The Ultimate Email Marketing Strategy Guide - Everything You Need To Know
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Email Marketing has been touted as the best marketing channel - especially where ROI is concerned. However, great as this marketing channel is, many businesses have failed to use it effectively. And the reason is simple - they don’t have an effective email marketing strategy. Before we continue and talk about all the nuts and bolts involved in creating an email marketing strategy that works, let’s clear a few things off the table first.

Is Email Marketing for Every Business?

A question many business owners ask is whether email is the right marketing channel for them. Well, before Covid-19, many brick-and-mortar businesses bragged about how they could do without email. Today the world is a completely different place.

Every business needs email to ensure they effectively communicate with their customers.

Without email, it’s next to impossible to build meaningful relationships with your customers. And in times of crisis, it’s impossible to effectively keep in touch with them.

Crisis aside, any audience you build on 3rd party platforms (like social media) can be lost overnight. That’s why email should be the backbone of your marketing as it gives you:

- Ownership
- (Almost) guaranteed reach
- Predictable conversions

Is email marketing for every business?
Looking at the argument above, I believe you’ll agree that email marketing definitely is for every business.

What is an Email Marketing Strategy (and 3 Reasons You Need One)?

The answer is exactly what we’ll be discussing - everything involved in crafting an email marketing strategy that works.

What is an Email Marketing Strategy?

An email marketing strategy is sort of like a business strategy designed to ensure your email marketing campaigns result in success.

In short, an email marketing strategy is a strategic plan that maps out your processes and steps needed to pull off a successful email marketing campaign.

3 Simple Reasons Why an Email Marketing Strategy is a Must

1. Step 1 - Create awesome email content
2. Step 2 - Send It To Your Entire List.
3. Step 3 - Wait For The Cash Register To Sing.

That’s how many businesses map out their email marketing campaigns. And that’s exactly why their campaigns fall flat. This method is extremely flawed and misses out on the 3 main reasons a solid email marketing strategy is essential. Here they are:

- **Gives direction.** Just as a business plan gives you a direction to follow in order to meet your business goals, so too an email marketing strategy acts as a compass that directs your email marketing activities.

- **Improves Efficiency.** The purpose of strategy, in any arena, is to increase efficiency. And this is exactly what an email marketing strategy does. It ensures that every activity has a purpose and impacts the ultimate goal.
Increases impact. Having a strategy in place for how you'll pull off your email marketing campaigns helps make your campaigns more impactful.

Because having a strategy ensures that these 3 factors are inherent in your email marketing campaigns, your cash register will definitely ring. Speaking of which, let's dive into the processes that will help you execute a winning email marketing campaign.

12 Steps to a Winning Email Marketing Strategy

Ready to get under the hood of an effective email marketing strategy?

I thought so. Let's get right to it then, shall we?

1. Define Your Objectives

The very first step you must take when creating an email marketing strategy is to define your primary objectives. In other words, what do you want to achieve with your campaign?

Common email marketing goals include (but are not limited to):

- Raising and increasing brand awareness
- Nurture leads
- Onboard new customers
- Sell or upsell a product
- Re-engage inactive subscribers
- Build rapport and relationships
The beauty of email is that it’s so versatile you can use it to achieve nearly any business goal. But as always, make sure your goals are SMART.

2 Start from Where You Are

The next step in creating your email marketing strategy is to evaluate where you are currently.

What do you have in place in terms of email marketing and what are you doing?

What steps do you need to take to move from where you are to where you want to go (your goals)?

In order to strategically answer these questions you’ll have to consider:

- The past performance of your email campaigns
- The strengths of your current campaigns and its weaknesses
- The tools you’re using and their efficiency

Failure to understand where you are with your email marketing could result in you throwing out the baby with the bathwater. Not only that, but it could lead to you carrying over some bad email marketing practices into your new campaigns.

3 Set Your KPIs

Now that you’ve set your goals and you know exactly what you want to achieve with your campaign, how are you going to know if your campaign is working or not?

Set KPIs.

Key performance indicators, or KPIs, are measurable metrics that you can use to track the progress of your campaigns. More importantly, they help show whether your campaign was successful or not. These metrics can also be used to build better iterations of your email marketing campaigns.

Here are a few common ones to know:

- Number of delivered emails
- Open rates
- Click-through rates
- Click-to-open-rates
- Conversion rates
- Unsubscribes
- Bounces and complaints
- Return on investment

So how do you determine which KPIs are most relevant to your campaign?
Select the KPIs that closely represent a measurable aspect of your goals. This means your KPIs for a lead generation campaign may not be exactly the same as those for a promotional campaign as the goals are different.

Automation plays a huge role in running a successful email marketing campaign. That’s why you must invest in the best email automation software. One such software you certainly can’t do without is an email service provider (ESP). This is a service that allows you to store emails, segment them, and automate most email activities you need to perform.

So how do you ensure you pick the right ESP for your campaigns?

- Start with your goals
- What features and functions do you need (e.g, do you need a shared, dedicated or multiple IP plan)?
- Can you easily scale your email campaigns?
- Which metrics do you intend to track
- Consider the ESPs delivery rates
- How efficient is their customer support?
- Don’t forget to check customer reviews

These and other considerations will help you get an ESP (and other email marketing tools) that aligns with your vision, budget, and needs. Different ESPs have their different functionalities and areas of strength, so don’t jump for the first ESP you find within your budget. Shop around.

In some instances, you may need to add a third-party tool or 2 to help you get better KPI data or extended functionality.

A successful email marketing strategy is powered by data. And one of the most important pieces of data you need is a deep understanding of your audience.

This is exactly where audience research comes in.
As the name suggests, audience research simply means digging deep into your target audiences:

- Pain points
- Interests
- Buying habits
- Online behavior

Getting to know your audience will help you “get inside their heads”. In other words, it will help you know what they want, when they want it, and how they want it. As such, you are able to provide them a great user experience on their customer journey.

So how and where can you get this data?

- **Start with your records.** Your internal records are a treasure trove of buyer data. A look at them will give you insight into data such as buying habits, preferences, and a whole lot more.

- **Leverage social media.** Social media is another great place to gather data on your target audience. You can gain an understanding of important customer demographics and psychographics.

- **Ask your customers.** Who best to inform your campaigns than your customers themselves. Simply conduct a survey and let the feedback roll in.

- **Spy on your competitors.** Who buys from your competitors? Getting this data can help you get a good idea of who your target audience is and what they really need.

Armed with this data, develop buyer personas that - imaginary representations of your target audience. These will help inform your messaging and overall email marketing strategy.
Everything you’ve been doing up to this moment has been foundational. Now we get to the practical aspects of executing your email marketing strategy. Of course, email marketing is impossible without an email list, so the first place to get your hands dirty when running an email marketing campaign is to build an email list. Not just any list, but a list that’s:

- **Engaged**. An email with people who are not interested in your content is dangerous for business.
- **Relevant**. Make sure the people on your email list are not only interested in your content but your product as well. For example, many people are interested in health articles, but not everyone is interested in the medical benefits of cannabis.
- **Profitable**. Apart from being interested in your product, you’ll need to focus on growing an email list with people who can afford your product.

While it may seem like a daunting task to build an email list that meets the above requirements, it’s actually quite easy. Here’s how you can do just that:

- **Create the perfect lead magnet**. The mistake many make with a lead magnet is to create one that’s too generic. Besides offering a lot of value, your lead magnet must also act as a qualifier that helps you eliminate subscribers that aren’t a perfect fit for your business.
- **Market it in the right places**. This is one of the places your audience research will pay off. Know where your target audience hangs out and promote your lead magnet in those places. Create a landing page that is designed with your target audience in mind to increase your conversion rates.

Of course, this is also where ESP comes in as you will use it to create a database of those who sign up for your email list.

You’ve built yourself an impressive email list, it’s time to send your first campaign, right?

Wrong.

Before sending out your campaign, you must segment your email list first.

Email segmentation simply means grouping subscribers with similar attributes into common sub-lists. This will help you treat each subscriber as an individual - also known as personalization. According to research, segmented campaigns can result in a 760% increase in revenue. And that’s all because of personalization.

So how best can you create segments that can help you personalize your campaigns?

You can segment your email list based on (among other things):

- Demographics
- Psychographics
- Age
- Gender
- Business size
The main determinants of your segments are your goals and business model. However, whatever you do, never batch and blast an email campaign. Instead, segment, personalize, and enjoy the action.

### Design an Effective Workflow

Now that you’ve segmented your email list, it’s time to map out how you’re going to send out your email campaign. This is what is called a workflow. To be more precise, a workflow is an email sequence triggered by a subscriber’s action, data, or behavior.

The main purpose of creating an email workflow is to put yourself in your customers’ shoes and go on the customer journey they’ll follow via your emails. A well-designed email workflow will help identify and eliminate places of friction in the customer journey. It will also help you overcome any objections your customers may have.

A simple example of an email workflow is an onboarding workflow. In this instance, the trigger can be signing up for your offer. The triggered email is a welcome email. After a predetermined period of time (2/3 days) another email is sent out with tailored content.

A big advantage of getting a very good ESP is that most come with templates and tools for creating workflows.

### Determine Which Email Types You’ll Use in Your Campaigns

One factor that makes email marketing effective is that it allows you to serve your customers different types of email. This helps spice up things and helps keep your subscribers engaged.

It’s important that you understand the different types of emails available to you. More than that, you need to determine which types of emails you’ll be using in your email campaigns. Some examples of email types include:

- **Lead nurture emails.** These are sent with the purpose of onboarding new customers, driving brand awareness, and gaining customer trust. Examples include welcome emails and re-activation campaigns among others.

- **Promotional emails.** Promotional emails are designed to drive revenue. These can be anything from product launches to special offers to upsell or cross-sell emails all the way to cart abandonment emails.

- **Engagement emails.** As the name says, these are emails that are meant to foster customer relationships through regular engagement. Typical examples include newsletters, educational emails, and customer loyalty emails among others. While their primary purpose is engagement, you can include a bit of promotional content.

- **Transactional emails.** Transactional emails serve the purpose of facilitating agreed-upon transactions between you and the recipient. Examples include order confirmations, thank you emails, and at times feedback emails.
Knowing which email types you’ll be sending in a campaign is essential as it will help fine-tune your strategy to achieve the goals of the campaign. It will also help you plan out your content. Which brings us to the next stage of mapping out an effective email marketing strategy.

You’re about to pull off an email marketing campaign. That’s because you’ve nearly got every important piece of the puzzle in place. One of the last pieces of your email marketing strategy is the email content itself.

You need to plan and create content for each and every email in your workflow.

No, you don’t create content as the muse hits. You need to strategically plan for it. Here are a few tips to help you ensure each email you send hits home.

- **Know your audience.** Yes, I’ve mentioned this a couple of times already but it needs to be mentioned again. Every email you create must be customer-centric, not self-fulfilling. In short, create content your subscribers want.

- **Understand your customer journey.** Each email you create must help your subscribers move along the customer journey as smoothly as possible. That’s the main point of your email content.

- **Use the right language.** Use lingo that’s common to your personas. Using the right language will help you connect on an emotional level. However, don’t overdo it. And as much as possible, avoid jargon.

- **Give your readers some eye candy.** Visuals are powerful communication tools. Not only do they help convey your message more clearly, but they also help communicate on an emotional level.

- **Pay special attention to your subject lines.** The subject line is one of the most important elements of any email. It can either make or break your campaign as your open rates hinge on them. Make sure to craft concise, benefit-driven subject lines that elicit opens.

Source: https://www.campaignmonitor.com/best-email-marketing-campaigns/announcements/tick/
Don't neglect your preheader text. Your preheader text is your next opportunity to convince your subscribers to open your emails. Don't leave this set to default. Instead, pen preheader text so powerful your subscribers will have no choice but to click open your email.

Looks do matter. Your email design plays a role in how effective your email content will be. Besides keeping your design clean and crisp, ensure that every element plays a role in directing the reader to your CTA.

For your email campaigns to be more effective, do your research before creating your content. Every email must be informed by data. It's also not wrong to check out your competitors' campaigns and see what kind of content works for them.

Before You Press Send

Everything is now in place. It's time to click the send button, right?

Hold your horses!

As much as your fingers are itching to click send, we're not done with your email marketing strategy yet. In fact, the last 2 stages are critical to ensuring your strategy is perfect.

One of these stages is making sure every piece of your strategy is in alignment. To do that, you'll need to:

- **Create a pre-send checklist.** A pre-send checklist is simply a checklist of everything that needs to be done before you send out your emails. Because there are so many moving pieces involved in running an email campaign, it's important to double or triple-check that every nut and bolt is in place. One misaligned component could spell disaster.

- **Conduct A/B tests.** No matter how good a campaign may be, it can always be better. This is why it's important to conduct A/B tests on critical elements of your emails. It will help you run the best possible campaign for that time. While it may seem time-consuming, A/B testing is worth it as you'll end up running the most effective (and more profitable) version of your campaign.

Many an email campaign has ended up a flop due to rushing things. Always stand back, take a good look at your campaigns and make sure everything is in order before you click the send button.

The Results are In - How to Evaluate Your Performance

After you've sent out your campaign it's time to sit back, relax and watch the money rolling in. Unfortunately, that's what most marketers do. Yet this is one of the most important parts of your strategy - collecting data.

Remember, data is the new currency in the digital world.

Instead of sitting on your laurels, put on your overalls and do some data mining. This is important as the data you collect will help you determine if your campaign was a success or not. In fact, this is where the KPIs you set earlier on come into play.
So what do you do with the data you collect?

Now, the first thing most marketers do is to benchmark their results against their top competitors. While this is fair and fine, it's not the best measure of success. Even if you're benchmarking against the exact same KPIs, there are many other factors to consider that may not be the same. Example include:

- Quality of the list
- Relationships developed with customers
- Segmentation strategies

These are just a few examples of some elements that can cause 2 similar email campaigns to have different results. So what's the best way to gauge your success?

Benchmark against yourself.

To truly know if your campaign has been a success or not, compare it to your previous campaign. As long as the goals for the campaign are the same, that is. Again, you can easily get data and statistics from your ESP or from third-party tools.

Email Marketing Strategy Case Study - Moqups

Before you rush off to implement the tips in this guide, let's quickly look at an interesting email marketing strategy case study. This time we'll look at Moquups’ email strategy. Back story - Moquups is a web-based design and collaboration tool that combines whiteboard, diagram, and design features and functions in a single, online app. Upon signing up for their service, you immediately get an amazing welcome email:
Besides the clean, crisp design, Moqups nailed this welcome email by:

- Understanding their users (pain points, and the solution they need)
- Using a benefit-driven subject line
- Giving specific steps the subscriber can take.
- Bold CTA button with personalized copy

Moqups welcome email is a classic welcome and onboarding email. It makes the reader feel truly welcome and appreciated while at the same time it gently guides the reader on to the next step.

The next email in Moqups’ workflow is equally impressive:

![Moqups email example]

Scrolling down the email will reveal different templates for different projects.

So, what’s so special about this email?

One word - value.

Instead of sending a promotional email, Moqups offers massive value upfront to its subscribers. This is a great way to hook users onto a product they’ve never used before. Besides the free templates, Moqups also uses a killer email marketing strategy in the same email...
By letting their users know that communication channels are open, Moqups is showing that they are a customer-centric brand. But more than that, they are showing that they practice what they preach - collaboration.

The next email in the sequence is another great example to draw inspiration from. Here’s the subject line: Discover 4 must-try features in Moqups
This is onboarding at its best. By showing users nifty tricks and hacks to get the most out of the product, Moqups increases the chances of first-timers becoming loyal users. And as if that wasn’t enough, they send another excellent onboarding email a day later. The subject line - Our top 3 visual collaboration features:

While the previous email showcased 4 features you just have to try, this one shows you 3 features that have helped successful teams collaborate. Who doesn’t want to create or be part of a successful remote team?

Now that Moqups has gotten your attention and gained your trust, their next email is not only relevant but impactful as well:

Subject line - ❤ From our team to yours: Get 2x seats and up to 50% in savings

We know the coming months are going to be challenging for many of our customers. Individuals and businesses are rapidly adjusting the way they work together. No matter where they’re located. Moqups enables teams to collaborate in real time on their projects.

So, to make things easier, until June 1, 2020, we have a special offer for you.

2x number of seats on any new Pro plans
For example, a Pro 10 plan will now come with 20 seats. This will allow you to get more of your team online, within the same budget.

25% off for any Pro plan
Save more than 50% if you combine this offer with the discount for paying yearly. Use this code at the checkout screen to apply the discount.

If you have any issues redeeming the coupon code, please let us know.

REMOTEWORK25
Start Saving Now

We’d also like to remind students, teachers, schools and NGOs that Moqups plans are free for both educational and non-profit purposes.
Having enjoyed the powerful features and the warm relationship, who wouldn’t want to take it a step further? Especially when the proposal is so enticing? No wonder the platform has a jaw-dropping +1.5 million-strong user base.

So, let’s quickly look at the key takeaways from this email marketing strategy case study. Here’s what Moqups does well to help them pull off amazing email campaigns:

- Know their audience - very well
- Hyper personalize campaigns (thanks to proper segmentation)
- Create irresistible subject lines
- Carefully plan their email content - each email feels like a continuation from the previous one
- Ingeniously convey empathy in their emails
- Use the right email type at the right time

Creating a winning email marketing strategy may require time and resources, but it definitely is worth it. Ask Moqups.

A Winning Email Marketing Strategy -
The Secret Lies in Execution

——— ★ ———

A successful email marketing campaign is a result of having a robust email marketing strategy. Sure, it takes time to build and monitor one, but at the end of the day, it’s the only way to ensure you succeed in breaking through the noise in your recipients’ inboxes. And if you need help in mapping out your email marketing strategy, the army is more than happy to help. The Inbox Army that is. So make sure to get in touch.
Our Service

Missions InboxArmy can accomplish

- Email Campaign Management
- Email Marketing Planning and Strategy
- Email Template Production
- Email Marketing Audit
- Email Automation
- Integration and Custom projects

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