



# how to

execute successful  
email campaigns



...JUST ASK EXPERIAN

Email marketing can be a powerful tool for finding new customers and building long-term, lucrative relationships. But getting it wrong can mean your recipients could unsubscribe from your emails or you could be marked as spam. To give you a helping hand, here's our quick guide to the basics.



## What can email marketing do for my business?

Email marketing is one of the most cost effective ways for a business to attract new customers and enhance relationships with them. With the right strategy and know-how, it can be a powerful tool through which you can build brand loyalty and repeat business with your customers and potential prospects. Unlike traditional direct mail, the advantage is that you'll be able to track results and work out your return on investment (ROI) almost straightaway.



## Who should I target with my email marketing?

Targeting your own customers is a good place to start. Open the conversation with something as simple as a newsletter, updating them on what's new at your business. For good measure, include relevant people from your address books who aren't customers yet. Additionally you could consider buying a list of email addresses from a reputable supplier who look like your best customers. In all cases, remember that no one likes to receive messages that are irrelevant to them. Your messaging must be as specific as possible to your readers' needs.

**72%**

**of companies rate email as an excellent return on investment\***



## How can I ensure my targets are good potential customers?

Quality is always better than quantity. Your data should be as accurate as possible to maximise relevance and minimise emails that cannot be delivered. Crucially, this will also help reduce the chances of your readers unsubscribing which means you won't be able to send emails to them again by law.

A positive response doesn't always mean a reply or a phone call as a result of your email. Through the use of email marketing systems, you can also check on who opened your message, or if the recipient was interested enough to click through to your website.

If you plan on sending hundreds or thousands of emails, you almost certainly need to purchase email data. Question the provider on how reliable the lists are, and make sure they are updated or screened regularly. You should also consider using a credit reference agency to check each business' financial status to be doubly sure.

\*Email Marketing Concensus 2011, Econsultancy

**...JUST ASK EXPERIAN**



# 17%

of potential revenue can be lost  
by using poor quality data\*\*



## How do I build a great email campaign?

**There are four main stages to an email marketing campaign – planning, buying data, creating emails and evaluating feedback. We've already touched briefly on the first two; here is the process in more detail.**

### 1. Planning

Planning is everything. The first thing to do is lay out the objectives of your email campaign. Whether you're doing it to get new customers, get more business from existing customers, raise awareness or something else, setting out clear objectives will help determine who you need to talk to, what you want to tell them, and what you want them to do as a result.

The content of your emails is also important in the planning stage. The best ideas are often those that come from putting yourself in your customers' shoes. What would they find interesting or compelling? These are key considerations that will help drive better response rates by making your messages as relevant to your recipients as possible. It also helps to plan out interesting articles or offers at least a few issues in advance. Doing this will help keep your readers interested by delivering varied content throughout your campaign.

### 2. Buying data

If you don't have enough email addresses to mail now, there are lots of companies online who will sell data, but with the competitiveness of the market, the results can vary from the good, to the dismal. Good lists are constantly checked and updated to give you a 'clean' set of emails to work with. Bad lists are often compiled without due diligence and sometimes even through automatic 'harvesting' methods, which can lead to undelivered messages, or worse still, complaints against your business.

That's why it's vital to check the source of the provider's data, how often it is cleaned and what portion of the lists are safe to use. A better provider will be able to model your best customers and give you prospects with the same characteristics. Some can even pre-screen data to make sure the people you're targeting don't have a bad credit rating.

### 3. Creating emails

When creating emails, it's really important to think about how you're going to send them. Gone are the days of

sending marketing emails from Outlook, or your desktop. Email marketing tools are widely available on the web. Should you choose to use one, research them thoroughly, because the cost can range from nothing to thousands of pounds. Many of these come with pre-designed templates so you can make your emails look attractive, and some also include tools to create your own email by dragging and dropping text and images.

Keep your emails short and snappy, grabbing readers attention and encouraging them to click through links to relevant pages on your website. You can also try including links to surveys to find out more about your customers. Most of all, make sure you give them the option to opt out or unsubscribe to your emails as this is required by law.

Make your brand visible so your readers recognise who you are so that they are comfortable interacting with your business. Subject lines can also play an important part in the success of your campaign. As a general rule, avoid writing them like advertisements. Simply tell them what to expect when they open the message. This way, you'll reduce the chances of being marked as spam at first glance.

### 4. Evaluating feedback

Once you've planned, created and sent your emails, you need to evaluate the results so that you can identify any problems. There are several indicators of success you need to consider for a full picture of what's working and what isn't, including the number of people who open your email, the number of those who clicked on links in the message, how many bounced and who unsubscribed. Again, all this is made easier with the use of well-developed email marketing tools, which are designed to give you detailed reports as part of the package.

Evaluation will also help you work out how your revenue is affected by the amount of time and money spent on email marketing. Conversion rates (the number of potential customers converting into actual revenue against number of emails sent) for instance give you an idea of how relevant your messages are, and whether you need make changes to targeting or messaging.

\*\*Guide to B2B Email Marketing, Experian

# ...JUST ASK EXPERIAN



### How do I get in touch?

To find out more about how Experian can help your business, please visit [www.experian.co.uk/small-business](http://www.experian.co.uk/small-business)

### Look out for our other guides on...

- How to find finance more easily
- How to improve your credit score
- How to manage your cashflow
- How to check out your suppliers
- How to recruit good people without risk
- How to find customers with spending power
- How to drive customers to your website

© Experian 2011

The word "EXPERIAN" and the graphical device are trade marks of Experian and/or its associated companies and may be registered in the EU, USA and other countries. The graphical device is a registered Community design in the EU.

All rights reserved.

**...JUST ASK EXPERIAN**