

Email Trends That Will Make You Money, Or Take It Away

By Joshua Rose

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Want to know the most important factor people look at to determine whether or not to open your all-important email?

Chances are it's not what you think. At least I was a bit surprised.

Bouncing addresses, sp*m filters, and inbox competition have raised the bar for all of us. While permission-based email marketing is still the web's #1 sales tool, and will remain so for the foreseeable future, we all need to pay careful attention to the rapid developments in this dynamic area, or risk being left far behind.

AN IMPORTANT STUDY FOR YOUR BOTTOM LINE

According to DoubleClick's 2002 Consumer Email Study, what then IS the most important factor consumers look at in determining whether to even open your email?

Surprise, although I've seen alot written about it being the "subject line", it's NOT. It's the "from line"! 60% said that's what they look at when making the "open" decision, while a still hefty 35% cited the subject line.

So, if your from address is a mess (bptx89653@sellyou.com, for example), your subject line is going to have a hard time saving the day. Your open rate is likely to be very poor.

A much better idea? "yourname@yourdomainname.com" This wasn't suggested in the report (that's not the point of the report), but it's pure, simple and ties in with the importance of "name recognition" and "branding" that the report DOES address (more on this in a moment).

SOME INTERESTING FACTS YOU CAN TAKE TO THE BANK

- * 69% of men say they'll open an email if the subject line contains "news" (while 46% of the women will).
- * 64% of women will open it if the subject line includes a "discount offer" (50% of the men will).
- * Got a new product to announce? Well, only 39% of women and 37% of men will open email with a subject line about a "new product announcement".
- * 90% cite unsolicited promotional emails as the number one consumer concern. 60% delete it without opening, up from 45% last year. Bad news for sp*mmers, good news for legitimate emailers.

CONQUER THESE CHALLENGES AND REAP BIG REWARDS

- * The volume of email has risen 60% over last year with the average person getting 254 emails a week versus 159. That's a lot of competition!
- * To deal with this onslaught of email, the average person has 2.63 email addresses. 50% also use an email feature to sort their messages into a bulk folder. And 76% "never or rarely" read the emails in their bulk folders.
- * Of those who made an immediate purchase after reading an email, 60% cited "merchant recognition" (branding) as the reason for their quick decision. Even more, 70%, cited a "discount" as their motivating factor.

Wow, if people know and trust you, and you offer a discount, your newsletter is going to pull some sales!

WHY EMAIL IS STILL #1

- * 25% of consumers with an email account made an online purchase in the last year versus 19% a year ago.
- * Of shoppers who have purchased online, 78% did so as a result of receiving an email.
- * 66% plan to use email to make a purchase during the upcoming holiday season.

CONCLUSIONS

When used effectively, email remains an incredibly powerful sales tool. The keys to success are being known and trusted, as well as carefully utilizing your "from" and "subject" lines.

But because consumers are countering their enormous volumes of email by using multiple addresses, bulk folders and sp*m filters, newsletter publishers will need to stay informed as well as creative to maintain and grow their actual "readership", as opposed to their simple subscriber counts.

Whatever you do, clearly differentiate your mailings so it is not mistaken for sp*am.

For those of you who would like to read the whole report, go here:

http://www.doubleclick.com/us/knowledge/documents/research/dc_consumer_email_0210.pdf

Joshua Rose writes about how to significantly boost your online results by improving your "communication skills", increasing the "responsiveness" of your subscriber list and utilizing effective Affiliate sales techniques. To subscribe, visit: <http://www.internetprofitwizards.com>

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