



EMAIL MARKETING IN 2023

Abstract

Email marketing predates to 1978, when Gary Thuerk of Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC) sent a marketing email to 397 recipients over ARPANET to promote DECSYSTEM-20 products to potential customers. While traditionally email marketing has been used to reach out to a large group of people and benefit them in terms of discovering useful or important information, over a period of time it has become notorious for unsolicited messaging to recipients. In this PoV, we will analyze how email marketing evolved over time and how to carry out an email marketing campaign successfully in 2023.



Introduction

By definition, email marketing is a powerful mass marketing tool, which is supposed to educate your potential

customers, who have opted in to receive your communication, of your products and services. However, over time, the email

marketing channel has been tainted with a lot of user dissatisfaction.



Key concerns of email marketing

1. Spam

Firstly, email marketing is largely considered as “spam” due to their nature of reaching out to a large number of people, in an unsolicited manner. According to [Statista](#), as of July 2021, almost 85% of emails sent worldwide (out of 336 billion) were marked as spam. According to a [2022 study published by DataProt](#), an independent reviewer of cybersecurity products, email spam costs \$20.5 billion per year to businesses and advertising makes up around 36% of all spam content. Email spam includes all sorts of illegitimate and fraudulent communications aimed at deceiving the recipient into compromising their money or data.

2. Lack of relevance

Another key concern related to email marketing is the lack of relevance. Globally growing customer bases have resulted in a dip in the quality of personalized communication. With diversification within organizations and their offerings, customers have also started to get hyper-segmented, which means the approach can no longer be “one size fits all”. According to [a survey by DMA Insights](#), more than 53% of B2B users feel that the emails that they receive are irrelevant to

their needs. DMA also reported that about 55% of marketers also agree that the emails they send are irrelevant.

3. Too much content

Another concern with email marketing is the superfluity of content. With the evolution of Web 3.0, there has been an incremental rise in content availability and outlets distributing the same, which basically means that people today have access to information like never before, whether they want it or not.

Users (especially the working professionals) end up receiving 100 emails per day on an average, they struggle to see value in mail that is not directly work related. All non-work email ends up being spam, and very few of them are noticed as users really don't have time to go through the contents of all of them, unless it is directly correlated to their work or interests.

4. Lack of consent

Many people are not happy about getting flooded with unsolicited emails, which are the emails they never intentionally signed up to receive. This is what leads to such emails being marked as spam, even if the communication is legit and genuine.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has been setup precisely for such use cases. Within a year of being enforced, there were nearly 150,000 queries or complaints related to inadequate data protection, security breaches etc. Several of the largest tech giants were slapped with GDPR fines, with [Amazon's \\$886 million](#) in 2021 being the heftiest. Now, opt-in and opt-out have become mandatory from a regulatory perspective.

5. Selling minus real value

We live in a time when emails are being sent just to sell, instead of attempting to understand the core needs of customers. Customers are very critical of emails from any new sender (or even existing partners for that matter) trying to reach out to them, as they've been shown solutions that not only are replicas of the existing processes they follow, but also because there's no more differentiation between one player and the other.

Why is email marketing still so relevant?

Despite having such far-reaching concerns, email marketing is touted as the most important form of marketing.

Email has been around for a while but has still not lost out on relevance due to its nature of being able to personalize and target customers through segmentation. [A study by Bluecore and NAPCO Research](#)

found that around 68% email users across generations feel it's the most personal and preferred channel for receiving brand communications.

The average conversion rate for emails recorded over 15.22% by 2021, [according to a study by Barilliance](#). While this has decreased from its peak in 2018 at over

18.49%, this still remains a medium which instigates action over other digital marketing channels. Also, [Litmus](#) has found in 2022 that the average ROI of email campaigns is 3600%, which is \$36 for every \$1 spent. This clearly shows how cost-effective email marketing can be.

Email marketing strategies for the future

Here are the key strategies recommended for email marketing for 2023 and beyond.

1. Integrated communications

Single channel marketing rarely works for any brand or medium. A multi-channel approach ensures that your communication converts your customers' initial consideration into conversion. Email marketing by itself has multiple segments and journeys it goes through, and if done right, close integration with your other marketing touch points will ensure a higher chance of succeeding in your objectives. Email campaigns work best in tandem with other touch points like display, search, social media, and content marketing activities.

2. Go Mobile

It's no surprise that two-thirds of emails today are primarily accessed on mobile devices. The entire world is on the move, and email marketing is no different. More than 46% of users prefer reading email from their mobile devices (Statista, 2021). Ensuring that your emails are mobile-responsive and keeping text crisp so that it fits into the small form factor of smartphones are basics that you need to keep in mind.

This, along with adopting bigger text sizes and customizing design to adapt to Dark Mode are some of the trends you need to watch out for.

3. Hyper-personalization

The best part about any marketing nowadays is having the ability to personalize your messaging to your customers. Email in this regard has the highest scope of doing so, by creating multiple customer segments and journeys. However, data from [multiple studies](#) indicate that only 16.75% are

personalizing the subject lines even today, leaving room for so many brands to catch on. [A study by Aberdeen](#), a strategy and research firm, surveyed marketers about the effectiveness of personalized communication; 53% of those surveyed said that personalization had resulted in moderate to significant revenue gains. [2019 Retail Email Benchmark Report by Bluecore](#) says that personalized emails improve CTR by 139%.

We're not just talking about subject lines here, but also personalizing content as per interest buckets, scheduling mails at a certain time during the day and adjusting the mail frequency with the help of past behavioral data. Another [study by Hubspot](#) found that personalized calls to action perform 202% better than normal CTAs.

4. Deeper profiling and content

Since the dawn of GDPR, consent of opt-ins is no longer just a "good to have" feature but a legal mandate. Rules of cold emails have changed, and you need to be more careful with messaging and frequency of your emails in today's era. Giving the users an option to opt-out at any stage of the journey is basic etiquette to any email, even if it hard for us to let go of even a single lead.

Deeper profiling of your email lists and segmenting them based on age, gender, geography, and occupation are core to building for more personalized messaging and ensuring that your customers are engaged and reduce chances of them getting annoyed and opting out.

Personalized messages have an ROI of 122% according to a [Litmus study](#), and targeted emails could generate 58% of all revenue according to a [DMA report](#).

5. Automation

In 2023, if you are in charge of your organization's email strategy and are

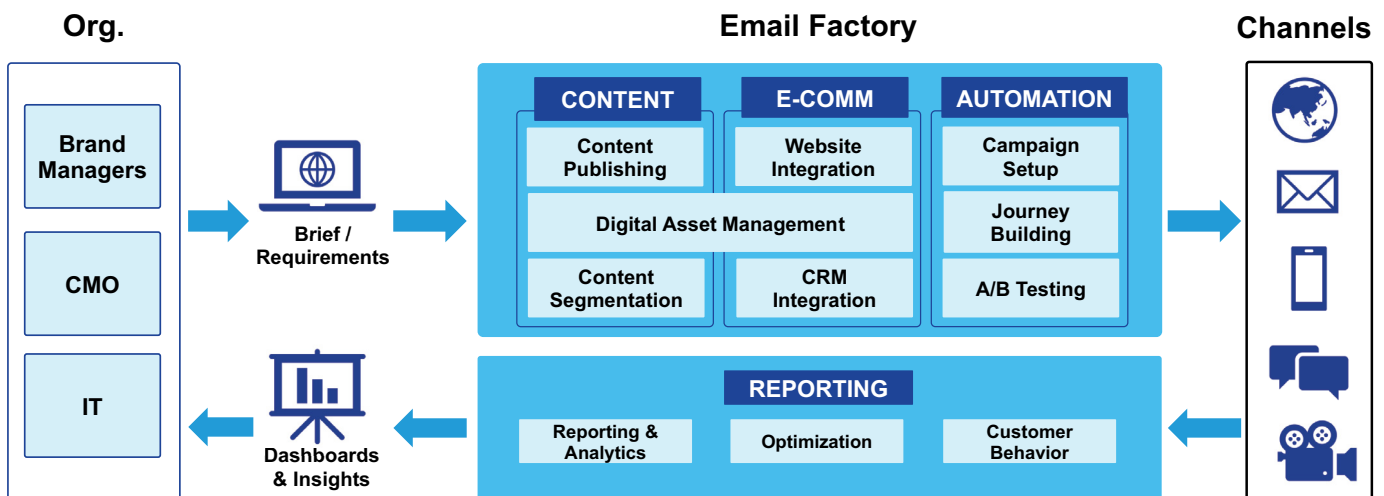
still not using automation, then you are indeed lagging behind. On an average, [51% of organizations](#) are using automation for their email marketing efforts, and the number keeps growing. Majority of marketing managers agree that automation has saved them in terms of time, effort and helped them more in lead generation.

Automation allows you to create various segments for your customers and chalking out unique user journeys for each of them. It also gives you better control of your messaging and helps as a passive revenue generator. Ecommerce is one industry where email marketing automation has become essential, where it greatly impacts with cart abandonments - Customers who receive automated abandoned shopping cart emails are 2.4x more likely to complete their purchase [according to Experian](#).



Establishing a seamless marketing flow

In order to succeed in email marketing, we may have to address the challenges we have addressed at the beginning. The following is a proposed marketing flow for this.



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Sreepriya is a Digital Marketing professional with over 18 years of experience across operations management, delivery management, profit center operations, business consulting, business development, campaign management, web analytics, and usability centric design. She has comprehensive experience in digital advertising and has actively been involved in delivering better ROI on customer acquisition and retention through the new-age media vehicles of digital space, search, e-mails, social, and GIS. Sreepriya's strengths are in understanding client demands and transforming strategy to optimized implemented solutions going the extra mile to create customer delight. At Infosys BPM, she's responsible for the setup, transition, and delivery of products in the digital and GIS space. She holds a post-graduate degree in Business Administration.

About Content Marketing Operations (CMO)

In order to grow and sustain in today's fast-paced digital business ecosystem, almost every function and practice has the necessity of one key asset - the right process.

Our Content Marketing Operations (CMO) team is made up of experienced digital content, campaign, and design experts who help in innovating and evolving processes for marketing operations at scale. This practice not only fulfils marketing requirements at the speed required to keep up in today's fast-paced world but also transforms processes that drive better time and cost efficiency.

*For organisations on the digital transformation journey, agility is key in responding to a rapidly changing technology and business landscape. Now more than ever, it is crucial to deliver and exceed organisational expectations with a robust digital mindset backed by innovation. Enabling businesses to sense, learn, respond, and evolve like living organisms will be imperative for business excellence. A comprehensive yet modular suite of services is doing precisely that. Equipping organisations with intuitive decision-making automatically at scale, actionable insights based on real-time solutions, anytime/anywhere experience, and in-depth data visibility across functions leading to hyper-productivity, [Live Enterprise](#) is building connected organisations that are innovating collaboratively for the future.

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