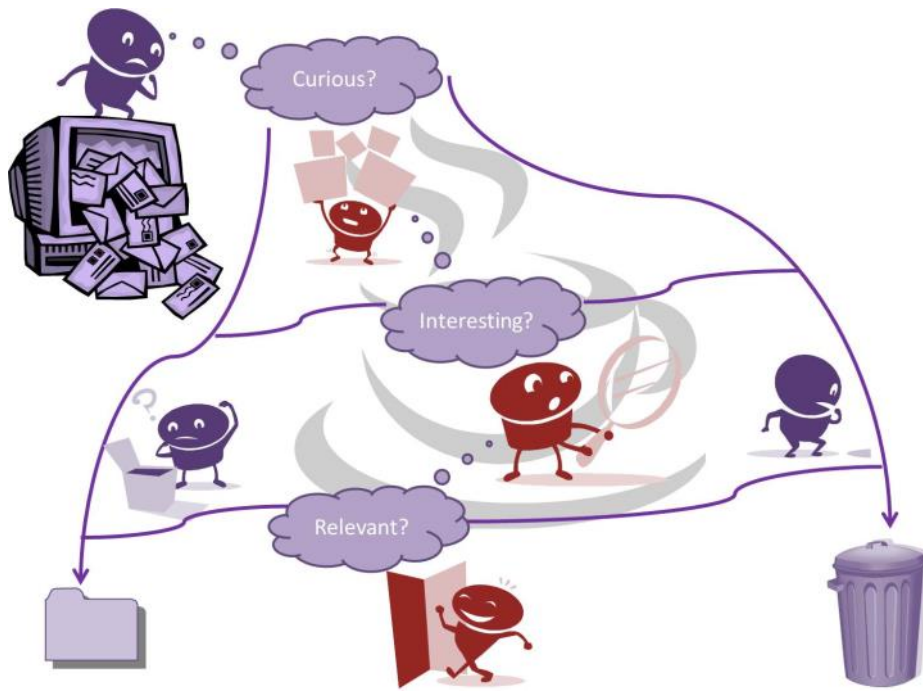# The Virtual Marketeer

10 Email

Marketing Tips

Improve your communications

Decision Time

The image on the left shows the thought process that most people go through in a millisecond as they scan their inbox each morning.

You have been *privileged* enough to get an invite into your recipients in-box but getting them to open and read your email is still a challenge!

You need *peak their curiosity*, then *spark some interest* before ensuring your *content is relevant* and worthy of reading.

All in a few seconds!

A powerful tool

E mail marketing really is a very powerful tool. It is you communicating with *your* database, people who have chosen to get your information having met you or liked something you said online or in print. They want to hear from you!

However, the challenges involved in making emails compelling can make it feel like too much effort many business owners and managers.

Here are 10 tips to help take your email programme to the next level!

1. Your Hook

A hook which encourages people to sign up is very powerful as it enables you to capture their email address and other pertinent information you choose to ask for.

It may be a freebie like this document, a discount on your site or a promise of exclusive offers. You can **automate** emails so they send once the hook is requested, making them very timely and totally relevant.

2. You lost me at hello!

S ubject lines need to capture your readers **attention** quickly—they assess their inbox in a millisecond! Many marketers think about them as they send, almost as an afterthought. Give yours some consideration, employ best practices including personalisation and give yourself time to test!

Originality, at least in your sector, (such as this upside down subject from Firebrand) helps you stand out. Look at including your brand and different offer options. Get ideas from other sectors you can adapt.

From: Firebrand Training [mailto:emartin@firebrandtraining.co.uk]
Sent: 26 February 2014 12:01
To:
Subject: don't let a security breach turn your business upside down

Metrics are an important part of your email campaign. Assess them internally over time as well as benchmark externally.

Open Rate : a good indicator of from names & subject line success as well as ongoing engagement. Somewhat unreliable since image blocking* means not

Click rate: assesses activity on your email. Due to a combination of factors including content, relevance & design.

Click-to-open rate (CTOR) or **effective rate**: better for understanding engagement. Measures activity as a percentage of messages opened rather than delivered.

Unsubscribe rate : some list churn is natural and it's better than a spam complaint but if your unsubscribe rate is very high or has a spike ,look at the content of that email.

Looking to benchmark? Consider Silverpop's Email Benchmarking Study now in its 6th Year!

* Open rates are determined by a tiny image embedded in emails

Click to Open Rate (IBM Silverpop Benchmark Report 2016)

Click-to-Open Rate	Mean	Median	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
Automobiles & Transportation	11.0%	8.6%	25.4%	0.7%
Banks & Financial Services	12.0%	8.3%	29.0%	1.0%
Computer Hardware & Telecommunications	16.2%	13.1%	34.4%	3.5%
Computer Software & Online Services	10.1%	6.5%	24.4%	1.9%
Consumer Products	12.9%	10.4%	26.0%	4.1%
Consumer Services	14.0%	10.7%	31.5%	2.3%
Corporate Services	12.5%	9.1%	29.5%	1.7%
Food Service, Sports & Entertainment	13.6%	8.9%	32.9%	2.6%
Hospitals, Healthcare & Biotech	12.2%	8.4%	28.9%	1.8%
Industrial Manufacturing & Utilities	11.7%	8.8%	26.4%	2.2%
Insurance	11.4%	7.1%	29.8%	0.4%
Lodging, Travel Agencies & Services	9.2%	7.4%	19.3%	2.2%
Marketing Agencies & Services	10.7%	7.6%	25.0%	1.9%
Media & Publishing	12.9%	10.2%	28.3%	2.1%
Nonprofits, Associations & Government	19.4%	17.5%	39.2%	3.3%
Real Estate, Construction & Building Products	13.1%	11.3%	26.0%	3.2%
Retail & Ecommerce	15.0%	12.7%	29.0%	4.8%
Schools & Education	11.2%	7.3%	27.7%	1.3%

■ Strongest performer ■ Weakest performer

There are 2 main things people look at when skimming their inbox—the **subject line and from name**.

3. Who Are You?

Consider whether you should use your name, brand name or a product name. What will generate the best *recognition* with your recipients?

4. Relevance

The first part of the magic formula for email marketing! A simple question to ask is what will the reader get out of this?

Why should recipients bother to open / read / act? Are your emails relevant? You may need to go back to some basic marketing looking at who you target, but relevance is crucial!

5. Looking Good

Whilst the old rules of scannability and grabbing attention still apply, email today must render well across multiple platforms and **mobile functionality is a must**.

Most service provider built-in templates are responsive, but check your templates have the flexibility needed for the modern email marketer!

6. Relationships

The other part of the magic formula for email! Use email to **build and develop relationships**, taking advantage of tools such as automation and dynamic content.

Automation of a welcome email (or indeed a series), basket abandonment, review requests, refill suggestions and birthday emails are usually relatively simple to set up and offer a personal experience for recipients based on their interactions & relationship stage.

7. Deliverability

Getting in the inbox is crucial, not just for that recipient but your entire email list, so best practices are vital.

Start with a **double or confirmed opt-in,** encourage people to unsubscribe if they are no longer interested (not report you as spam) and **cleanse your list regularly.**

8. Personalisation

Make recipients feel like an individual not a number. Start with someone's name (if you have it) before building up to more complex personalisation involving dynamic content and triggered emails.

Do remember that **each relationship is different** and we now expect more from the brands and businesses we interact with. How can you make your emails more personal?

9. Testing

Testing is vital for any campaign, **test anything you can change**! Split A/B testing on subject lines, offers (e.g. 15% off or £15), time of day and day of week can all give valuable insights to consistently improve results.

Even better sometimes the results can inform other, more expensive areas of marketing!

10. Measure

Monitor your metrics and do benchmark, but remember benchmarks are generic. Health and Beauty is a very broad sector for example. Test, measure and refine your own programme on a recurring loop and you will continually improve.

Julie Joseph is The Virtual Marketeer, a Marketing Mentor and Strategist who specialises in Email and Relationship Marketing.   She has over 20 years sales and marketing experience, is a member of the IDM and an Email Enthusiast working with a number of different email service providers.

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