

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO EMAIL MARKETING

A WHITE PAPER BY MIRABEL'S MARKETING MANAGER



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BENEFITS OF EMAIL MARKETING

Email marketing is a key digital strategy to sustain long-term relationships with your current customers and generate valuable leads. It effectively helps you push published content, analyze subscriber trends, and better understand your target audience through data like open and click-through rates, spam and unsubscribe reports, and conversions.

Here's why email marketing is extremely beneficial for every company:

- **It's cost-effective.** Email marketing is one of the most efficient and inexpensive options in digital marketing due to its high return-on-investment and lack of internal constraints. In fact, every dollar spent on email marketing generates an average ROI of \$38.
- **Email automation increases relevance and timeliness.** Don't worry about scheduling email campaigns or what to include in each digital newsletter. Email automation software takes care of that for you. This marketing tool allows you to set it and forget it with workflows. Workflows send relevant email content to the right audience based on their activity from your website. For example, if a new lead subscribes to product updates by filling out a form on your website, the automated workflow will send a thank you message to their inbox. Going forward, whenever a new product comes out, they'll be notified.
- **Email personalization improves response rates.** By using relevant data collected from your subscribers, you can strategize for more customized and relevant content marketing. When you account for these details, your leads are likely to feel nurtured and will want to take real action.
- **Actively measure email marketing metrics.** With the right software, like Mirabel's Marketing Manager, analytics measurement is effortless. See how subscribers interact with your emails via open, click-through, and conversion rates. This data ultimately allows you to determine what's working for your brand and where you need to fine-tune and make improvements.
- **Increase mobile marketing efforts with email.** Mobile marketing is vital to success in an increasingly digital marketplace. Email marketing is apt for mobile engagement and design, allowing brands to place messaging at the fingertips of their most valuable audience members: mobile users.



BENEFITS OF EMAIL MARKETING

4.5
BILLION

EXPECTED
EMAIL USERS
BY 2023

- [Statista](#)

92
PERCENT

ADULTS IN THE
U.S. CURRENTLY
USING EMAIL

- [Pew Research](#)

62
PERCENT

U.S. ADULT EMAIL
USERS WHO
CHECK AND SEND
EMAILS DAILY

- [Pew Research](#)



DEVELOPING YOUR EMAIL LIST

To get started with email marketing, you first need an audience. Your audience will determine the types of content you send out and how well your campaigns perform, so you want to make sure you source your email list with care. It's vital to remember that good things take time, and curating a solid email list doesn't happen overnight. Here's how you can begin developing the perfect audience for your email marketing efforts.

Boost readership with opt-in tactics

With opt-in email marketing, you can send marketing materials to individuals who've subscribed to your brand's content via a form on your website. Ways to get forms filled out include:

- **Using blogs, social media, and videos to showcase your brand's value.** If you answer questions and offer solutions to common problems that your leads experience, your content is valuable.
- **Ask for a potential subscribers' information without being too needy.** Place forms on highly visible and easily accessible parts of your website, including the home page.
- **Create exclusive content that can only be accessed by your subscribers.** Gated content, like ebooks, white papers, and guides, are great ways to captivate the interest of potential leads and gain email addresses.



DEVELOPING YOUR EMAIL LIST

Avoid cold emailing

Cold emailing and buying email lists from other companies is a risky traditional marketing strategy. It can lead to an inbox of unsolicited emails, an increased unsubscribe rate, phishing scams, and spam complaints.

Because of this, it can harm your online reputation with internet service providers like Gmail and Outlook. It can also lead to accidentally breaking laws set in place by the [CAN-SPAM Act](#). This legal act sets regulations for commercial messages and gives email recipients the right to unsubscribe. A company that disobeys these regulations can be subject to some incredibly steep fines.

Encourage forwarding

Forwarding emails to friends is the digital “word of mouth” of today. One of the easiest ways to expand your network and organically grow your audience is to encourage your subscribers to share your content with their network. If they’re interested in what you have to offer, they likely know a few more people who would be, too.

Include social sharing buttons and an “Email to a Friend” link in your marketing emails to assist in easily sharing content. It’s a great way to grow your reach and track whether your content connects with a wider audience.

Also include a “Subscribe” call-to-action at the bottom of your emails. This helps people receiving the forwarded emails easily opt-in and become a part of your email list.



DEVELOPING YOUR EMAIL LIST

When sending out content or offers, it's important to target subscribers who can benefit the most from your message. Who is most likely to read your latest blog on keyword research? Who is most likely to use that 20% discount code on boots? That's where segmentation comes in. Email recipients are more likely to open and engage with content that's customized to their specific needs and interests.

You can segment your email lists based on a variety of characteristics, including:

- New subscribers
- Website or social media activity
- Demographics
- Interests
- Shopping behavior

To gauge the effectiveness of your list segmentation efforts, you first need to understand the metrics that will quantify the success of your email campaigns or provide insights on what to improve upon next time around. These key performance indicators include open rate, click-through rate, bounce rate, delivery rate, click-to-open rate, unsubscribe rate, and number of spam complaints.



DEVELOPING YOUR EMAIL LIST

OPEN RATE

The percentage of the total number of subscribers who opened an email campaign. A healthy open rate is 20 to 40 percent in any industry.

CLICK- THROUGH RATE

The percentage of the total number of subscribers who clicked on at least one link in an email.

BOUNCE RATE

There are two types of bounces: soft and hard. A soft bounce means that an email address was valid but did not deliver to the mail server for temporary reasons, such as a full inbox. A hard bounce means the email failed to deliver for permanent reasons, such as the email address was invalid or doesn't exist. A zero percent hard-bounce rate is ideal.

DELIVERY RATE

Determined by dividing the number of sent emails minus the number of bounces by the number of sent emails.

CLICK- TO-OPEN RATE

Measures the performance of an email's content by comparing the number of subscribers who opened an email to the number that actually clicked on links in the email.

UNSUB- SCRIBE RATE

Measures the number of subscribers who opt out of email marketing during a singular campaign. An unsubscribe rate of one percent is industry standard.

SPAM COMPLAINT RATE

Measures how many subscribers reported your email as spam. A spam rate of 0.1 percent is ideal.



CREATING AN EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN

Let's take a closer look at how to create an effective email marketing campaign and what it takes to connect successfully with your target audience.

SET MEASURABLE GOALS FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN

CAPTURE ATTENTION VIA SENDER NAMES AND SUBJECT LINES

UTILIZE KEYWORDS IN USER-FRIENDLY CONTENT

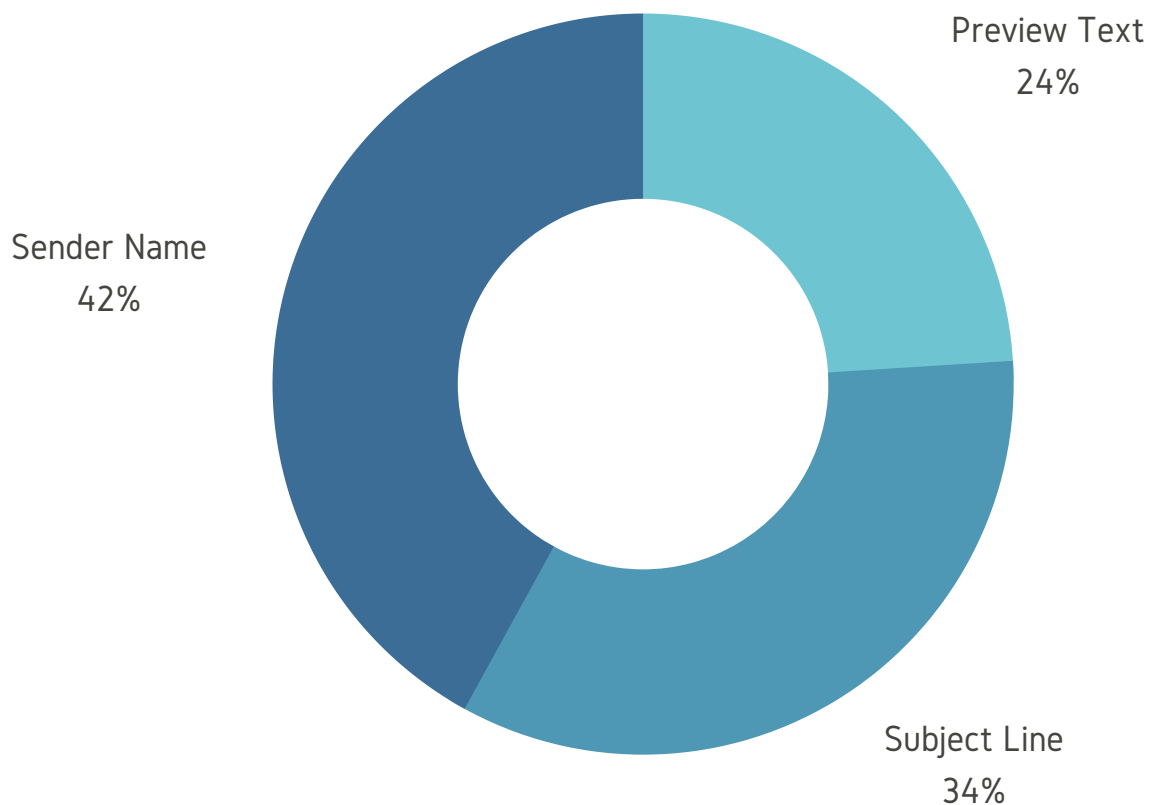
Before curating your email messaging, take the time to set measurable goals. Do you want to generate leads for an upcoming event? Are you trying to inform your audience of a new product or service? Are you educating your audience about your social corporate responsibility initiatives?

Setting **SMART** goals helps you determine an effective email marketing campaign strategy. Each goal you set for should be **s**pecific, **m**easurable, **a**chievable, **r**elevant, and **t**ime-based. By ensuring that your goals can be tracked and tested, you are setting a precedent for future marketing strategies that will be informed by clear and measurable information.



CREATING AN EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN

When Litmus asked 1,361 email users what's the first thing they look at when deciding to open an email, here were the results:



This isn't too surprising considering sender names, subject lines, and preview text are the first lines subscribers see in an email, especially in mobile inboxes. The split second it takes to read these few words determines whether they click to see the rest of your content. It's the ultimate test in determining if you are able to captivate your audience.

While what's interesting and effective constantly changes as digital strategies evolve, there are a few tried-and-true tactics you can employ to ensure your emails get the open rates you want.



CREATING AN EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN

SENDER NAME TIPS

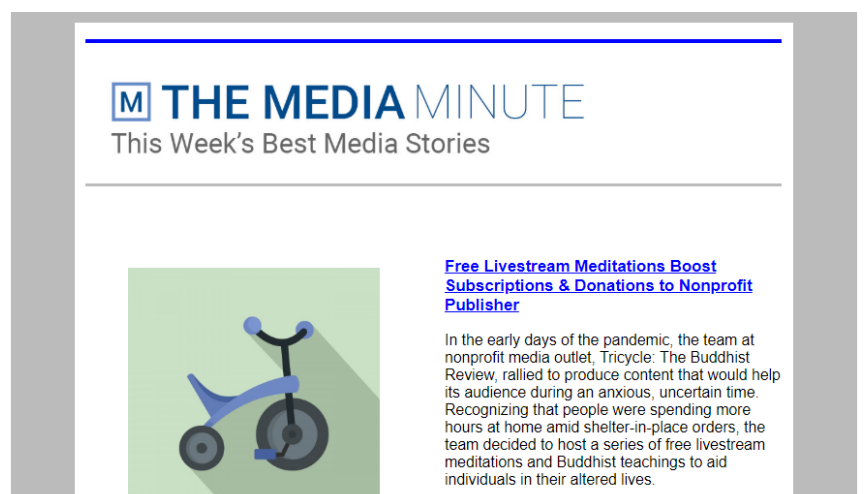
Sender names play a big role in creating trust between you and your target audience. Due to increased phishing scams and spam emails, people are more careful about who they open emails from.

- **Use a reputable name that's familiar to your target audience.** This could be the company's name or a recognizable employee with a helpful, trusted reputation, such as the president or CEO.
- **Avoid having "do not reply" in the sender name or sending address,** as your email could appear cold and insignificant. It also can backfire if your readers have support-related questions and need an easy way to contact you. The ability to reply directly to your email is easier than searching for contact information in the body of your email or on your website.
- **Use the title of a series or newsletter.** If one of your campaigns is a regular series or newsletter recognized by your readers, spare any confusion and continue to grab their attention by including the name of the series or newsletter as the sender.

At Mirabel Technologies, one of our most successful email campaigns is the Media Minute, a weekly newsletter that compiles our latest blogs, industry news, and more. Because the sender name is "The Media Minute," our digital audience can easily recognize the newsletter when it hits inboxes every week.



The Media Minute <marketing@mirabeltechnologies.com>
to me ▾



CREATING AN EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN

SUBJECT LINE TIPS

- **Keep your subject lines short and sweet.** When creating a subject line, prioritize getting to the point in as few words as possible. It's a call-to-action that sparks curiosity to keep reading. From emojis to fun facts, find out how to spice up your subject lines without compromising the integrity of your message or straying away from your brand.
- **Build trust and avoid misleading lingo or trigger words.** Email marketing builds trust between your brand and subscribers. If your readers feel like your content is "spammy" or misleading, you risk being reported, sent to the junk folder, and notching higher spam complaints and unsubscribes. Try this handy list to avoid the ultimate trigger words.
- **Pique interest by asking questions.** A great way to create a subject line is to think about how your offer could benefit someone and frame a question around that idea. Framing your brand as a solution to a question showcases the value that you have to offer your subscribers.
- **Utilize personalization tactics.** Personalization goes beyond including the recipient's name in the subject line of your email. Once you segment email lists, it's easy to customize email messages based on your target audience and their individual interests in your content.

With these marketing strategies in mind, a variety of resources are also available to help you fine-tune your campaigns. Tools like CoSchedule and Mizy test your subject lines before you hit send, while Mirabel's Marketing Manager provides a spam score that evaluates each campaign's sender name, subject line, and body content so you only deploy emails with the highest delivery potential.



CREATING AN EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN

BODY CONTENT TIPS

In the hierarchy of email content, body copy tends to rank the lowest, since it's only seen when the reader opens the email. However, it's important to keep in mind that spam filters look at everything, including elements of the body copy, such as keywords, prior to letting an email into inboxes.

Similar to subject lines and headers, body copy requires personalization tactics, simple and straightforward language, and a lack of spam trigger words. In addition to these strategies, here's how to optimize the body content of email campaigns:

- **Include images and a user-friendly design** that are eye-catching and complementary to your brand.
- **Remember that white space is not a waste of space.** White space helps to frame the rest of your content in an easy-to-read way.
- **Conclude your email with an effective call-to-action.** Opening and reading the email shouldn't have to be the end-all-be-all of the campaign. Include an effective call-to-action to make it easy for a reader to continue digesting your content.
- **Include company contact information to comply with legal regulations.** Most often found in the footer of an email, company contact information needs to include a physical address and phone number.
- **Provide an easy way for users to unsubscribe from your mailing list.** Along with contact information, the footer is usually where readers find an unsubscribe option. Provide an "unsubscribe here" link for readers who want to opt out.

Building a successful email marketing campaign takes goal-setting and strategy. The components of your email campaign should always complement each other, coming together to form a message that increases your chance to make an impression on your digital audience.



THE DOS AND DON'TS OF DELIVERABILITY & SENDER REPUTATION

A vital element of successful email marketing is deliverability, which is when your email successfully arrives in your subscriber's inbox. Deliverability is not to be confused with delivery, which is simply getting past an email server. A delivered email could end up in a spam folder.

So, how does one ensure deliverability? With a good sender reputation, of course. Your sender reputation can be evaluated based on your IP address, which is the unique number attached to your internet-connected device, or your domain, which is the unique name of your website that subscribers type in to access your content. The IP reputation is often the reputation of your email service provider's server, but the domain reputation is solely your responsibility.

To bolster your domain reputation, do:

- Monitor your email engagement metrics, especially bounce rates and spam complaints. The lower the number, the better for you.
- Set up a sender policy framework (SPF) to protect your domain from being fraudulently used and subsequently classified as spam. SPF allows your domain to be connected to a specific IP address. These all live in a directory of sorts called the domain name server (DNS). When you send an email, inbox providers consult the DNS to verify that the email is definitely from your domain. If the IP associated with the sending domain doesn't match what the DNS has, per your SPF, the email in question will either be rejected completely or sent to the spam folder.
- Implement DomainKeys Identified Mail (DKIM), an authentication process that boosts deliverability by helping to confirm an email has come from the domain it claims to be from. This is similar to an SPF, but rather than being affiliated with an IP address, a domain gets assigned a digital signature (read: unique encrypted key private to the sender). Receiving inboxes then search the DNS for a public key matching the sender's private one. If the keys match, the email in question has not been tampered with in transit and is safe to enter the inbox.



THE DOS AND DON'TS OF DELIVERABILITY & SENDER REPUTATION

To bolster your domain reputation, do not:

- Buy email lists. Sending emails to those who didn't give you permission to do so is a great way to annihilate your sender reputation. Not only do you risk getting marked as spam repeatedly, you risk ending up in a spam trap. Spam traps are fake email addresses that look real. They're used to catch spammers and unsuspecting marketers who buy email lists to unnaturally grow their subscribers. Sending an email to a spam trap will get you automatically classified as spam.
- End up on a blacklist. Yes, it's as bad as the name implies. Blacklists are collections of domains and IP addresses that have been noted for being spammy. How does one get classified as spammy? Well, someone could use your domain to send spam emails, which is why a sender policy framework is great to implement. You could also get caught in the aforementioned spam trap. Recovering from being blacklisted is possible, but it's not easy.

