

10 TIPS

To Improve Your B2B Email Marketing Effectiveness

By Adam Holden-Bache

When using email to market your business to another business, it's natural to want to develop campaigns that showcase the professional side of your organization. The challenge for most B2B marketers is to appear professional while creating messaging that engages and promotes an actionable response by their target audiences. Here are a few tips that should help you to generate more opens, clicks, and conversions on your next B2B email campaign.

1 ☐ Have a goal (and make it obvious).

Having a goal seems like a no-brainer, but many email campaigns fall short when it comes to having purpose. Your emails must be focused on achieving your business goal. And the goal should be obvious to you and your recipients. Remember: without a goal you can't achieve success.

2 ☐ Provide a clear path to conversion.

How many times have you opened an email that interested you but found it was unclear what you should do? There was no obvious link or call to action. And if you managed to find a link and click-through, the website was a dead end. Avoid this scenario as much as possible by being direct about what you want readers to do. Draw their attention to the clickable content, and make sure that after they click, your landing page or website offers a clear path to conversion.

3 ☐ Put your offer AND call-to-action above the fold.

Most email recipients only see the top part of the email in their inboxes, especially users on mobile devices. If you have a lot of content, make sure you state your offer and provide a call-to-action at the top of the email message. In many cases it's best to place your offer and call-to-action (CTA) at the top of the email, and then below that provide supporting content. At the bottom of the email, re-state your offer and CTA. With both placements, recipients who have read through the email can take action by clicking the bottom links, while those who were immediately interested can click through using the links at the top.

4 ☐ Make your email scannable.

Email recipients seldom read every word in an email from top to bottom. Eighty percent of readers scan emails for content that catches their attention. Prepare your email so that key messages stand out. Break apart your copy. Use headers and subheaders. Use bold copy, bullets, and lists. Add color or create whitespace to lead the reader's eye to your most important content.

5 ☐ Use a preheader.

A preheader is a short text summary that displays after the subject line when an email is viewed in the inbox. It is taken from the first lines of copy found in the email. Many mobile, desktop, and web email clients provide preheaders, so recipients get a glimpse of what the email contains before they open it. Because most senders do not add a preheader, what typically displays is "view this email as a web page" or a similar message. Marketers that include an interesting preheader will provide another reason for recipients to open their emails.

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□ Plan for a mobile audience.

Did you know that over 50 percent of your emails are probably read on a mobile device? A 35-40 percent open rate on smartphones and tablets is now commonplace. Make

your emails mobile friendly by minimizing content, using links and large buttons with plenty of padding (so they are touch-friendly on small screens), and using responsive email templates that dynamically adjust to the size of their viewing environment.

□ Always be collecting data (the ABCD rule).

Your email marketing efforts are only as good as your list, and a larger list will give you more opportunities for success. Up to one-third of your email list will go bad every year due to changed or expired addresses, so always collect opt-in data whenever and wherever you can. Place email opt-in forms in multiple locations on your website, at offline and online events, at trade shows, at point of sale, on social channels, and anywhere else appropriate. Request data wherever you can in order to grow a quality list.

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□ Test, test, and test again.

What? You're not testing? Well, it turns out not many B2B marketers are. So on your next campaign test something. Anything. Try two different

subject lines or two different offers. Try a different layout, or test personalization. And remember that the point of testing is to increase performance to help you achieve your business goal.

□ Show you're human.

Business transactions are made by people, and relationships matter in business. A relationship can trump price or features when a buyer is making a purchasing decision. Even in B2B emails, you should show that a person is behind your messages. Try using a person's name instead of your business name as the sender. Add a personal greeting. Add a personal photo. Write the email like you'd speak in person. Be clear, helpful, and concise. Be human.

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□ Analyze your results.

An email campaign doesn't end when you hit the send button. Reviewing campaign performance is a

must for any serious B2B marketer. Good marketers will evaluate campaign performance, understand how it performed against business goals, and use what they've learned from campaign analytics to improve their future marketing efforts.

What makes'm an expert:



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Adam Q. Holden-Bache is CEO and managing director of Mass Transmit, a B2B email marketing agency. Mass Transmit provides email marketing tools, services, and expertise. Adam's forthcoming book, *How To Win At B2B Email Marketing: A Guide To*

Achieving Success, will be available in early 2015. Visit b2bemailmarketingbook.com to pre-order, view a sample chapter, and opt-in for email updates. All pre-orders will receive a signed copy of the book.