

As you prepare for 2016, take some time to think about the goals you'd like to achieve.

4 IMPORTANT GOALS TO CONSIDER FOR 2016:

1. Grow your email list

Your [email list](#) is one of your most valuable marketing resources.

These are people who opt-in to receive updates from your business. Many will be existing customers who have shopped at your store or done business with you in the past. Other people may be completely new to your business and signed up to learn more about you, your business, and how you can help them address a specific need or problem.

Things to consider.

- **Am I making it easy for people to sign up?** Growing an effective email list starts with making it easy for people to sign up in all the places they're interacting with you. You can collect email addresses in-person — using a [sign-up sheet](#) or [mobile device](#) — and also add new contacts online — by adding a [sign-up form](#) to your website and Facebook Page. ([Click here to see how we use a sign up form on our website](#))
- **Am I giving people a compelling reason to sign up?** Make sure your audience understands the value of signing up right from the start. What can they expect to receive? How often will they hear from you? What have other people enjoyed about receiving your emails?

2. Improve email open rates

Your open rate is one of the best metrics for measuring the effectiveness of your email marketing efforts.

Open rates let you know how many of the people who receive your emails are actually taking the next step to open and read the content you send out. The more people you get to open your emails, the more opportunities you'll have to drive business results.

Things to consider.

- **Are people looking forward to my emails?** You can get people to look forward to your email newsletter by providing high quality valuable content. Once people sign up, it's your responsibility to provide value in every email you send out. To put it simply — focus on sending emails that your audience will [thank you for sending](#).
- **Are my emails standing out in the inbox?** Standing out in a crowded inbox starts with recognition. Use a [consistent from name and from email address](#) in every message you send out. Also, craft a [compelling subject line](#) that catches your reader's attention and lets them know why they should click to open.

3. Increase email engagement

Hopefully you've taken steps to get more people to open your emails, but how can you tell if people are engaging with the content you send out?

One of the best ways to measure engagement is to look at your [click-through rates](#).

Click-through rates show you how many subscribers are engaging with your content and taking a desired action by clicking on links within your email.

Getting more people to engage with your emails could mean more traffic to your website or blog, more registrants for your next event, or a greater number of people acting on an offer.

If you want to boost email engagement in 2016, pay attention to these questions:

- **Am I making it easy for people to engage with my emails?** Design can play a major role in whether or not people will interact with the emails you send out. This is especially important for [readers on mobile](#) devices who will be less likely to engage with emails that are difficult to read on a smaller screen. Keep your message as focused as possible, with one [clear call to action](#) that you want them to take.
- **Am I providing a compelling reason to act?** If people aren't engaging with your emails, it may be because they aren't connecting with the content you send out. Take some time to look through your [click reports](#) to see which links are getting the most attention. This is a great way to see what your readers are most interested in.

4. Improve business results

At the end of the day, the success of your email marketing won't be measured solely by opens and clicks; it will be determined by the impact your efforts have on your business. Whether that impact comes in the form of more sales, new clients, or increased foot traffic — you should take steps to measure your results beyond the inbox.

As you move throughout 2016, there are a few important questions you'll need to ask yourself:

- **Am I setting the right goals for my emails?** Think about the [goal of your email](#) before you sit down to create it. In some cases, the goal will be a direct response — to drive sales, generate reservations, or bring more people into your store or office. In other cases, the goal will be focused on the long-term — to generate awareness, keep top of mind, improve loyalty, or increase referrals. With a goal in mind, you'll be able to make [smarter decisions about the content you decide to include](#).
- **Do I have an easy way to measure my results?** You'll also want to think about how you'll measure the results of your campaign beyond the inbox. For example, if you're including a coupon in your email to generate sales, you'll want to make sure you can track how many coupons have been redeemed. You also want to pay attention to how many of the people who redeemed the offer are existing customers, and which are new to your business.

Don't be afraid to start small.

Hopefully you've already seen the impact of an effective email marketing strategy.

As we continue into 2016, look for small things you can improve on in the days, weeks, and months ahead. Making tweaks to improve opens and clicks could mean more exposure for your business and more opportunities to turn readers into paying customers.

Let us know what goals you have in mind for the New Year. And don't forget — we're here to help!

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