



Email revenue booster kit

3 Checklists to improve ROI by building trust in your email programme



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The year ahead may be challenging but that doesn't mean you can't exceed your revenue goals and enjoy even greater ROI.

As email volumes continue to rise, the challenge will be improving open and click-through conversion rates from the delivery of targeted, timely and relevant information.

Building trust is the key to growing your revenue from email marketing. Follow our checklists in this Revenue Booster kit to help improve customer confidence, sharpen your campaign relevancy and reap the rewards.

Checklist No.1

The letter and the spirit

- Have a working opt-out (i.e. unsubscribe) link on all marketing-related email communications (including your newsletters).
- Make it clear, conspicuous and easy to use so your subscribers don't resort to using the "This is spam" button.
- When sending regular emails, change elements of the design to ensure it stays fresh.
- Process all unsubscribe requests immediately where reasonably possible.
- Display the physical address of your company in the footer of the email (not a P.O. Box).
- Make sure the purpose of your email matches both your subject line and body. Don't use the subject line "20% off all merchandise" if you're promoting your store credit card. It's just common sense and smart marketing.
- Prominently display your privacy policy and make sure it includes the following:
 - The personal data you collect on your website and why.
 - Any third parties with whom you may share the information, if you don't share information, state that specifically.
 - An explanation of how your customers review and change their personal information
 - An explanation of how your customers are notified of privacy policy changes
 - The effective date of your privacy policy
- Make your privacy policy a friendly document. It shouldn't read like a legal treaty – the language should be easy to understand, and build trust and confidence with those who are entrusting their personal data with you.

NOTE: This information should not be construed as legal advice. Please consult with your legal counsel on all regulatory compliance issues.

Checklist No.2

Get Permission

- Permission comes first, customer engagement follows.
- Be clear about what you're offering at sign-up. State the benefits, the content of the emails, the frequency and when the subscriber should expect the first email.
- Follow up with a welcome message with opt-out instructions within 24 hours of sign-up.
- Make the unsubscribe process instant, perfect, and painless – test it often.
- Respect varying levels of permission. For example, submitting an email address to get a shipping notification is not in reality an opt-in for a weekly newsletter.
- Keep permission current. Reach out to the people who don't open or click, find out what they want and deliver the experience.

Keep your lists growing

- Use your website to promote your email program. Prominently place the sign-up on every page. Test form placement and a custom invitation on your most heavily trafficked pages.
- Create an easy sign-up process. Don't ask for information you don't need. A short form with just a few fields (i.e. name, email address) is most effective.
- Make email capture a priority on your search landing pages.
- Cross-sell your email program in your transactional emails.
- Consider expanding list growth efforts through targeted mailings to trusted, opted-in rented lists as part of third-party offers, lead generation and co-registration campaigns.
- Choose the good partners. Ask yourself, would you bet your brand and sending reputation on their practices?

Checklist No.2

Give Subscribers a Choice

- Have a preference centre so your customers can choose the types of email they want to receive, and provide options for account management (i.e. change of address).
- Don't make assumptions. Just because a subscriber opted-in to receive monthly offers doesn't mean they also want to receive your weekly newsletter or press releases.
- If you are sending something as part of a new campaign, product launch or initiative, make it clear that it falls outside the original permission grant and include a prominent unsubscribe link.
- Use the unsubscribe flip: as subscribers opt-out of one list, offer them a choice of opting into another.

Go Viral

- Forward to a friend means nothing if your content is not interesting and forwardable. The most popular viral content is often humorous, witty, off-beat or related to current events.
- Encourage subscribers to forward your messages (but don't offer an incentive) following best practices and guidance
- Go multi-channel with viral campaigns – using blogs, social networking sites and other promotions to build support for the campaign.

Checklist No.3

Target, Don't Blast

- Break through the inbox clutter with informative and useful content
- Create a memorable subscriber experience:
Make it about them, not you.
- Customise the email campaigns as much as possible based on behaviour, demographics, expressed preferences, product usage or customer status.
- Segment for relevancy (i.e. customers vs. prospects or new subscribers vs. long-time subscribers).
- Send more emails when subscribers are in market to buy (when their tolerance is higher) and less when they are not.
- Always ask for (and listen to) feedback.

Send a Welcome Message

- New subscribers are most engaged – and also most vulnerable.
- It only takes 1-2 emails to wow them – or turn them off completely.
- Send a welcome message within a day (24 hours) of sign up.
- Include these elements:
 - Confirmation of frequency, type(s) of email to be sent and privacy policy.
 - Welcome offer or thank you gift.
 - Link to your most recent newsletter edition.
 - Easy way to unsubscribe or change preferences.
 - Something of intrinsic value – content, downloads, vouchers or interactivity.

Checklist No.3

Be Interactive With Engaging Copy and Images

- Write content and promotions that entice the click – make it interactive.
- Invite readers to post ideas or answers to questions.
- Consider a poll or quiz once a quarter.
- Ask for feedback in each message (a link in the footer or at the end of an article will do).
- Consider a survey once a quarter.

Provide Real Value

- Value, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. Even ardent customers get tired of repetitive sale announcements and product shots.
- Most readers only really care about themselves. So be sure your emails help them to see how your products and services can make them smarter, more productive, slimmer, a better parent, more beautiful, wealthier and happier.
- Treat your VIP subscribers like they are VIPs – and make sure they know that they are valued and respected.

From the Returnpath Sender Education Programme Kit.
For more information please visit www.returnpath.net



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