

EFFECTIVE EMAILS

Etiquette

- ✓ There are many unwritten rules and pitfalls to watch out for when writing emails
- ✓ Email is not a good medium for long-form content – it's generally better to keep emails short and to the point
- ✓ Always use a polite greeting, and also end your emails with an appropriate closing
- ✓ HTML formatting will often look different depending on the client used by the reader – to ensure emails look good and are perfectly readable everywhere, use only the bare minimum of formatting
- ✓ If you're sending out an email with attachments, make sure you've compressed them and that they are below 5 MB in total
- ✓ If you include images in your email, make sure they're small and fast to download, and also that your email looks good even with images disabled (which is the default in many clients)
- ✓ Make sure your From: field is properly setup to show your name
- ✓ When sending cold emails, do whatever you can to look like you're sending a personal message, not mass-sending it to everyone you can find
- ✓ If you run a newsletter, be careful about emailing too often, but also don't let too much time pass between each message – the optimal frequency is usually somewhere in the middle

The Subject

- ✓ The best performing subject lines are 50 characters or less in length
- ✓ Simple, straightforward subject lines with a hint of what's inside usually work well; try to avoid hype and sounding overly promotional
- ✓ If you can personalize it, without resorting to inserting the recipient's name (doesn't work well anymore), then you can achieve great open rates
- ✓ A question in the subject line is often quite effective
- ✓ Controversy and scarcity techniques can work very well to increase open rates, but the actual email content also needs to match the promises made in the subject line
- ✓ Always split test subject lines and look at your stats to find out what works best

The Body

- ✓ Shorter content is almost always better – people don't have time or patience to read long emails
- ✓ Always strive to deliver something you know is valuable for the subscriber
- ✓ Beginning your email with the most exciting, interesting or valuable bit is a good way to “hook” readers and keep them reading
- ✓ Try to stay relevant to the interests of your subscribers and don't let your content stray too far from what they expect
- ✓ Using simple, direct language and writing in a casual manner is almost always better than being overly formal and impersonal

Call to Action

- ✓ Your call to action should be consistent with your subject line and body – your entire email should be constructed with the desired action in mind for best results
- ✓ Simple wording and an offer that's easy to understand are both key elements in a good call to action
- ✓ Don't stare yourself blind on your click-through rate; also consider whether conversions increase or decrease when you change your call to action
- ✓ Buttons are usually better than plain links to draw people's attention
- ✓ You can include more than one opportunity for readers to take action, it doesn't have to be just one big button at the end of the email

Mistakes to Avoid

- ✓ Probably the most common mistake people make with newsletters is not sending them out at regular intervals
- ✓ Keep in mind that you're far from the only person in your reader's inbox, and act accordingly
- ✓ Not adding enough value is an extremely common mistake that causes users to unsubscribe, report you as spam or simply delete your messages on arrival
- ✓ Don't try to hide the unsubscribe links – people will just report you as a spammer
- ✓ You absolutely have to make sure your emails are mobile-friendly

- ✓ Don't start selling solo ads or doing ad swaps without knowing exactly what you're doing – it can be a quick way to burn your list