

## Five Tactics to Make Your Emails More Interesting

When was the last time you were excited to take a look at your inbox? If you're like most people—including the people you market to—the answer is probably never.

Let's be honest: Most emails are boring. Research backs that up: Social media tends to evoke "excitement" as the prevailing sentiment, but the first word that comes to mind for email is "productivity." Emails are a chore.

You might be interested in what's in the email, sure, but it's rare that you open an email and get excited by the content there.

Brands have taken email marketing for granted for so long that it's stagnating. Email is often a company's most effective digital marketing channel, but email marketing campaigns have stayed the same. Many brands are simply not trying anything new.

But what if you could make your emails more interesting? And what if, by making them more interesting, you could increase opens, click-throughs, and conversions?

Here are five email marketing tactics that can make all that happen.

### **1. Weather-Targeting**

If you have a few thousand email addresses or more, there's a good chance that the customers getting your emails aren't all in the same region. So if you're an e-commerce website, your emails about a sale on sandals might also be going to areas where it's raining. Or if you're an event management company, your upcoming event list might be about outdoor festivals.

But what if you could—in real time—switch email content and offer rain boots or indoor venues, depending on the weather forecast?

Brands are starting to do exactly that with contextual email marketing technology that detects a customer's context. Real-time weather-targeting allows companies to change the content of an email depending on customer context. Even if it's raining in the morning then clears up in the afternoon, the customer would see the rain boots sale in the morning and the sandals sale in the afternoon.

Weather-targeting presents opportunities for content marketing, too: Even if you're not selling something directly, you can build specific content for specific weather conditions. Auto companies can create newsletter content with rainy-day driving tips, media companies can create activity packs or TV show lists for snow days, or finance companies can offer different rewards based on the weather.

### **2. Geo-Targeting**

With about 67% of emails being opened on mobile, location and geo-targeting emails are becoming more important than ever. Emails with personalized maps that show customers the nearest retail locations can help drive in-store traffic and sales. Other industries, like financial institutions, have used geo-targeted emails to show the closest locations where customers can redeem rewards.

Customers already expect their phones to know their location; nearly three-quarters (PDF) say location information is helpful. Emails with personalized maps can drive higher sales simply by showing a store around the corner.

### **3. Real-Time Inventory**

Recently, Sears used Google's Local Inventory Ads to promote its stores to local customers, which led to a 122% increase in in-store visits for Sears Hometown and Outlet Stores.

In addition to geo-targeting the ads, Sears offered real-time inventory information about products that were in stock in the local stores. That is a tactic email marketers can use as well. Real-time inventory information can be included in emails. For example, a shoe store can send an email that includes all the available shoe sizes for a certain shoe. And, as the items sell out, those options would disappear from the email.

Real-time inventory information can be used by event management businesses, airlines, and others, too. By displaying real-time inventory in emails, brands can guarantee the stock—whether seats or shoes—is always up-to-date.

#### **4. Dynamic Web Cropping**

Web cropping allows brands to include a live snippet of content from their websites within an email. By combining this technology with different rules and logic, companies can actually display different content at different times, so even if a recipient goes back to an email later, the content will have changed.

Brands can use web cropping to display different sales at different hours, or show off different graphics under different conditions—whether that's location, weather, demographics, or customer behavior.

#### **5. Live Social Media Content**

For the past few years, marketers have experimented with ways to combine social media and email marketing, but they've stopped short of integrating social media directly within email.

By integrating real-time social content—whether from Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram—businesses can bridge their email and social media channels.

Some companies have started using this feature to create contests that send email subscribers to a social channel, like Instagram, for a contest; they can show the latest Instagram photos, in real-time, in the body of every email. Others include live tweets about a sports event or news story.

#### **The Inbox, Reimagined**

Customers are no longer bound to their desktops and laptops when they're checking their email. That means the way people interact with emails on their phones is a lot different than how they interact with them on their computers. But many marketers have yet to start creating emails that reflect that change in behavior. And that doesn't even take into account the new wearable devices, such as the Apple Watch.

New technology can allow marketers to create emails that are contextually relevant to recipients at the moment of open. With content that changes in real time, brands can create a new kind of experience with email, transforming it from a static message to a dynamic, multimedia experience.

And maybe, just maybe, that will help customers—and marketers—get excited about checking their inbox again.

Šaltinis: <http://www.marketingprofs.com/articles/2015/28194/five-tactics-to-make-your-emails-more-interesting?adref=nl080415>