By Kimi Mattig-Louria Posted June 7, 2019 in email marketing, Marketing

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EBLASTS

HOW TO CREATE MARKETING EMAILS THAT GET OPENED AND PROMPT ACTION

An email marketing blast (or eblast for short) is an inexpensive way to market your product or service by sending a digital message to a wide audience. Unlike spam emails, which are sent to a random mass of people in the hopes that someone may open them and take action, eblasts are "blasted" out to a pre-selected target. This target will typically glean some benefit out of the eblast, which is why they usually generate much better engagement than spam.

A study by the Radicati Group shows a steady growth in consumer emails and predicts that the number of emails sent and received each day will exceed 246 billion by the end of 2019. There's no denying that the marketing eblast community has become extremely competitive. We'll discuss ways to make sure your eblast avoids the "spam" folder and does the job it's intended to do.

AIM FOR THE RIGHT TARGET

Who, exactly, are you talking to? If you don't yet have a target audience, start by segmenting. Determine what age group, location, interest, gender, etc. would most benefit from your company's offerings. If you're selling diapers, you probably don't want to reach bachelors. Likewise, if you're selling tractors, you won't seek to grab the interest of a national knitting club. Deciding who will most benefit from what you're trying to sell is a great way to begin creating your target audience.

Next, make sure to include past purchasers of your product. If you haven't already done so, begin capturing their information with the intent to follow up after the initial purchase or inquiry is made. Some of these people may be outside your target audience, which is simply "icing on the cake." Are you still seeking first-time purchasers? Send out a survey or sign-up form and gather information in that way. You can also add a form to your current website. By the way, your audience will be more likely to participate if you promise a prize—i.e., being entered to win (with submission) a gift card or similar incentive.

Once you know who you're targeting and have a database with contact information, you'll most likely wish to expand your audience. An easy way to do that is to go after purchasers of comparable products. For example, if you're selling dog collars, you can adopt the same audience who have previously purchased dog leashes, food and kennels.

Together, these are just some of the ways to build your eblast audience. If you haven't signed up for an email provider with assets to help you gain and maintain an audience, you can find some suggestions here.

THE STRENGTH OF A SOLID SUBJECT LINE

A successful return on your eblast begins with your subject line. Use it to grab your audience and commit them to opening the email. If the subject line doesn't "connect" with them, you'll miss out. No matter how impactful the content of your email, it won't matter if it's not opened. Keep in mind that the subject line of your email will be supported by your pre-header (we'll talk about that next) so that it doesn't have the entire weight of responsibility. The subject line does lead the user to the pre-header, and together this can mean the difference between a click-through or a delete.

Assuming you have assembled a viable target audience to send your eblast to, here are some tips on how to write a subject line that gets your eblast opened.

- **Ask a question.** Questions force the user to think. They spark curiosity. Assuming your recipient has some connection to your product, a well-phrased question such as, "Tired of spam emails?" and "Want to learn how?" can provoke a desire to learn more.
- **Personalize it.** Using a recipient's first name improves open rates by adding an immediate connection (unlike spam). Combining someone's name with a subject they have some interest in has prompted successful outcomes.
- **Add a sense of urgency.** Phrases such as, "Hurry, offer ends soon!" or "Last chance!" put a gentle pressure on the recipient so that they respond. Take advantage of the fact that no one wants to miss the boat.
- **Make an announcement.** Using words like "New," "Improved," and "Announcing" has been shown to increase click-through rates. People want to be in on the latest and the greatest. If your email can support it, go ahead and bait your audience this way.
- **Numbers add up.** By inserting a number that promises value to your reader as either savings or tips for improvement on something they're interested in, you can increase conversion rates.Try phrases such as "80% off today only" or "12 ways to work smarter." Numbers work. Use them.

Feel free to mix and match the tips above in your subject line. Try a question that includes a digit...or personalize an announcement. All these tips work well, either as a stand-alone or grouped together. Here are some final thoughts to keep in mind when crafting your subject lines.

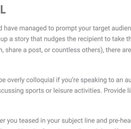
– Know your audience. Write to them.
– Keep it short...4 to 7 words is the sweet spot.
– Questions should be specific, not open-ended.
– Prepare the receiver for the actual content inside the email.

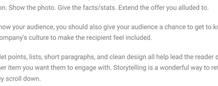
PROVEN PRE-HEADER PERFORMANCE

A pre-header is the text immediately following the subject line that summarizes the content of the email. When someone is checking their email from a desktop or mobile device (the latter accounts for most email opens), your pre-header, coupled with your subject line, may determine if the email is actually read or archived. Therefore, it's just as important for your pre-header to grab the interest of your audience as your subject line. The two should work together. Here are some tips to write pre-headers that boost open rates:

- Shoot for 85 to 100 characters and don't waste a single one!
- Be creative–use emojis, color changes, caps and unique characters.
- Include a call to action such as "Join us," "Celebrate," or "Enjoy."
- Don't repeat words from the sender name or subject line.
- Personalize it, unless you have done so in the subject line.
- Ask a question...again...only if it works with the subject line.
- Entice the user with incentives such as "Open to view images" or "Click below for your chance to win."

The art of writing a great subject line and pre-header takes practice. Test your subject lines and pre-headers. You can test how they appear on most mobile devices here. Once you have a feel for what your audience responds to, you can provide them a promise they will engage with often. For more clarity on how the user receives these, on both mobile and desktop, see the images below.





THE "MEAT" OF THE EMAIL

If you've taken all the necessary steps so far and have managed to prompt your target audience to click through to your email, congratulations! This means you've earned your chance to serve up a story that nudges the recipient to take the action you desire. No matter what that is (make a purchase, commit to a date, send in a donation, share a post, or countless others), there are a few things to consider that will help guarantee success.

Write to your audience in their language. Don't be overly colloquial if you're speaking to an audience about a serious topic. Same is true for the opposite, don't write too "high-brow" if you're discussing sports or leisure activities. Provide likeable content in language that your recipient can relate to.

Stay on track. You made a promise with whatever you teased in your subject line and pre-header. Now is the time to deliver on that promise. Provide the answer to that question. Show the photo. Give the facts/stats. Extend the offer you alluded to.

Get personal. It's not enough to know your audience, you should also give your audience a chance to get to know you or your company, too. Include photos from inside your company's culture to make the recipient feel included.

Move the user along. Images, bullet points, lists, short paragraphs, and clean design all help lead the reader down the page to the survey/form/link/download or other item you want them to engage with. Storytelling is a wonderful way to retain the interest of your audience while providing information as they scroll down.

Ensure a return visit. Before they leave, try to gather any and all relevant information you can about the wants/needs/requests of your email recipient...as well as their personal information. This can be accomplished with a simple form or questionnaire. You can then leverage the information they provide to reach out to them even more specifically the next time around.

Once you've compiled your engaging, thought-provoking, compelling eblast, you need to try it on for size before you blast it out.

THIS IS ONLY A TEST

Before you hit "send" to that ginormous email audience you've compiled, you should always test your emails. Send them out to yourself and anyone else on your team who can help you make certain that they render properly in all browsers. Check for clean image uploads, search for hidden typos, and make sure everything is legible. For even more help with testing eblasts and to measure their results, click here.

With all that said, there's another topic you may want to consider—namely, when exactly is the best time to send your eblast in order to have the most people open and respond to it? Well, that really all depends.

TIME OUT

In a perfect world, there would be an optimal day and time to send your email in order to get the best return rate, but it's not that simple. Although there are many studies out there on the subject, they don't tally up to an agreed upon moment. That's because there are many factors that play a role in the time, including the product or service you're marketing, the audience you want to reach, and even where you're sending it from.

Common sense backed by several studies shows that a morning email from 10 a.m. until noon is best–especially for work-bound individuals who are linked to a laptop all day.

According to other stats, the most favorable days of the week to send eblasts for the highest open and click-through rate are Tuesday and Wednesday. These speculations, however, all depend on your audience, their lifestyle, and mobile device habits.

ALL OF THE ABOVE

The best way to figure out what day and time to send your eblast, however, is trial and error. Moreover, the very best way to send a successful eblast that converts is to incorporate all the best practices listed above. Gather a viable audience. Write a compelling subject line and pre-header combo. Present engaging email content. Test your email, then blast it off at the best time for your target. With that, you should effectively motivate your audience to click through and take action.

If you feel you need help with anything you've read here, reach out to us today. Our team would love to provide your company the momentum it needs to gain a higher level of overall consumer engagement.

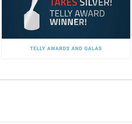
Let's talk

By Kimi Mattig-Louria

Email Marketing

Kimi Mattig-Louria

RECENT POSTS



TELLY AWARDS AND GALAS

MAKING THE SHIFT FROM IN-PERSON TO VI...

TELLY AWARD WINNER

LEAVE A COMMENT

LEAVE YOUR COMMENT

Name * Email * Website

Save my name, email, and website in this browser for the next time I comment.

POST COMMENT

Search site

RECENT POSTS

TELLY Awards and GALAS
Making the Shift from In-Person to Virtual Events
Telly Award Winner
Digital Marketing in a COVID-19 World
The Resurgence of Print

RECENT COMMENTS

ARCHIVES

July 2021
February 2021
January 2021
November 2020
September 2020
April 2020
March 2020
August 2019
July 2019
June 2019
May 2019
April 2019
March 2019
February 2019
January 2019
December 2018
November 2018
October 2018
September 2018
August 2018
July 2018
April 2018
March 2018
February 2018
January 2018
November 2017
July 2017
June 2017
March 2017
December 2016
November 2016
October 2016
September 2016
May 2016
March 2016
February 2016
January 2016
December 2015
November 2015
October 2015
July 2015
June 2015
May 2015
March 2015
February 2015
January 2015
December 2014
November 2014
October 2014
September 2014

CATEGORIES

Advertising
audio blog
Blogging
Branding
Buyer Journey
campaign
Cause Marketing
community
Content Marketing
conversion
Digital Advertising
email marketing
emotional branding
Event Marketing
insight
Leads
live events
Logo
Marketing
online marketing
Print
Proofreading
SENIOR LIVING
SEO
Social Media
Storytelling
tracking leads
Video
website

META

Log in
Entries feed
Comments feed
WordPress.org