

The Ultimate Guide to Email Marketing



How to Build Successful Email Marketing Campaigns

Forward

Fun Facts

87% of marketers say the effectiveness of email marketing is increasing. *(Campaign Monitor)*

77% of consumers research before engaging with a brand. *(HubSpot 2018)*

Email is 40 times more effective than social media and up to 3 times faster. *(McKinsey & Company)*

However,

51% of marketers say that the success of email marketing is often limited by the lack of relevant information about their contacts.

78% of its recipients claim to have canceled email subscriptions because they are receiving too many. *(Hubspot 2016)*

We also know the way buyers behave has changed:

Everyone goes through the Buyer's Journey—sometimes fast and sometimes slow.

Buyers consume different types of content at different points in their journey.

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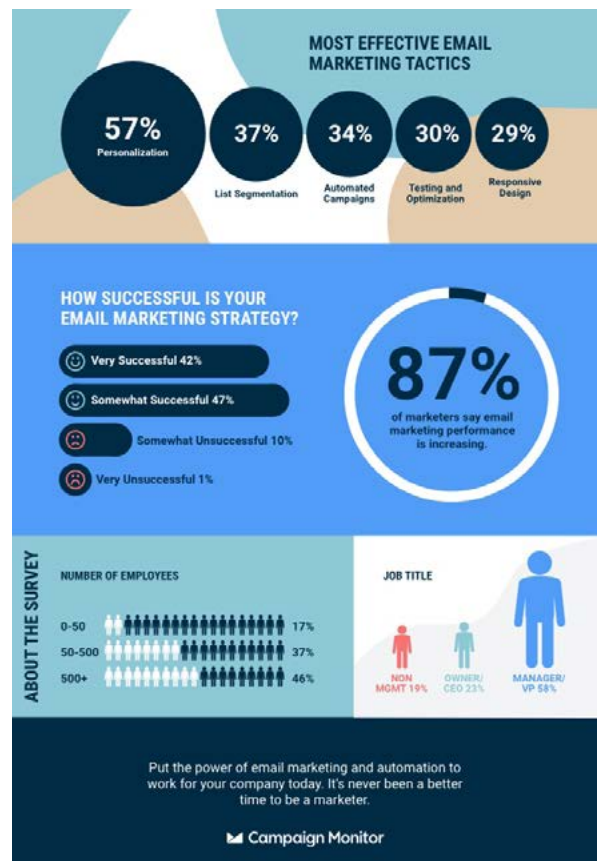
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The State of Email Marketing

Here's how Campaign Monitor summarized their research:



Email Marketing is More Complex than Ever

All the basics of running a successful email campaign are getting harder. Getting emails into inboxes, getting people to open the email, and getting them to click on your offer is being thwarted by engagement, competition, and technology challenges.

Also, remember that for any successful marketing campaign, you must be offering something your audience wants. But that's always been the case!



Consider These Three Things

1. No one wants to receive irrelevant emails—it's a waste of their time. But, everyone is interested in something—and will engage if the topics and the timing are right.
2. You are not just competing with other people who provide a product/service like yours, you are competing against many different interests and priorities. And the companies offering those services are also getting smarter about their email campaigns.
3. Spam filters at the server level can block good campaigns if mismanaged or misunderstood.

Managing the Email Engagement Challenge

Problem: If you are irritating they will unsubscribe.

Consequences: You can never send them another marketing email (it's the law), and you will damage your reputation as an email sender.

Solutions: Send good messages to the right people.

1. Use a clean, organically derived growth list
2. Keep the list up to date (clean)
3. Segment your list for relevance and prior interactions
4. Add personalization—name and content
5. Establish trust
6. Be transparent
7. Get to the point
8. Add value—tangible, intangible, emotional
9. Offer—something they can try for free
10. Make it easy to find what they are looking for and provide a self-education option for those who are not ready to talk to you yet
11. Measure your performance and improve—open rate, click-through rate, and leads generated



Email Spam—an Abridged Story

Once upon a time ...

We sent an email to a person's inbox, but spammers abused the privilege, and then came spam filters that looked at triggers such as: FREE!! Buy Now! and more.

And the spammers persisted.

Then the email servers wanted for verification of reputable email sources in the form of SPF, DMARK, and DKIM records.

And still, the spammers continued to drive people nuts.

So servers added the likelihood of the recipient engaging with your email based on past interactions.

The moral of the story: if you don't pass all the technical tests (and you look like spam) no one will know you sent them anything at all!

Managing the Technology Challenge

1. **Problem:** Technology can stop your emails from being delivered. For example, a bad reputation caused by sending lots of emails that are flagged as SPAM, unsubscribed, bounced, or remain unopened.
2. **Consequences:** your domain can end up on a blacklist, which can also affect the delivery of your regular email.
3. **Solutions:** Sort out SPF records, clean up your database, segment properly, and don't send emails to people who consistently won't engage.

Building an Email Marketing Campaign—Where Should You Start?

Steven Covey said:
"Start with the end
in mind."

What is an Email Campaign

Let's look at the term *Campaign*. Campaign implies a series of emails that provide relevant information to a particular audience. It is also typically integrated with other marketing activities such as an event, or an offer, and almost certainly has information and landing pages on your website.

What an email campaign is NOT is the monthly newsletter of yesteryear.

The Importance of Building a Process

If you are successful in engaging prospects with your email campaign, you must have the next step in place to convert them into a client. Otherwise, your investment will have been in vain.

For B2B (business to business) the final step in the sales process typically means contact with a sales rep to see a demo, complete an assessment or participate in a sales call to close the deal.

Before a sales call, an Internal Sales Rep (ISR) may reach out to people who have demonstrated an interest in your product/service. Ideally, prospects would complete a form on your website and request a sales meeting, however, you can also define other criteria that would prompt an ISR to make an outbound call. Examples of triggers include; watching a video, a webinar, or downloading an e-book.

You can monitor interactions by setting up the email campaign and the landing pages in a way that tracks open rates, click-through rates, views, downloads, and form fills. Marketing automation tools, such as HubSpot, can generate reports and send notifications for your sales team when follow-up is required.

So, where do you start? The answer is not necessarily with an email campaign. First, make sure you can do something with the leads you generate before pressing send.

Objective-Based Campaigns

Each email campaign should end with a tangible objective, for example:

- Event participation: X number of attendees at a webinar
- Behavior: Y downloads of the “how-to” e-book by the end of October

Objectives should be established because activities indicate interest in your product/service, and they have historically resulted in a conversion to a sale.

For new campaigns, where the historical data is not available, you will need to experiment. Use your best judgment to establish objectives and then, track the results to establish benchmarks for future email campaigns.

How to Calculate Return on Investment for Email Campaigns

CEOs, CFOs, CMOs, and investors are all likely to ask about Return on Investment (ROI), so here's how to estimate that number. ROI is the **gross** profit you expect to make as a result of running a campaign, divided by the direct cost of running the campaign.

To estimate the ROI of your campaign, use the following formula:

$$\text{ROI} = \frac{\text{the **gross** profit derived from the estimated sales of products \& services}}{\text{The direct costs of the campaign}}$$

The Problems with Calculating ROI for Email Campaigns

There are two significant challenges with calculating ROI for email campaigns

1. Attribution
2. Misclassification of expenses

Attribution means tracking which leads, deals, and sales came from which campaign. It is unlikely that email marketing is the only tool you are using to influence a particular target audience. So, was it the LinkedIn advertisement or the email that got the prospect over the finish line? For larger companies, it makes sense to consider attribution at a higher level than merely this one task. Instead, look at all the expenses for all media used to influence your target audience, including advertising and lead nurture, and calculate ROI for those expenses.

Misclassification of expenses can also lead to inaccurate calculations of ROI. For example, a website, a video, or other evergreen assets may be used in multiple campaigns. These assets should not, therefore, be expensed against a single email campaign.

- Avoid the temptation to overburden your first email campaigns with the full cost of evergreen content. Amortize evergreen content over the multiple campaigns where it will be used.
- Also, recognize that evergreen content may also be used in the sales process or other purposes that provide a benefit to your business.
- The setup cost of email software, workflows, etc. should also be amortized over multiple campaigns or absorbed as an overhead to the business.

Establishing the “Offer”

The “Offer” is the final step and the conclusion of a particular email campaign.

For a campaign driving towards a sales goal, the offer may be something like 2-for-1 sale before October 31st—a traditional type of offer used in B2C marketing or retail. However, not all campaigns can thrust a sales pitch at the prospect without appearing overly aggressive and off-putting.

For B2B products/services, we may need to create an attractive offer that represents a low risk for the prospect and is an opportunity for us to illustrate our value. It may also be part of a multi-step campaign, for example:

Offer 1 (for email campaign): Free educational webinar on challenges faced by people in your industry

Offer 2 (at the free webinar): join a paid educational webinar on “how to...” or buy products or services to address challenges we have discussed

Offers must be valuable to the people receiving your emails and established as part of your overall sales and marketing plan.

Email Campaign Ideation

With the offer established, you can now figure out how to move people through their buyer’s journey, answering essential questions on the way. The ideation process is to figure out the best way to engage your target audience over time.

A typical campaign includes several emails—each with specific goals—for example:

Email 1: Build trust—offer a link to a useful article on your website. No other requirements or overt requests for information at this stage

Email 2: Educate—link to something of value, for example, product comparison or white paper

Email 3: The Offer—deliver the call to action and make it easy to participate

Not all campaigns are the same. There may be multiple trust emails or multiple emails with links to valuable items before delivering the offer email. We also recommend subtly introducing the offer as early as email #1 (for example, as a P.S. in the body of the email). After all, there is no reason to prevent someone who is ready to buy from taking up the offer now.

With each email in the campaign, there will be links to other content—e-books, product comparisons, buyers’ guides, research papers, etc. These will reside on your website with links coming from the emails and other sources such as social media.

Each piece of content on your website should also have links to the next logical step in the sales (or further education) process. That way, we encourage your prospect to keep moving along the buyer's journey if they are ready.

Building an Email Campaign Plan

The campaign plan is a document that captures the elements you need to execute, including:

- The number of emails, their primary message and the specific audience for that email
- Any new evergreen pieces you need to create
- The logic of how email recipients are intended to flow through the buyer's journey
- Any landing pages that need to be designed to capture the data related to engagement, including forms that capture visitor information for gated content

Conversely, randomly generating content is a particularly time consuming, expensive, and ineffective way to engage in content marketing. At Ocean 5, we often use email campaigns as a stepping-stone to build a broader content plan. By starting with the email campaign, we can ensure that every piece of content has a specific purpose within the campaign and is therefore valuable to the business.

Evergreen Content

Evergreen content, which has proven useful to your prospects, can be used to generate additional articles in the form of blogs. It is common for five or more blog articles to stem from the content in a single e-book. How do you know if it is useful to your prospects? Check the analytics for your website and see which pages and which gated content is viewed most frequently.

Multiple pieces of content that are grouped by a shared topic and related subtopics are called topic clusters and form the basis of a search engine optimization (SEO) program that draws visitors to your website. Topic clusters are one of the pieces of the puzzle used to create a website with high topic authority, which is favored by Google.

Links from these blogs to the original e-book landing page can generate new leads from prospects that find your articles through online research.

Social Media and Advertising

In the same way that a content plan can emerge from an email nurture campaign, so can a social media campaign. Social media posts should not be a series of disconnected activities, but part of a larger marketing goal.

Offers and articles that are created as part of an email campaign can become valuable assets for social media posts. Social media posts (on multiple platforms) can highlight articles, often numerous times through different posts.

Developing a content plan in this way allows us to repurpose content, increasing the value of the assets you created for your email marketing campaigns.

7 Email Campaign Essentials

To successfully execute on an email campaign requires the following steps:

1. Prerequisites

- A robust product offering and value proposition
- A sales process already established (so that you can convert the prospects into closed-won deals)

2. Ideation

- Objectives
- Offers
- Questions you will answer through the buyer's journey
- How to track the success

3. Planning

- Key messages for each email
- Evergreen content and landing pages required
- Content plan
- Timelines
- Opportunities for the additional leverage of the campaign assets via social media or advertising

4. List

- Clean, segmented list of contacts

5. Execution

- Email content
- Email software/platform setup
- Lists loaded
- Testing & QA

6. Reporting

- View reports and analyze

7. Follow Up

- ISR to follow up on leads that meet predefined criteria
- Sales to follow up on prospects

What's Next?

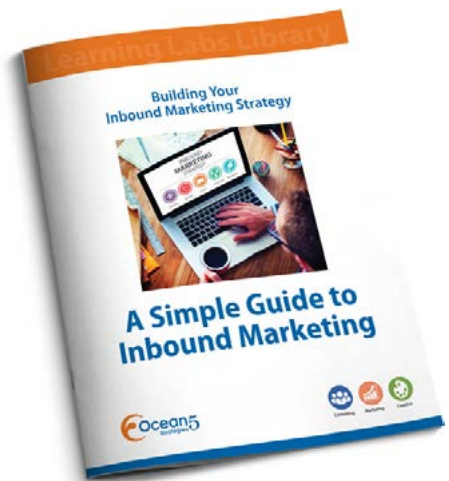
Now that you have discovered how to build successful email marketing campaigns, you may want to learn more about how to adapt and profit with today's shift in consumer buying behavior.

Internet technology has changed the way people and businesses buy. Inbound marketing allows you to get ahead of the curve and respond to this fundamental shift in buyer behavior—which keeps you ahead of the competition!

Learn More About:

- How inbound works
- Building a winning campaign plan
- Creating outstanding content

Get Your Copy Of [A Simple Guide to Inbound Marketing](#)
<http://bit.ly/5inboundguide>



Ocean 5 is an ROI-focused marketing company that creates and implements plans, strategies, and programs that deliver results.

Using a combination of nurturing programs, website development and optimization, content marketing, and continuous improvement, Ocean 5 has a record of demonstrating:

- 500% ROI
- 600% increase in client acquisition
- 218% increase in profit
- 216% increase in conversion rates

To learn more, contact us at:
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