

Guide to Strategic Email Marketing

What to share in emails to your customer base – and how best to share it

If you aren't using email marketing to be top of mind when customers are ready for your services or when they might re-engage or refer you to a friend, then it's high time you take advantage of this easy marketing tool.

Email marketing is a top strategic digital marketing trend for 2019. Your business will reap long-term benefits by focusing on growing your subscriber list and systematically engaging your buyers, collectors, and prospective clients. Email is highly beneficial, and nothing will convert better—not even SEO, display ads, or social media lead generation.

Email provides direct access to your customer base in promoting your business, goods, and services. It creates significant opportunity to cultivate long-term relationships, which in turn create repeat customers. Additionally, the relative low cost of implementation associated with email marketing makes for an astonishingly high return on investment; the average return for email marketing is \$38 for every dollar invested, or an ROI of 3,800 percent (source: Salesforce).

To build and engage current, new, and



prospective customer relationships, email marketing is critical to your business strategy in building and maintaining subscriber lists. Consumers have changed their digital path to purchase, and staying relevant in a highly visual manner while building value is of the utmost importance.

Your greatest asset is your customer mailing list. Did you know 94 percent of internet users use email and 75 percent of adult users state a preference for receiving marketing communications directly in their inboxes? Are you truly making the most of this, and are you ready to take it to the next level? For some it's daunting just understanding where to begin—but it needn't be! Let's build out the modernized framework your business needs to optimize and master strategic marketing with email marketing.

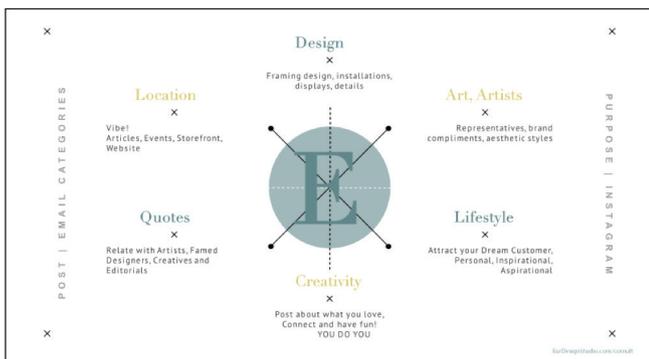
Growing Your Subscriber List

Email marketing allows for smart cross-chan-

The more compelling your visual imagery, the more likely your text will entice readers to click through and keep reading.



Ginger Hartford is a career veteran of the art and design industries formerly with Larson-Juhl. Ginger is recognized as a highly accomplished business development and marketing strategist and leader in the business of design. She has collaborated with Fortune 500 leadership teams to envision, build, and deliver high-impact customer experiences. Her extensive experience includes global business development, product design, integrated marketing, and branding with leading national retailers, international online art marketplaces, the designer community, and major brands across home furnishings, art and framing, and photography. Ginger is the founder of EurDesign Studio.



Focus on these six key areas when building creative content that you can then use cross-promotionally.

nel promotion you can leverage with social media and direct links or promotions to specific content. There are many easy-to-use platforms specializing in tools and resources to help you scale and implement, such as Mailchimp, Constant Contact, Drip, ConvertKit, and Klaviyo.

First and foremost, identify key touchpoints to collect email data. Develop forms so you can always ask visitors for their email address, name, and other contact information (list email first on your form!). The internet offers many digital touchpoints to incentivize and capture new subscribers. Within your website, take every blog or page view opportunity to incorporate a signup box or link to subscribe for your newsletter. Socially, Instagram stories offer a great way to lead your audience to your website with its popular “swipe up” feature, and fantastic plugins like Linktree allow for Instagram profiles to offer a direct link to your “Contact Us” page or newsletter subscription form. Facebook also allows retailers to directly add signup forms to business pages.

Consider your retail brand’s tone of voice and don’t include boring language like “Sign up for our newsletter.” Consumers love when retailers get creative and have fun while appealing to them, such as “It wouldn’t be a party without you!” At signup, incentivize with a freebie such as free shipping or special access to particular services or even downloadable content. For example, EurDesign Studio offers my branded freebie, “Top 10 Artful Display Tips,” as a value add at opt-in.

A side note about subscriber emails: your business must stay compliant with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Businesses must gain consumer consent with form checkboxes and disclaimer text to collect and process yet protect your customers’ data.

Getting Support from an ESP

Ultimately, today’s top retailers are using data intelligence to improve their business. Invest in a workhorse email ser-

vice provider (ESP) to streamline and fully optimize data. Think of it as an expert extension of your marketing team with ensured return on investment!

When considering your options, look for strategic support tailored to your needs for customer acquisition, retention, and e-commerce. Ensure reliable inbox delivery and avoid spam due to flagged word choices or product types with an ESP that has a minimum 85 percent delivery success score. They also have experts, educational resources, and systems for performance reporting with easy-to-understand analytics so you can measure what matters.

Designing and Scheduling Your Emails

Your business can create beautiful branded emails and design like a pro with dynamic design templates to help convey your messages in style. Top ESPs have a vast library of beautiful templates to customize and fast-track your efforts. Design tools like these help elevate your communications to look ultra-professional and stand out among your competition.

Many templates are also preformatted for mobile, desktop, and tablet views with drag-and-drop designer programs to easily manage your content, edit photos, and work collaboratively either in-house or with campaign managers. Keep in mind, 49 percent of all emails sent are opened on a mobile device. As smartphone users increase, this number is likely to rise, too, so keep your email communications concise, mobile-responsive, and visually appealing. Mailchimp, for example, has many readymade layouts, themes, and featured templates to select a starting point for your communications.

Once you have your email platform provider established, you’ll need to determine the frequency of your communications. It’s recommended you send an email out once a month at minimum, and it’s important to be consistent with your schedule. Data reports the best times



Creating a subscriber list, leveraging cross-channel promotion, and using templates are crucial building blocks to marketing success.



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to send emails are Tuesday at 10 a.m. or anytime between 8 p.m. and midnight.

Automation and Segmentation

Automated emails triggered by user behavior are invaluable and don't rely on just a content calendar. Email automation can be set to trigger a response and preformatted email, such as a "Welcome to the party!" email for new subscribers. Automated communications can also be segmented and apply to user behavior in post-purchases made online, or if consumers abandoned their cart.

Consider ways to segment your email list based on purchase history, demographics, events, and engagements (in-store or online), interests, cart activity, or subscriber actions (i.e., newly subscribed, emails opened, links clicked). Look for email platform tools that allow for basic segmentation yet have the capability to scale with the needs of your growing business and subscriber list. It's worth noting that Mailchimp reports 14.64 percent more opens and 59.99 percent more clicks with segmented emails than non-segmented communications.

Personalization

When a new subscriber signs up, their interest in your gallery and services is at its prime. This is the moment your captive audience is most excited to learn more about your business. Personalized emails can drive first-time buyers and return buyers to increased sales activity while deepening customer relationships. Some newsletter examples that I've enjoyed feature exclusives, press releases, videos, product and new designer spotlights, trending goods of the week, brand journey highlights, and content that tells a story.

Per Experian Marketing research, including a customer's name in an email subject line boosted open rates by 29.3 percent—but the effect varied widely across indus-

tries. Transaction rates were 49 percent higher (0.09 percent compared to 0.06 percent) and revenue per email was 73 percent higher (\$0.15 compared to \$0.08) with personalization, according to Experian.

"Consumers expect their interactions with a brand to be dynamic and personally relevant," says Shelley Kessler, manager of reporting and analytics for Experian Marketing Services. "A brand that recognizes a subscriber by name in the subject line of an email is able to establish an immediate, personal connection with that subscriber and that is reflected in our research—campaigns with personalized subject lines achieve higher open rates than those with subject lines that are not personalized."

Content is King

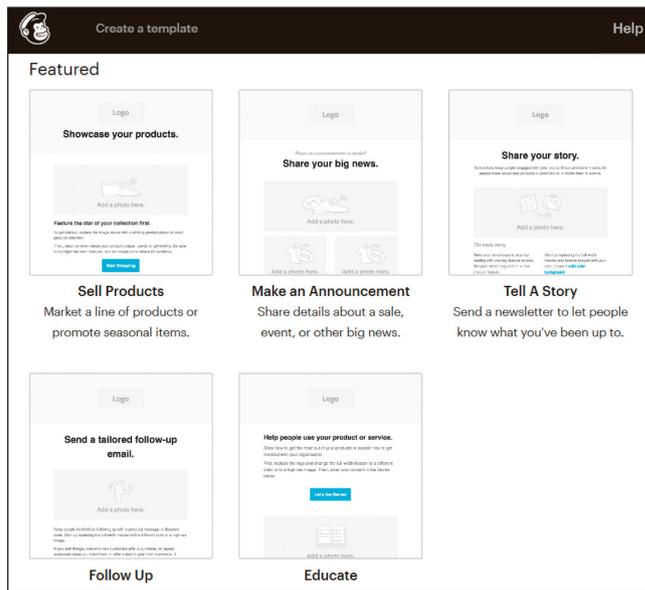
Just as we live in a highly visual world full of distractions, customers expect communications to be of high caliber and serve their needs. What to share? Consider new product introductions or announcements, highlighting your creative process behind the scenes, event or artist features, popular trend insights, or decorative guides to help customers "get the look." Aligning with your social and digital marketing strategy, I've highlighted several key areas your business can build creative content and post calendars around to then use cross-promotionally:

- 1) Design and Creativity. What kind of framing designs, installations, or preservation services do you specialize in?
- 2) Art, Artists, and Location. Who do you represent, what styles or artist themes can you highlight, or what artist events are coming up? Work your location to advantage by highlighting your store in the context of community and online reach. Keeping your communications informative, feature content based on collector offers, gallery events or artist receptions, and press releases to build value.
- 3) Lifestyle. Attracting your dream customer begins with speaking their language in the aspirational context of how your products and services can serve them best. Millennial moms, for example, are big spenders with a great interest in decorating. Acknowledge this demographic settling down in their new family abodes and becoming the fastest segment of art collectors as they design their interiors. A campaign could be set up to highlight art sourcing for nurseries and how you'd style the custom framing to suit their style.
- 4) Quotes. Always a creative graphic that relates to

the business. Consumers love designer, art, and artist quotes. Make it personal with your own branded quotes, too! Don't forget that today's consumers prize authenticity.

Above all, storytelling is key in every facet of your digital marketing strategy. Email marketing helps deliver your brand message in a meaningful way to share your story. It also has the most potential for your business as the leading source for customer and collector engagement. You'll want to pay attention to the quality of your imagery. The standard is light and professional-looking images, not dark or unprofessional shots. Invest in yourself and your brand by sourcing high-quality imagery or hire trained photographers. (For example; Waiting on Martha, a popular, independent omnichannel retailer, has a monthly standing appointment with her photographer for product shots and her content is paying off big!)

It's also helpful to understand that email marketing and blog posts are not the same thing. You don't need to overwhelm readers with too much text, or they'll delete. Try for 300 words by choosing one concrete topic of value that solves a problem for your customers and three sub-points. A call to action is critical for growth. Be specific



Tools like Mailchimp are user-friendly and easy to learn, saving you time when crafting an email marketing campaign.

when explaining how to book a consult, connect, or purchase, and feature button links to simplify the path to purchase for your customers. Build value your customers look forward to and are more likely to engage with long term. Good luck and sign me up! **PFM**

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Pkg'd 12/box (1/2"); 8/box (3/4"). 1" Core
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| 773 | 1/8" | Black | 100' | \$30.50 | \$25.42 | | |
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| HOLLOW SPACERS | | | | | | | |
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