

# Email Bloopers The Pro's Make

By Robin Forbes

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Robin Forbes  
ezine@pencildude.com

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Now I'm not even going to suggest that I am perfect, the master of marketing or even the one with all the answers. Far from it... Like yourself I've made and continue to make mistakes, blunders, and outright bonehead decisions. But mistakes can be good, it's all a matter of looking at it the right way.

One of my secrets to learning is to see how the professionals do it. My next secret is finding out that even the most high profile Fortune 500 companies make terrific bloopers that we can learn from and NOT duplicate.

Recently I entered a couple of online contests. One was a contest for a camera from a big name film manufacturer, the other from a toy company which is hardly known here in North America, (Some sort of stuffed toy was the prize in this case).

As expected I received a generic "Thank You" e-mail delivered by autoresponder - nothing shocking or strange about this... But it was the lack of substance to the simple "Thanks For Entering Our Contest". That was just about it - there wasn't much else that they said!

Here's What Else They Did Wrong:

- In the "From:" field of the e-mail they used an acronym as opposed to a name or e-mail address. Now how is someone supposed to remember what an acronym stands for, especially if one is not familiar with the company in question but also particularly in light of what else these two companies failed to do.

- In the body of the e-mail they made no attempt to personalize the message. As they were large companies with large ad budgets, they certainly had enough money to at the very least, hire someone to make them a template that said something like:

Dear { name }, or even Dear { name@somedomain.com },

Now granted for many "smaller operations" this may not be possible in every situation. E.g.: I can't personalize my listserver, or my Sendfree autoresponders

but I can personalize my domain autoresponders. However a generic friendly salutation would not be out of line... "Greetings," or "Hello," for example. But they chose not to when they sure could have done it.

- Next, there was no signature block. Yes, I know these are autoresponders, but at the least, one could simply write:

Regards, (Good Luck, Cheers, etc...)  
The Widget Team  
[www.widgetcompany.com](http://www.widgetcompany.com)

And lastly, they both failed to entice me back to their web site. No URL = No reminder of who and where to go back to. There were no incentives, no back-end offers, no "P.S." or "By the way...", no "Keep updated...", or "Subscribe to our mailing list..." Nothing, 0, blankness, zilch.

Do you make any of these mistakes in your e-mail marketing? If so, correct them and you'll be one step of the "Big Guys".

Robin Forbes is the Pencil Dude, Proud Publisher of "Pencil Dude's Picks" and "Pencil Dude Says..." Visit the Pencil Dude at his latest site: <http://pencildude.net/> for practical Internet Marketing advice and resources for real people

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