

14 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.

#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).

*"My single biggest recommendation is the use of a monthly customer newsletter. Nothing, and I mean nothing, maintains your fence better."
Dan Kennedy*

#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.

#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. 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.

#9. 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.

#10. 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.)?

#11. 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.

#12. Measure performance

Engagement-based deliverability metrics, like open rates and clickthroughs, are increasingly important for email campaigns. Raising your level of engagement is the key to sales growth and increased response.

#13. 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 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.

#14. 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 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! If you need quality content or want your campaigns to be more effective and to stand out, contact us today. 740-824-4842.

Sources: Netatlantic, Constant Contact, Aweber, Sorrell Associates, LLC, Exact Target.