

EMAIL OUTREACH BEST PRACTICES

Email campaigns can live and die by the subject line. This is your one shot to grab someone's attention or pique their interest long enough to get them to take that gigantic step of actually opening the email. In general, the more concise the subject line, the more likely it is to get opened – hard numbers, declarative statements, or short, quirky questions do well – anything to make the reader do a double-take.



The times you send can be just as important as the subject line itself. In general, there are three sweet spots around 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., and 6:00 p.m. Think of these as after breakfast, lunch, and just before dinner is ready, when a person is more likely to be free and use their phone or other personal devices.

Strive to sound human to stand out from the over-polished marketing noise cluttering inboxes everywhere. For example, using “Re:” or “Fw” gives the reader the false sense that they have previously established a relationship with you. That being said, there is a fine line between strategy and manipulation, and most folks have a built-in gut sense of that creepy, uncanny valley wherein a mass email is overly familiar.

Have a clear call to action. You've gotten your recipient to open your email, and that's the hard part. Now, it's your job not to mess it up. At this point, the biggest enemy of email success is mission creep and too many asks—you want one specific, actionable goal or **call to action** in your email and prominently placed as close to the top as possible. This might be a sign-up form or a button that the reader can click to take them to a specific link. **The more steps you add to the process, the higher the bar of effort you set for your reader, resulting in a higher drop-off before taking action.**



Keep things as pithy and concise as possible, with the experts recommending at most 50 to 125 words in your email.

Other helpful tips to keep in mind:

- ✓ Break up big, daunting blocks of text in favor of short paragraphs composed of no more than about two to three sentences. *(Keep in mind the various devices on which people read emails, resulting in scrolling even for these two to three sentences.)* Bolding some of the text periodically also helps break up the paragraphs.
- ✓ Make the email read as conversationally as possible. The more you can continue to pull the reader in with humor, quirks, or just plain good writing, the better your chance of keeping them reading the entire email.
- ✓ GIFs and Images are your friends. Not just because of the humor they inject, but also because they're a chance to break up the text and entice the reader to keep scrolling. But there is such a thing as too much of a good thing: overloading on images or GIFs can be dizzying, drown out your message, and, in the worst cases, cause the email to be inadvertently chunked into the spam folder.
- ✓ Be mindful of your audience's makeup and diversity to ensure that people from every walk of life can appreciate and understand your content.

