



Here's How to Double (or Triple) Your Email Open & Click Rates

There's an element of email marketing that seems to veer pretty far from the cold, scientific world of metrics and deliverability, yet it's an essential consideration: human psychology. What makes a subscriber open an email, versus relegating it to the trash without a thought?

While there are no hard and fast rules, there's one thing we've come to discover in our years of experience in this industry. Timing really matters. And there are a few tried-and-tested ways to use the power of timing to significantly boost your open rates and engagement.

In this eBook, we'll break down three main types of emails you're probably already using, along with a secret strategy to leverage these emails against each other to increase opens, improve deliverability (how often you get into your subscribers' inboxes) and ultimately drive more results.

Some of the highest volume email senders are already doing this, and we'll show you how to implement it on your own. No matter your industry, the purpose of your emails, or if you're selling something or not, this information will change the game for you.

Whether you realize it or not, your business sends out three main types of emails: promotional, editorial content, and transactional. Here's a bit more about each, and why you need to balance these three types to keep up your open rates and click rates.

INBOX MAILERS
—TIMING IS EVERYTHING—

THE THREE TYPES OF EMAILS

(AND WHY YOU NEED THEM ALL)



Promotional Emails

These are exactly what they sound like: emails designed to sell or make the customer take action and move further down your funnel. These emails may contain a direct sales pitch, a meeting request, coupon, a special offer, or a reminder that a customer abandoned their shopping cart. The goal of a promotional email is to drive a conversion, whether that means a customer makes a purchase, books an appointment, schedules a call, or signs up for something.

Key benefit to the business: These emails directly impact your revenue and bottom line.

Potential Issues: Promotional emails generally have a higher spam complaint and unsubscribe rates.

Editorial Emails

Editorial emails are a form of content marketing, designed to help, inspire, or entertain your readership. These are the emails your readers can't get enough of: those juicy industry tips, fascinating stories, or laugh-out-loud memes. At the heart of every editorial email is your reader. If these emails don't speak directly to your audience's interests and issues, they'll fall flat (no matter how perfectly they're crafted).

Key benefit to the business: Editorial emails are incredible brand-builders. They help your audience see you as an authority in your field or a leader in your industry, which builds your "know, like, and trust" (KLT) factor. And when your KLT factor is high, customers are way more likely to convert. There's another hidden benefit that happens behind the scenes, too. Editorial content emails help keep your IP and sending domain healthy, which improves email deliverability overall.

Transactional Emails

Transactional emails usually arrive in response to a subscriber taking some kind of action. It's the confirmation email you get when you create a new account on an e-Commerce site, or the link to download a free e-guide or course. Transactional emails can be all business or they can show a bit of your brand's personality, but what's important is that they're clear and concise.

Key benefit to the business: Transactional emails are essential to delivering on your promises, regardless of your business model. They don't have to be strictly business, either. You can use transactional emails to convey your mission or even drive another conversion event.

A BALANCING ACT

You can imagine why it's so important to balance your email marketing strategy to include all three of these types of emails. Nobody likes to be constantly pitched. At the same time, if you're only sending editorial emails, you may have a super-engaged audience, but you likely won't see any kind of monetary ROI from your email marketing.

If you've done a good job with your editorial or content emails, chances are your users are already itching to take the next step with you. If you're providing tips and tricks or how-tos, many people may love your content and ideas but they don't know how to execute or simply don't have the time and would rather you just do it for them (which is great if you are in a service business).

If you balance these three types of emails, and send each at the most appropriate time, you can dramatically improve click rates, open rates, and conversions. To strike the perfect balance, lead with value.

HOW TO LEAD WITH VALUE

It seems like everything's about value these days: value selling, valuable "freebies", providing advice or information through valuable content marketing. "Leading with value" is on the cusp of becoming a cliché, but that doesn't change the fact that it's a really great way to bond with your prospects and customers.

Chances are, you can scour your inbox for emails right now and identify the companies that choose to lead with value by prioritizing content-based emails, versus the ones who don't. If the majority of a company's subject lines include things like "flash sale" or "50% off" or even "what's new at Company XYZ", that's a sign that these companies are lending too much weight to sales and promotions, and not enough to building a genuine connection.

And here's something else. Beyond being a bit annoying, there's a really practical reason to prioritize editorial emails over promotional emails. The most effective mailing programs out there know that great content emails boost deliverability of all emails — meaning you'll actually get more traction from your promotional emails if you send mostly editorial content.

BALANCE YOUR CONTENT

So, what's a good spread? Consider starting with 70% content emails and 30% combined promotional and transactional emails. Diagnose your current email campaigns: what does the balance look like right now? Can you adjust the frequency or timing of your emails to provide more value? Here's a sample email marketing flow for an aquarium shop:

Monday: "Newsletter: what's new in the aquarium hobbyist world" (content email)

Wednesday: "From the blog: a new fancy goldfish variety arrives" (content email)

Friday: "Customer story: how this customer built her own filtration system from scratch" (content email)

Saturday: Weekly deal: 25% off all fish food (promotional email)

This is already a good balance of editorial and promotional content, but there's a simple adjustment you can make to double or even triple open and click rates. The trick is to use automation to deliver super-relevant promotional emails when the reader is most likely to open them.



Let's revisit that email schedule, but this time, let's add in some relevant promotional emails that only fire when readers take specific actions:

Monday: "What's new in the aquarium hobbyist world" (content email)

- When reader opens the email, a targeted promotional email arrives seconds later

Wednesday: "From the blog: meet this new fancy goldfish variety" (content email)

- When reader clicks the blog link, they get a promotional email announcing that the shop has this type of goldfish in stock

Friday: "Customer story: how this customer built her own filtration system from scratch" (content email)

- When reader opens the email, they get a promotional email that shows how you can purchase everything you need for a DIY filtration system at the shop

In each example above, the subscriber receives a promotional email in the moment they're already in their inbox, increasing the likelihood that they'll open the promo and make a purchase..

Our research has shown that sending related, promotional triggers when your users are already in their inbox will:

Increase your open rates for the promotional email by 200-400%.

For example, if you are usually at 10% open rate for your editorial emails, using these triggers will increase your promotional triggered emails to the range of 20-40%. We've seen promotional triggered emails get up to 70% open rates while maintaining or increasing normal click rates.

The other cool thing here is that instead of sending one promotional email out per week, you can now send four without it damaging your email deliverability or increasing your unsubscribes.

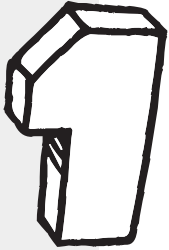
Here's how it works. By using your editorial emails to trigger another email that instant, you are actually delivering more value to your reader by making it easier for them to take action and they are way more likely to open. Email service providers see this as a good thing — “aha, users must like this sender's content, since they opened both emails!” — which sends up the message that ESPs shouldn't block your emails or send them to spam.

In other words, sending a triggered email while a user is in their inbox is the best way to provide them with more value, while also working the ESP system to make your emails more deliverable.

PRO TIP:

Inbox Mailers has perfected the technology to help you send automatic triggered emails at the exact moment a subscriber is in their inbox and they work with most of the major email platforms to give you this ability with no technology buildout needed! Plus, I've gotten a sneak peak into their next release and it's going to enable a feature that is about to change the game for everyone using the platform.

TIPS FOR BOOSTING OPEN AND CLICK RATES



Don't overload your subscribers with ill-timed emails.

As we mentioned above, ESPs are watching you. They don't care if you send a million emails or five, but they do care that subscribers are actually interacting with your content.

One of the quickest ways to get marked as spam is to send too many emails with zero regard for your users' behavior. However, if you focus on timing (setting up triggered sends that only arrive when the user is in their inbox), you can significantly increase open and click rates, which tells the ESPs that you're not a spammer and is a significant increase to your revenue.

What's a strong open rate? **Keep it around 20%**, and this should be high enough to keep out of spam folders, stay in the ESPs' good graces, and get seen by your subscribers.



Segment your email list.

Create different audience segments based on how likely they are to interact with your content, and send fewer emails to those who aren't regularly opening and clicking.

Again, aside from this being a marketing best practice, there's a very practical and technical reason to employ segmentation in this way. If your open rate is in the danger zone (below 20%), the biggest way to increase engagement is to send your emails to people most likely to open and click on them – rather than continuing to send generic emails to your entire list.

So, who is most likely to interact with your email content? Here are a few different segments you should be focusing on if you want to increase engagement rates:

- People who have engaged with your content within the last 14 days
- Recent opt-ins or new subscribers
- New customers or people who have just made their first purchase
- Brand new leads you've recently advertised to

For this to work, you have to give your subscribers ample opportunity to open and click. If you aren't sending content or editorial emails on a regular basis, your users may not have the opportunity to open or click and this whole system doesn't work as well.

PRO TIP: *Make sure your new users get an automated drip of emails when they first subscribe so they get onto your "engaged" list right away and don't fall through the cracks.*

On a related note, make it easy for people to unsubscribe. It's far better to have a couple hundred engaged subscribers than a massive list of unengaged ones. The lower your engagement rates are, the more you get penalized by the ESPs. Super easy pro tip esp if you already have a low email sender score, don't send to people who have not opened your emails in the last 30 days.

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Get the subject line right.

Engagement starts with the subject line, and continues with the content of your email. The subject line is a great place to create urgency, but make sure you're actually following up on your statements or promises within the body of the email!

More often than not, it's the human-sounding subject lines that garner attention. For example, if you're sending timed emails that arrive when your subscriber is already reading your content, a timely subject line like "Re: I almost forgot to tell you..." will pique your subscribers' curiosity.

Ready to reach the right people at the right time? Inbox Mailers uses proprietary technology that helps you identify when your subscribers are in their inbox, so you can send promo emails at the right time. It integrates with all of the major email platforms and is a cinch to set up (no technical knowledge required). They will even send you a quick start guide with the exact implementation and strategy that the most successful mailers are using.

Sign up for a free demo today
so you can see it in action!

inboxmailers.com



INBOX MAILERS

TIMING IS EVERYTHING