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# The Essential Guide to B2B Email Marketing



# CONTENT AT A GLANCE

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>WHAT IS EMAIL MARKETING?</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>DEFINE AN EFFECTIVE EMAIL STRATEGY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>SET UP AN EMAIL CMS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>BUILD YOUR LIST AND SEGMENT</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>DESIGN AND DELIVER FOR SUCCESS</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>CREATE EDUCATIONAL CONTENT</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>EMAIL TARGETED PROMOTIONS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>MEASURE EMAIL MARKETING SUCCESS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>NEXT STEPS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>ABOUT THE AUTHOR</b>	<b>23</b>

# INTRODUCTION

## Learn how to produce a successful email newsletter

As a marketer, your goal is to get prospects and customers to buy your products and services - instead of those of your competitors – and keep them coming back for more. To make this happen, you need a cost-effective way for communication that builds your relationship with them and transforms them into valuable, loyal customers. That's where email marketing fits in.

We created this B2B email marketing guide so that you can take full advantage of the power of email marketing and produce results for your company.

This guide will provide you with a step-by-step plan to:

- Create a successful B2B email marketing strategy
- Build a valuable list of subscribers
- Create content your customers will love
- Design and deliver for success
- Measure your email marketing results

Let's get started!



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# WHAT IS EMAIL MARKETING?

## Nurture relationships with B2B email marketing

Email marketing is an important component of an integrated B2B online marketing strategy that leverages permission-based electronic communication to nurture relationships with customers and prospects, generate leads and sales, and enhance customer retention. Email marketing offers a number of advantages over other marketing methods, such as:

- **Email is cost-effective.** Creation, production and delivery costs for email are much lower than traditional direct mail. And while postage costs are continually rising, email delivery costs are declining.
- **Email can be personalized.** With targeted email, you can speak directly to each customer and prospect, addressing their unique needs and desires. Email allows you to easily segment lists based on interests and personalize content within each message.
- **Email provides timeline feedback on results.** Emails are delivered almost instantaneously and 80% of messages are opened within two days of delivery, according to studies. You'll know quickly if your email campaign is a success.
- **Email can help you get more value out of your website.** You have invested a lot of time and money into your website. Email can help boost your return on investment (ROI) by driving prospects and customers back to your website on a regular basis.
- **Email provides a strong ROI.** When planned and executed effectively, email will inspire your customers and prospects to take action and respond to your offers. When coupled with its cost-effectiveness, email produces substantial ROI.

## What B2B email marketing should – and *shouldn't* be

Email marketing is all about relevance and respect. If you embrace this principle and make it the core of your email marketing strategy, you will be successful. Unfortunately, too many companies ignore (or don't understand) this principle, leading to the problem of unsolicited and unwanted email messages. To avoid having your emails perceived as spam, make sure you have a good understanding of what email marketing should be – and shouldn't be.

<b>Email marketing <i>should</i> be:</b>	<b>Email marketing <i>shouldn't</i> be:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Permission-based</li><li>▪ Personalized</li><li>▪ Customer-centric</li><li>▪ Relevant</li><li>▪ Predictable</li><li>▪ Respectful of privacy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Unsolicited</li><li>▪ Broadcasted to everyone</li><li>▪ Company-centric</li><li>▪ Deceptive</li><li>▪ Haphazard</li><li>▪ Exploitative</li></ul>

# DEFINE AN EFFECTIVE EMAIL MARKETING STRATEGY

## Begin with the end in mind

Before you begin planning your email efforts, make sure you understand the goals of your B2B email marketing campaigns.

Consider the items below, and check off the ones that are goals for your company.

- Build trust and credibility for your products and/or services
- Change your customers' perception of your business
- Establish yourself or your company as a thought leader in your industry
- Build stronger business from existing customers
- Grow your marketing database
- Increase attendance at marketing events and trade shows
- Lower communication costs through the use of online resources
- Build relationships with existing customers
- Present offers that generate leads or inquiries
- Present offers that generate direct online sales
- Increase repeat visits to your website
- Improve brand or company awareness
- Increase repeat sales
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Define Your Email Marketing Audience

Now that you know you want to attract more traffic, spend some time defining who you are trying to attract. Take a moment to brainstorm about your target audiences. By defining your specific audience groups, you will be able to understand and address their unique needs and motivations.

- ✓ What specific industries and/or market segments do you serve?
- ✓ Describe a typical company in each industry and/or market segment you serve.
- ✓ Who will be going online to search for your products and services? What is their role within the company? Are they the end-user of the products and services?
- ✓ What product or service categories are they interested in?
- ✓ What information will they find useful and want to receive?
- ✓ What offers will they find valuable and want to respond to?

## Define Your Top Competitors

Now it's time to find out what your competitors are doing with email marketing. We recommend creating an email address that doesn't identify you or your company and subscribe to your competitors' email lists. Then, as you start to receive their email communications, take notes.

- ✓ Who are your top five competitors in order of priority? Do they engage in email marketing?
- ✓ What is the primary focus of their emails? promotional (e.g., product announcements, specials, etc.) or relationship building (e.g., educational email newsletter with best practice and useful tips)?
- ✓ How often do they send out their email communications?
- ✓ What do you like about their email marketing efforts? What do you dislike?
- ✓ How can your email newsletter give your company an edge over each competitor?

## Define a Clear Measurement Strategy

How will you know if your B2B email marketing strategy is successful? Identify specific success measures from the list below that will allow you to quantify the impact your email marketing strategy will have on your business.

Be clear about what you want to achieve and make sure the goals you set are attainable.

The following list can help you get started by defining your goals:

- Grow your marketing database by X% from new website subscribers.
- Grow your marketing database by X% from readers forwarding messages to colleagues.
- Increase traffic to your website from email marketing efforts by X%.
- Increase leads and inquiries from email marketing offers by X%.
- Increase direct online sales from email marketing offers by X%.
- Achieve an average email delivery rate of 90% or greater.

- Achieve an average email open rate of 40% or greater.
- Achieve an average click-through rate on offers of 15% or greater.
- Achieve minimal 'unsubscribes' from email lists.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_



# SETUP AN EMAIL CAMPAIGN MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

## Don't use your personal email for email broadcasts

An email marketing campaign management system will help you automate the entire process of building your lists, designing and delivering compelling messages and measuring the success of your campaigns. You don't need any special technical skills to use most of these systems. Most have tools that will guide you through the process of creating and distributing your emails, which makes it very easy.

At the lower end of the price range, email campaign management systems like [Constant Contact](#) and [Mailchimp](#) provide a great set of base-level capabilities at a very affordable price. At the higher end of the price range, email campaign management systems like [HubSpot](#) and [ActiveCampaign](#) offer more than just email marketing, they offer the software to fuel various parts of your sales and online marketing program.

These above-mentioned systems are self-service you can work with. In addition, a capable online marketing agency can manage this process for you, as well as provide turn-key solutions for your entire email campaign.

# BUILD YOUR CONTACT DATABASE AND SEGMENT

## Drive results with a segmented email list built online and offline

The key to an effective email program lies in a notion known as “permission marketing.” Your emails should build goodwill with your customers and prospects, not annoy them. Therefore, you need to obtain their permission before adding them to your email marketing mailing database. I strongly recommend you focus the majority of your efforts on building your own in-house contact database, rather than purchasing or renting a list from a publisher or list broker.

### Build Your In-house Email List Online

Begin by building your email database online. Your website is a great place to grow your email subscriber base. Leverage the following tips to make the most of this process:

- **Offer an e-newsletter sign up form on every page of your Website.** Your email newsletter sign-up should be a consistent call to action offered on every page of your Website. It’s the best way to build your in-house database. You can include a short form asking for the name and email in the sidebar, footer of your site or with a popup using a tool like [LeadBox from LeadPages](#).
- **Add a ‘subscribe to our email newsletter’ checkbox on every form on your Website.** Every lead generation form or inquiry form on your Website should include a checkbox allowing people to easily signup to your email list. Be clear about what they’re signing up for.
- **Make sure your e-newsletter sign up form is short and simple.** Don’t scare away subscribers by asking for too much information right away. The more information you ask for, the fewer people will complete the form. I recommend you just ask for their name and email address. You can build out more demographic information later.

- **Show that you are trustworthy.** Make sure a link with your privacy policy is clearly presented on every sign up form. Make it clear to subscribers that you will not misuse their personal contact information. And, let me repeat, make sure you're clear about what they are signing up for.
- **Offer an incentive at signup.** You will get more subscribers if you also offer an incentive, such as a whitepaper, a "how-to" guide, or discounts on future purchases, in exchange for their information.
- **Allow people to review your educational e-newsletter prior to sign up.** An effective way to entice people to subscribe to a regular offering is to let them sample the goods. On your email sign up form, provide a link to prior issues so they can see how valuable your e-newsletter is.
- **Include a "subscribe to our email newsletter" call to action in your email signature.** Add a brief statement to your personal email signature that describes the benefits of your e-newsletters such as, "Subscribe to our e-newsletter for tips on how to grow your business."
- **Show appreciation and say thank you.** Send a welcome email thanking new subscribers immediately after they sign up. Include a link to your e-newsletter archive for their convenience.

- **Encourage subscribers to "forward to a friend."** Your customers are probably friends with your best prospects. Make it easy for subscribers to help you build your list.

### **Build Your In-house List Offline**

Often your offline interactions with customers and prospects are a great opportunity to build your email list. Talking with them face-to-face can provide an extra level of trust that you can't get via the computer.

- **Ask your customers for their email addresses and permission.** Whether it's done over the phone or in person, ask salespeople and customer service people to tell all of your current customers about your email newsletter and ask permission to add them to your list. If you are a distributor with a retail location, have an email sign-up list on the counter where customers pay.
- **Promote your emails in all printed marketing materials.** Whether you're producing a brochure, letter or direct mail postcard, always include a line asking the recipient to sign up.
- **Tout your emails on invoices and packing slips.** Any transactional communication you have with customers is an opportunity to grow your list.

- **Promote your email newsletter on product registration and warranty cards.** Have a check box to let customers sign up to receive your email newsletter.
- **Collect email addresses at trade shows and other events.** As people visit your booth, let them know about the great educational resources you can offer. Ask for their permission and their business card.
- **Send postcards to customers encouraging them to subscribe.** If you have postal mailing addresses for customers but not email addresses, send a post card with an invitation to subscribe to your email newsletter.

### **Segment Your List to Tailor Content for Targeted Groups**

If your company serves a variety of distinct industries, business types, and/or company sizes, consider segmenting your list into separate groups. This will allow you to send targeted, relevant messages to each of these distinct audiences.

You can also segment your list based on:

- Roles (department, seniority, function)
- Behavior (email opens, page views, conversions)
- Marketing intelligence (social media data, web analytics)

You can do this manually by creating groups within your email subscriber database, or you can let your customers do it for you. By providing a variety of segmentation options on your email subscription form, your subscribers will segment themselves during the sign-up process.

### **How to Effectively Use Rented Lists**

So far in this step outline, I've focused mainly on ways to build your in-house email list. This is because I want you to focus most of your email list-building efforts on building your own in-house list. But what about purchasing or renting a third-party email list from a publisher or list broker? While not recommended as your primary list building method, third-party email lists can work if you adhere to the following best practices:

- **Rent lists, never buy them.** If someone sells you a list that you can use as often as you wish, it is not permission-based. However, if a publisher or third-party rents you a list that you can use one time through the publishers broadcast email system, then it most likely is permission-based.
- **Drive them to your website so they can join your list.** The primary goal of your rented list email campaign should be to drive recipients to your website so they can sign up for your email list. Then, you will own these subscribers' email addresses to use for your future campaigns.

# DESIGN AND DELIVER FOR SUCCESS

## “Design is not just what it looks and feels like. Design is how it works.” – Steve Jobs

Even the most compelling email message will fail if it is not designed well. Emails need to quickly catch your customer’s attention, communicate the value of the content, and make it easy for them to take the next step. Email design and layout is important because customers tend to scan email messages first before reading them in detail. There are a number of best practices you should follow to design messages that produce results.

### Leverage Design and Content Best Practices

- **Leverage a simple HTML email design.** Don’t go crazy with your email designs by including complex graphics and HTML code. Simplicity is the key to make sure it is displayable in email client software, like Microsoft Outlook. Create a compelling, yet simple, design that complements your Website using basic HTML code. Your template should be 600 to 700 pixels wide. In addition, text-only messages should be sent for readers that are using text-only email. Better yet, choose a tested template from an email service provider and customize it.
- **Choose an effective email template.** With email campaign management systems like Constant Contact or MailChimp, you often begin with a predesigned template that you customize with your company’s branding elements. Choose one that allows you to maintain a singular focus and present offers accordingly. Choose one for email newsletters and a different one for promotional messages (where the offer needs to be more prominent).
- **Consider the preview pane.** Most email client software allows readers to preview messages before officially opening them. Make sure your most compelling content will show up within the top 400-500 pixels of your message.

- **Write compelling subject lines.** The subject line of your message is one of the first things your recipients will see. The goal of the subject line is to get the recipient to open the message, not accept the offer. In under 50 characters (preferably around 25), you need to state the immediate benefit of opening your message to create a sense of urgency and importance. Numbers also make great additions to your subject lines. For example, instead of “<Company>’s November Newsletter,” try “Get 7 Tips for Better <Benefit>.” To determine the best subject lines, many companies A/B test different subjects to small segments of their list to find the most effective one before the big blast.
- **Use a familiar “from” address.** Most email recipients use the “from” line in your message to determine if they should read or delete the email. If customers are used to doing business with specific sales people, have the ‘from’ address include the salesperson’s name and your company name, as in: Bob DeStefano, SVM E-Marketing Solutions. If there is no specific contact person they normally deal with, just use your company’s name.
- **Make a clear call to action.** When you include an offer in your email, make it as easy as possible for the reader to take advantage of your promotion. Use bold, obvious buttons for readers to click. Make sure the buttons link to a page on your website where people can place an order or take advantage of the promotion. Cut down the number of steps it takes to convert your readers into purchasers.

## Leverage Deliverability Best Practices

- **Get a spam checkup.** Before sending each message, give it a spam checkup to look for red flags in your content and design that may trigger anti-spam software to block it. It’s better to find out now, before it is too late. Many email systems have automatic tools for doing this.
- **Test before sending.** In addition to the spam checkup, make sure you test your messages in a variety of email clients to make sure everything is working properly. Set up a number of test email addresses and use a different software with each.
- **Consider how often you send.** You should send your email newsletter on a monthly basis. If you send your e-newsletter out less frequently, it will not be often enough to establish a relationship with your readers. If you send it out more frequently than monthly, you may risk bothering your readers. In my experience, a monthly educational email newsletter will get the nurturing job done. Also, make sure you send it out roughly the same time each month. You want your readers to know when to expect your e-newsletter. Promotional emails should be sent as needed.

- **Consider when you send.** There have been many studies performed to determine the best day and time to send an email message. Unfortunately, they all seem to contradict each other. There is no perfect day and time to send that applies to everyone. Every business is different and you need to determine the best day and time to reach your target audience. Test sending your emails on different days, and then look at your open rates and click-through rates. That is the most effective way to determine your best day to send.

## A Few Words About Spam

Don't do it!

Since spam, or unsolicited and unwanted email, has become a major problem, a number of countries have passed anti-spam legislation that email marketers must comply with. I recommend you visit the [Federal Trade Commission Website](#) to familiarize yourself with the United States laws. Here is a quick overview of a few key elements you need to be aware of:

- **Gain permission.** You must receive the explicit permission from your email newsletter recipients prior to adding them to your list.
- **Let them unsubscribe.** You must make it easy for your readers to unsubscribe from your list.

- **Don't be deceptive.** I know you would never do this, but just to be thorough on the topic, make sure you do not include any false or misleading information in your email message.
- **Provide contact information.** In every message, provide your complete contact information including company name, address, phone number and email address. Make sure it is easy for readers to get in contact with you.
- **Don't share your email list.** You should never share or sell your email list to a third-party. Don't violate the trust of your readers.

If you use an email service provider like [MailChimp](#) or [Constant Contact](#), they offer some tools to keep you compliant with SPAM laws.

# CREATE EDUCATIONAL NEWSLETTER CONTENT

## Create and send great emails in a timely manner

Email marketing with a monthly e-newsletter offers you an opportunity to build an ongoing, interactive dialogue with your B2B customers and prospects on a measurable, cost-efficient basis. Not only can an e-newsletter demonstrate value to your customers, but it can also change your customers' perception on your business. By sending timely articles that solve current business problems, you demonstrate to your customers that you understand them and their needs. This repeatedly reinforces their importance to you and builds their trust in your company.

If any of the following apply to your company, you should seriously consider producing an email newsletter:

- You rely on repeat customers.
- Your prospects are not ready to buy right now.
- You can benefit from referral business.
- You have valuable information to share.
- You want your customers to view you as a partner.

One of the biggest challenges in conducting a successful email newsletter campaign is generating content that will motivate prospects and customers to open, read and take action. Email newsletters that simply provide a recap of the latest products and news from your company will be read only by your most loyal customers. To reach out and influence all potential buyers, you need to provide useful, objective information that can help your prospects and customers improve their processes.



Once you get in the habit of providing valuable information that fits your company's business, you will find it easy to unobtrusively slip in a sales message that will be likely to catch your prospects and customers in a very receptive way.

### **Find an Expert and an Editor**

Your company should have a great writer and editor for your email newsletters. Your writer is the expert responsible for creating compelling, customer-focused articles and content for your email newsletters. Your editor is responsible for reviewing and editing content, managing production and distribution, and ensuring the voice of your e-newsletter is maintained issue after issue.

Both of these people may already exist within your company, so how do you choose the right people?

Is your company president a talented writer? His or her insights into hot topics or emerging trends in your industry can serve as the expert voice for your e-newsletter. Or, perhaps you have another thought leader in your company that can create content. Even if this expert is not a talented writer, he or she can work with a talented copywriter to craft and polish a compelling e-newsletter article.

The editor is responsible for your email newsletter campaign as a product. He or she is responsible for reviewing and editing e-newsletter articles, ensuring that the voice of your company rings clear in each issue. In addition, this person is responsible for managing the

production and distribution of your e-newsletter. Finally, your editor should monitor the results of each e-newsletter to measure the success and gain actionable insights to influence the success of future email newsletters. This role can be filled by a member of your team or an online marketing agency.

### **Name Your Newsletter**

Your email newsletter needs a creative and memorable name that will get the reader's attention, fit with the content your business will offer, and set your e-newsletter apart. Conduct a brainstorming session and come up with a number of catchy names. Present them to your team members, employees and best customers, and ask for their help to select the best name for your newsletter.

### **Focus on One Thing at a Time**

Many companies pack way too much content in each issue of their email newsletter. Focus on one idea per issue and resist the urge to explain your entire field of expertise in each e-newsletter.

You'll have more content to choose from for your next issue, and your readers will find your newsletter easier to read.

## Getting Content for Your Email Newsletter

Your email newsletter is not for you – it’s for your customers. Focus less on your company and more on the issues and ideas your customers are interested in. I like articles that focus on how-to tips, best practices and actionable strategies. To help get you started, the following are examples of useful e-newsletter content:

- **Problems and solutions.** Identify common problems your readers might face and provide ideas on how to solve them.
- **Technological developments.** Inform your readers on how to take advantage of recent technological developments to improve their operations and be more effective.
- **Lists and statistics.** Provide actionable lists and statistics with titles like “Seven Steps to \_\_\_\_\_” or “The Top Five Ways to \_\_\_\_\_” or “The Top Ten Tips for \_\_\_\_\_.”
- **Industry news and trends.** Write about new developments in your industry that are relevant to your readers. Make sure to highlight why they are important for your readers’ businesses.

- **Case studies.** Write case studies of how others have improved their operations. Make sure to include details that readers can learn from and success measures so your readers can gauge the results achieved from these actions.

## Write Good Teasers that Encourage Clicks

As mentioned, you should not put full pieces of content in your newsletter. You should write short teasers, and then provide links for subscribers to read the full text on your website.

When you write your teasers, you want to take a conversational tone in your copy. Don’t feel as though you are writing for hundreds or thousands of subscribers. The reality is that one person will be reading your newsletter at a time. Have a conversation with each reader by writing the way you normally talk – in a direct and friendly manner. Your readers will find it much more appealing than if you write in a formal manner. In fact, you can break a lot of the rules you were taught about writing. Below please find some tips for writing in a conversational tone:

- **Keep it short and to the point.** Your teaser needs to attract the reader to click through and read the full text of the article, and no more. Focus on giving your reader reasons to click through.

- **It's OK to use contractions.** Your high school English teacher may not agree with me, but feel free to use contractions. Most people use contractions when they speak, so it's a natural way to grab your readers.
- **Use "and" and "but" at the beginning of sentences.** Again, in our real-life conversations, we use these words at the beginning of sentences very frequently because they make great transitions. Use them in your articles and you will sound more authentic and conversational.
- **End sentences with prepositions.** It is fine to end a sentence with a preposition if it resembles everyday language, but make sure you don't do it sentence after sentence. For example, you can say "What did you step on?" instead of "On what did you step?" Because, have you ever heard anyone talk that way?
- **Speak to the reader.** When writing using a conversational tone, the words "you" and "your" work well.
- **Remember the e-newsletter 80-20 rule.** I like to see email newsletters be 80% educational and 20% promotional. The majority of the email newsletter content should be useful educational information followed by an attractive offer that is relevant to the content.
- **Make sure your offer is relevant.** I know I mentioned relevancy in the previous bullet point, but it is important to repeat this idea again. Your offer must be relevant on a number of levels to be effective. It should be relevant to the reader's interests, as well as relevant to the focus of your newsletter content.

## Make a Call to Action

Even though the focus of your email newsletter is to educate prospects and customers, this is a great opportunity to present them with relevant offers to generate sales or encourage repeat website visits.

# EMAIL CUSTOMERS TARGETED PROMOTIONS

## Create results-focused promotional messages

When executed effectively, promotional email marketing is an excellent way to promote new products and encourage repeat purchases. According to a study by [Convince and Convert](#), 44% of email recipients make at least one purchase per year based on a promotional email and those customers spend 138% more than people that do not receive email offers. So, if you are not sending out promotion emails, it's time to start.

Unfortunately, most manufacturers and distributors don't know how to effectively approach promotional email marketing, with many of them just emailing a PDF of their weekly flier. That approach is not going to work! To be effective with promotional email, follow these proven best practices:

### Create Customer-focused Promotions

Promotional email marketing campaigns too often center around products a company wants to sell instead of products customers want to buy. This is a recipe for lackluster email marketing results. To be successful with promotional email, think carefully about your customers' needs and create offers that will cause them to "Act now!"

- **Know your customers and offer something they value.** The key to successful promotional offers is to understand what drives your customers and to offer them something that adds value to the purchase. Examples could include "buy one, get one free," limited time discounts or a gift (e.g., \$50 Starbucks gift card) for purchasing a certain dollar amount. Brainstorm offer ideas with your sales people to determine what type of promotional offers would be perceived as most valuable to your customers.

- **Focus on a single customized offer targeting specific customer segments.** Resist the urge to promote any products in your email messages. The most effective promotional messages are simple to understand and focus on a single offer targeting specific customer segments. According to a [Mailchimp study](#), emailing customized promotional messages to specific customer segments increase open rates by 14% and click-through rates by 59%, as compared to general broadcast messages.
- **Mine your sales data to create personalized promotions.** Your customers' past purchases can help you uncover effective offer ideas. By mining your sales data, you can create personalized offers to buy again, buy more or try a complementary product. For example, you can search your sales data to find a segment of customers who purchased a drill within the last 30 days. Then, you can create a promotion email for this segment of customers with a discount on drill bits. This strategy works very well for cross-selling related products and expanding the breadth of product each customer purchases from you.
- **Send perfectly timed promotions for products that expire.** If there are certain products that you know your customers will need to reorder at a certain time, create timed, personalized promotions to make it easy for them to reorder. For years, I have been buying coffee

for my office from a small online reseller. The primary reason they get my continued business is because they happen to know exactly when I'm running low on coffee and send me an email with my personalized order allowing me to purchase with one click.

- **Have a firm deadline and/or limited quantities available.** Effective promotional offers create a sense of urgency. You can accomplish this by setting a firm date when your offer will end. Another way to create urgency is to limit the number of offers or quantities available. People will respond faster if they know they need to be one of the first 50 people to respond.
- **Design your promotional emails for success.** Follow all best practices laid out in step 4 to make sure your email quickly catches your customer's attention, communicates the value of your offer and makes it easy for readers to take the next step. Promotional email design and layout is important because customers tend to scan email messages first before reading them in detail.

# MEASURE EMAIL MARKETING SUCCESS

## Is your email marketing working? Find out with analytics

As with all marketing activities, you must measure success to see how well you performed in the past, as well as identify actionable strategies to improve your results in the future. Below please find a few suggestions for measuring the success of your B2B email newsletter campaign.

### Measure the Success of Each Email Blast

When using an email marketing campaign management system, you will have access to great reports that will allow you to track the key metrics to measure the success of each e-newsletter. Below please find a summary of the key statistics to track for each newsletter:

- **Delivery rate.** This metric tells us whether or not your email is actually making its way to the intended recipient's inbox. If your delivery rate is not 90% to 95% you probably have some bad addresses on your list.
- **Open rate.** This statistic will let you know how many people opened your message. For a successful message your open rate should exceed 35% of your subscribers.
- **Click-through rate.** This metric tells you, for your readers that opened your message, what percentage clicked on your email to visit your website. Depending on the offer, your desired click-through rate will vary; however, a click-through rate above 10% is generally considered a success in the industrial industry.
- **Forward rate.** This statistic will tell you the percentage of readers that forwarded your message to a friend or colleague. If you get any forwards your message was a success.

- **Unsubscribe rate.** This is the percentage of people that unsubscribed or opted out of receiving future communications. This percentage should be as close to zero as possible, but anything below 2% to 3% should be fine.

In addition to looking at these statistics after each email message, I recommend you compare the statistics of each email newsletter issue to determine the content and offers that your readers are responding to. You can use this information to improve your future e-newsletter issues.

### **Ask for Reader Feedback**

One of the best ways to find out if your e-newsletter is a success is to receive reader feedback. For your email newsletter to be a success, your readers must consider it a useful and valuable resource. By asking them for feedback, you will be able to know what's working and not working so you can fine-tune and improve your content. The following tips will help you receive this valuable information:

- **Ask for feedback.** Don't assume that your readers will take it upon themselves to reach out to you. Invite them to submit feedback and ideas in every issue.
- **Make it easy to submit feedback.** Make sure your e-newsletter is set up so readers can simply hit "reply" to submit comments or click on an active email link in the body of your e-newsletter.

- **Survey your readers.** From time to time, conduct an online survey of your readers to request ideas and feedback. This will allow people to anonymously provide their ideas and comments.

### **Measure the Impact on Your Website**

One of the goals of your email newsletter campaign should be to generate repeat visits to your website. You want to make sure you can track these visits to see what online content your readers are interested in, as well as what calls to action in your messages are generating the most leads and sales. In addition, you should track what sections of your website are generating most of your new subscribers. Web analytic reports will help you track this information.

If you haven't done so already, I strongly recommend you implement [Google Analytics](#) on your website. Google Analytics does a fantastic job of making Web statistics easy to understand – and it's free! There are many other website analytics tracking platforms other than Google Analytics as well. No matter what Web analytics package you use, these are the important stats to keep track of to measure the success of your site.

## NEXT STEPS

### Do something!

This guide defines a proven approach to creating a B2B email newsletter that will produce measurable results. By considering the steps and best practices detailed in this guide, you have now taken the crucial first step toward achieving your online marketing goals.

Now it's time to take action to profit from these principles. Assemble a team of talented writers and online marketing strategists to bring your email marketing strategy to life.

We hope this B2B email marketing guide has helped to simplify the process of attracting profitable traffic to your Website. The principles detailed in this guide are based on SVM's over twenty years of experience creating effective online marketing strategies that produce measurable business results for manufacturers, distributors and B2B service providers.

A great next step will be to [setup a free consultation with me](#), Bob DeStefano, to discuss your B2B online marketing strategy.

I guarantee I'll provide you with tips and ideas you can use immediately to boost your results.

Call me at **(877) 786-3249 x234** or click the link below to schedule your consultation.

[SCHEDULE CONSULTATION](#)



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

### Bob DeStefano, B2B Online Marketing Strategist & Speaker

Bob DeStefano is an internet marketing pioneer with over 25 years of experience helping B2B companies leverage online marketing to produce bottom-line results.

Through his speaking, writing and consulting, Bob makes online marketing understandable and empowers business leaders with actionable tips and strategies they can put to work immediately to:

- Increase sales & profits
- Generate new business leads
- Strengthen relationships with customers
- Boost marketing results on a limited budget
- Measure marketing ROI



Bob's online marketing career began during the birth of online marketing in the early 1990's serving as a strategic planner for Dean Witter, Discover & Co. At Dean Witter, Bob spearheaded the creation of the company's first Dean Witter and Discover Card websites.

As president of [SVM E-Marketing Solutions](#), a leading B2B online marketing agency, Bob has worked with a wide variety of companies, from Fortune 500 companies to small family-owned businesses, to help them leverage online marketing to produce bottom-line results.

Bob is the author of the [Old Dog, New Clicks: Online Industrial and B2B Marketing Know-How for the 21st Century](#), a step-by-step plan to transform your marketing practices from past decades to ensure your company's success for the next decade. In addition, Bob is a regular contributor to a variety of publications, including Modern Distribution Management, Contractor Supply and MarketingProfs, on the subject of actionable online marketing strategies.

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