

Welcome to
Getting it read not deleted:
The secrets of a good e-newsletter

Nick Day



Today's approximate timings

- 10.00 – Start
- 11.30-11.45 – Tea break
- 13.00-13.45 – Lunch
- 15.00-15.15 – Tea break
- 16.30 – Finish

By the end of the day you will be able to:

- Better consider the needs of your audience
- Write effective copy for your audience and know the tricks to getting your copy read
- Identify the different methods of making e-newsletters
- Know what should be in an e-newsletter
- Know what your e-newsletter should look like



Some email marketing basics...

Creating your e-newsletter template

- Use a template service
e.g. Mailchimp
- Create your own HTML design
e.g. Dreamweaver
- Outsourcing to a provider
e.g. Dotmailer

Getting it to your audience

- <http://www.charityemail.co.uk/>
- <http://www.dotmailer.com>
- <http://www.mailchimp.com>

To read or not to read...

- Is it from **someone** I want/need to hear from?
- Does the **subject line** get my attention?
- How is it **personalised**?
- Is there items of **interest**?
- Can I **act** on something?

The AIDA Principle



Getting their attention



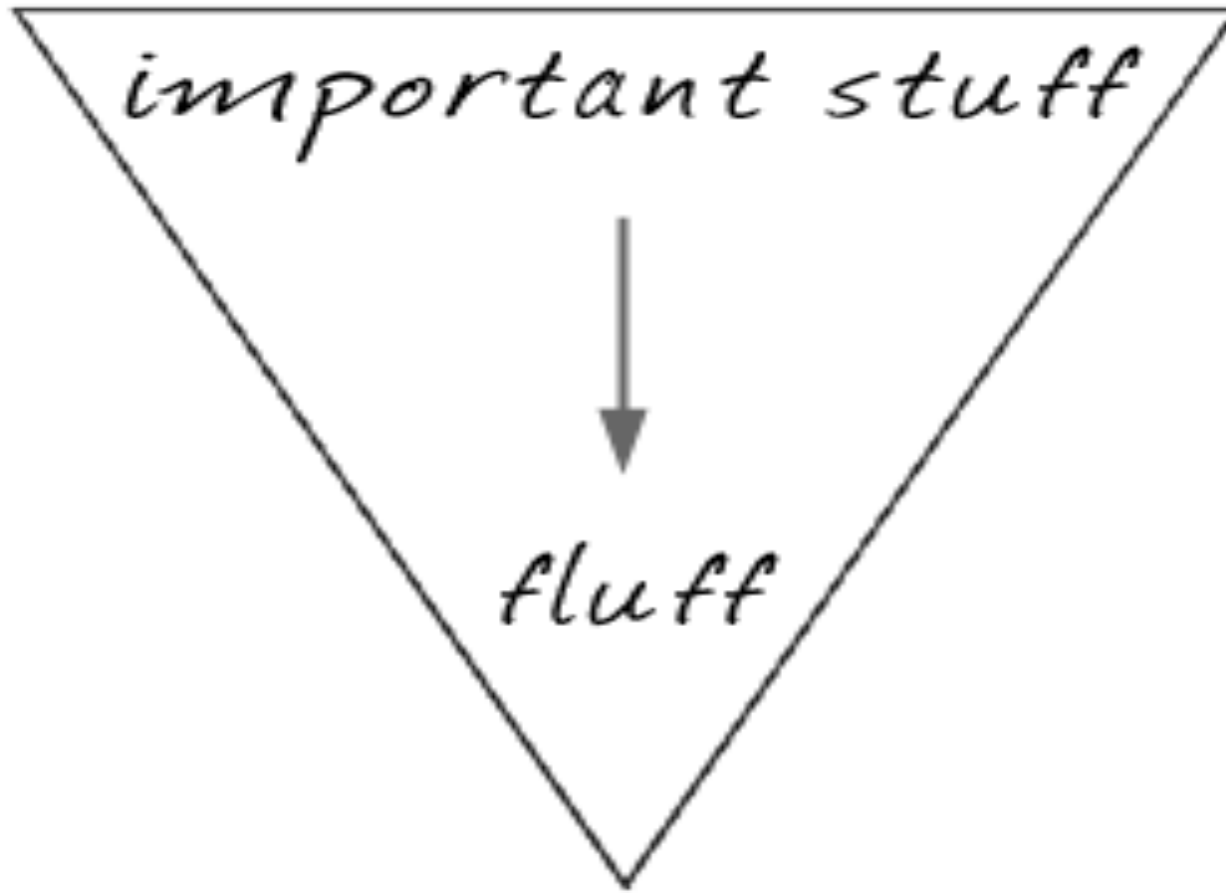
Who is it from?

Save The Children and emailinform <email@eform4.com>

Kevin Degenhard - RSPCA <supportercomms@mail.rspca.org.uk>

WWF <news@email.wwf.org.uk>

Front load with the inverted pyramid



Does the subject get my attention?

Nicholas, help inspectors like Trevor save animals' lives today

Nick, every moment counts

Request your complimentary Will Writing Guide

Our position on badgers and bovine TB and fracking



directory of social change

Does the subject get my attention?

Nicholas, help inspectors like Trevor save animals' lives today

RSCPA

Nick, every moment counts

CRUK

Request your complimentary Will Writing Guide

Save the Children

Our position on badgers and bovine TB and fracking

National Trust

Does the subject get my attention?

- What's in it for me? (WIIFM) Make it relevant
- Ask a question
- Offer a teaser
- Use 5-10 words or 40-60 characters
- Make your recipient feel like you're speaking directly to them
- Should encapsulate the **core proposition and key benefits**

Not so good subject lines...

- Scientists conduct cell transplant experiments
- News update from our CEO
- Charity Newsletter #407
- Welcome to our newsletter

<http://subjectlinegold.com/>

Test subject lines

Want to self-test your subject lines?
Try these handy headline analysers:

<http://subjectlinegold.com/>
<http://coschedule.com/headline-analyzer>

Personalisation

- Dear 'First Name' is the protocol
- Possible to personalise in the subject line and other areas
- Great care is needed because if you get wrong it's very visible and noticeable...

Personalisation

- Even those who should know better...

What will you spot?

No pictures? [See this email in full](#)



Dear ,

This is the best time of year to get started with nature recording for spring. We've already started to see the early signs of spring; there are lots of birds showing breeding behaviour near Woodland Trust HQ in Grantham. And the mild weather some of us are still

Personalisation

- Make the content relevant to them
- Segment lists using geo-demographics e.g. region, gender etc.
- Segment based on behaviour and interests

Preview pane

If you have problems viewing this email please follow the below link to view it in your web browser:

<http://www.smartbulletins.co.uk/view/bulletinfinal/982>



VIEW YOUR ECARD

DONATE NOW

WEBSITE LOG IN

Tamba

Saving lives, supporting families

dsc

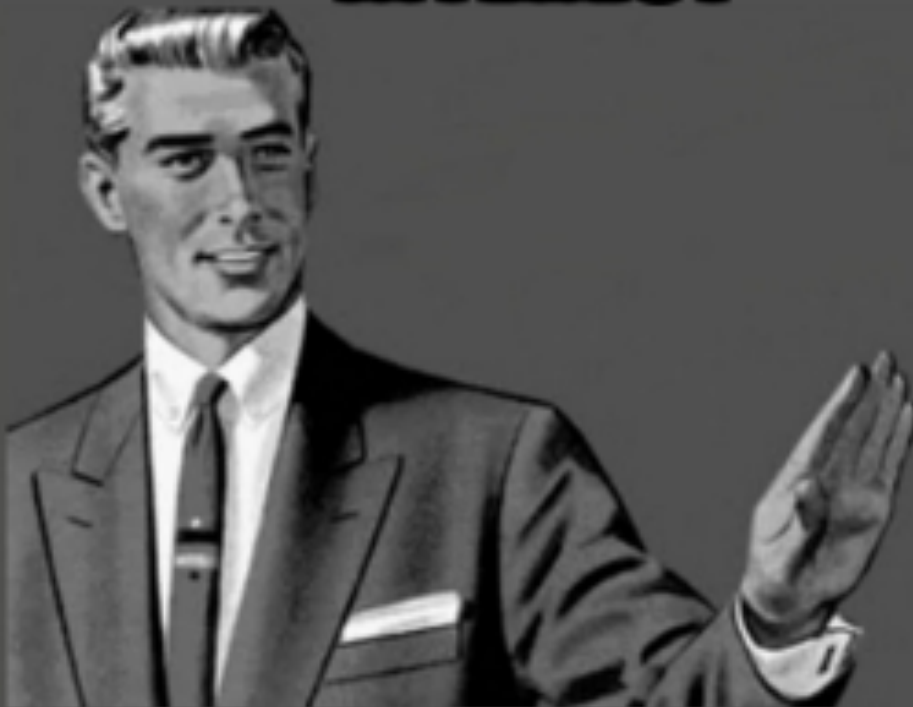
directory of social change

Preview pane

- Reinforce/establish who you are
- Summarise the proposition
- Remember it's a snapshot!

Holding their interest

**I'M GOING TO STOP YOU THERE
YOU'RE NOT HOLDING MY
INTEREST**



Attention grabbing headlines

- Classic 'How-to'
- Identify and Solve a Problem
- Strike A Note Of Controversy
- Shorter Titles Are Great
- Ask Questions

Power Words

180+ Power Words

From Copywriter Karl Stepp

FOR WRITING **EMOTIONAL HEADLINES**

free
sale
new
professional
guaranteed
special
tested
improved
immediately
limited
simplistic
powerful

focus
wanted
absolutely lowest
interesting
challenge
lifetime
highest
expert
advice
the truth about
compare
colorful

remarkable
obsession
surging
revisited
unique
bargain
hurry
daring
pioneering
destiny
unsurpassed
genuine

confidential
sizable
wonderful
delivered
secrets
scarce
alert famous
strong
unusual
outstanding
energy
instructive

Telling great stories

- How does your work relate to real people?
- Stories, accounts and case studies work well... especially if told in the first person.

Read about an award-winning rescue
Can't see the images? View online



RNLI Life

November 2015

[News](#)



[Magazine](#)



[College](#)



[Donate](#)



'It was the most difficult rescue I've been on'

When Andrew McGeown saw Arnold, his 2-year-old Staffordshire bull terrier, vanish off of the side of the sea wall, he instinctively went in after him. What happened next sparked a tragic chain of events that would severely test the crew of Scarborough's inshore lifeboat and would become a defining moment for the close-knit seaside community.

[Read more about the award-winning rescue](#)



DONATE NOW



Find your local PDSA

**TAKING CARE
OF YOUR PET**

**VET
SERVICES**

**GET
INVOLVED**

SHOP



Dig Deep Appeal... the story so far

Thanks to supporters like you, building work is coming along nicely at our Birmingham (Oldbury) PDSA Pet Hospital, The Marian and Christina Ionescu Centre of Surgical Excellence.

The roof for the new hospital is now in place, and we're beginning to clad the walls. When our new hospital is finished it will be able to treat more than 100 pets every day.

Cut out the waffle, get to the pitch!

‘Dear Jeff,

Welcome to our latest newsletter, the fourth this year, all of which we hope have helped to keep you updated on our latest news and provide you with vital financial tips. We hope you’ve been enjoying the Summer months this year, with plenty of sun around to get us all up and active and enjoying the great outdoors. Here at Charitycats, we’ve certainly enjoyed it: we recently completed a charity fun run, raising an amazing £1,500 for local cat charities!’

Cut out the waffle, get to the pitch!

Dear Jeff,

We did it! The team at Charitycats completed the South Manchester fun run on Saturday, raising an incredible £1,500 for local cat charities!

Make a strong statement

Dear Jeff,

The government's economic policy is faltering and it is directly impacting your household budget...

Dear Jeff,

Did you know that the compulsory retirement age of 65 was phased out in 2011?

You may not retire until you are much older, as we continue to work longer...

Tease something

Dear Jeff,

We've got something really big coming soon, something that will change how every Charitycats client interacts with us forever...

We'll share more details with you in our next email but for now let us tell you about what's happening right now, with our new range of services

Getting them to act



Click Through...

- **Relevance** and **dialogue** is key to achieving a click through – you must give a good reason to!
- Use **headlines, indents, images, interact:**
What do you think about...?

Get them to take action



Your last chance to sign up

February 2016


Get them to take action



[Donate Now](#)

Get them to take action

We must have £121,534 in hand by midnight to keep a strong Christian voice!



Premier. **Final Reminder**

Dear Chari,

Our financial year-end deadline is here - and we must receive **£121,534** in order to keep Premier a strong Christian voice in the year ahead!

[So thank you for giving generously by midnight to ensure that we remain a strong Christian voice for so many across our nation.](#)

And please pray with me that God would move many to respond in these final hours.

AMOUNT STILL NEEDED: £121,534

> MY BEST GIFT TO CLOSE THE GAP

E-newsletters



E-newsletters

- What is your e-newsletter for?
- What makes a good e-newsletter?
- Do you have any favourites?

Your e-news...

- What's in it?
- Why are you sending it now?
- What do they get out of it?
- What do you get out of it?
- Could you do it better?

Speaking the right language



Speaking the right language

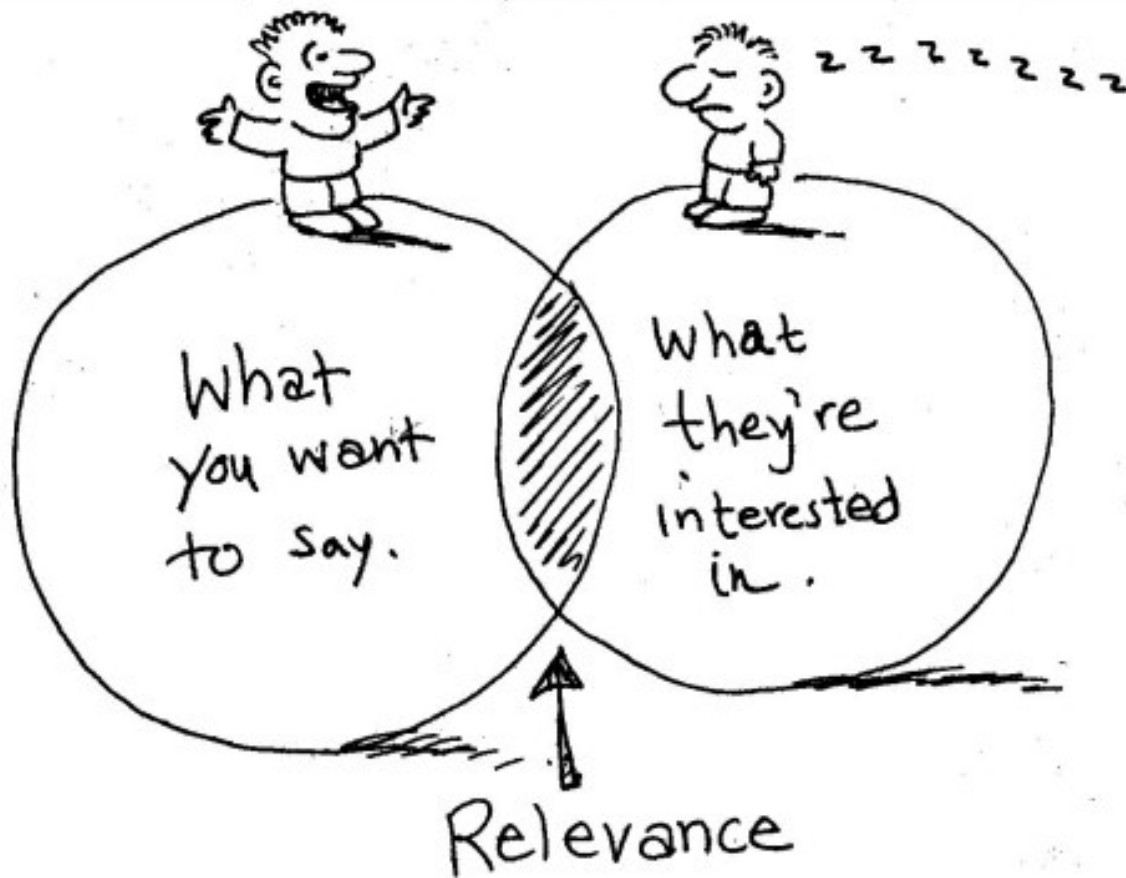
- Getting the right tone and speaking in a language people understand!
- Use shorter, simpler and less formal words as much as possible.
- We connect with the reader with a conversational tone, which still shows our authority and knowledge.

Activity 1:

Speaking the right language

- Consider the terminology and language you are using in your emails

Understanding your audience



Understanding your audience

- What do they look like?
- What matters most to them?
- What are their reference points?
- What words connect with them and make them care about what you deliver?

Activity 2:

Understanding your audience

- Identify and draw a sketch of a typical person receiving your email who really matters!
- Identify key words that they care about

Making it easier to read



Making it easy to read

- Decide what you want to say
- Structure simply and sensibly
- Omit needless words
- Give them something they need
- Ensure everything passes the 'so what' test?
- Lead with most important info first

Activity 3:

Shortening sentences and lists

- Once you've decided what's going in and decided on a great headline- you now have to make sure you don't bore them to death
- You're frontloading
- You're not waffling
- You're using fewer words, shorter sentences and lists

Shortening sentences & lists

Our present system of calculating interest is manual and very time-consuming. This leads to a loss of production because staff need to put their phones on 'hold' while they do their calculations.

Shortening sentences & lists

The last person to leave the office should make sure that:

- all the lights are out
- the PCs are all logged off
- the toilets are flushed
- the doors are all locked
- security know the office is empty

What goes in your newsletter?

- Who is this from? (your logo)
- What's in it for me? (your offer)
- What action do I take? (your call-to-action)
- Put your logo in the top left of the page. This helps establish credibility immediately through brand recognition. The upper left corner is looked at nearly every time.

Industry standards

- Most e-newsletters follow a template
- No more than 5-6 stories with many links back to the website
- Good use of external links as well
- Good use of images
- Information carrying headlines that will get people clicking

Style

- Follow your house style guidelines.
- Use **bold** and *italics* sparingly as large amounts of text in bold or italics are hard to read on screen.
- Never underline or type in CAPITALS - Typing in CAPITALS makes it seem that you are SHOUTING

Personalisation

- Use the person's first name – email is less formal than mail!
- Make the content relevant to them
- Segment lists using geo-demographics e.g. region, gender etc.
- Segment based on behaviour and interests

A bad example

‘Dear Jane,

Now is an interesting time if you’re an NHS pension holder over fifty, with plenty of investment options available for you. If you’re under fifty, now is the right time to start planning for you future retirement’

An A/B test

- This is testing two versions of a web page — an A version (the control) and a B version (the variation) — with live traffic and measuring the effect each version has on your conversion rate. Start an A/B test by identifying a goal for your company then determine which pages help achieve that goal.

Final Activities

- Quiz
- Can we draft an e-newsletter!

A few final thoughts...



When should it go out?

- Monthly e-newsletters can have more impact at the start of the month
- More difficult to create impact at the start of the day, particularly on a Monday

How big should it be?

- Not everyone is on Broadband all of the time!
- Try to keep to no more than **100kb** and avoid attachments – encourage click through instead

How should I align text?

Left-aligned text is the easiest on the eye.

Avoid anything that slows us down.

Right- and centre-aligned paragraphs slow us down because each time you finish reading one line your eye has to search for the beginning of the next line.

What should I check?

- **Personalisation** – do the data fields work?
- **Copy** – is it linked to the correct data segments?
- **Links** – do they take to the right landing place?
- **Landing page** – is it correctly loaded and hosted?
- **Un-subscribe** – does it go to the right landing page and update database?

What should I analyse?

- Open rate
- Hard bounces
- Soft bounces
- Click through rate

What should I analyse?

- Track the success of each campaign & its performance in relation to previous campaigns.
- Which messages were most clicked on?
- Which generated the most un-subscribes?
- Which segments of your list are the most engaged?

Thank You!

Nick Day



Getting it read not deleted

Only around 20% of non-profit e-mails are actually opened, so how do you make sure your message is getting through to your supporters? It will help if you:

- send it to the right people at the right time
- be interesting, relevant & personal
- don't waffle
- tell stories about people
- have a clear objective for each communication
- provide a clear call to action
- monitor and analyse your results to make your next email even better.

Here are 13 ways to better e-newsletters.

1. Don't mention the e-news

Have any words inspired more apathy at 9am on a Monday morning than...

"Welcome to the November 2010 issue of our e-newsletter. In this issue..."

It doesn't have to be this way. We're at the forefront of improving peoples lives, of calling attention to causes we passionately represent – a place millions would love to be. It's easy for us to be interesting and inspirational – much more than companies that make yoghurt and trainers.

2. Don't talk about your organisation all the time.

People are interested in you because you represent a cause that's important to them. Write about the cause first, and connect your organisations work, campaigns and appeals to that second.

3. People love people

An easy way to break the habit of organisation centric communication is to talk about how your work relates to real people. Stories, accounts and case studies work well... especially if told in the first person.

4. New voices

Add interest by inviting different voices to contribute. Think about people with something interesting to say. This could be staff, but more often then not comes from enthusiastic supporters and service users.

5. Invite contribution

Always invite people to get involved in your communications by asking for their feedback, responses and contributions. It helps you build a relationship quicker and can be a source of some great, unique content.

6. Use humour/emotion

Don't be afraid to inject humour. Even supporters of the darkest of causes won't be able to put up with shock and indignation for long. Find uplifting, humorous perspectives or takes on your area of work if you can.

7. Give advice

Some of the most popular content online is advice-driven. Helping people be great at things, cope with situations better or assist them in making decisions. If you communicate directly with your service users, then you've no doubt got tons of this

content in factsheets and leaflets gathering dust in the archives – why not freshen some and add it to next months newsletter?

8. Be topical

Latch onto stories in the news or public consciousness and offer a new or unique insight.

9. Segment your lists

Use your data to make it individual. Email management programmes like Mailchimp can help you segment your lists

Are volunteers in Newcastle likely to attend an event in Southampton? Are commissioners likely to be interested in your employee of the month announcement?

Your supporters might only be interested in a very narrow scope of your work. Feed that interest and don't bother them with details of everything else.

Regular donors may be more willing to pay to attend a gala dinner than someone who donated £5 once. Regular volunteers may be more willing to travel further to an event or take part in a more laborious ask.

10. Respect the data

Make it easy to unsubscribe. Provide an "unsubscribe" or "manage your alerts" link to help improve the types of email they receive.

Respect your subscribers' privacy. If they offered their details for a particular reason, don't use it for a different reason without their consent.

Get familiar with your data protection obligations.

11. Timing is important

There's no ideal time to be sending messages, but your chances of hitting the target are improved if you send email when people are likely to be sitting at their PCs.

Emailing first thing in the morning may be better than last thing at night as you're more likely to appear towards the top of your subscriber's inbox.

Don't send too frequently, people already suffer from information overload.

Don't send too infrequently, people may forget you exist or that they subscribed to your list at all.

Intervals of between 3 and 6 weeks may be best for scheduled newsletters, but these don't apply to emergency response or urgent alerts.

12. Analyse everything

Do you analyse the results of your email campaigns? Do you know how many emails were sent? How many were opened? How many bounced? If not, how can you verify the effectiveness of your campaigns?

Consider using a dedicated mailing list management service, like Mailchimp, Constant Contact, Experian CheetahMail, DotMailer or Salesforce.

Once you're using analytics, track the success of each campaign & its performance in relation to previous campaigns. At the end of the year, review your campaign

effectiveness. Which messages were most clicked on? Which message generated the most un-subscribes? Which segments of your list are the most engaged?

13. Getting through

If you're a charity that writes about potentially controversial themes or use certain words or phrases, check up to make sure your subscribers are actually receiving them. The Lesbian & Gay Foundation have encountered problems with local authority firewalls blocking emails containing the words "lesbian" and "gay".

You're probably a newsletter subscriber yourself. What do you love and hate about the emails you receive? Are you guilty of those same crimes against email?

Subscribe to your competitors' newsletters. Try to identify what they do well and improve on what they do badly.

Don't leave it at that, though, subscribe to your organisations newsletters to simulate the experience of being a real newsletter subscriber.

5 easy ways to create compelling subject lines from Sticky Content

1. Use multi-element subject lines

This is a great idea if your email covers a number of different topics. By adding multiple elements to your subject lines, you're creating more hooks and giving your subscribers more specific reasons to open your email. So instead of 'Top things to do in London this week', for instance, a travel company could write 'Top 5 London markets | 30% off Shard tickets | 50% off wine tasting | £10 river boat tickets'. Bang. That's four subject lines for the price of one, with four separate benefits for subscribers. **Top tip:** Your subject line will truncate at different points on different devices, so always prioritise the elements from left to right.

2. Front-load the most valued elements

We know from eye-tracking studies that people tend to spend more than twice as much time scanning the left half of the screen as they do the right. The left half of the screen occupies a whopping 69% of an average reader's viewing time, compared to just 30% on the right, according to Nielsen's 'Horizontal attention leans left' study. What this means is that you should always front-load your subject lines: put your most important elements first if you want to grab your subscribers' attention. **Top tip:** Don't stop with front-loading the subject line of your email – front-load the body as well. Get to the point and always use plain English, not waffle and jargon.

3. Hook your readers

The best subject lines are instantly understandable and intriguing, even out of context. And that's because they have a great hook. If you put out a regular blog, don't write 'This week's blog' in the subject line every week. Don't just describe the container – hint at what's inside. Try reeling in your readers with a question that appeals to their needs and concerns. It should draw attention to a problem they care about, and imply that an answer is contained within the email. Coming up with a good question is easier than you think, and can simply involve rephrasing a key statement. Just reviewed the latest smart phone, for instance? Writing 'Apple iPhone 6 review' is pretty dull, but 'iPhone 6: is it the phone you've been waiting for?' is far more interesting. **Top tip:** Questions are great, but make sure your content provides a satisfactory answer.

4. Throw in a few fascinating facts

If your email or content contains any interesting facts or stats, try putting them in your

subject line. People always want to keep up with the Joneses and won't want to miss out on any important insights they can share. Formats like 'Did you know... ?' or '5 reasons why...' will get your readers wanting to learn more. **Top tip:** Make sure you only pick out truly useful or interesting stats. It helps to think like a journalist.

5. Help your readers out

We're all busy people, and we're always looking for ways to make our lives easier. Think about how your content will help your audience, and apply those benefits to your subject line. Use words that convey ease such as '6 free and easy ways to improve your emails'. If a subject line sounds demanding or taxing, it's likely to be left unopened. **Top tip:** Want to self-test your subject lines? Try this handy headline analyser from CoSchedule or Touchstone from Alchemy Worx.

Make sure your email clicks with your audience

Top tips on how to create a killer call-to-action



Does your email get the desired response or no response?

The Econsultancy Email Marketing Census 2014 shows that 68% of companies rate email as a 'good' or 'excellent' channel for improving their ROI. But if you're getting the opens yet aren't making it easy or compelling enough for your contacts to click through, you won't see the success other brands are enjoying.

A good CTA is vital as it requires your customers to engage even further with your brand. A bad CTA puts you at risk losing a profitable opportunity. As an email marketer, you understand the need for your customers to buy your products, subscribe to your services, and register for your events.

To help ensure your email works as hard as it can, here are our top tips on how you can create the kind of CTA that'll get you killer results.



Simplify, simplify, simplify

What do you want your customer to do? Buy something? Look at some new content you've created?

Whatever it is you want them to do, make it as clear as possible, and as easily as possible to understand.

Less is more

When Whirlpool reduced the number of CTAs in its email from four to one, it achieved a 42% increase in clicks. Originally, they'd thought more buttons would equal more clicks. It didn't. It equalled confusion and misunderstanding with their customers.

Location, Location, Location

Where you put your CTA is vital. The 'real estate' of your email is precious. Every bit of it should be working the hardest it can, which is why we always recommend you place the CTA above the fold. That way, your customer will see what it is you want them to do almost immediately. Hide it at the bottom of your email, out of the way, and they'll either miss it completely, or delete the email before they've even got there.

Choose your words carefully

Words are incredibly powerful tools. Choose the right ones, and your campaign could be a runaway success. Use the wrong ones, and it'll sink without trace. First and foremost, think about what it is you want your customer to do. Remember, only ask them to do ONE thing. For example:

- [BUY NOW](#)
- [SUBSCRIBE HERE](#)
- [SHOP THE SALE](#)
- [LEARN MORE](#)
- [DOWNLOAD NOW](#)
- [ENTER HERE](#)
- [SEE WHAT WE RECOMMEND FOR YOU](#)
- [START YOUR FREE TRIAL](#)



TOP TIP

Try using the **K.I.S.S** rule -
Keep It Super Simple.

Quick! Read this – immediately

Bet your eyes went straight to this, didn't they? Most CTAs are time-critical. In which case, make it clear you want your customer to act now, shop now, do something – now. However, research has found that some customers react negatively to being told to do something immediately.

We come on to A/B testing soon, but the different use of language in one email vs. another might be something you want to consider – and test.

Make it STAND out

A good CTA needs to stand out from the rest of the email to grab your customer's attention. Don't make the colours or design the same as your brand colour and design. Choose a different typeface. Give it room to breath. What we mean by that is, try and make sure there's plenty of space around the CTA. Don't stick it right in the middle of a load of text.

One size does not fit all

Mobile is fast becoming the most popular method for consuming email. That's why getting the size of your CTA right is imperative. Clicking a link on your desktop is easy: touching a CTA with your thumb can be slightly more difficult.

Here are some guidelines for finger-friendly design:

- Apple's iPhone Human Interface Guidelines recommend a minimum target size of 44 x 44 pixels
- Microsoft's Windows Phone UI Design and Interaction Guide suggests a touch target size of 34px with a minimum touch target size of 26px

Testing, testing

See what kind of CTA works best for you. Try sending out two creatives using two different buttons: maybe one that's blue and one that's red, or try two different sets of copy. See what works best for you and your users so you can optimize ongoing sends.

A platform built by marketers, for marketers

As marketers ourselves, we understand what you need. A flexible platform that helps you create, automate, test and send emails in minutes. With dotmailer that's exactly what you get.

- So easy to use, you'll be up and running in minutes
- Gives you time back to plan your future marketing
- Integrates quickly and easily with your existing system
- Solutions for corporates and SMEs

Book a demo



Boosting your open rates

Boosting your open rates

First, the bad news: 20% of marketing emails never even make it to a subscriber's inbox ¹. But now, the good news: with the right email service provider and sender reputation, along with an advanced spam checker and super-relevant subject lines, you're in a much better position to ensure your emails make it to the inbox and get read.

That's great, you might think, but do they act on the call-to-action once they've been opened? The one thing to keep in mind when measuring success is not just the number of opened emails, but the number of opened emails that then result in some kind of action. A sale or a lead.

Here at dotmailer, we know a thing or two about the secret to a successfully opened – and actioned – email. And in this cheatsheet we'll share a few tips that'll help you open your mind to new and exciting ways to get your customers to open, and act on, your emails.

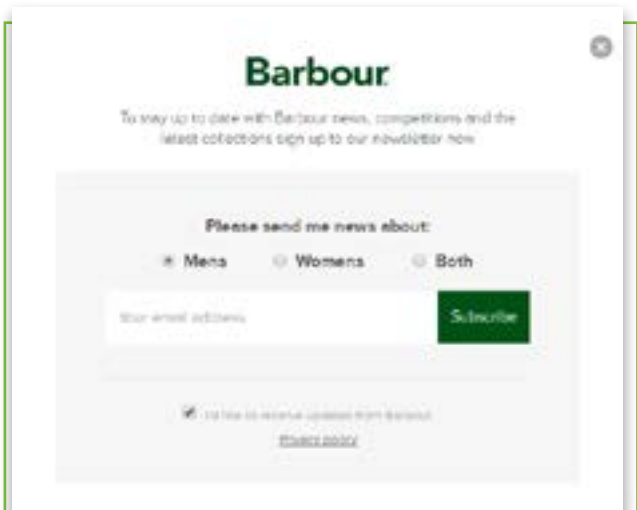
¹ Who Is Hosting This, Email Delivery 101



Start as you mean to go on

When you meet someone new for the first time, it's natural to introduce yourself. And the concept should be exactly the same when it comes to sending a first-time email.

Tell your customer or lead why you're contacting them in a welcome email – for instance, they could've signed up to your newsletter on your website or joined your list as part of a social media competition. Set the expectations of your relationship, like letting them know how often they can expect to hear from you or telling them the kind of content they'll receive from you. The more you put them in the picture, and the more information you give them about yourself, the more likely they are to open any future correspondence from you.



Heritage clothing brand Barbour lets new subscribers know exactly what they'll receive in their inboxes, along with the option to select content based on gender.

Keep it fresh

People's tastes and preferences change over time. That's why it's essential you keep your mailing list as fresh as possible. You can do this by simply asking your subscribers if they still want to hear from you, or by checking in and seeing what they'd be interested in receiving via a survey.

If not, try a re-engagement program based on what you know about your contacts. You could either use the insight you have on your customers to create super-relevant content, or attempt something a little more explicit like a 'We miss you' email with accompanying offer. You can also use more creative and imaginative subject lines to pique interest – sometimes wacky and unexpected will alter people's perceptions of your brand.

But if all this fails, simply (and politely) go your separate ways.



Rather than completely ending the relationship, Habitat pushes lapsed contacts towards one of its other marketing channels in a bid to keep them engaged with the brand.

Make your subject line STAND OUT

A creative, funny, interesting, relevant, timely or personalized subject line can really help to boost your open rates.

Bland, generic ones are likely to block your chances – so make sure you put as much effort into crafting your subject line as you do your email body copy.

Use A/B testing to your advantage – record the results; keep sending the ones that work and stop sending the ones that don't!

Segment your list

Every one of your customers has different needs, tastes and desires. Communicate with them accordingly by creating meaningful segments and tailoring your content so that it has resonance with each set of contacts.

Age, gender, location, past orders, behavioral data: these kinds of insight are invaluable in helping to guide you as to who should receive what content. Remember, the days of 'batch and blast' mailing are long gone – the more personal you are with people in your emails, the more likely they are to open and act on your messages.

Avoid spam

Another way to improve your open rates is to avoid your emails being labelled as spam. Every time an email is marked as spam, you're at risk of harming your sender reputation.

Firstly, you'll want to make sure your email makes it to the inbox by using a spam checker. dotmailer's spam test gives your email a spam filter score and alerts you when it's in danger of triggering inbox spam filters. This ensures that your IP reputation remains as clean as possible by providing you with a detailed breakdown of how your content and code scores against all the key spam filters in use.

Secondly, make it clear that the email is from a recognized sender. If it's not obvious that it's from you – i.e. you don't have a friendly 'from' name or the email isn't branded – then the recipient could mistake your email as spam.

Timing is everything

Open rates very much depend on timing. Day or night? Weekday or weekend? Season? It can be difficult to gauge, particularly when one person might consume your content during their morning commute and another might check emails intermittently throughout the day. One way is to test sending your emails at different times and see which garners the best overall response.

Another is to use dotmailer's Send Time Optimization tool, which will optimize the time of individual sends to maximize open rates based on your contacts' historical behavior.

Don't be content with just standard content

If your recipient thinks they're going to benefit in some way shape or form from opening your email, they will.

You have to reward them for doing so. There has to be some value, financial or otherwise, in every email you send. Discounts, loyalty points, exclusive previews, limited-time offers, video, tips, blogs....so whatever kind of content you provide, make sure it benefits the recipient.

Don't forget mobile

55% of email is now opened on a mobile device, according to Litmus' 2016 Email Analytics report. That's why mobile-friendly design is essential.

If your emails can't be read on a smartphone, you're opening the door to either having your message sent to trash or, worse still, marked as spam because unsubscribing is just too difficult.

The good news is the latest version of dotmailer's EasyEditor email creation tool makes every email work well on mobile.

Subscribe to a clear unsubscribe button

As painful as it might seem, some customers will want to separate from you.

To show that you've nothing to hide, don't hide your unsubscribe button. Make it clear and accessible. If people see you're being honest and fair, the more likely they are to trust you in the first place.

Conclusion

By using all the tools at your disposal – such as a spam filter – and making sure you've upped the relevancy of your emails, you're much more likely to reach people's inboxes and achieve the desired responses.

A platform built by marketers, for marketers

As marketers ourselves, we understand what you need. A flexible platform that helps you create, automate, test and send emails in minutes. With dotmailer that's exactly what you get.

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- Gives you time back to plan your future marketing
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