

Guide to B2B Email Marketing

Part two : A guide to buying email data





Introduction

Email marketing drives powerful results. Recent statistics show that for every \$1 spent, it gives a return of \$44.¹ That's a Return On Investment (ROI) that can't be matched by any other form of online marketing. Messages can be created and sent in days rather than weeks and leads can be generated in just minutes.

So it's safe to say, that purchasing high quality email data is going to be a sound investment. It increases your reach, enhances your targeting and ultimately boosts the results of your email campaigns.

So how do you make sure that your email data is high quality?

In this guide, we are going to cover ten key questions that you should be asking your email data provider to ensure that your investment gets the best results possible.

1. Where do they source their email data from?
2. How often is the data verified and how?
3. What portion of the database is safe to email?
4. What selection tools can I use?
5. Can I remove high risk businesses?
6. How often is the data cleansed?
7. Can they cleanse my current data and append email data?
8. Can they supply me with email prospects that have the same characteristics as my best customers?
9. How do I receive my data and will it be secure?
10. How is it priced?

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Where do you source your email data from?

The phrase 'quality over quantity' has never been more pertinent! Before you invest in email data, it's absolutely key that you can be confident in its quality. You need to know that the data has been sourced compliantly and that it has been verified. Out of date or incorrect information will not only lessen the impact of your campaign but could even result in it being non-compliant and lead to fines and reputational damage. You should ideally see at least one reputable source to ensure optimum coverage.

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When and how do you verify the data?

Ideally you want to purchase data that is up to date. This means that your marketing is more likely to reach relevant businesses who fall within your target market. A sign of out of date details can be a high email bounce rate (indicating email gone aways). The last thing you want is to waste valuable budget marketing to businesses that no longer exist!

It is therefore useful to know how often your data supplier checks and verifies their records.

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What proportion of the data is safe to email?

In order to simplify your own compliance requirements, it makes sense to ensure up front that the data you are purchasing is fully compliant for the purposes of your email campaign. This means that you only have to include opt-out subscription clauses in your communications, without worrying about the legal status of your business leads.

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What selection tools can I use?

Email marketing is at its most powerful when you are able to target your ideal clients. That is, those who you already know will be most likely to purchase from you due to their interests, their demographics or previous buying behaviour.

When you select a data provider, it's important that their database is flexible enough for you to refine the data for your own needs and to fit your own target market.

Applying these filters gives your campaigns more depth and precision and your email marketing, a better ROI.

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Can I remove high risk businesses?

Finding potential clients that fit your target market isn't the only filtering that's required for a truly successful email campaign. You also need to identify those businesses who may expose you to bad debt. A reputable data provider will offer the ability to remove any businesses that are classed as maximum risk with a high likelihood of business failure in the next twelve months.

After all, spending your marketing budget on businesses that won't exist next year is as fruitless as spending it on those that don't exist today.

Where possible, you should also include factors such as payment performance trends, showing how quickly (or not) a business settles its invoices and the number of County Court Judgments (CCJs) that have been registered against them over the last year.

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How often is the data cleansed?

In B2B markets, sectors with high job turnover can see contact data decay rates as high as 70 percent per year². With data going out of date this fast, it's vital that your data supplier is checking and cleansing their data regularly. Recent research by Royal Mail shows that businesses are losing around 6 percent of their revenue due to poor data³ so data cleansing is definitely worth the investment.

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Can you cleanse my current data and append email data?

A 'single customer view' is the dream for any business when it comes to managing their data. If your data supplier can cleanse your current data AND provide up to date email addresses, then this will help you to deliver the best results for your next integrated campaign. It's also worth considering what other useful data can be added to your existing records. Perhaps named contact details, market intelligence information such as financial data or employee numbers or other data that can help you to segment and target your audience more effectively.

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Can you supply me with email prospects that have the same characteristics as my best customers?

By modelling the characteristics of customers that already perform well for you, you will of course further enhance the success of your campaign. Your data provider should be able to provide you with new prospects which match the characteristics of your best customers, allowing you to maximise your ROI.

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How do I receive my data and will it be secure?

Personal data must always be kept and transferred securely. Your data supplier will usually transfer your data to you by encrypted File Transfer to ensure that the details can only be accessed with secure login and password details.

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How is it priced?

As with any purchase or investment, you will want to understand the costs and terms up front. Be sure you find out;

- How many times you may use the emails
- Exactly what information you get for the cost
- Whether the customers can be followed up with by telephone or direct mail – and how much that additional data would cost
- Whether there are any restrictions which may increase the cost
- Whether there is any refund for bounce backs

Sources:

1. [campaignmonitor.com blog 'email marketing stats you need to know'](http://campaignmonitor.com/blog/email-marketing-stats-you-need-to-know/)
2. https://blogs.informatica.com/2016/08/03/customer-data-decay-why-your-contact-data-is-rotten/#fbid=a1CoZ5_GGwx
3. <https://www.marketingweek.com/2016/12/01/poor-data-costing-brands/>



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