

How to Master Professional Services Email Marketing

Rumors are not always true. So often, you hear that email marketing peaked years ago and is on the decline. However, that is just not the case. After attending this year's Digital Summit Conference in Philadelphia and listening to speakers recognized in their industries, it's undeniable that [email is still a key marketing tool](#).

For one thing, email is prevalent. Based on research by the [Radicati Group](#) published in 2018, there are 6.69 billion email accounts across the globe, and that number is growing. From these billions of email accounts, 281 billion emails go out every day. People now spend 2.5 hours each day checking personal email and have increased time spent on reading their emails by 3 seconds since 2011.

Email also is effective. When you compare email marketing against other forms of social marketing, email has an ROI of 59%, with social media marketing trailing behind at 21%, according to [Campaign Monitor](#). Of course, the most-effective way to reach your customer base is to use email and social media together. Sending an email about a product or service and then targeting your social media channels within seven days afterward can increase ROI by 24%.

Email is also good for mobile. With the explosion of mobile devices in recent years, 40% or more of email campaigns are viewed on mobile devices first, with purchases often happening more on desktop devices after the first mobile touchpoint. Mobile also enables people to check email regularly throughout the day and into the evening when watching television, before or after going to bed, while walking, etc. Basically, email is at our fingertips at a moment's notice.

Because email is still incredibly relevant to our practice as marketers, it's important to know how to use this medium effectively. Here are some email marketing tips that will help you be a better professional services marketer.

How to Be Better at Email Marketing

Don't spam your list: A lot of email is spam. [Don't be a spammer](#). Over-sending a campaign or emailing too frequently will only encourage people on your list to opt-out or ignore your emails, giving a negative impression of your company.

Make it sound human: Make sure your message sounds like it was written by a human, not a robot. Have a few people read your copy to ensure it sounds warm and inviting, not cold and off-putting.

Stay reputable: Email reputation has an impact on deliverability. With email filtering



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systems becoming more sophisticated at weeding out true spam messages, having a good reputation will help improve your deliverability rate. Over-sending emails in a short span of time can throw up an alert in spam filter systems and block you from ever getting through again.

Clean up text versions of your emails: Often overlooked is the alternate message that is sent/received when a user opts out of formatted visual HTML email or when a user receives email on wearable devices like the Apple Watch. Having a clean, text-only option that uses truncated links will be more user-friendly and easier to read.

Design Matters

“From” names matter – a lot: Research has shown that emails sent from an actual person are opened more than those that come from a company name. The message comes off as more personal and less corporate.

Slim your headers: With so many people reading emails on mobile devices, pay attention to the header area of your email. Shorten or tighten up the information that appears above your actual message so the recipient can see the true message of the email sooner rather than later. You only have 1 to 2 seconds to grab a person’s attention, so don’t waste time on long subject lines and unnecessary text.

Make it responsive: Because a large portion of people view their inboxes on mobile devices, make sure your email is responsive. No one wants to pinch and squeeze the message and move it around to read your offering. If you are using a two-column format, make sure that the information will stack when viewed on mobile. When formatting content, think of the inverted pyramid or a zig-zag design.

Email ratios: Set your email program so you have responsive minimum size requirements. Small call-to-action buttons are hard to click on when viewed on a mobile device, so keep them no smaller than 150 pixels x 50 pixels. Remove the words “click here” and consider a better call-to-action word or phrase. Emails that are all images look nice, but can cause issues when recipients have images blocked or turned off, so keep your important information in the body of the message. Each industry has different standards for image-to-copy ratios, but a good starting point is 60% text and 40% image(s).

Subject lines: When [writing subject lines](#), punctuation and superlatives matter. Pay attention to the details and research which words have more impact when crafting your subject line. Does your subject line warrant an emoji? 56% of brands that used emojis had a higher open rate. Keep your subject short and know your audience. Each generation may react differently to certain words based on how they communicate.

Add animation: Animated gifs can add visual interest to your email. However, note that this functionality is based on the end user and which email program or platform they are using. Companies using older versions of Outlook may not see the animation, while a user on a newer version can. Tracking data from your campaigns to help you determine details about your audience members’ email clients can guide you in what your recipients will see when they open your message. Is it mobile or desktop? Are they viewing on a web browser via webmail or are they downloading and viewing in Thunderbird or Outlook?

Data and Lists Are Everything

Have people opt-in: Your list should contain only those people whom you have done business with or who have opted in to receive emails from you. This will ensure that your company will not be reported for sending spam. Note that places like Canada and Europe have even stricter rules than the U.S., so make sure you are aware of how these rules can affect you. Spamming someone in one of these countries can have a large fine associated with it.

Segment your lists: It is important to **collect as much data as you can about each person on your list**. If your lists are B2B, do you have people tagged to receive the appropriate information? For example, sending an email about environmental issues to an individual who is only interested in financial information may result in them opting out of future emails. Detailed data is important so you can send the right message to the right individuals. Remember that it is not the size of your list that is important; it's about the right content reaching the right people.

If used correctly, your email marketing can have a great impact and significant ROI, but email marketing is an investment. You have to gather data with every message sent to hone your messaging and maintain your lists.

Need guidance about getting your email marketing going in the right direction? Contact Alan E. Singles at asingles@jaffepr.com.