

Email Marketing Best Practices

We all receive many email communications every day. What prompts you to open a message? Why do you keep reading? You know from your own experience with email that it is important to have the right subject to get the recipient to open it. You have one chance to get it right. Once your recipient has opened the message, how do you get that person to take the next step and act on your message? Brainshark has been in the business of email communications for over a decade and we would like to pass on some of our expertise in email marketing to you.

General Recommendations

If you will be sending an email that includes a Brainshark presentation link, applying the following steps will increase the likelihood that you will achieve the response rates you are looking for.

1. Objective

Clearly define the goal of the communication.

2. Audience

Make sure you have an updated email list.

3. Process

Define your distribution and follow-up strategies ahead of time.

4. Content

Concise is best. This is true for the subject line, body of the email and the Brainshark presentation itself. Is the topic of interest? Is your presentation engaging?

5. Execution

A quick follow-up to those who view your presentation will ensure you maximize the ROI of each campaign.

6. Evaluation

The reports provided by Brainshark enable you to optimize your response rates. In the real-time you can see exactly what's working and identify areas needing improvement. By applying what you've learned, your campaigns will continue to improve.

Email Construction Recommendations

Subject Line

Our first recommendation is to make it brief. The second is to use the value you have inherent in the presentation to entice the viewer to click. So if it is the person speaking or the product name that is of value to the viewer, then use that. The purpose of the subject line is to make it through two sets of filters: system and human. Sales-like words can be caught as SPAM by filters, and your message will never get to your audience. If your subject line makes it past the system SPAM filters, the next barrier is your viewers. The subject line must be something that your viewers will click, or else they will never see your message.

Message Body

Again our recommendation is brevity. The key here is to make your value statement and make it quickly. The body of the message – whether it is text or html--should be clear and easy to navigate. The URL for the presentation should be high in the email so that the viewer does not have to scroll to find it. Personalizing the email body and Brainshark link are also recommended. In 1 to 3 sentences tell them why their lives will be better for clicking the link and watching the presentation. The key words when it comes to the message are: Brevity, Value and Clarity.

From

The “From” field has the single largest impact on your viewers’ behavior. If they recognize it, they are much more likely to open the email. Our experience clearly indicates that when an email comes from “marketing@customer.com” it has a poorer open rate than an email coming from an individual. The highest rates occur when the person receiving the email recognizes the sender. We recommend that the sender be the sales person working with the client. There are email systems that make this very easy to accomplish with almost no burden on the sales person. If you do not have such a system, we can provide this service for you. [Contact us](#) for more information.

Personalization

We have found that adding personalized data fields in the email copy increases click through rates. Personalized fields can often be added as tokens and pulled from your distribution list. Common fields for personalization include first name and the sender’s contact information. If you have incomplete data for the fields you would like to personalize consider, creating a generic or default field name in place of missing data.

Test & Reminder Emails

We highly recommend sending a test email to a random sampling of the distribution list. This allows you to analyze the effectiveness of the subject line, email body and Brainshark presentation across a controlled audience. A test email is typically sent to 10% of the total number of intended recipients and allows you to make adjustments if necessary prior to sending your full campaign. We also recommend sending reminder email to target anyone who did not open the Brainshark presentation, provided they did not opt out of future email communication.