

1. Plan your email campaign

It's important to plan your email campaign well in advance of your send date. You need to give yourself time to make sure your email campaign is as good as it can be.

When planning your email campaign, consider the following:

- Who is your target audience?

To make your email relevant, you need to identify your target audience and understand their needs. This will allow you to design an email creative that will engage them and encourage them to respond. You may identify more than one target audience and they may have different requirements. One email creative may not be suitable for all.

- What are your objectives?

Identify what the main aim of your email campaign is. Do you want to raise awareness of your products and services, generate leads and sales or improve customer retention?

- What is your budget?

It's important to agree a budget and stick to it so you can prevent costs escalating. Work out your campaign budget by considering the return you expect to get from it by undertaking return on investment (ROI) analysis.

- How are you going to implement and track your campaign?

You might need to engage a third party to design and build your email for you, or to send and track your campaign. We can now conduct all aspects of your email campaign for you - from email address selection, to building the creative, broadcasting the campaign and tracking response. Our Online Software takes care of all your Analytical needs.

2. Segment, personalise and be relevant

Use the information you have identified about your customers to send them targeted, relevant messages. Segment your customer list and if possible develop specific offers for each target audience. The better your targeting the more likely your campaign will be a success - 80% of an emails success is down to the targeted list; 20% the creative.

3. Write a great subject line

In order to maximise your email open rate you need to write a good subject line for your email – it's the first thing your customer will see when they are deciding which emails to read and which to junk!

Keep your subject line simple, to the point and tell the reader what to expect inside. Don't use words like "free" which might trigger spam filters. Personalising the subject line to the recipient and including your company name works well to encourage high open rates.

4. Design a strong campaign creative

It is very important when designing your email campaign creative that you design a strong wire-frame template and consider these tips;

- Give readers the choice of both HTML and text versions of your email.
- Logo in the upper left corner is always a strong placement.
- Make good use of the top 2 to 4 inches of your email design which is prime reading space.
- Keep your message short – keep scrolling to a minimum.
- Don't use lots of different fonts and colours.
- Make your call to action prominent and clear so that your audience knows what to do.
- Make both images and text clickable.
- Don't use one big giant image as this may be mistaken for spam - always include some text.
- Make sure copy is easily scannable – web readers won't read every word.
- Don't try to make your emails too fancy with Flash as it can be removed by anti-virus programs trying to protect email programs getting infected.
- Include an unsubscribe link in the footer of every email campaign you design.

If you need more help with your email design, we can now design an email creative for you. We have a variety of different email packages available to suit businesses and budgets of all sizes. Contact QAMAR MEDIA for more information.

5. Direct customers through to a relevant landing page

You're doing well if you've managed to persuade your customers to open and read your email – don't lose their interest when they click through by sending them to your home page or a basic product listing page.

You should be sending customers through to a purpose built landing page designed to convert click throughs into leads and sales. Tips for designing your email landing page include;

- Every email campaign should have its own specific landing page.
- Only use content on the landing page which is relevant to your email campaign.
- Mirror the landing page headline copy to your email campaign so that customers can quickly see the page is relevant.
- Make sure the most important information is displayed where it is likely to be read (at the top and/or to the left).
- Make sure your copy is easily scannable.
- Make your call to action prominent and clear so that your audience knows what to do next and are directed to the end goal.
- Make your call to action clickable.

6. Test before you send

Don't forget to test your email campaign before you send it out to potential customers. First impressions count and you don't want anything to go wrong which might put them off doing business with you. You should send at least 5 test emails to yourself, and to all your test email accounts, before you send your email campaign out to your customer list.

You should always test;

- What the email will look like in the most popular email readers (Outlook, Hotmail, Google Mail, Yahoo Mail and Apple Mail) - set up as many test accounts with free email providers as possible and leave them in their default settings.
- That your images aren't broken.
- That your email won't be considered spam.
- That your unsubscribe link works.
- A way to ensure that your email doesn't have any of the obvious words or phrases that mean it is likely to get automatically sent to the junk mail folder is to use a free spam checker – there are lots available to choose from.

7. Measure campaign success

It is very important to make sure that you are monitoring key email marketing metrics such as;

- The number of emails delivered (delivery rate).
- The number of emails opened (open rate).
- The number of click-throughs generated (click-through rate).
- Ideally, each time you send an email, you want to increase the number of people who open and act on it. Analysing your campaign results will help you do this.

Remember, Outlook won't help you track email results, manage unsubscribes, or process and remove bouncebacks from your list so you shouldn't send your emails out using this programme. For a simple solution, our Email Marketing service can send out and track all your email campaigns for you.

8. Keep testing and learning

You aren't going to get everything right first time, so it's important to use your campaign results to modify and re-test your campaign – perhaps your subject line could be stronger or your landing page could be improved. Remember to only change one part of your campaign at a time so you can clearly see the effect that change has had on your results the next time you send your email.

9. Update your email data list to keep it accurate

However targeted your message and attractive your creative, your email can only be successful if you have an up to date, accurate data to send your campaign to. A high bounceback rate indicates your data list is out of date and a high unsubscribe rate means you aren't sending relevant emails to customers who want to hear from you.

10. Integrate your email with other communications

Numerous studies have shown that combining email with other communication channels, such as direct mail, increases response rates. A multi channel approach can also help increase customer spend by almost 25%.

