation around it.

▶ You're sending messages to stale contacts

Over time, every email list will collect addresses of people who have changed their contact information or are no longer interested in the products, services or information that you have to offer. While you may not think there is any harm in sending messages to these contacts, ISPs will start to notice low engagement rates and will eventually block the IPs that you use to deliver your messages from. To solve this issue, make sure that you periodically take the time to



2. POTENTIAL PITFALLS WHY IS MY EMAIL MARKED AS SPAM?

[weed inactive addresses out of your list](#). It doesn't need to be a frequent undertaking; once every quarter or so is fine, but you still need to ensure that your email list is kept as up to date as possible.

▶ **Your Sender/Score reputation is too low**

Sender Score is a service created by data company Return Path that judges how often a specific mail server IP sends spam, gets unsubscribes, or has complaints filed against it. Your Sender/Score reputation is a factor that ISPs use to determine which emails get sent to the spam folder. If your sender/score reputation isn't where you want it to be, make sure that your send volumes and frequencies are consistent, and try to send more content to the people who actually want to receive it. This will help reduce the frequency with which your emails get marked as spam.

Email marketing is one of [the highest-ROI tactics](#) available for digital marketers, but you have to be reaching the inbox for it to be worthwhile. Be certain that you correct these email marketing mistakes if you are making them, so that you can avoid the spam trap and connect with more customers and prospects.



3. THE (NEAR) FUTURE OF EMAIL MARKETING

Predictions from our email experts

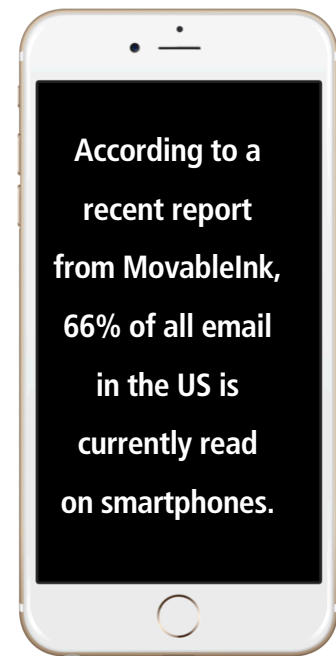
Our resident experts here at Net Atlantic have some theories about where email marketing is going in the next several months, and into 2016.

If you've been paying any attention to the email marketing landscape over the last couple of years, you know that optimizing your emails for mobile devices is a huge trend—and it's one that will only continue to grow in importance as we move into 2016 and beyond. According to a recent report from MovableInk, 66% of all email in the US is currently read on smartphones. We're also seeing smartphone screens getting bigger, in order to accommodate consumer demand for video and gaming.

Personalization is getting a lot of buzz these days, and for good reason. **Emails that incorporate even "entry-level" personalization—for example, using the recipient's first name in the subject line or greeting—are seeing significantly better results than their more "generic" messages.** As our inboxes continue to overflow, it's going to become increasingly important for email marketers to stand out amidst all the noise.

Speaking frankly, it's simply impossible for us to take in all the information coming at us all day long—never mind make sense of it all. People will have no choice but to give their time and consideration to the messages that mean something to them personally—and ignore the ones that don't. So it's in your best interest to keep tweaking your content to make it as relevant, relatable, and personal as possible.

Once you've ensured that your emails will show up beautifully on screens of every size, and that your messages are speaking personally and directly to your recipients, how do you measure the success of your campaigns?





3. THE (NEAR) FUTURE OF EMAIL MARKETING

Delivery rates, open rates, and clickthroughs will continue to be important, but there are already even more ways to measure your campaigns – methods that provide more in-depth, detailed campaign metrics. Clickstream tracking and interest tracking enable you to gain valuable insights into what visitors to your site are doing, and as a result, how effective your email campaigns really are. By applying this knowledge, you'll be able to create campaigns that make the call to action and the desire for your product much more compelling. And this will help you reach – and even surpass—your campaign goals.

What else does 2016 have in store for email marketers? Read on for predictions from Net Atlantic VP of Customer Success, R.J. Phipps, and CEO Andy Lutts.

RJ Phipps, VP of Customer Success



An email marketer's job is probably the most difficult and complex in the marketing arena. It requires you to develop many facets of expertise, as well as more practical experience than most other marketing functions. Just a few elements the expert email marketer needs to have a handle on are:

- Strategy
- Tactics
- Segmentation
- Personalization
- Analytics
- Content creation and management
- List best practices
- Email infrastructure and authentication



Whether you have hundreds, thousands, or even millions of subscribers, understanding these aspects of email marketing is critical if you want to deliver highly personalized, well-crafted messages that your recipients will want to open.

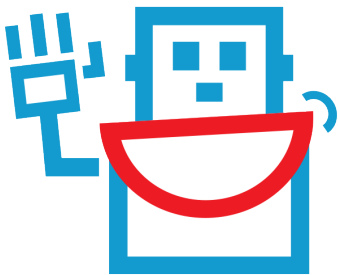


3. THE (NEAR) FUTURE OF EMAIL MARKETING

That said, the next major email marketing trend is already beginning take hold: automation. Automation enables you to combine a number of the initiatives above into a single process—freeing you up to focus on strategy and campaign development.

With the introduction of predictive analytics and Machine Learning, the automation of segmentation, personalization, message triggers, and even content and subject lines will become commonplace – and ultimately necessary – in email marketing. For example, moving forward, much more demographic and behavioral data will be coming into the marketer's datasets. And it will start coming in at a rate that no human could manually process – never mind attempting to mine insights from the data or determine what to take action on.

Enter Machine Learning.



Using the same technologies that are used in self-driving cars, Machine Learning will process new and existing data and make predictions about the future behavior of your subscribers. Based on those predictions, changes to the components of a given email will automatically be made. This ensures that list segments, sending times, subject lines, and even the content of the message itself are optimized so that the subscriber will likely take a desired action.

When a subscriber takes action (or not), that data then goes back into the process for compilation and analysis, along with all the other data, including any dynamically developed components. From that analysis, predictions will be made as to what subscribers are likely to do in a particular scenario, and those predictions will be used to shape the next email campaign.

Other areas that will benefit from automation are list management and profiling, especially as more and more data – both demographic and behavioral, online and offline – becomes readily available. You'll see datasets being continuously analyzed for accuracy, completeness, uniqueness and consistency, which will create dramatic improvements in the quality of your data. As a result, you'll deliver more successful email campaigns and see a much greater return on investment.



3. THE (NEAR) FUTURE OF EMAIL MARKETING

Andrew Lutts, Net Atlantic Founder & CEO

Andy predicts the following:

- **Targeting, engagement and relevance** will only increase in importance. Gmail, Outlook and others are doing a masterful job at keeping out email that users don't want – and bringing in mail that they do want. So the biggest metric now is looking at how users are engaging with your email. High engagement means great delivery and predictable inboxing. Low engagement means the user's ISP or email provider may put your email into some "other" kind of folder – and they may never see it.
- **Readability across all devices.** A good "responsive" display throughout the experience is another requirement. For example, can your recipient easily access and buy your product using their smartphone? Is that something that's important to your business? Is it something your users want and/or need?
- **Although content is still king,** a strong business model is the critical element for financial success with email. Put another way, you can write great stuff that people want to read all day, but monetizing your efforts can lead to an attractive financial reward down the line. See our [11 Most Successful Email Marketing Business Models](#) white paper for more on this.
- **It's still okay to grow your mailing list** as quickly and aggressively as possible. Just as Amazon has always put off profitability to another year down the road, a growing email mailing list of highly engaged and targeted subscribers can be an extremely valuable asset.



Conclusion

We've hope you've enjoyed reading the Net Atlantic Guide to Expert Email Marketing—and that you learned a few things, too!

Want to find out how your current email program measures up? Click below to get in touch and discuss your current challenges with one of our email experts. We'll set you up with a free trial, so you can experience our incredible email marketing solutions and stellar customer service for yourself.