

Data is the key to successful email marketing

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The single most important factor for a successful email marketing campaign is the quality of the data. It's not enough to merely have a working email address. That address needs to correspond to other data you hold on the recipient, data that will allow you to understand their needs and tailor your message accordingly.



Negative Space © [Pexels](#)

This potential to segment the audience and tailor the message is what makes email such a powerful medium – arguably more powerful than social media. Yet the data held by many companies is in a generally sorry state.

If yours is a company that has been around for a while, your database is probably an aggregation of contact information gathered over time from multiple sources. It probably doesn't have the matching segmentation data required to design an effective campaign.

Why data quality matters

Facebook's success as a marketing platform comes from the quality and richness of the data it is able to gather on users, with their consent. The company's ad sales team can offer marketers multiple ways to slice and dice any given demographic, and has the methods built into the platform to direct messages to specifically those segments.

They charge and make massive profits from this – ensuring that the message appears in the target audience member's feed.

What many businesses don't realise is that they also, in their day-to-day interactions with customers, record similarly rich data by consent. With relatively minor adjustments to their customer touchpoints, businesses can ensure that this data is collected or updated as a matter of course, and corresponds to a matching working email address.

What are the benefits?

A credible database with multiple data points allows you to understand exactly who you are talking to, what they need and what you could do to have them choose your business to fulfil that need. This is why some of the reported ROI statistics on email campaigns are off the charts. Massive reward is possible for relatively little cost.

Email can also be superior to other channels because it can be sent in a rich, multimedia format that generates analytics on how customers engage with it. For example, which subject lines, links and images get the most clicks and from which groups of customers. That data in turn can be used to inform the design of the next campaign and so the refinement goes until what you have are highly impactful communications with fairly predictable, tangible financial outcomes for your business.

Other things to remember

Even with the best of databases other pitfalls exist. So bear in mind that the same basic rules that apply to all the other communications your business sends, also apply to email.

Keep it short and simple - people have limited time. Use a consistent voice, tone and style to imprint your brand image, but keep an eye on the analytics to spot ways to improve. Always consider including a call to action. If you can't think of one perhaps the email isn't worth sending. And make sure your emails can also be read on web and mobile.

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