
marketing & PR
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EMAIL MARKETING – AN ONLINE WORKHORSE

Email marketing may lack the glamour of other areas of online PR such as search engine marketing or social media, but it remains an essential component of the marketing mix to increase visibility and gain new business.

Email marketing strategy is based on a fundamental business aphorism: 90 percent of success is just showing up. By appearing in your prospects' in-box on a monthly or quarterly basis, you remain in the back of their mind, and they remember you when an opportunity arises.

EMAIL MARKETING CONTACTS

List segmentation represents the first step in the email marketing process. It involves an analysis of contacts and their organization into target audiences. Segmentation also provides the critical ability to exclude people from your email marketing such as the press, personal friends or any other inappropriate groups based on the subject matter of each issue.

Growing your email marketing list can be facilitated through the use of a JMML (join my mailing list) icon provided by most email marketing programs. The icon

should be included on all electronic collateral including your company's blog, your employees' email signatures and social media sites.

EMAIL MARKETING TEMPLATES

Constant Contact, the most famous email marketing company, provides professional templates suitable for almost any industry. A two-column format lets you separate promotional material, such as the company boilerplate, from vendor-neutral stories often more appealing to your recipients. Using teasers of one or two paragraphs, with a "click here" link to read the rest of the story, helps to drive traffic to your company's website.

For branding purposes, you can replicate key components of your website on the email marketing template such as the top navigation bar, the company's colors, your logo and other graphics. Visit www.sxc.hu to research and access copyright-free photos related to your newsletter stories.

You should also publish back issues of your e-newsletter in your website's media room and offer access to the archives on the template as well.

EMAIL MARKETING DISSEMINATION

Email marketing programs offer several statistics to help you evaluate your success. An open rate of 30 percent or more is considered superb while click-through rates on interior links generally range from 3-to-5 percent. More importantly, you can determine each person who took the time to read your e-newsletter, essential knowledge for follow-up pitching.

Your e-newsletter can be used to support your entire publicity campaign – you can reproduce recent press releases and promote your blog with a clickable list of recent posts. Social media integration can occur both through "Follow Us" buttons to your company accounts and "Share" buttons at the end of interesting stories.

The main challenge of email marketing involves commitment. Lots of people publish two or three issues, not so many for two or three years. Perhaps email marketing is best compared to a blog; unlike the flash-in-a-pan of a tweet or Facebook post, it is an online workhorse.

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