

# **Simple E-Mail Marketing for Small Businesses**

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# Introduction

Are you curious about **e-mail marketing strategies**? You may have heard that e-mail marketing can be used very effectively to promote your small business, but have no idea how this process actually works.

The good news is **that e-mail marketing strategies** are not really very complicated and can easily be used by just about anyone.

*Every small business owner should be implementing them into their advertising plans.*

**E-mail marketing** offers one of the best advertising returns for the money spent. Based on the research performed by several different marketing firms over the past 5 years, e-mail marketing strategies can produce an average of **\$45 of revenue for every \$1 spent**.

**That's an extremely cost-effective form of advertising!**

This form of advertising is being used by hundreds of thousands of companies all over the world. If your small business hasn't joined the movement then you could be missing out on revenue, customers and brand recognition. Like all things in small business, you have got to start somewhere. Now is the time to begin your company's **e-mail marketing campaign**. This report will get you started quickly and easily.

## What is E-Mail Marketing?

**E-mail marketing** is not a complicated subject. In general it means to incorporate the use of e-mails in your small business's **marketing strategy**.

It is essentially the same thing as sending out **newsletters, mailers** and **coupon books** via **snail mail**, only it occurs via **electronic mail**. *Almost all of your customers use e-mail as a form of communication, meaning that you could be directly contacting these customers every day!*

There are many ways that you can use e-mail marketing strategies to market your company and your services to your customers. You can use e-mail marketing to reach potential customers on their private computers or you can use these strategies to market your business in public venues.

Here are some examples of e-mail marketing tactics:

- Direct promotional e-mails
- E-mails to new customers
- E-mails to existing customers
- Customer loyalty offers
- E-mail advertisements and marketing messages.

E-mail marketing strategies are very popular with small businesses today for several reasons. **First, e-mail marketing allows you to connect with hundreds or thousands of people every day.** This means that your latest products, services and promotional deals could reach your potential customers

several times per day, and in just a few seconds. E-mail marketing allows you to reach out and connect with your customers easily and effectively.

**E-mail marketing tactics are also very cost-effective.** Sending out an e-mail is very cheap- especially when compared with other forms of small business marketing techniques such as **Search Engine Optimization strategies** and **snail mail**.

**Also, e-mailing marketing tactics have a distinct advantage over many other forms of small business marketing because they allow you to directly reach your potential customers.** Sure, online viewers can find everything they want to know about your company by simply visiting your webpage, but they have to take the required action to get there. With e-mail marketing you are actually reaching out and contacting your customers without them having to do anything.

**Finally, e-mail marketing strategies have been proven to be a very effective way for small businesses to market themselves- if the tactics are implemented properly.** This means that you can begin the process of developing an e-mail marketing campaign for your small business with the assurance that if you do it properly you will see results! *This certainly explains why e-mail marketing strategies are so popular with many small and local businesses.*

## Types of E-Mail Marketing

**There are 3 general types of e-mail marketing techniques that you can use.**

Each type can help you find and retain more customers.

The first type of e-mail marketing is known as **direct e-mail**, and it is just what it sounds like. This tactic refers to the practice of sending out direct promotional messages and advertisements to your customer's email account. These messages may be announcements of **special offers, great deals** or **sales**.

They may be used to spread the word about any new services your company is offering or new locations it can now serve. These e-mails will often have a 'call to action' included in them, which encourages the customer to take some sort of action to receive a promotional deal. This 'call to action' may include asking the viewer **to sign-up for a service, visit your business's home page** or **make a phone call**.

*Basically, direct e-mails tell your customers what is happening with your business and all they have to do to see it is to open the e-mail.*

The second type of e-mail marketing is called **retention e-mailing**. **Retention e-mails** are designed not only to inform your customers about your business, but also to help create a long term relationship with them. Retention e-mails offer more than just promotions and advertisements; they also contain content that is valuable to the reader.

These e-mails contain content that will **entertain, inform** and **engage** the reader, so that they will feel a connection with your small business.

*The most common form of retention e-mails used in e-mail marketing strategies is newsletters.*

The third e-mail marketing tactic is straight-up **e-mail advertising, only you will be using e-mail content created by someone else**. This means attaching your business's advertisement to an e-mail or newsletter created by another company. You have probably received such an e-mail already- where another business is advertising on the top, bottom or sides of the e-mail.

*This can also be a very effective way to use e-mail marketing to enhance your small business's advertising reach.*

# How Can E-Mail Marketing Benefit Your Small Business?

E-mail marketing campaigns can help your small business develop **loyalty, awareness, trust** and **desire** with its customers.

It can be used to retain and engage your business's existing customers and help you establish new customers at the same time.

Here are some of the ways that a properly established e-mail marketing campaign can benefit your small business:

## **1. E-mail marketing campaigns are very cost-effective.**

Direct marketing techniques require a decent amount of money to operate, mostly because you are generating 'real' content, such as a printed advertisement or newsletter. Then you will end up spending more money to send this 'real' content out to your customers via the postal mail. E-mail marketing on the other hand uses 'electronic content', which is much cheaper to produce, and sends it out to your customers electronically. Sending content electronically is much less expensive than sending it out in the real world. This means you can reach hundreds or thousands of your potential customers for a fraction of the costs associated with direct marketing techniques.

### **2. E-mail marketing is targeted marketing.**

You can directly target specific customers with e-mail marketing. This means that you can focus on contacting people who are likely to want to receive your message, while wasting less time and money reaching out to those people who are not likely to want to hear from you. Again, this helps save your marketing department both time and money.

### **3. E-mail marketing allows you to track data.**

Because e-mail marketing campaigns are done electronically it makes it very easy for you to track your data to determine how well your strategy is working. For example, it is easy for you to track how many viewers actually opened your e-mail, how many chose to unsubscribe to your e-mails, who forwarded your advertisements to someone else and who listed your e-mails as spam. All of this information can be collected quickly and easily from each of your potential viewers. This data tracking system makes it a lot easier for your marketing team to figure out which of their e-mail marketing tactics are producing results, and which are wasting time and effort. Once you know this information you can alter your marketing strategies to make them more effective.

### **4. E-mail marketing can be automated.**

Once you have an idea of the kinds of content you wish to send out to your customers via your e-mail marketing strategy it is easy to automate the process. This means that you will

be able to schedule e-mails and newsletters weeks or months in advance, which will make it much easier to create the desired content. You can also set up automated delivery, which will save you time, man-hours and money.

### **5. E-mail marketing tactics are super fast!**

One of the best features of an e-mail marketing campaign is that it works really, really fast. You don't have to wait days or weeks to see the results of your e-mail marketing campaign- results can be seen in seconds! Your business's e-mails will instantly reach your customers and will provide up-to-date information and content. You will also be able to see the results of this marketing tactic almost right away. E-mail marketing strategies help small businesses keep up-to-date with their customers and operate in 'real time'.

### **6. E-mail marketing techniques can boost revenue.**

Not only can e-mail marketing tactics help your business increase its sales and generate more revenue, but these tactics can do so in a time-tested and easily measurable way. This form of marketing can also generate sales through other channels. Create the right type of e-mail marketing strategy and avoid the dreaded 'spam' label and your company *will* see an increase in its revenue. After all, the more potential customers you can entice- the more sales and revenue you will receive!

# How to Run an E-Mail Marketing Campaign

It is obvious why your small business should be using **e-mail marketing** strategies **to increase its customer base, build brand awareness** and **increase revenue**.

However, there are both good and bad ways to use this marketing technique. *It is very important that you learn the proper ways to implement an e-mail marketing strategy to avoid alienating your customers and being labeled as a 'spammer'.*

**There are 3 basics that you must get right before you can expect your e-mail marketing campaign to begin showing results.**

These 3 basics include **creating a list** of people who will want to receive your business's message, **crafting that message** so that it is not thought of as spam and **creating a system** that will get these messages into your viewer's inbox.

Once you have accomplished these 3 basics you can work on a number of more detailed and sophisticated tactics to improve your results.

*In the world of e-mail marketing there is always room for improvement.*

## Getting Started

**To begin the process of creating an effective e-mail marketing program for your small business all you have to do is commit to doing so.**

For most business owners, the misconception that they have to be a 'marketing expert' in order to successfully implement an e-mail marketing campaign represents their biggest hurdle. *E-mail marketing can be a whole lot easier than it sounds- as long as you get the basics right.*

*Now that your business has made the commitment to creating an e-mail marketing strategy the next step is to begin consolidating your names for your outgoing e-mail list.*

### Creating an e-mail list

**This will be the heart of your marketing strategy.**

You will need a list of names and e-mail addresses to begin with, so that you can start getting your e-mail marketing message out there. Odds are your business has a list of past and present customers.

The first step is to gather together all of your names and contact information into one easily identifiable spot. The best way to organize and categorize your e-mail names list is to use a **database**. You don't need a computer sciences degree to use a database- you can use [Microsoft's Excel Spreadsheet](#) or [Mac's Mactracker](#) or anything else that you know how to operate.

*(Look up some database tutorials on [YouTube](#) for easy advice if you are not familiar with using a database.)*

Managing all of your names using a database makes it easy to see the e-mail addresses you already have and to add to the list as time passes and your business changes.

Start with your company rolodex and create a list of previous, current and potential customers. Later on you can purchase or rent names and e-mail addresses to expand your marketing reach, but for starters go with consolidating your current and past customer lists.

*The next step is to locate the e-mail addresses of these customers.*

If you do not already possess these e-mail addresses here are some ways to go about getting them:

### **Signup Sheets**

Create an **e-mail signup sheet** for your customers to provide you their e-mail addresses. A good way to do this is to offer a signup form at your store front and on your company's website. Offer the customer something for giving you their e-mail.

For example:

You can say: "Sign up here to receive a free newsletter and great promotional deals!" Make sure this signup form as enough room for people to write out their long e-mail addresses and start with just their names and e-mails. If you ask for too much information right off the bat then you might discourage people from signing up.

## Privacy Concerns

Privacy is **EXTREMELY** important to customers and without a good privacy statement you probably are not going to get many e-mail addresses.

In order to run an e-mail marketing campaign, you **MUST** have the permission of the people you intend to send messages out to. Unsolicited e-mails sent to someone without their permission is known as **SPAM**. Spam filters on most e-mail inboxes will prevent these customers from seeing your unsolicited e-mails anyway, plus everyone despises spam. If you want people to respect your business's brand and receive your e-mails, **never, ever send out spam!**

Sending out spam will not only cause you to lose your customer base, but it will also result in a loss of your e-mail accounts and website hosting services.

*The repercussions of being a 'spammer' can be very high.*

This means that you must have the owner's permission before you can send out any marketing or commercial e-mails to them.

*E-mail marketing campaigns will only be successful if they are based on permission.*

There are ways to gain a customer's permission.

You can add a check box to your signup sheet or online purchasing page that reads: "Yes, I would like to receive promotional e-mails".

If they click the yes box then they have granted your company permission to send them marketing e-mails. You will also want to develop a strong **privacy statement**, so that your customers can be sure that you are not going to do anything bad or unethical with their e-mail address.

This privacy statement should be clearly visible to your customers. It should be posted on the website, in your store and next to anything that asks for a customer's e-mail. If you want more information regarding e-mail privacy you can check out some online resources such as [www.privacy.org](http://www.privacy.org).

### **Developing your e-mail marketing campaign**

Now that you have a list of customer names and have taken steps to receive their e-mail addresses and permission to send out messages to these addresses, you are ready to develop your e-mail marketing campaign.

*Remember that the goal of e-mail marketing is to deliver something of value to the reader, in order to gain their loyalty, their trust and to get them to purchase your goods or services.*

This means that you don't want to overwhelm your customers with information, as this may cause them to unsubscribe from your program. You also do not want to send out too little content, or your customers may forget about your company. **A proper e-mail marketing strategy requires that you find the balance between too much content and not enough.**

**The quality of your marketing content also has to be high.**

One of the best ways to ensure that your customers consistently enjoy receiving your e-mails is to offer them a blend of different types of content delivered at various intervals. A good way to figure this out is to think of yourself and how you view your own e-mail inbox. Ask yourself some questions about what types and forms of content you like to read, and what kinds of content annoy or bother you.

Here are some different forms and types of content that your company could deliver to its customers. Which types would best fit with your targeted customer base?

- Informative news
- Editorial content
- Entertaining content such as anecdotes and jokes
- Urgent product/service updates
- Price changes
- Recall information
- Customer notifications regarding warranties, accounts or contracts
- Promotional deals
- Order confirmations
- Shipping confirmations
- Up-selling messages
- Personal messages such as birthday greetings

The goal is to offer e-mail content that is **useful for the reader**, **encourages them to take more action** and that helps them **remain loyal to your company**.

Think about what you would want a company to send you to help you out. Think about informative and helpful content, maybe in the form of a newsletter that will provide something the reader wants for free. Think about what types of

promotions and deals might actually get you to take an extra step and visit their webpage or store.

Offer specific deals and promotions for loyal customers. Keep them coming back again and again. *Target potential customers and give them a reason to become loyal customers.*

*Once you have a good idea of how you want your e-mail marketing campaign to go, you can begin writing up individual e-mails.*

### **Composing e-mails for your marketing campaign**

*Take the time to create really good marketing e-mails for your campaign.*

This is *especially* important during the initial stages, where viewers will have to decide whether or not your company e-mails are worth reading.

Here are some tips for making your marketing e-mails worth reading:

- **Start with a new e-mail address to send outgoing messages.** This means using an e-mail address that isn't already in your customer's address book. Make sure this address looks professional and not like a machine-generated e-mail account with tons of letters and numbers.
- **Pay attention to the words you place in the subject line.** The subject of the e-mail is extremely important because it will determine if the reader will choose to open the e-mail or if they will automatically delete it. *Don't be too aggressive or overstated with your subject lines.* Too many promotional terms, exclamation marks or capitalization in the subject line might get your e-mail categorized as spam. Be especially careful with how you use the term "free".

- **Keep the content of your marketing e-mails relatively short and to the point.** If the content is too wordy or too long odds are your readers will disregard it. Write a captivating first sentence to keep them reading and be sure to offer them something of real value. *Make sure your content gets right to the point.* Your viewer will probably only give your e-mail a few seconds of their time, so make sure what you wrote counts. Offer a promotion, a piece of news or a special offer. Then add some links to your website and a reason for the reader to click on this link.
- **Use a different e-mail for current customers.** Treat your recurring customers special- make sure they know that they are respected and valued as customers. This will hopefully keep them coming back for more. Write up a specific e-mail for prospective customers and customers that you may have lost too. *Make your e-mails look personalized.*
- **Test out your various e-mails before you send them out to your customers by sending to them to co-workers and friends, even yourself.** This will help you make sure that your e-mails look right and are not being categorized as spam by inboxes.
- **Add a disclaimer at the bottom of your e-mails that tells the recipient why they have received the e-mail.** It should read something like this: "You are receiving this e-mail because you subscribed to our service using this e-mail address. If you did not subscribe to this service or would like to be removed from our service, you can click on the unsubscribe icon located at the bottom of the page".

This is something that you must do in order to follow the **Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing Act of 2003 (CAN-SPAM Act)**, which was created to help control spamming.

In order to comply with this law, you **must** also include the physical address of your company in your marketing e-mails.

Here are a few more things that you must do in order to comply with the **CAN-SPAM Act:**

- Accurately identify your business and your routing information in the header information. **Don't** use misleading "To" and "From" headers.
- **Always** identify your message as an advertisement. You can choose how you want to do this, but make sure that your e-mail can be clearly identified as an ad.
- Make sure that your business honors its **opt-out** program. If a customer asks to unsubscribe to your e-mail marketing service, make sure they are removed from your list. You **must** remove any opt-out clients within 10 days of the time they received the message and your opt-out service must be operation for **at least 30 days after the e-mail was sent.**
- Your company is responsible for adhering to the **CAN-SPAM Act**, whether it contracts out its e-mail marketing campaign or hires another company to manage it. So be sure that any outside help you receive is also following these guidelines.
- **More than one person can be held liable for any violations of this act and a single e-mail violation could be subject to a penalty of up to \$16,000.**

**It is very important that your business's e-mail marketing campaign adheres to the CAN-SPAM Act.** To ensure that your strategies are lawful it is recommended that you review the law's restrictions at **the Bureau of Consumer Protection's Business Center**. Their website can be found at:

<http://business.ftc.gov>.

## Broadcast Messages and Pre-Loaded Follow Up Messages

There are two different types of e-mails that are used as part of an e-mail marketing campaign. These are broadcast messages and **pre-loaded messages**.

**Broadcast messages are one-time messages that will be sent to all of your customers at the same time.** These messages contain the latest news and information about your company and are time-sensitive in nature. These messages may contain **product recommendations**, the **latest promotions** and **deals** and **new product launch information**. A weekly or bi-weekly newsletter is a good example of a broadcast message.

**Pre-loaded messages are most commonly used as part of an autoresponder system, where pre-written messages are sent out automatically to customers at regular intervals.** These intervals can be every few days, once a week or several times per month. You will have to determine what amount is enough to keep your customers interested but not overwhelmed.

Some e-mail marketers will send out very short and cryptic messages several times a day. These messages usually contain a mysterious or intriguing communication that urges the reader to continue following them. **The point of pre-loaded messages is that they are pre-written with plenty of content and are ready to go.**

*It is important that you create plenty of pre-loaded content to be used as part of your autoresponder program, usually several month's worth.*

This content should also be **useful, engaging** and **relatively short** in length. These pre-loaded messages should **not** contain any time sensitive materials either, so that they can be sent out at any time.

All of the products, services and promotions that you offer in your pre-loaded messages **must** still be available at the time of their release. Pre-loaded messages usually begin with an autoresponder message followed by lots of follow-up messages.

**A quality e-mail marketing program will make use of both of these types of messages.**

Pre-loaded autoresponder messages work very well with time-sensitive broadcast messages to keep your customers in tune with what is happening with your business.

For example:

Your customers could receive a pre-loaded autoresponder message every few days or so and an up-to-date newsletter once every two weeks. If they only received the autoresponder messages then they would not have the up-to-date knowledge and they may get bored with your e-mails. If they only received your broadcast messages once every 2 weeks, then they might forget about your company in the mean time.

**Sending out both pre-loaded autoresponder messages and broadcast messages will cover all of your bases.**

## **Sending Out Your Marketing E-Mails**

Once you have created your various marketing e-mails for your different customers, you are ready to begin sending them out. This is why you created a database of e-mail addresses.

**Most marketing e-mails have a lifespan of about 3 days before they are either read or deleted.** You can choose to send out your e-mails at any time, but studies have shown that earlier days of the week, like Mondays and Tuesday are better, especially if you are sending e-mails to businesses. For weekend mailings to private homes you may want to send them out on Sunday. These days will most likely ensure that your e-mail will be read.

### **Dealing with opt-out requests**

**Remember that it is *extremely* important that you quickly handle all opt-out requests from your customers.**

The faster you respect your client's wishes- the happier they will be. Even customers who choose to opt-out of your e-mails may still want to purchase your products, so it is important that you treat them well.

The best practice for this is to collect all **opt-out requests** from all of your channels before you deal with them. These opt-out requests may come to your company via the **telephone, e-mails, letters** or **in person**.

*Take the time once or twice a week to update your e-mail contacts list with client's who opt-out. This will ensure that these customers will no longer receive your marketing e-mails.*

## Bounced messages

As your e-mail marketing campaign moves ahead you will probably begin to experience **bounced messages**. These are returned e-mails delivered back to your inbox as "undeliverable".

*Be sure to collect all of your bounced messages every few days or so and update your database.* This will ensure that you do not waste your time and energy sending out e-mails that will only come back to you.

Here are some ways that you can attempt to collect the right e-mail addresses for bounced messages:

- Resend your bounced messages in about a month's time. If the message was bounced because the recipient's inbox was full they may get it this time.
- If you have the customer's telephone number you may want to give them a call to let them know that the e-mail or newsletter they requested cannot be delivered to them. (Don't make too many calls as your customers may be on a no-call list.)
- If you have the customer's mailing address you may want to send them a postcard asking for a new e-mail address. Attach a returnable postcard or a link for your website where they can update their e-mail address.

## Follow-up e-mails

**It is important that you follow up with your e-mail customers, both for bounced e-mails and for received e-mails.** You can choose to follow-up your e-mails with **more e-mails**, through **phone calls** or through **snail mail**.

Most of the time you will send out your follow-up e-mails as part of your autoresponder program, so that your customers will receive automated e-mails that will keep them interested. The more times a customer sees your advertisements, the better the chance they will remember it.

You can use terms like "last chance", "just a few days left" and "offer ends soon" in your follow-up e-mails. *Just remember that you are looking for the delicate balance of enough e-mails to keep the customer interested but not too much that they become annoyed with your company.*

## Defining your results

**After a period of time you can begin to define your e-mail marketing results.**

You will have a list of e-mails your company has sent out and a list of how many of these e-mails were read, deleted and forwarded. You will know how many of your customers have asked to unsubscribe to your e-mails and how many customers have taken advantage of your offers.

You may wish to write a special e-mail to certain customers to ask them if they liked receiving your e-mails and what you could do to improve your performance. *The point is to be flexible with your e-mail marketing campaign.*

**If a particular tactic isn't working then alter your approach. Always be on the lookout for more e-mail addresses and more potential customers. Try new things. Learn from your triumphs and mistakes.**

## **Automated E-Mail Marketing Tools**

Managing your e-mail marketing mailing lists and sending out dozens of both pre-loaded and broadcast messages every week can be very difficult. This is why there are **automated e-mail marketing tools** or **AEMTs**.

These are programs that automate the entire process of **constructing letters, scheduling the sending out of messages, managing your e-mail address list** and **handling opt-outs**.

*In short, an AEMT can make the entire e-mail marketing process much easier to manage.*

There are many of these automated programs available for purchase all over the web and there are several that are offered for free. A simple [Google](#) search will help you find these programs. Most small businesses elect to go with one of the **3 major AEMTs** available.

**The 3 major AEMTs are [MailChimp](#), [AWeber](#) and [Constant Contact](#).**

All 3 of these automated tools offer message templates, **automated mail delivery services** and **interfaces** that allow you to control your own e-mail marketing strategy. They offer lots of functions, which means you will have to learn how to operate their options and tools. Tutorials can make the learning process much easier.

Here is a brief rundown of the 3 major AEMTs:

**MailChimp** is free to begin using, which makes it a popular choice for beginners to the world of e-mailing marketing. **As long as your e-mail address list has fewer than 2000 people on it and you send out less than 12,000 e-mails each month, you can use MailChimp's services for free.**

Above that amount and you have to pay a light monthly fee. *Overall, MailChimp has a very user-friendly interface and makes the learning process easy.* It also offers an external opt-in form, which allows you to make a more customized permission form. This form will then be hosted on the MailChimp website.

**MailChimp** offers 3 on-site opt-in forms as well. As for creating your e-mails, **MailChimp** offers a very good line of templates and do-it-yourself creations in its **Campaign Builder** feature. The company also offers basic but helpful autoresponder management tools and a decent spam management filter known as the Inbox Inspector. Their tracking features are not as in-depth as AWeber's, but they are still very helpful. **MailChimp's support team is helpful but somewhat limited.**

**AWeber offers a 1 month trial period for \$1, which is refundable if you do not like the service.** Their interface is very powerful and places all of the information you need to know about your marketing strategy right in front of you on their dashboard. It offers plenty of form designs and letter templates for you to use when constructing your messages. All of these are highly customizable.

**AWeber** also offers built-in opt-in forms for your customers to grant your business permission to send them e-mails. This built-in opt-in feature makes it

very easy and fast for your customers to opt-in to your e-mails. Some users report difficulties when using **AWeber's text editor** to create their e-mails, especially if they cut and paste their written e-mails from another program such as [Microsoft Word](#). It does feature a good selection of e-mail templates for you to choose from, however. **AWeber's autoresponder management tools offer you the ability to really dive into the more sophisticated database management principles.**

**AWeber's spam management software** reportedly has a 99% success rate, and features the Spam Score feature that allows you to judge whether or not your message will be listed as spam. Their tracking tools are some of the best in the business and make it very easy to track your strategy. **Their support team is very helpful as well.**

**Constant Contact also has an impressive delivery rate and is considered to be very user-friendly.** It is blacklisted from military addresses however, which is something to consider if you want to market to this niche. They offer a 2 month free trial and their pricing guidelines are similar to both MailChimp and AWeber. *You will also be able to create templates, track your marketing tactics and learn the ropes with webinars and training videos.*

All 3 of these automated e-mail marketing tools can vastly increase the success rate of your e-mail marketing strategy. All 3 are relatively close in price, meaning you can decide which one you want to use based on how much you like their interface and their design tools. You can generally count on all 3 to deliver your e-mails properly and to avoid the spam filters of your customers.

*For the e-mail marketer beginner who has a short e-mail list MailChimp is the best option.* Their free service for users with less than 12,000 emails per

month and fewer than 2000 e-mail addresses can last forever and still offers about 99% of the services paying customers get.

**MailChimp can also grow with you if your e-mail marketing campaign really takes off. Marketers who want to really dive into the more sophisticated and in-depth methods of e-mail marketing will probably want to go with AWeber.**

# E-Mail Marketing Best Practices

Here are some tips to ensure that your e-mail marketing campaign is as successful as possible.

- **Pay attention to your e-mail's preview**

About 69% of e-mail readers will decide whether to open your e-mail or delete it based on what is written in your subject line and your e-mail address.

**Always** make sure to keep your sender name visible and easily recognizable. *Avoid having your e-mail look like it was sent from a giant automated machine.* The goal is to make your customers recognize your name so that they know who the e-mail is from. The more the reader trusts your company name the more likely they will open your e-mail. *The subject line should clearly summarize the e-mails content, making the reader want to know more and therefore open the e-mail.*

- **Keep your e-mails readable**

Colorful images can be very useful for enhancing the look and feel of your marketing e-mails, but **always** make sure your e-mails are readable even without the images. **Never** put images that must be downloaded from the web. This is because a large amount of your readers will receive and read your e-mails via their mobile devices.

If downloadable images don't show up on mobile devices your text could look weird. If this happens your customer probably isn't going to bother reading your e-mail. *Use plain text in your e-mails because this will look good on every platform.*

- **Ensure a high delivery rate by avoiding spam**

You will want to maintain a high delivery rate for your e-mails in order to keep your customers interested. To do so you **must** take precautions so that you do not end up labeled as a spammer.

This means checking with your e-mail service provider to make sure you are **not** sending out too many messages and avoiding the common spam indicators in your headings and subject lines. (Such as the words “free”, “\$\$\$\$” and “You have won!!!!”) *Don't get labeled as a spammer!*

- **If possible, personalize your e-mails**

There is mail merging software that allows you to place the customer's name into a mass generated e-mail. Research shows that seeing their name in an e-mail creates a feeling of knowing and trust in the customer, which increases the chance that they will open the e-mail.

- **Use an automated e-mail marketing tool**

You can choose one of the top 3 AEMTs or you can choose from the hundreds of other companies that are available. The cost of these tools is well worth what you get in return.

*It is almost impossible to operate a large scale e-mail marketing campaign without these tools.* It is harder to track your results without these tools as well.

- **Make your e-mail content more personal too**

People like to connect with the businesses they use. If you can develop a personal relationship with your clients then odds are you will receive their trust, loyalty and repeat business. *No one wants to read a computer generated e-mail, so put a little personality into it.* Talk about your business's goals, employees, charity contributions and other personal stuff. Add in content

about your family, hobbies and passions if you want to. Develop a connection with your customers through your e-mail marketing campaign.

## Sample List of E-Mail Marketing Topics

- "Announcing a new real estate listing" (Real Estate Company)
- "Bring a friend to class week" (Dancing Studio Company)
- "Buy 1 Get 1 Free Coffee All Week!" (Coffee House)
- "See live owls up close this weekend" (Wildlife Shelter and Education Center)
- "Check out our club all week risk free" (Gym)
- "Get a free second pair of glasses when you purchase a new pair" (Eyeglasses Company)
- "New Model Showcase" (RV Dealership Company)
- "Dedicated Health Plans Available for All Families" (Health Care Insurance Company)
- "Need a new look for your kitchen?" (Home Remodeling Company)
- "Earn Energy Efficiency Tax Credits" (Window Company)
- "Four new wines this week only" (Wine Shop)
- "We pick up your old furniture for free" (Junk Removal Company)
- "Brand Name Watches on Sale for Valued Customers" (Watch Company)
- "JJ's BBQ Unveils Its Hottest Sauce Ever!" (BBQ Restaurant)

## Conclusion

**When it is properly implemented, there are few things that can match the effectiveness of an e-mail marketing campaign.**

*Your small business **absolutely** should be using these strategies to reach out to your customers in conjunction with organic SEO techniques and other traditional advertising methods.*

Contacting your customers through their e-mail is a great way to keep them informed and engaged with your business. It is also one of the most cost-effective advertising methods available today.

As long as you take the proper steps to ensure that your outgoing messages are not being labeled as spam by both the customer's inbox and by the customer themselves, you will enjoy success with this type of marketing.

*The hardest part of any e-mail marketing campaign is determining what is the right amount and frequency of messages. Once you have found this 'marketing sweet spot' you can enjoy almost constant contact with your customers.*

**If your small business isn't currently using an e-mail marketing strategy, then you could be missing out on tons of revenue and customer interest!**