

Creating and Tracking Successful Email Campaigns

CREATING & TRACKING SUCCESSFUL EMAIL CAMPAIGNS - The Shangri-la of Online Marketing

The Subject Line“Personalized emails boost open rates”, according to a MailerMailer study. “The email service provider found that personalized subject lines in particular increased the number of times recipients opened their mailings.” Now, I myself have often found that some pretty clever spammers somehow found my name and use it regularly to try to get me to open their “special offer” emails – so I’m leery of using names in subject lines. However, I have found that having a meaty subject line that is specific and clear and not “salesy” can lead to more emails being opened and read – and responded to...

“The Subject line is so important that even when marketers have recipients permission, the WRONG line can still mean trouble – since the from and subject lines are key elements that help recipients quickly decide whether the email is spam,” said David Hallerman of eMarketer.

A December 2006 study by the Email Sender and Provider Coalition and LPSOS confirmed how crucial “From” and “Subject” lines are – “About seven in to US internet users said they judged these lines when deciding whether to report an email as spam.” Yet even legitimate marketers confuse the issues by sending messages from different groups or individuals within their companies with various from and subject lines – making their email campaigns more likely to be flagged as spam by the recipient. Building a trusted relationship between sender and recipient will greatly increase the overall effectiveness of marketing spending – especially when there are links within email content that lead to a website with more information available.

Here are some easy subject line tips: • Be Unique but Descriptive – You want your message to stand out in a crowded “inbox” and make people curious about what you have to say without being too bizarre, For example, “Margarita Happy Hour Marks the Launch Of Marketing Campaign To ‘07 Law School Grads” – definitely unique but you get a sense of what the email will be about. This would probably be a press release of some sort. • Desirability Factor – A subject line that inspires the reader to find out how to achieve a specific result works well if you have a product or service that explains how to achieve a particular goal. For Example, “How To Write Effective Newsletter Copy” • Quick Results – A subject line that promises fast results tends to be hard to resist. For Example, “The Quickest Way to Build a Subscriber Database.” • Something Worth Mentioning– If your list is targeted (and it should be for the best results), you will have an understanding about what topics your readers will relate to and what they will not be interested in. If something happens in the press or society in general you feel that is worth commenting on or incorporating into your email message because you think your readers will be interested – don’t be afraid of mentioning it in your subject line. For Example, “Legal Industry is John McCain’s #1 source of Campaign Donations to Date – Attorneys are A Politically Active Group this year.” The Email might be about political issues related to the industry of your readers – and you might provide some upcoming events where they can get involved in their community, etc.

The key of successful subject lines is communicating that you have something of value that they will want to read or learn about - then delivering the value in the content of your email. The Follow Up When US customers say they are interested in a company – more than one half of them are open to getting an interactive follow up such as a personalized email or text message – and when they don’t receive a follow up – they are often confused or frustrated – which degrades the whole e-marketing process. Still – according to a 2006 Email Data Source study – “more than two thirds of companies do not send either a follow up or welcoming email or sales offer after their initial emails have been responded to”. For a small business owner – it can be tricky to make sure you follow up with everyone who reaches out to you – I have been guilty of it myself. This is one reason why putting a contact management system in place along with an email program that tracks responses and opens is so important – you can always go back and follow up with those customers that requested more information – even if you missed the initial email or phone call.

Nearly All e-mail marketers measure their campaigns but many do not use the results to support their budgeting goals. Though nearly all respondents in a survey conducted by EmailStatcenter.com said they measure results 24 to 48 hours after email deployment, fewer than one fifth said they measured their annual results or considered them in their budget forecasting for the next year. Still, at the end of 2007 more online marketers planned to increase their budgets for in-house email lists than for any other online ad tactic except for search marketing, according to MarketingSherpa. This means that spending on direct marketing email in the United States will hit \$600 million in 2008. Why? Because Email produces the highest response rate for lead generation and is generally the lowest cost way to run a campaign with the average ROI being \$45.65 for every dollar spent.

SENDING & TRACKING The days where you could send a single email and blind copy hundreds of other people are over – thank goodness. Email Service Providers – ESP’s – are companies that provide one or more of the following commercial e-mail services: • Improved Email Deliverability • Database and List Management • Email Template Design • Email Message and Content Creation • Tracking Reports • Advice and Consulting along with tutorials • Survey options • Graphs & Response charts for tracking survey responses and email opens • Unsubscribe services and spam filtering and alerts • Storage of your email lists and tracking bounced and blocked emails

They can assist you with template design of newsletters, promotions, announcements, press releases, invitations, greeting cards, business letters, etc.

Here are some ESP options that have good reputations, I use the first one. 1. Constant Contact (<http://www.constantcontact.com>) 2. Microsoft Office 2007 (<http://www.office.microsoft.com>) 3. Vertical Response

(www.verticalresponse.com 4. Exact Target (www.exacttarget.com))