



ELEVATING YOUR EMAIL MARKETING



STARTING AT 1,000 FEET

Measuring Your Results

The Major Stats

- **Open Rate** – The percent of people who received your email and opened it
 - An Open Rate above 20% is solid
- **Click Rate** – Percent of people who received your email and clicked a link in it
- **Email List Size** – The number of emails on your list
- **Bounces** – The email addresses which didn't get your email
 - Hard Bounce – The email address is incorrect or can't be delivered
 - Soft Bounce – The email address isn't receiving emails at the time. Mailbox is full, etc.

Improving Your Metrics – Open Rates

- Improve your subject line (we'll get to this!)
- Add/edit preview text
- Improve your content
- Test different timing to find the best times to email
- General timing guidance
 - Mid-week days (Tues – Thurs) are best with higher conversion rates on Friday
 - Mid-day times (10am to 2pm) are best
 - Note: Optimal times may shift depending on your audience

Improving Your Metrics – Click Rate

- Use powerful Call-to-Action language
- Reduce the number of links in your email
- Try incorporating buttons and other enticing design
- Segment your audience based on interest (we'll get to this too!)

Let's Talk About Spam

Ending Up in Junk Mail

- Two ways to be flagged as SPAM:
 - Automated SPAM filters – this can be difficult to control
 - People manually flagging you – this is something you can control
- Make sure your audience has opted in to receive your email!
- Be on the up-and-up
- Use well supported email marketing solutions or platforms

Why You May Get Flagged as SPAM

- Your email is missing information
 - Your organization's physical address – legally required
 - Unsubscribe link – make this easy!
- Low engagement rates – this one-pager will help!
- High amount of bounces in your list
- You email too infrequently, and your subscribers may forget who you are
- Perceived misleading subject line or from address
- You used SPAM trigger words – these are common, so just don't overuse
- Test your emails using [IsNotSpam.com](https://isnotspam.com) or other services

BEST PRACTICES

Get Organized!

- If newsletters always sneak up on you...
- If stopping to make newsletters feels like an interruption...
- If you find yourself rushing and typos slip through...
- If your open rate and click through rate are stagnant...
- ... *Then getting organized is the answer!*

First, What are Your Marketing Goals?

- Fundraising
 - Donor Relations
 - Event Promotion
- Issue Advocacy
- Community Organizing
- Public Education
- Promoting Your Work, Reports or Events

(You'll probably have more than one goal!)

Build an Editorial Calendar for Email Marketing

- Incorporate your goals into an editorial calendar
- Keep your value proposition in mind
- Start with existing events: galas, report releases, announcements, conferences, holidays, Earth Day, etc.
- Fill in the gaps with regularly scheduled content:
 - Donor relations
 - Stories highlighting your impact
 - Blog highlights
 - Series on advocacy or education topics

Editorial Calendars

- First Rule: Make your calendar fit your capacity, not the other way around! It's okay to NOT send an email
- Regular Sections – create a sub-calendar for these. Examples:
 - Once-a-month “Notes from the Field” section
 - “Tips from an Expert” section
 - “Questions Answered” section
- Can you involve other staff – regular, scheduled contributions?

- Leverage your blog's editorial calendar
- Don't fatigue your list
- You don't have to tie your newsletters to a day of the month

Day-By-Day Production Schedule

- Make this clear to the whole team and note dependencies
 - Create your schedule starting with your delivery date
 - When is the outline done and who approves it?
 - Who is writing what?
 - Who is picking, designing and placing the visual collateral?
 - Where is the collateral coming from and who is making it?
 - Who is editing, and when? (Must have at least one other pair of eyes!)
 - Who gives the final go-ahead?

Improving Your Subject Lines

The Elevator Pitch for Your Email

Improving Subject Lines

- Don't sound like a marketer, sound like a friend
- Use action-oriented language
- Be succinct – most enticing info should be upfront in the first 50 characters
- Be clear before being cute or clever
- Use segmenting to personalize subject lines
- Test your subject lines with A/B testing

Segmenting Your List

Segmenting: Dividing your audience into separate lists using your email marketing solution

- Can you have too many segments? Probably not.
- Segment based on the following:
 - Contact source
 - Donor levels
 - Relationship to your organization
 - Interests
 - Location
 - Statistics (open rates, clickthrough rates)

Use Segments to...

- Improve open rates and clickthrough rates
- Shift messaging to fit the audience
- Shift asks to fit the audience
 - Great for fundraising
- Leverage elements of your audience for different purposes
 - Great for organizing and advocacy
- Test your strategies – A/B Tests
- Clean your lists

How to Segment Your Lists

- Look up instructions for your Email Marketing Solution or CRM
 - Your customer service department may walk you through how to segment
- Often these use “if/then” and “and/or” statements
- Start with larger, general groupings and then go specific
- Start fresh with new contacts by dividing them into segments when uploading them to your list
- Check your work:
 - Download each segmented list and check your work using Excel’s Conditional Formatting commands to check for duplicates
 - Pick well-known contacts and check where they land

Cleaning Your List

Why to Clean Your Lists

- It can save money! You may be able to get under list-size thresholds
- May keep you out of SPAM folders because you reduce bounces and increase the percent of your audience that engages with your email
- It is an opportunity to re-engage your audience
- Improve your statistics so you have a more accurate read on your campaigns’ performance
- Get a better read on your email marketing impact to adjust strategy
- Be efficient by pairing your cleaning efforts to your new segmentation efforts

How to Clean Your Lists

- Filter your list by the date of the email last opened
- Separate those who haven’t opened in a long time (One year? Six months? This will depend on your list)
 - Email these people a series of emails (aka a “Drip Campaign”) to see if they’re still interested and what may have left them uninterested
 - Send lapsed donors a personalized email from your own account to re-engage them

- Separate out those who are still “live” but haven’t opened recently (Two months? A quarter?) and send a series of emails to re-engage them. Ask what they’re interested in or why they may have stopped opening your emails!

Welcome Emails

Retain those hard-won emails!

- Have at least one evergreen email prepared to use for every contact that comes to you through the usual channels!
 - Automate this if possible – Create a Drip Campaign with a series of automated welcome emails
- Your welcome email should match your tone, but be light
- Put your best foot forward – highlight your value proposition
- Some elements you may want to include:
 - How to contact your team
 - The biggest news of the last quarter
 - How often you’ll email
 - What exciting content can they expect
 - Link to your email archive

Welcome Emails – Sourced Acquisitions

- Acknowledge the source of the list! For instance, if they are from a conference or petition, then mention that source so they remember where they “met” you. (Don’t forget to segment each source)
- Consider this as a sales email and your newsletter content is the product
 - What’s the most exciting part?
 - What do they get that they can’t get elsewhere?
- Consider creating a Drip Campaign with each email in the series providing something exciting

Overhaul Your Templates

Email Templates

Benefits of Overhauling Your Templates

- SAVES TIME in the long run
- Ensures you don’t go too long
- Allows for regularly scheduled content to have a place
- Enables you to quickly update all emails going forward
- Enables you to be more creative and easily swap around content
- Allows anyone at the organization to take up the work when needed

Difficulties

- May take some understanding of HTML and CSS to create/update templates
- Upfront expenditure of time

Templates Rules of Thumb

- Be simple!
- Single-column newsletters are recommended
- Put your branding front and center
- Leverage your email builder's CSS (aka styling) tools to set these elements: Colors, Fonts, Headers, Backgrounds, Footers and Footer Content
- Fully use your email builder's Drag and Drop or Block elements
- Use placeholder text and photos to see what each element looks like
- Include styling for regularly scheduled sections or content
- Include call-to-action buttons
- Have a footer that includes required elements
- Be mobile optimized – your email builder should be already!

A Note About Email Length

Email clients, like Google's Gmail, will cut off emails that are too long

- Newsletters are made up of two elements:
 - The HTML and CSS coding that designate the email's styling (color, font, shapes...)
 - The content itself
- The HTML and CSS are "hidden" but the code can be very long

Solutions

- Start Templates from scratch with simple CSS created by your email builder
- Test your template by sending it with extra placeholder text to a Gmail account. Then cut back if you run too long

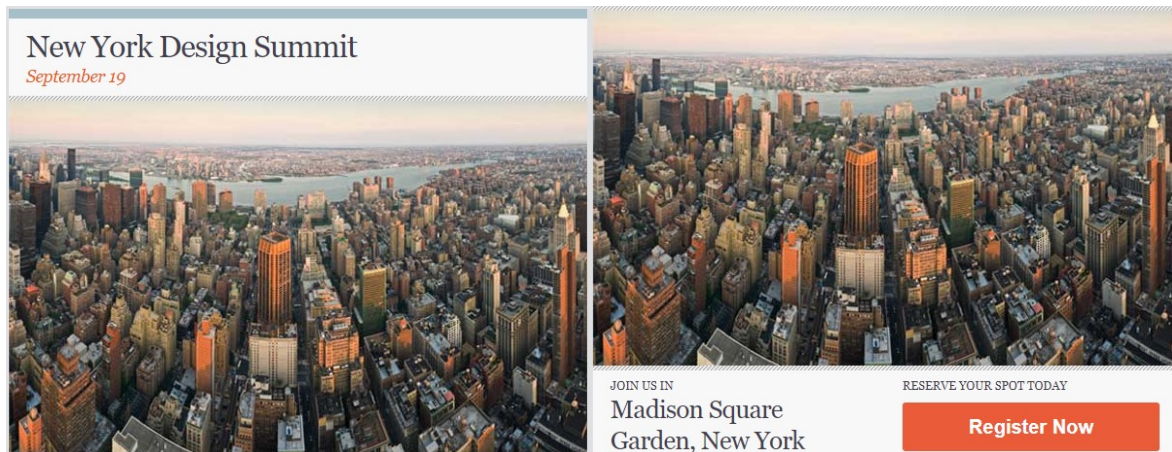
What to Include in Your New Template

- Style your regularly scheduled content to set it off and save you time
 - Examples: include a headshot for an expert's column, fun bullets for weekly tips, specific styling to highlight tweets, etc.
- Section dividers
- Include varied-content types and stylings
 - Image Hero with Header and Paragraph
 - Two-Column options
 - Social Media feature

- Quote Block
- Statistics Block
- Promotional Sections

Examples from Mail Chimp below

Header Image Options



Input caption text here. Use the block's Settings tab to change the caption position and set other styles.

Header Text

The New York Summit provides email senders and receivers from around the world a unique opportunity to come together and discuss that thing we emailed you about. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

Another Button

Image with Header

- Main stories
- Full-width images without text
- Caption
- CTA button

Text Options

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- Full Name

Header Text

The New York Summit provides email senders and receivers from around the world a unique opportunity to come together and discuss that thing we emailed you about. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

Another Button

Two-Column Options

- Pair image with text
- Swap columns for variation
- Use variable width columns for differentiation
- Get creative with content
- Make a gallery

Header Text

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Caption 1234

Another Button

OPENING THE HOOD

Merge Tags, HTML and CSS

HTML and CSS

- You don't need to know these coding languages, but some fluency does wonders
 - W3schools.com – an excellent resource for learning HTML and CSS
 - Lynda.com – great training that you can typically access for free through your library
- HTML and CSS elements that you'll commonly use:
 - Headers: H1 vs. H2 vs. H3
 - Links: `foodprint.org`
 - Font styles set inline: `<p style="font-color:#e3e3e3; font-size:24px;">Insert Text Here</p>`
 - Images: ``
 - Breaks and carriage returns: `
` vs. `<p></p><p></p>`
Try holding down Shift + Return to eliminate the extra spacing
 - How lists work: `Bullet 1Bullet 2`

Merge Tags

- Merge Tags are automated coding created by your email builder
- The most common example would be including a first name of each contact in the salutation of the email
- Can be risky to use unless you are 100% confident that each contact's info is correct

RESOURCES

Helpful Guides and Posts:

- [11 Sure-Fire Ways to Increase Email Click-Through Rates](#) – HubSpot
- [10 Ways to Improve Email Open Rates](#) – OptInMonster
- [The 6-Step Secret Sauce for Awesome Email Subject Lines](#) – HubSpot
- [11 Reasons Why Your Emails Go in the Spam Box](#) – OptInMonster

SPAM Testers:

- [IsNotSpam.com](#)
- [Litmus](#)

List of [SPAM Trigger Words](#) via HubSpot

HTML & CSS Training:

- [W3schools.com](#) – an excellent resource for learning HTML and CSS
- [Lynda.com](#) – great training that you can typically access for free through your library



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