MarketingSherpa's

DIRTY DOZEN:

Email Newsletter Mistakes Nearly Everyone Makes

Special Report

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MarketingSherpa's Dirty Dozen: Email Newsletter Mistakes Nearly Everyone Makes

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For years, MarketingSherpa has been publishing research-based reports on email marketing – from hundreds of online Case Studies to multi-page documents entailing industry best practices to our heralded annual Benchmark Guides. Like all MarketingSherpa content, this information has been based on interviews, surveys and studies; "best of" outside studies we garnered results data from; and other anecdotal evidence we gathered after spending hundreds of hours with marketers in the field.

Indeed, we are one of the few marketing publishers who base our writings on actual research. While most people talk about what they think should be done, or what's launching but is yet proven, we write about a tactic or test only after the results are in.

That said, we have often discovered that what works in newsletters is fairly obvious to anyone with a strong hold on common sense. Therefore, it shouldn't be surprising that interesting, relevant and punchy subject lines work. Or that sizable typeface in the body of messages produces clicks because people can easily read them. And so on and so forth.

On the other hand, we have discovered that what works for one marketer may fail for another. Some brands can get away with publishing long, prosy newsletters, but most online audiences tune out after 400 words. Some emailers can send out daily bulletins, but most brands' recipients would report them as spammers or unsubscribe because of that level of frequency.

In the end, all you can do is test the tactic or strategy, and then test it again – because "what works" is often elusive. Your brand is changing before your very eyes, along with your readership and your marketing sophistication and your competition in the inbox.

An example: In 2006, we used to run our house ads in the right-hand column of our Sherpa newsletters – just like we did (and still do) on the homepage of our website. After speaking with a publisher one day about their tests, we had a strong hunch that we were leaving money on the table because we were informed that those ads were not showing in preview panes. So, we tested our ad column on the left-hand side, where they would appear in preview panes and, voila, 28.24% more clicks. We have followed the strategy ever since. But even that won't stay this way forever.

A second instance: Last September, we discovered that the difference in just a couple of words could mean a big change in response. For the hyperlink to each article, we tested "Continue to article" (the incumbent) versus "Click to continue"; the latter outperformed the former by 3.5%. Needless to say, we immediately switched the words in our link in all of our newsletters.

Moving forward, the main lesson we have taken away from reviewing the email newsletter field for more than six years is that you can never stand pat. Your official newsletter template has to be grabbed by its corners, shaken upside down, tested and then revamped every year or so.

That doesn't mean your template will change entirely – or sometimes at all. But if you put a template in place even just a year or two ago and you've yet to conduct an audit on it, now is probably the time. Review open rates and, more importantly, click rates and patterns.

Also, run a reader survey (a study-proven idea that's never really crossed over from the professional publishing world to the marketing-newsletter world). Simply ask your list what they want. Without question, email communication makes surveying so easy to send and track, and its cost-effectiveness compared to the older methods is out of this world. (We ran a special report on how to do email surveys in early October that would certainly be worth checking out.)

Some marketers also run usability studies that can range from plopping a consumer down in front of a screen and watching how they delve through email to sophisticated eyetracking tests. Meanwhile, if you want to check just one element, A/B testing your list has never been more affordable as ESPs have premiered offers for small- and medium-sized brands. Or, multivariate tests can help you see how a number of extravagantly different design elements perform.

Naturally, if your brand relies on its site as the home of the brand experience, and you've revamped that site's look and feel, you'll want to make sure the newsletter changes to adequately match it.

Should you change your newsletter dramatically? Frankly, we think newsletter revamps are a lot like site revamps: They can be risky. Enormous changes (especially involving colors, logos and navigation) can depress response for a short time before an uptick occurs as regular users adjust. But again: Test it. Test it all. And then test it again – at least once a year.

To help you begin auditing your newsletter, we have put together this dirty dozen list of email mistakes to avoid. Like all marketing, some of them are common-sense ideas that were relevant a few years ago and will be relevant in the future. Others, though, will cause your department to pause and reconsider its strategies.

Tad Clarke

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Blatant Lack of Permission

MarketingSherpa's Email Marketing Benchmark Guide 2008, in which 1,210 marketers revealed their email budgets, tactics and responses, indicates that newsletters for the most part are still paying off. Almost half of marketers (49%) said their newsletters routinely justified themselves. Meanwhile, 41% reported that their results varied significantly, and 10% said their newsletters were not being justified by revenue.

Truthfully, we wish those numbers were a little better to represent a more clear-cut triumph for our email community. It's reasonable to suspect that the reason why about half of those surveyed were less than absolutely thrilled was because they hadn't conquered the idea of relevancy. And while there are many things that go into relevancy, it really starts with how you gain subscribers' permission.

Sound like Email 101-type stuff? Well, 15% of all marketers we looked at for the Benchmark Guide were still using an "opt-out" registration tactic. Those companies either prechecked the box for receiving emails or required an email address for some other purpose (e.g., to get access to the website/to get an insurance quote). They did not make it clear that the person signing up would be receiving emails from them.

Meanwhile, 64% used a single opt-in tactic, leaving 21% employing double opt-in. So, there's a pretty good possibility that many marketers' response rates are suffering due to a sketchy sense of permission and trust between them and their subscribers.

There are other causes to what is the huge mistake of "assumed permission" as well. Your reasoning may fall into any of the following ideas:

- "They are already a customer, so they must want to hear from me."

- "They entered their email address in a contact form or registration form, so they must know I'm going to use it."

- "They received something of value for free from me (sweeps entry, white paper, etc.) in exchange for their email address on a form, so they understand their 'cost' is receiving email from me without complaint."

- "They are in a very specific niche – perhaps an extremely targeted

group of people, or even one single person – who should be interested in my newsletter, and they posted their email addresses publicly on a site or handed a business card to a rep from my company."

- "It's legal. CAN-SPAM allows me to send email newsletters to anyone I choose to in the US until they say no. So why not?"

- "Our unsubscribe rate is low (under 5%), so they must like receiving the newsletter."

Unfortunately, the vast majority of consumers and business professionals who receive email newsletters do not agree with any of these assumed permission excuses. Simply put, they don't see why you've started emailing them. They are likely to consider your newsletter spam (especially if it is higher in frequency than monthly and/or they receive it for more than a few months without clicking through on any of the links).

In fact, according to data from a special research project on complainers in our Email Marketing Benchmark Guide 2008, 21% of all respondents said they use the "report spam" button to unsubscribe even though the email is not technically spam. Overall, 39% of the complainer respondents said they used the "report spam" button often or very often.

In other words, carelessly sending email to addresses that haven't duly shown permission in your registration process will do several things: hurt your response rates, significantly damage your reputation among receivers and, eventually, put a pinch on your deliverability.

You also risk losing your relationships with your email-services provider and Web-hosting vendor because assumed permission is often unauthorized under terms of their contracts.

HOW TO AVOID THIS MISTAKE

Audit each of the ways an email address can be added to your list for a newsletter. Is the individual told they'll be added to the list? If it's over the telephone, have you scripted this for clarity? If it's online or in print, is there a box on the signup form they must proactively check (i.e., it's *not* prechecked) to receive the newsletter?

Plus, if you have more than one type of email you would like to send them, have you asked them separately (given separate preferences check boxes) for each? It's not merely a best practice to ensure higher response rates to your future mailings; it's the best way to safeguard your mailer reputation.

Lastly, implementing specific frequency options during the opt-in process *could be* quite the cure for your headaches here, and it's a move many industry leaders are testing to ensure that the email they send out counts. For instance, allow your database to decide what kinds of offers they would like to receive and *how often* they want to get them.

Once a week? Once a month? Once a quarter? Depending on your customer

niche, these may be timing options that will actually improve your response rates, while deflating your unsubscribes and messages sent to the junk bin. It's probably worth a test. (More on this in Mistake #4.)

SAMPLES FROM MARKETERS WHO GET IT RIGHT

(1) After entering an email address on the homepage, (2) new GourmetStation subscribers see a stylish but cleanly designed Web page that prompts them to complete the double opt-in at their inbox. (3) There, they are greeted with a straightforward subject line: "GourmetStation Newsletter: Please Confirm Subscription." (4) Then, the gourmet cuisine eretailer's email body features a prominently placed "Confirm" button (gold-hued, 92-by-42 pixels) and a secondary opt-in link, which make finishing the subscription a seamless, permission-driven activity.

Sample 1.1: GourmetStation

Utterly Deficient Segmentation

We heard it quite often at Sherpa's 2007 Email Summit in Miami, and it's still true: Top-performing email campaigns are all about relevancy.

While most marketers we speak with also say they would like to do more segmenting – if only to break out recent customers from prospects – they often just don't have either the time or resources (or both). The following real-life response data from our Email Benchmark Guide 2008, however, should inspire you to add segmentation to this year's budget:

- For advertising-oriented lists, 57% of marketers surveyed said that "emailing unique content by segment" produced routinely justifiable results.

- Also for advertising-oriented lists, open rates for segmented versus non-segmented campaigns are as much as 20% higher on average for the first 30 days, and 12.4% higher for days 60-90. For the last 90 days of the first year, segmentation wins by anywhere between 11% and 15% for opens compared to the non-segmented.

- Click rates are even more dramatic in favor of segmentation: They are doubly high for the first 30 days, with a slight increase for 60-90 days, before being more than five times higher compared to non-segmented for the last 90 days of the year.

For finance, publishing and retail lists, segmentation also beat non-segmented every time for each category. But many email newsletters try to accomplish segmentation by adding a little something for everyone to each newsletter issue. Sorry, that's not going to cut it!

Although this works at restaurant buffets (where you try to please the whole family with an assortment of offerings), it doesn't work in email because each message is received by one individual. That individual is only interested in information that's relevant to them.

And, that individual has a very short attention span for your newsletter that is only growing shorter – perhaps as little as a few seconds, generally not more than 15 to 20 seconds. If they don't immediately see something highly relevant and interesting, your email gets deleted.

Unlike print magazines and catalogs, which might get second glances, emails once abandoned are usually abandoned forever. So, by cluttering the newsletter with non-relevant info, you're wasting those precious few seconds of eye time and reducing your overall chances of readership and account lifetime open rates.

HOW TO AVOID THIS MISTAKE

Discover how people on your list think of their information needs as being unique. You may want to run a survey (once again, email is an incredibly ROI-effective medium to deliver surveys) or even focus groups.

Other segments may be by age group, purchasing style (discount shoppers versus early adopters), geographic region, etc. As in Mistake #1, allowing your audience to decide how often they would like to hear from you is also worth heavy consideration. (Definitely worth a survey question if you go that route.)

Best practice: Ask about interests up front when folks sign up for your newsletter. If the name is already on your list, send out with a survey and/or start reacting to data on which links they've clicked and which they've ignored. These types of database-driven segmentation and "dynamic content" have been technically possible for more than seven years now, and more marketers are using them, thankfully. But many still do not … yet.

SAMPLES FROM MARKETERS WHO GET IT RIGHT

Electronics eretailer Second Act tries to grab more than an email address and a few demos on their registration page. They facilitate built-in segmentation by offering 16 categories for which their subscribers can choose from specific content options.

(SEE SAMPLE 2.1 ON NEXT PAGE)

Sample 2.1: Second Act

Lame 'Welcome' Messages

We have known for a couple of years that the email most likely to be read by your newsletter subscribers is the very first one they receive from you. No, this doesn't mean the first newsletter issue or campaign; it means the first email after they sign up.

Most marketers use a formulaic message for this first email, which is usually sent in text-only. From your perspective, it's often seen as an "administrative" message rather than a marketing message. So, it looks and feels more like a receipt or subscription-order acknowledgement than any sort of branded messaging.

Sample of a basic welcome note:

~~~~~~

Thank you for subscribing to the NAME OF NEWSLETTER.

SUBSCRIPTION STATUS

If you wish to unsubscribe at any time or feel that

you have been added to our list in error, click the

following link:

REMOVE: http://www.LINKTOUNSUBSCRIBEHERE.com

~~~~~~

Some marketers dress this up a bit with some warm wording about what to expect in future email newsletter issues. While we applaud the effort, why not take things a bit further? If this is going to be your most-read email of all time, why not try to get some real engagement or interactivity going? The more you can engage a recipient from the very start, the more likely it is that this pattern of engagement will continue throughout their account lifetime with you.

HOW TO AVOID THIS MISTAKE

Review your online content and possible offerings. Perhaps you wrote a great "evergreen" article everyone loved. Perhaps one particular emailed offer got an outstanding response recently. Why not include the offer in your welcome message? So, your welcome becomes a mix of administrative info (brief) and an engaging offer.

Of course, retailers can try coupon offers (15% off, free shipping, etc.) to get their new subscribers, who signed up for the newsletter but didn't make a purchase, immediately engaged in the brand. Or a simple "Shop Now" button is undoubtedly better than nothing at all.

As one example, athletics gear retailer Finish Line offers a smart dual offline-online coupon. Recipients can redeem it for $10 off at a store or online. They also invite new signees to immediately join their rewards program in the Welcome message.

On the coupon: No, you don't need to (and should not) mention this extra bonus on your opt-in form; you really do not want your list to be comprised of discount-chasers and whatnot. (You'll want to test the offer to see if it raises opt-ins of course, but that's a different discussion.) Adding an extra unannounced bonus is never a bad thing. Like Finish Line, you will be over-performing against expectations.

Lastly, be sure to include an annual review of your 'Welcome' letter from then on. Most marketers do it every six months, including reviewing the percent of clicks on the offer.

SAMPLES FROM MARKETERS WHO GET IT RIGHT

Finish Line makes the most of the 'Welcome' message by offering a savvy dual offline-online coupon. Recipients can redeem the coupon for $10 off at a store or online. The athletics gear merchandiser doesn't stop there. The 'Welcome' message design uses a nine-category top navigation bar, and they invite new signees to immediately join their rewards program.

Sample 3.1: Finish Line

We sent you this email because you asked for updates about new products and promotions. To ensure receipt of our e-mails, please add us (finishline@news.finishline.com) to your e-mail address book.

Finish Line.

MEN | WOMEN | KIDS' | FAN SHOP | ACCESSORIES | BRANDS | CLEARANCE | WINNER'S CIRCLE

Welcome!

Now that you've joined our exclusive email group, you'll get some great perks delivered straight to your inbox:

- Incredible discounts
- Free shipping offers
- Exclusive access to special events and promotions
- First dibs at our Clearance Section

Your special treatment starts now. Just for signing up with us, here's a special offer for $10 off your next in-store or online purchase of $60 or more!

Sincerely,

The Team at Finish Line

WINNER'S CIRCLE

WANT MORE REWARDS?

Join the Winner's Circle

SIGN UP NOW >

TAKE $10 OFF YOUR NEXT PURCHASE

$10 OFF

YOUR NEXT PURCHASE OF $60 OR MORE!

**ENTER COUPON CODE
140572**

*Minimum purchase amount must be met before shipping and taxes. Coupon not redeemable for cash. Present this coupon at time of purchase. Limit one redemption per customer per day. Coupon not valid on the purchase of gift cards. This coupon cannot be combined with any other discount, coupon, offer, prior purchase, exchange or refund. Excludes regularly priced Nike Statement product (including but not limited to all Air Force, Air Max 360, LeBron James, etc.) and Brand Jordan. Also excludes all Fossil. Additional exclusions may apply. Coupon valid in-store or at www.finishline.com. To redeem online, enter the 6-digit promo code at checkout. Cash value 1/100¢. Coupon valid 12/1/2007 through 3/1/2008. Coupon code 140572

Finish Line. GIFT CARDS BUY NOW

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Finish Line
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Indianapolis, IN 46235
1-888-777-3949

Frequency Decisions Made for the Wrong Reason

How do you determine your newsletter's frequency? Is it based on how often readers want to hear from you? Did you choose a frequency by default? ("Monthly seems good. Let's do monthly.") Did you pick a frequency that matched your own ability to get an issue written and created?

Frequency is one of the toughest strategic decisions you'll make that will affect the success of your newsletter. But as was touched upon in Mistake #1, it's becoming a hot testing ground for marketers because – with all the messages being sent these days – many are extremely curious to find out if a bit less sending will actually manifest higher response and better sales.

If you send too frequently, you risk annoying readers. The minute you annoy them, you go from valued mailer to unwanted spammer. Not only do you risk losing a customer, but you risk losing your email reputation and deliverability to boot.

On the other hand, if you mail too infrequently and the folks on your list don't receive any other communication from your brand (in any media) during the normal run of things in that time period, you run the risk of lower performance. Simply put, your brand isn't in front of the recipient enough to have any sort of impact.

And during the gap time in between mailings, your competitors may pick up sales that should have been yours. Throttling down your email frequency can be a scary proposition, but there are safe measures to take.

HOW TO AVOID THIS MISTAKE

The first thing you need to do is, of course, test. Conduct an A/B split on your signup page for a short duration of testing time that allows you to get a healthy sample. Let half of your new subscribers pick frequency-specific options ("weekly," "biweekly," "three times a month," "monthly," "bimonthly," etc.), while the rest see your current signup options.

This could be a huge part of your timing strategy moving forward, so follow the A/B groups for at least a few months to see if the needle moves in terms of how each responds to offers. Being able to hone in on your subscribers' timing

preferences could very well be a boon to this arm of your brand's marketing.

Meanwhile, because email tracking is becoming more sophisticated, major eretailers have been adjusting their email schedules to reflect increased consumer interest for a few years. As a basic example, many mail more frequently during the holiday rush and barely at all during the slow summer months. Some marketers email only on Tuesdays (a good day for opens and clicks for many brands) and not later in the week when response typically declines.

But, shouldn't how often they visit your website also be reflected in how often they get emailed? Ask your ESP if this is something they can help you test.

Some advanced B-to-B mailers are also picking up the idea. If a prospect has visited their site or done other activities indicating heightened interest, that prospect may get more email from the company.

And here's a no-brainer: Some marketers only send mail to their list when there's content of genuine value to distribute. When you are ready to hit the submit button to start your send, consider this question: "Am I sending this because it's on my to-do list, or is it something recipients will be genuinely excited to get now?"

The answer should determine your schedule. Once again, common sense rules.

SAMPLES FROM MARKETERS WHO GET IT RIGHT

Powells.com gives subscribers some truly meaningful leeway when it comes to how often they receive messages. Signees can choose from eight newsletter options with these frequencies: daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly and "as specials become available."

Sample 4.1: Powells.com

Institution-to-One Messaging

Many marketers forget that personalization comes in two forms.

On the one hand, personalization is about creating a "personal" communication to an individual, which might range from the basic insert first name and last name at the head with common content to customizing content to match a recipient's interests.

Then there is personalization on your end. One-to-one communication means you writing as an individual to another individual – not as an institution to an individual.

All too often, email newsletters come off written as though they are coming from a large institution writing to an individual. Take this quick quiz to see how personalized your newsletter is:

- Is the "from" an individual's name?
- Is the newsletter "signed by" any individual?
- Is there contact information for a named individual anywhere in the text?
- Are there any headshots of individuals?
- Does any of the writing have an individual's "voice" or tone?
- Is the word "I" used more than the words "we" or "our"?

If you answered "Yes":

4-6 times – Congratulations, you're doing great.

2-3 times – Good work, but you might be able to improve even more.

0-1 times – Time to consider revamping your newsletter.

HOW TO AVOID THIS MISTAKE

One-to-one messaging doesn't have to be cutesy, nor is it limited to certain types of brands. We know financial brands that carry regular columns from

their analysts in newsletters. They write just as you would expect an analyst to write; you get the sense the column wasn't ghost-written for them by marketing or PR. And you can contact the analyst at his or her direct email if you have questions.

Meanwhile, B-to-B marketers are now often personalizing newsletters by putting the name of a sales rep or account rep for each recipient on the newsletter. The content may be the same for all recipients, but the "from" and contact info is different.

We also know franchise and chain retail marketers, automotive firms and real estate agents who are doing the same thing. The email comes "from" the manager of the local store, even though it's actually written and distributed by headquarters on their behalf.

Once again, you also have to show that there's a true relationship taking place by WHAT you send them. Whether you are talking about a specific salutation within copy or subject line, matched products to customer needs or stated wants, products matching buying cycle (batteries for a year-old iPod), etc., a little bit of personalization can go a long way.

Offer-based personalization can be as specific as your list segmentation. And after all, it's hard for the subscriber to feel like they are in a one-to-one relationship if it doesn't appear you are listening to them.

SAMPLES FROM MARKETERS WHO GET IT RIGHT

Charles Schwab shows that the simplest gestures can nurture powerful relationships: Their email program connects a personal consultant to the customer when the account gets opened. The consultant's name appears in the reply-to slot, and the message includes the Schwab rep's first and last name and direct telephone number.

Sample 5.1: Charles Schwab

charles SCHWAB

SCHWAB INVESTING INSIGHTS®   **January 17, 2008**

Dear [Name of Client],

I'm pleased to share the January issue of *Schwab Investing Insights* with you. In this newsletter:

> Chief Investment Strategist Liz Ann Sonders argues that this economic cycle is apt to look more like a fat "u" than the typical narrow "V," and explains what it might mean for investors.

> Our 2008 Sector Outlook. Consider overweighting health care and info tech. Get ready for bargains in consumer discretionary and financials, but beware of energy. Plus, stock ideas to get you started.

> Get a grip on cash by learning how to manage inflows and outflows wisely—it can save you a bundle.

> Great mutual funds for 2008: Check out reviews of five of our favorites, plus a list of 14 more funds across a broad spectrum of fund types.

If you'd like to discuss any of the ideas you find in this issue, just give me a call or drop me an email. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

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VP, Financial Consultant
Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.
+1 (415) XXX - XXXX
 Name of Financial Consultant@Schwab.com

Client Log In | Unsubscribe

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★ ★ ★

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No Real Interactivity

Now, let's take Mistake #5 a little further. Everyone talks about how wonderful the Internet is because it's such an interactive medium. Yet, most marketers treat their newsletters as "blast" content – information that's sent one way, marking the end of the so-called interactivity.

Note: A hotlink back to read an entire story or to accept an offer back at your site is not really interactivity unless you plan to treat each newsletter recipient differently in the future based on that particular click (i.e., dynamic content). Most of the time, you're just using the hotlink to show users something that wouldn't fit in the email itself because of format or deliverability restrictions.

The true nature of interactivity is give-and-take on both sides. You send something to someone, they react, and then you respond, and then they respond, and so on and so on. This is why strategists often talk about email as a "relationship-building medium."

Don't fool yourself. Sending out blasts with links to get more stuff at your site is not building a relationship. It's broadcast advertising, albeit to a segmented market of requestors.

Another note: Adding a reader poll feature to your newsletter is often the first and last additional interactivity newsletter publishers do. However, unless readers truly believe their answers to your poll will be effective and have an impact, they are less than likely to answer it, or to feel in their hearts that your newsletter is interactive. Hence, a poll is an interactive feature, but it's not interactive unless you truly react to it.

HOW TO AVOID THIS MISTAKE

Before you get caught up in the fancy stuff, first make sure your email newsletter is interactive on the most basic level. Email Street cannot be one-way.

If a recipient hits the "reply" button, does their message reach a named human being who will get right back to them if need be? Plus, is there a named contact on the masthead with personal direct contact information? No, info@ and feedback@ do not count as direct contact information in anyone's

book. JillSmith@ does. Better yet, add in Jill's telephone number and direct extension. Even better: Include a headshot of Jill.

OK, lots of folks are doing a nice job of testing linked videos in email. But, once again, the communication is too one-way to be truly interactive. The video landing pages need to have a "Comments" section. Moderator or editor duties do not have to be extensive; one person on your team can check the comments and approve them over the course of a few minutes at the end of each day.

And, what about a hyperlink with this invitation: "Have a Question About Our Video? Email [insert name of Product, Service, Content Offering] Expert, [insert rep's First-Name] Now And We'll Get Back to You Within 24 Hours!"

Think about the possible conversion rates for those emails to your "expert." In short, for all the ballyhoo about video in email, marketers are only beginning to test what kind of true interactivity can be applied.

Example of cool, real-life interactivity: A popular independent rock band, The Faint, allowed their online audience members access to separate recorded tracks (vocals, guitar, bass, keyboards, etc.) to the songs on their forthcoming album. The viewers were able to download the tracks and do their own mixes, which were posted in a separate forum and listened to by other online community members. Band members posted about their favorite fan mixes.

The idea was pushed by their record label's newsletter. Fans loved it, and it only encouraged sales when the band's version of the album came out. It was their best-selling CD to date.

SAMPLES FROM MARKETERS WHO GET IT RIGHT

Every issue of Annie's Homegrown newsletter is sent "from" Bernie (a rabbit), whose "headshot" appears in the upper left corner. Sure, Bernie's not a real person, but that doesn't stop thousands of consumers from taking up the newsletter's perennial offer to interact with Bernie at its blog online. Plus, the ongoing news and photos from a real-life customer on Baffin Island give readers the feeling that someday their story could appear, too.

Sample 6.1: Annie's Homegrown

Annie's HOMEGROWN

Rabbit Tales

April 21, 2007

Free Shipping!
Receive free shipping on all UPS Ground orders of $100 or more. Go to Annie's Store

Bernie's Blog
Come join the discussion at Bernie's Blog. Discuss current events in Environmental policy, learn about new products in development, and other topics that concern Bernie, the Rabbit of Approval. Read the Blog!

Store Locator
Find Natural Foods stores and Supermarkets near your home or office that carry Annie's products. Locate now!

Annie's Affiliates
Become an Affiliate and earn cash commissions when you refer friends and family to Annies.com. Become an Affiliate

Dear <%Field2%>,

Earth. A tiny magical and mystifying speck, orbiting a star in our solar system within an ever-expanding universe. Our shared planet. Our common ground. Our shelter and our source of sustenance. The home that connects not only all people but also all other earthly inhabitants. From coral to camels, penguins to pandas, oak trees to osprey, honey bees to humans. We are all interconnected, here and now, alive on our home planet, our Earth.

Earth Day is not an observation in honor of individuals or events, nor could it be called a religious celebration in any conventional sense. Still, it is a global celebration, transcending specific holidays and excluding no one. Our Earth awes, inspires and uplifts our human spirits without regard to race, gender or religion. In our commonality, we can celebrate our Earth.

As global temperatures rise and the land, rivers and oceans become more and more poisoned and polluted, we humans must raise our collective voice to speak out. We must demand better of ourselves and our leaders. As citizens of the most powerful democracy in the world, a democracy and political system for which men and women continue to sacrifice their lives for, we must utilize our rights and privileges. We must use the power of our voices and actions to be responsible stewards.Let's take back our democracy and put it to work.

Annie

p.s. Do you have an Earth Day resolution? Please share it with us (your answer just might win you something snazzy!) so we can share it withothers. My Earth Day resolution is to use as few new plastic bags as possible. I will reuse the ones I have collected or bring cloth bags to the stores where I shop.

In this issue:

1. Organic Pasta Conversion
2. Annie's Farmer Profile: Meet the Turners
3. Recycling & Reusing Annie's Packaging
4. Native Energy Helping to Reduce Our Bunny Footprint
5. Stop Global Warming
6. Fan Letter of the Month
7. Stand For Peace Goodie Bag

What's the Next Name of Annie's Mobile Tour?

As you know from previous Rabbit Tales issues, we're looking to you to help us rename our Mobile Tour. So far, we've received 31 different suggestions from our beloved Rabbit Tales readers as to what to call the vehicle itself and the overall tour. All of the suggestions were fantastic. But we haven't chosen one yet because we think we can get more of you to spin your creative wheels and add to the idea pool. So the search continues! Read the ideas we've gotten so far.

For all you new to the contest, here's the skinny. This year, we bought a trailer and hit the road in a tour across the country, stopping at various events, sampling our delicious macaroni & cheese, Cheddar Bunnies, and Bunny Grahams. We dubbed our traveling trailer "Annie's Stand" and the tour itself "Annie's Mobile Tour". As we plan next year's adventure, we want to be a *little* sassier, a little catchier. Help us rename our tour!

Send us your brilliant ideas . We'll decide by the end of this month, and send a bountiful gift filled with all kinds of Annie's goodness to those who come up with our favorite three suggestions.

Annie's Pasta now Made Exclusively with Organic Durum Semolina Wheat!

THINK ORGANIC
FOR A HEALTHY PLANET FOR A HEALTHY YOU
Annie's www.annies.com

We're proud to announce that all of our yummy products - with the exception of our Gluten-Free Rice Pasta & Cheddar - are now made exclusively with organic durum semolina wheat pasta! Since 1998, when we became the first to introduce organic macaroni & cheese, we've worked with organic wheat growers to build the supply. We now work with more than 75 organic family farmers - mostly out of North Dakota, Montana and California- who grow our organic durum wheat. *Organic* means that it's produced without synthetic fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, GMO's or irradiation.

And our cheese? We're supporting Cedar Grove , our organic cheese supplier, as it works towards gaining Sustainable certification from the Food Alliance - a step beyond organic certification. We're very excited about this opportunity to grow within and support the movement toward "beyond organic".

Why Organic? Learn more about organic farming and sustainable agriculture . Grow your own garden with the help of our Growing Organic booklet!

Get $2.00 off any Macaroni and Cheese product when shopping online . Use Coupon code ALLORGANIC. Valid until May 31.

Back to the Top

Meet The Turners

"It used to be that farming knowledge was truly valued, but now there's an urban mentality that looks at farmers as peasants. Farmers are some of the smartest people I know. Give a farmer some iron and he can make anything. Farmers are the original engineers."

◦ Dee Turner

It takes a lot of hard work to grow the organic durum wheat that makes up Annie's organic pasta . Our organic farmers do what they do because they have incredible respect for the land. Thanks to their care and consideration, their farm's soil stays healthy and you get to eat mineral-rich pasta that's been grown and processed without synthetic fertilizers, herbicides, or pesticides.

Living in northeastern Montana, the Turners are known to consistently grow some of the best wheat available. Welcome, Dave and Dee Turner, to the Annie's family and for helping us to provide the best ingredients to our customers! Read more about the Turners.

The Turners

One of our farmers, Terry Jacobson, is quite the talented poet. We received his book of poetry and couldn't resist sharing with all of you. Read *Right of Ownership.*

Back to the Top

Deliverability: Content, Formatting & Lack of Self-Advocacy

Deliverability concerns turned out to be one of the lesser worries for the marketers we've talked to, but we're left wondering if people aren't merely putting their heads in the proverbial sand.

Consider these stats from our Email Marketing Benchmark Guide 2008: 30% of practicing marketers don't take the time to figure out their actual rate of delivery, while 12% have no idea how to characterize their organization's precise definition of delivery. Hmm … it's hard to sell your wares if the message isn't getting through.

Marketers are in denial about what their deliverability situation may look like because it makes them feel helpless. It's one of the key aspects to their campaigns where they probably have the least control. Keeping your copy "un-spammy" just isn't good enough anymore. And now we're starting to learn that having a good reputation isn't necessarily the cure-all we thought it *might be* about six months ago. (Although, to be clear, we at Sherpa still HIGHLY advise making reputation management a HUGE priority.)

Marketers also tend to fall into two "mistake camps" when it comes to email filtering:

- Camp #1. "It doesn't happen to me. My reports say 95%-99% of my mail is delivered."

Well, unless you have had your delivery audited by a third party, as much as 20% of your campaign email may be getting filtered.

- Camp #2. "It's our email service provider's job to get the mail past filters. If too much is being filtered, we'll switch broadcast vendors."

The answer to that: Although competing vendors may tell you that they can save the day, chances are one of the big (but not only) reasons your email is stopped by filters is because you formatted it incorrectly in HTML. Or, it could be that your reputation with an ISP or two is bad.

HOW TO AVOID THIS MISTAKE

Assuming you're already doing the basic stuff – only mailing true permission names messages you're darn sure they're interested in at a non-annoying frequency – here are four more factors to double-check:

Factor #1. Are you currently using a dedicated IP address to send email that no other mailer ever uses? Almost all vendors offer it, and it's your responsibility as the mailer to insist on using this service.

Otherwise, you're at the mercy of every other mailer sending from the same IP address. If any of the folks on their list block or blacklist them, your mailings are tarred with the same brush because you appear to be identical.

Factor #2. If you send in HTML, is it coded properly? Industry experts have told us off the record that it's actually STILL rare to see email newsletters and alerts coded cleanly. (Reportedly, there have been only slight improvements on this front in recent years.)

For instance, a great deal of email design is done by Web designers who don't realize email requires super-clean code. Plus, as original email templates are altered and adjusted over the years, the code can get messy.

Factor #3. Content filtering is still HUGE in the corporate world. Excellent email service providers can help you get through to major ISPs with volume controls, strict list hygiene and reputation.

But, you must remember to be your biggest deliverability advocate when speaking to your ESP. Talking with them should be just like going to the doctor – it's your job to ask questions, too. (That goes for factors #1, #2 and #4 as well.)

Factor #4. The most important thing you need to do is improve your sender reputation. Work with your ESP on this if you need to improve deliverability.

Example of why deliverability is huge: In a recent Sherpa Case Study, we saw how events marketer LiveNation dramatically tempered their massive email list for three months worth of campaigns, only sending to purchasers from the past 16 months for one month before slowly reopening the spigot to include all database records. It worked wonders; they saw 20.4% more messages get through and a year-over-year increase in email-generated revenue of 143%.

MISTAKE 7

Deliverability: Content, Formatting & Lack of Self-Advocacy   MarketingSherpa's Dirty Dozen: Email Newsletter Mistakes Nearly Everyone Makes

SAMPLES FROM MARKETERS WHO GET IT RIGHT

eDiets tested a number of 'sexy' subject lines that other marketers might have steered clear of due to concerns about getting flagged and sent to junk bins. Not surprisingly, they learned that the best kind of email content management can entail testing your own audience. eDiets saw opens jump by more than three percentage points with the sexier subject lines and got clickthroughs as high as 92.2% in the tests. Meanwhile, their deliverability rate didn't drop a bit.

Sample 7.1: eDiets - Sex Shockers: Positions, Dos, Don'ts

eDiets - Dumbest Things to Say in Bed

Designing Images That Appear as Red Xs

Still wondering if you should be sending HTML or text-only newsletters?

Here's the bad news first: Getting HTML images to appear for people who have images turned off hasn't gotten much easier. The good news: Marketers are getting remarkably more intelligent about the way they design their HTML newsletters to look intriguing even if the images do not appear right away.

It's amazing how many big-brand retailers, however, are still sending out banner-styled messages that appear as blanks or red Xs after initially being opened. We won't name names to protect the not-so-innocent, but we at Sherpa have been watching and, overall, the firms doing the best job are medium-sized, eretail-born firms. (Not surprising, we know.)

HOW TO AVOID THIS MISTAKE

At the same time, one example of a big-brand marketer doing excellent work in this regard is A&E Television Networks. Basically, they laid out the blueprint to ridding red Xs from your design.
(See http://www.marketingsherpa.com/article.html?ident=30071 for the article.)

Here were their three major steps:

Step #1. Balance copy and images. They created a three-column layout where the text flowed up and around images so readers who had their email images disabled could focus on the message rather than the blank spaces.

Step #2. Employ ALT-text tags. They used a feature available in all HTML email programs, but not used by all marketers: ALT-text tags. The tags allow the designer to insert descriptive copy that the viewers could read inside the blocked images.

Here's what you need to do to add ALT-text tags:

- Open the image tag (IMG)
- Add the ALT-text attribute: (img src="http://..." alt="XYZ")

- Type in copy the way they wanted it to read

Step #3. Implement checklist. To avoid badly written code or copy typos in the ALT-text tags, A&E put together a 13-point quality assurance checklist that addressed various potential tripwires in rendering and deliverability.

Of course, this is something you can easily test in-house. You should already have an account for every free ISP, as well as the Comcasts, Time Warners and AT&Ts of the world. So, test your designs in each of those accounts (and, of course, Outlook) before you settle on a "post-red X" template. And if you have any other difficulties with the red Xs, contact your ESP – they will be happy to help you with these procedures. (If not, tell them you are moving on.)

A&E Relationship Marketing Manager Ana Lucia Dunkle and her team are sure glad they did. With clickthroughs being their most-important data point, they saw a whopping 41% increase since the overhaul. In addition, email-generated traffic from the content programs has doubled at their Web sites. The ALT-text tags, as well as the improved copy/image design balance, deserve most of the credit.

"We've seen that designing HTML for a Web page and an email is totally different," she says. "It's been difficult for our designers because they're used to designing using tools like CSS, Flash animation, Java script, etc. So, we went back to basics and found that HTML as a programming language contains a plethora of tags and attributes that may not always be used for Web page design but can be taken advantage of in email."

SAMPLES FROM MARKETERS WHO GET IT RIGHT

Abandoning banner-style emails for designs involving ALT-tags, which let text appear inside images even if a recipient has images turned off, proved to be a boon for A&E Television Networks' newsletters. With clickthroughs being their most-important data point, they saw an incredible 41% increase – while email-generated traffic from their content programs doubled at their websites.

Sample 8.1: A&E Television

Date: Tue, 4 Apr 2006 18:55:07 -0400
Subject: A&E: We're wheeling and dealing, Vegas style.

GOD OR THE GIRL -- Series Premiere
Sunday, April 16 @ 9pm/8C

Meet Joe, Mike, Steve, and Dan, four all-American guys at the most important crossroads of their lives: becoming Roman Catholic priests or finding women to love, marry and start a family with. A&E's new five-part series, GOD OR THE GIRL, takes you along on their powerful journey, capturing the tension, turmoil and triumph of choosing between two divergent paths—and committing to that choice for the rest of their lives.

DOG THE BOUNTY HUNTER
Tuesday, April 4 @ 9pm/8C

Dog may act like he's tough as nails, but case after case proves he's a softie at heart. When he discovers that Frankie is trying to get off meth and get a job, Dog promises to help him out of jail. And when he tracks down Christy, a woman with 87 prior arrests, he is moved by her life story of abandonment and betrayal. This episode is about second chances, and Dog is eager to give others the new start on life that he had.

See our Dog DVDs

BIOGRAPHY: WOMEN OF COUNTRY
Friday, April 7 @ 8pm/7C

Musicians. Businesswomen. Stars. The women of country music are not only making it in a man's world, but changing the industry in the process. This two-hour special gives a never-before-seen look at the glamour, heartache and music of some of the top female stars in the country music business, including Barbara Mandrell, Emmylou Harris, k.d. Lang, LeAnn Rimes, Loretta Lynn, Naomi Judd, Tanya Tucker, Trisha Yearwood, Reba McIntyre and Crystal Gayle.

Loretta Lynn's life story on DVD

COLD CASE FILES
Saturday, April 8 @ 9pm/8C

On a summer night in 1987, a 19-year-old girl is raped and strangled near the Hudson River. Her friend Michael remains the chief suspect for 17 years, until DNA fingers another man who offers a chilling account of Diana's last breath. In 1983, a young mother is raped and murdered while at work at a San Antonio interior design shop. Two decades later, detectives reopen the case, but when DNA evidence turns up missing, it looks like it could all be over before it starts.

Check out our Cold Case Files DVDs

APRIL HIGHLIGHTS

By Satan Possessed: The Search for the Devil: America Undercover
Monday, April 10 @ 9pm/8C

Biography - Gone Too Early
Friday, April 14 @ 8pm/7C

Mysteries Of The Bible®
Sunday, April 16 @ 8pm/7C

Dallas SWAT - New episode
Thursday, April 20 @ 10pm/9C

Visit the A&E Store !
>> all Dog DVDs
>> BEST SELLERS
>> BEST SELLERS Channel

This email was sent to you by A&E Television. To ensure delivery to your inbox (not bulk or junk folders) and view (AOL), please add 'xxxxxx@newsletters.aetv.com' to your address book or safe list. If you have trouble seeing this message, click here or paste this URL in your browser:

Sample 8.2: A&E Television

Sent: Monday, July 30, 2007 2:51 PM
Subject: NEW time! New episode: Sticky stuff

THIS DAY IN HISTORY 7/30/1971:
Fighter jet collides with passenger plane

The viewers have spoken, and the winners are...thousands of you voted in our MODERN MARVELS Viewers' Choice, here are the results:

Freight Trains (4:23)   88's Tech (3:35)

World's Biggest Machines 3 (3:21)   Extreme Aircraft (4:32)

Nature's Engineers (3:21)   Horsepower (4:00)

Brewing Beer (2:46)   Snack Food Tech (5:05)

Buy one MODERN MARVELS DVD, get one free!

MODERN MARVELS: The Creation of the Computer DVD

Duct tape, scotch tape, fly paper, Poligrip...we take this stuff for granted, but without it, our lives would come undone...
MORE

Now catch MODERN MARVELS Monday-Friday @ 8pm/7C

Check the **TV Schedule** for more MODERN MARVELS!

FACTOIDS

1) Working in zero gravity might be a challenge if it weren't for hook and loop fasteners - which line the walls, ceiling, and floor in many sections of the international space station.

2) The historic punishment tar and feathering should have been called rosen and feathering since it was pine tar rosen that gave the penalty its stick. Burning occurred in less than three seconds, and the accused was left to clean it all off with turpentine and tar soap.

Get **The History Channel Magazine**
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Disregarding Your BlackBerry and Mobile Readers

Did you know that 64% of key decision makers are looking at your carefully crafted email on their BlackBerrys, iPhones and other mobile devices? In addition, regular users are often from a wealthier demographic – with an annual household income of more than $100,000.

Yet, chances are, your email looks downright terrible in BlackBerrys. The good news is that mobile email isn't, per se, replacing desktop email usage; it is merely complementing it. Because consumers know that the quality of mobile email rendering is not as good as it is on a computer, they'll typically wait to deal with commercial email until they're back at their desks.

At the same time, ignoring the impact your campaigns can have on BlackBerry, iPhone and mobile users would be foolhardy. In a Case Study from September, we saw how sending text-only messages on the weekends helped the Durham Bulls minor league baseball team have their best playoff tickets sales campaigns in their history.

Further, there's no reason why marketers shouldn't be able to balance the needs of their readers who are on mobile and at their desks. In fact, with swamped inboxes being the top challenge to email marketers, this is an area where you can get a distinct leg up on the competition (especially B-to-B marketers).

HOW TO AVOID THIS MISTAKE

What do you do?

First, get a BlackBerry, iPhone and other wireless devices and see your emails for yourself. Then, call for an immediate meeting with your email design team.

Second, design your messages so they can be read in almost open-standard formatting. If possible, you want malleable email that conforms to where relevancy through the message is maintained no matter what receiver or device the recipient is using. But, unfortunately, with all the different protocols for every receiver, it can get rather complicated.

The easiest solution is to offer text-only messages when you are emailing during peak times for BlackBerry users, like the Durham Bulls did on weekends. But business professionals are often not at a desk even during regular hours.

What a lot of smart marketers are doing to dually serve their computer- and mobile-based subscribers is to design the offer (or "the hook") in text format at the very top of the message. What's below it – for the sake of this particular discussion – doesn't matter. At least everyone knows WHY you are emailing them. Hence, if necessary, they will make a mental note to examine your entire message when they get back to their desks. In the case of "traditional" HTML emails, that might not be the case at all for people receiving them on BlackBerrys and not being able to make out a thing.

(For more on this subject, check out the Special Report we did last year: http://www.marketingsherpa.com/article.html?ident=30057)

SAMPLES FROM MARKETERS WHO GET IT RIGHT

The Durham Bulls tried to target BlackBerry weekend readers in a time-sensitive campaign with a text-only email, which was followed by an HTML message three days later. The one-two punch sold 262.3% more single-game tickets than their average 2007 email campaign. Better yet: 88.5% of the sales derived from the initial text-only message.

Sample 9.1: Durham Bulls Baseball text-only email

Sample 9.2: Durham Bulls Baseball HTML email

Repeating Ad Types

One of the more interesting projects while putting together the 328-page Email Marketing Benchmark Guide 2008 turned out to be the eyetracking tests. In the email eyetracking, we wanted to explore how people view ads in newsletters and the different elements that could positively (and negatively) affect their attention.

We led test groups through several rounds of newsletter changes, each time trying to introduce variations to test their effect on how people view and move through the page.

One of the most telling findings was that, in these unmodified emails, attention on the top left ads dropped steadily each time the audience viewed them. By the third viewing, attention had dropped to almost zero.

Of course, we're all aware of "banner blindness," but it's interesting that this occurred so quickly and to ads that were highly relevant to the context of the surrounding content. (This likely helps explain why moving our house ads from the right to the left was such a big win for the Sherpa newsletters.)

HOW TO AVOID THIS MISTAKE

This news sounds like a conundrum for your design team, huh? We can hear them now: "Are you telling me we have to change the template every third or fourth mailing?"

Fortunately, there are methods to positively change attention, and we explored a number of them. Yes, the bottom line is to change things up. Ad rotation isn't necessarily enough – if ads are in the same location and are the same size, blindness occurs quickly. In several subsequent tests, we found that changing ad position and format can jumpstart attention.

Simply put, you need to mix up your ad spots on your newsletter without losing its consistent feel. Use different ad types – from graphical ads to text lists. Slight variations can bump up attention. If you have a template with a couple of choices, rotate between the spots to keep the ads looking fresh.

SAMPLES FROM MARKETERS WHO GET IT RIGHT

Here's one from the MarketingSherpa file. We tested moving our house ads from the right-hand side of our design to the left margin, where they would appear in preview panes. Presto! 28.24% more clicks.

Sample 10.1: MarketingSherpa

Collecting Bad Response Rates

While collecting data for a number of our email-related research endeavors, we were surprised to learn that not all marketers use the same math to calculate their rates – mainly clickthroughs and conversions. For instance, some divide their clicks by the total list to get their "clickthrough rate." Some divide it by the number of opens.

Who's to blame for this mess? Not anyone, in particular; it's just the industry as a whole, which has not established standards for emailers.

The potential trouble with all of this is that marketers who aren't doing the math the right way are not as likely to hone in on what's working (or not) in their campaigns. The problem could have to deal with anything from the subject line, to the creative, to the call-to-action copy to the color of a button. Heck, there could be people in the same brand's department calculating things differently.

HOW TO AVOID THIS MISTAKE

First of all, you can clean up this situation with – you guessed it! – a little common sense. Here's an easy-to-understand breakdown of how most industry leaders are tallying their stats:

- How to calculate opens: Divide the number of opens against the sum of delivered addresses (to the best of your tracking) – and not the entire list. There's little use in judging a subject line against a group of people who never saw it.

- How to calculate clickthroughs: Divide the number of recipients that click through by the total opens – and not the entire list. This way you can assert how truly effective the body of your message was, along with the subject line if you like (that's up to you and whether you think subject lines affect clickthroughs).

- How to calculate conversions: This is the most debatable of the three, since some marketers tend to "cook the books" at this stage by calculating conversions against the smallest possible pool. But it is not difficult to figure out which kinds of calculations actually equal a fair assessment.

If you want to judge a campaign in its entirety, from the list segmentation to the subject line to the body of the message to the landing page to the offer, divide the amount of unique transactions against the number of total delivered addresses. But, if you want to measure the effectiveness of just the landing page, divide the number of transactions by the amount of clickthroughs.

Over time, if you consistently collect rates in these manners, you will get the truest read on how the different components to your campaign are performing. And, that is what's really important.

Chart 11.1: Biggest Challenges Facing Email Marketing, In-House vs. ESP Mailers
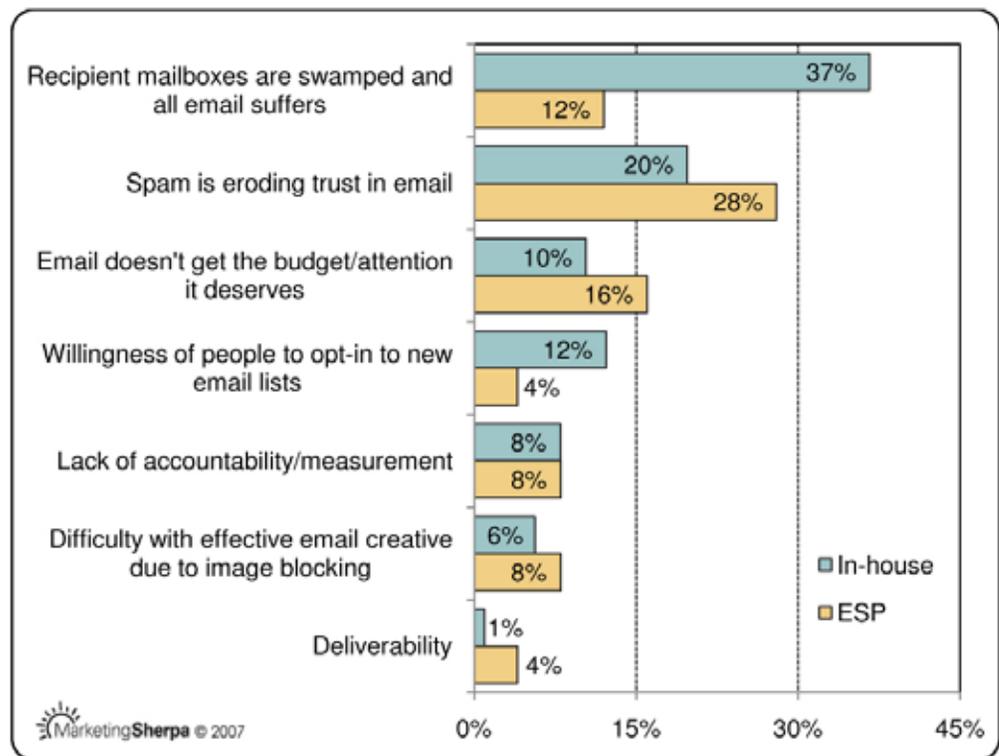
Source: MarketingSherpa, Email Marketing Benchmark Survey, November 2007
Methodology: This fifth annual survey was opened to selected MarketingSherpa reader lists on Oct. 23, 2007, and closed on Nov. 2, 2007. 1,210 total responses were collected from in-house email marketers and employees at agencies/ESPs working with email. Any respondents not directly involved with email marketing were screened.

OK, maybe saying 8% shows a lack of accountability/measurement doesn't immediately raise an eyebrow. But that's still a pretty high response. And the marketing community didn't launch the Email Standards Project (http://www.email-standards.org/) in recent years for nothing. It was founded to fill a troubling void and to create a standards-based culture to make email better for marketing.

Relying on Email Only

Whether you are talking about combining media, such as TV and radio spots, roadside billboards, banner ads or telecommunications, one strategy that is still in style is multichannel marketing. With that in mind, even if your newsletter is a vital part of your communications with clients and/or prospects, don't rely on email alone. One-two punches of the smart variety almost always test better.

For instance, Disc Makers targets their audience of music recording hobbyists by emailing request-a-catalog campaigns to past customers and opt-in prospects; then they mail the catalogs. "The email campaigns qualify the catalog requests at a higher level and increase [ROI]," says Kate Sullivan, Marketing Manager. "Most of our sales come over the phone, and the direct mail-email combinations drive those calls."

Indeed, email alone is not going to do the trick for a promotion (unless your brand has one heckuva longstanding offline presence and an INCREDIBLE house list, perhaps). It helps greatly if you complement it with another channel.

HOW TO AVOID THIS MISTAKE

First of all, reconsider your own newsletter strategy. Perhaps you should send follow-up printed copies of your newsletter to top prospects and best customers. Or, perhaps, you should create a bound booklet or syndicated PDF of your best-of articles for annual distribution. At the very least, supplement email sends with RSS feeds (a companion to, not a replacement for email) and posted online articles (in a search engine-friendly format).

If your message matters, then make sure people receive and pay attention to it. Be as creative as possible in the ways you reach out to them. Of course, retailers have the luxury of combining email with one or two examples of the other forms of media. Combining email with a channel that has traditionally worked well for you offline may be worth a test.

SAMPLES FROM MARKETERS WHO GET IT RIGHT

There are two popular and proven ways of using email with your print catalog. Like many successful marketers, World's Finest Chocolates has consistently used email to announce the in-home arrival of their seasonal catalogs. And since pushing the print book is important to Disc Makers' success, they regularly include an image-driven, request-a-brochure house ad in their newsletters.

Sample 12.1: World's Finest Chocolate

Sample 12.2: Disc Makers

ABOUT MARKETINGSHERPA

MarketingSherpa Inc. is a research firm publishing Case Studies, benchmark data, and how-to information read by hundreds of thousands advertising, marketing and PR professionals every week.

Praised by The Economist, Harvard Business School's Working Knowledge Site and Entrepreneur.com, MarketingSherpa is distinguished by offering practical, results-based marketing information researched and written by a staff of in-house reporters.

MarketingSherpa's publications, available at http://www.MarketingSherpa.com, include:

- 800+ Case Studies on marketing from Agilent Technologies to Xerox, searchable by company or topic. All Case Studies are researched and written by in-house reporters.

- Annual Benchmark Guides featuring primary research and collected "best of" secondary research on statistics related to search marketing, email marketing, ecommerce and business technology marketing.

MARKETINGSHERPA NEWSLETTERS

Visitors to MarketingSherpa.com may sign up for their choice of newsletters, including: specific Case Studies for business-to-business versus business-to-consumer marketers, email-focused studies and Career Climber – the best way to find a great marketer or a great marketing job.

Get the Weekly:

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100 Case Studies and 50 book contest giveaways per year, hotlinks to the week's research, awards and jobs.

Or choose by topic:

- Business-to-Business Marketing
- Marketing to Consumers Online
- Great Minds: Interviews
- Fame: Awards & Speaking Gigs
- Email Marketing

- ContentBiz:
  Online Pub. Industry
- Job Classifieds
- SherpaStore Newsletter
- Chart of the Week

Sign up for newsletters at http://www.MarketingSherpa.com.

MARKETINGSHERPA SUMMITS

MarketingSherpa also hosts annual Summits. This year's include:

- Email Summit '08 – February 24-26, 2008 – Miami , FL
- Selling Online Subscriptions Summit '08 – May 12-13, 2008 – New York City , NY
- Web Optimization Summit '08 – September 2008 – Orlando, FL
- B-to-B East Coast 2008 Summit – October 5-7, 2008 – Boston, MA
- B-to-B West Coast 2008 Summit – October 26-28, 2008 – San Francisco , CA

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Service@MarketingSherpa.com
(877) 895-1717 (outside the U.S., call 401-247-7655)

PRACTICAL REPORTS

MarketingSherpa Landing Page Handbook 2008

Newly updated and expanded for 2008, MarketingSherpa's bestselling Landing Page Handbook helps you raise conversions by up to 55% or more for search, email, and ad campaigns for lead generation, ecommerce, and even blogs. Includes: page design & copy instructions; 54 stat & data charts; 114 samples of landing pages to copy; help for search, email, B-to-B, ecommerce, blogs & lead generation conversions
273 pages. Published November 2007 by MarketingSherpa; $497 for instant PDF download plus printed copy!
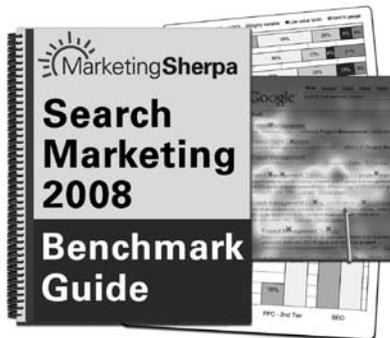
MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Guide 2008

New handy guide gives you: 2,475 search marketers surveyed; 184 charts & tables +10 eyetracking heatmaps; 711 search marketing agency execs and staff surveyed; growth rates and ROI of search marketing vs. other marketing tactics; stats on costs per click, conversion rates, SEO vs. PPC and more.
275 pages. Published September 2007 by MarketingSherpa; $297 for instant PDF download plus printed copy!
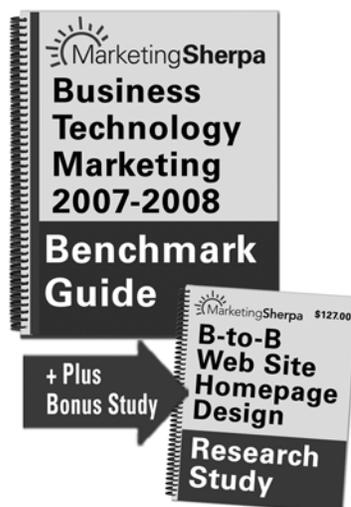
MarketingSherpa Business Technology Marketing Benchmark Guide 2007-08

- 1,038 B-to-B marketers surveyed
- 4,658 business tech buyers surveyed
- Practical data on: search, email, PR, direct mail, lead generation, trade shows, podcasting, telemarketing & budgeting

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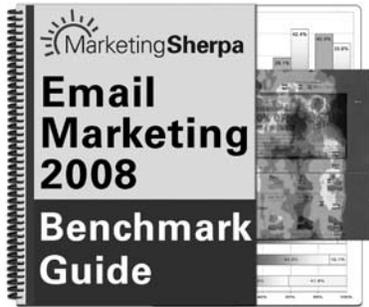
MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Guide 2008

Complete with all new research, Marketing Sherpa's fifth annual Email Marketing Benchmark Guide delivers the fact-based data you need to compare your Email campaigns with others. Includes: Results from in-depth survey of 1,210 marketers with hands-on Email experience; 260 charts, 12 images and 9 new eyetracking heatmaps + 4 new special reports
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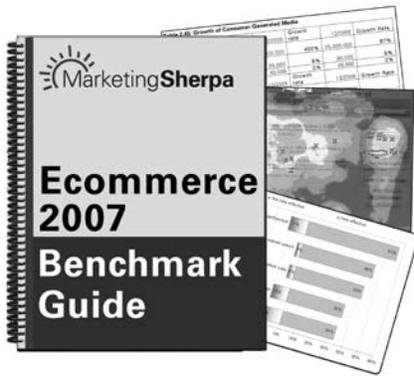
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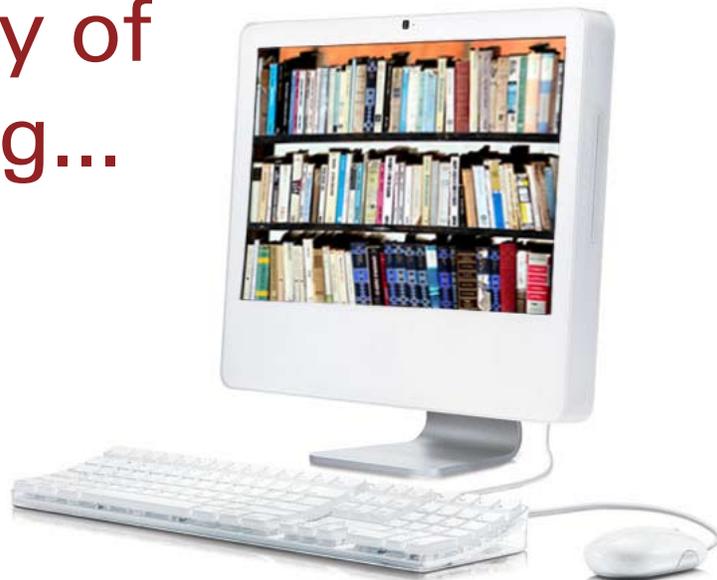
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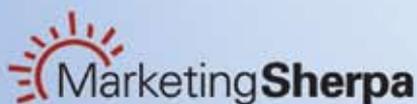
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Discover

Email Tactics and Strategies that Really Worked from 47 Seasoned Marketing Professionals.

Come to the 3rd Annual Email Summit in Miami, February 24-26, 2008 (Sunday – Tuesday), and we promise you'll leave with practical and specific Email tactics and strategies that you can apply directly to your business or your clients' businesses.

Whether you're involved in B-to-B, B-to-C, operations, small business, multinational or agency, Email Summit '08 has been set up to address your specific issues.

Here's how:

- Three distinct tracks to choose from – B-to-B, Advanced B-to-C, Operational
- Private consultation clinics
- General Sessions on Office Politics & Email Policy, Sending Emails that Inspire Action, What I Learned at Email Summit '07, and the latest research on Email Marketing

While in Miami, network with 800 of your marketing peers from around the country. Gain valuable information from the many vendors at our Expo and find out who will be MarketingSherpa's 2008 Email Award winners. It's MarketingSherpa's biggest Email Summit ever, with three days worth of Case Studies, panels, training and research data that will provide answers to your most pressing challenges whether they be growing lists, creating design to maximize results, avoiding filters and increasing delivery, or improving ROI.

BASECAMP TRAINING

"Copywriting for Email 101: Inspiration & Remedial Skills" is being taught by MarketingSherpa Founder Anne Holland.

- Learn the most effective methods of creating copy for email subject lines, text copy, and landing pages.
- Submit real life email examples for critiquing

COCKTAIL PARTY

Networking starts when you arrive, but for those who like a place to gather when they meet, come to our Welcome Cocktail Party on Sunday evening.

EXPO

You'll have plenty of time to visit the booths on the show floor, which will be set up by top vendors. This is not only a good way for you to get direct answers about products that could help you, but it's another way to network.

ONE-ON-ONE CONSULTATION

Take advantage of private consultation clinics where you'll get one-on-one consultations on Email marketing. Make an appointment at the Summit and have an expert evaluate your Emails and landing pages.

3RD ANNUAL EMAIL MARKETING AWARDS

Every year at the Email Summit we recognize Email campaigns that have outstanding measurable results. Meet this year's winners of the third annual Email Marketing Awards at the final general session of the Email Summit, where they'll get the full recognition that they so justly deserve.

AGENDA

For a complete description of each session go to:
http://EmailSessions08.MarketingSherpa.com

Sunday, February 24, 2008			
8am-7pm	Attendee Check-In; Receive promotional items sponsored by Silverpop		
9:00-5:00pm	General Session – Email Professional Certification, basecamp		
2:00-5:00pm	Basecamp taught by Anne Holland, MarketingSherpa		
5:00-7:00pm	Opening Night Cocktails on Expo Floor and Attendee Check-In		
Monday, February 25, 2008			
7am-8:45am	Networking Breakfast and Registration		
8:45-9:15am	General Session	Research Keynote	Stefan Tornquist, MarketingSherpa Inc.
9-15-10:15am	General Session	Office Politics & Email Policy	Joe Slepski, Reed Business Info.; Jennifer Rash, Sage Software; Nicole Fowler, Playground
10:15-10:30am	Break		
10:30am-12pm	General Session	Relevancy Case Studies: Sending Email that Inspires Action	Annette Promes, Expedia; Sarah Nelson, 500 lb Solutions; Uwe Michael Sinn, Rabbit emarketing; Kimberley Talbot, Adobe
12-1:30pm	Networking Lunch		
1:30-2:00pm	Breakout Sessions	I. B-to-B: Research Update	MarketingSherpa Inc.
		II. Email and Landing Page Testing and Optimization	Liz Brown, Dell
		III. Managing the Vendor Selection Process	Daniel Kuperman, Quadrant Software
2-2:30pm	Breakout Sessions	I. Response Rate Testing: Putting a Face with a Name	Dave Wieneke, Thompson Compumark
		II. Testing Format and Content to Boost Response Rates	Tara Zanecki, Workshare
		III. A Proven Procedure for Changing Vendors	Bob Frady, Live Nation
2:30-2:45pm	Break		
2:45-3:15pm	Breakout Sessions	I. The Rapid Rise of the Un-Newsletter	Jeff Cram, ISITE Design
		II. Advanced Testing: Targeting and Creative	Randall Huff, Intuit
		III. Managing and Integrating Multiple Vendors	Cori Mozilo, Cold Stone Creamery
3:15-3:45-pm	Breakout Sessions	I. Building High-Performance Newsletters	Stephen Wellman, CMP
		II. Using Triggered Campaigns for Targeted Messaging	Matt Griffin, Boston Celtics
		III. Strategies for Mobile Messaging	Jeremy Wright, Nokia
3:45-4:15pm	Breakout Sessions	I. Nurturing the Lead: Messaging and Frequency Planning	Rosanna Picillo & Shelly Smith, National Instruments Corp.
		II. Newsletter Before and After: Layout, Content and Copy	Anjie Moin, BlueGreen Corp.
		III. Dynamic Content for Increased Loyalty and Lower Costs	Marc Constantineau, Air Canada
4:15-4:45pm	Breakout Sessions	I. B-to-B Segmentation Strategies and Procedures	Vicki Morris, Northstar
		II. Advanced Testing Case Studies: Part 2	Sudhir Diddee, Microsoft
		III. Information Security Procedures and Privacy Protection	Michele Dow, Eli Lilly
4:45-5:15pm	Breakout Sessions	I. Inventing Must-Read Content for B-to-B Newsletters	Robin Anna Pernice, JP Morgan
		II. Utilizing Viral Campaigns for Customer Acquisition	Jeff Greene, Coastal Federal Credit Union
		III. Strategy and Procedures for Global Email Operations	Jeff Kosiorek, TAC
6:00-9:00pm	Gala Party	Gala Party – Bongo's Cuban Cafe	Sponsored by ExactTarget
Tuesday, February 26, 2008			
7:30-9:00am	Networking Breakfast		
9-9:30am	Breakout Sessions	I. Launching and Managing Global B-to-B Campaigns	Samuel Pederson, Sun Microsystems
		II. New Proprietary Study: How Consumers Interact w/Email	Pam McHugh, Mintel Comperemedia
		III. Email Deliverability: The Battle to the Inbox	Arend Henderson, Q Interactive
9:45-10:30am	Breakout Sessions	I. Testing & Segmentation Strategies of a Chinese Weekly	Danny Levinson, XZList.com
		II. Deploying Video eMagazines to Enhance Engagement	Ken Bott, InterContinental Hotel Group
		III. How a Good Reputation Delivers Huge ROI	Sal Tripi, Publishers Clearing House
10:30-10:45am	Break		
10:45-11:15am	Breakout Sessions	I. Creative and Viral Components of Refer a Friend Program	Michael DeHaven, CareerBuilder
		II. Email and Complex Partnership Marketing Campaigns	Jason Steele, Liberty Travel
		III. Data Enrichment and Synchronization Strategies	Michon Van Doorn, Unilever (Belgium)
11:15-11:45am	Breakout Sessions	I. Revisiting Email Survey Strategy to Optimize Results	Erin Sheehan, Parametric Technology Corp.
		II. Utilizing Mobile Messaging for Heightened Engagement	Terry Dry, Fanscape
		III. Affiliate Seeding Technologies in Acquisition Marketing	Craig Petz, TaxBrain
11:45-12:15	Breakout Sessions	I. Email Strategies to Increase Event Attendance	Don Browne, Tarsus
		II. Critical Steps for Addressing Image Blocking	Elias Haslanger, Dell
		III. Conducting Smooth Email Testing Operations	Flint McGlaughlin, MECLABS Group
12:15-1:45pm	Networking Lunch		
2-2:30pm	General Session	Ideas into Action: What I Learned at Email Summit '07	Karen Imbrogno, Insurance.com; Marc Majers, Insurance.com
2:30-3:20pm	General Session	Sherpa Email Award Winners	Presented by Flint McGlaughlin, MECLABS Group + ExactTarget
3:20-4pm	Interactive Audience Q&A		
4:00-4:15pm	Top 5 Takeaways		