

## Video Title: The Importance of creating an email marketing strategy

Hi there, I'm Courtney with HubSpot Academy and this is your introduction to email marketing.

When was the last time you sent an email? Could have been a few minutes ago or even right now as you are watching this video.

Now ask yourself what type of email did you send? Go ahead and take a look I'll wait **(tick tock)**.

The email could have been a quick note to your co-worker, maybe a longer one to your boss, a personal email, or even sending out a marketing email to a segmented list of contacts.

The first email was sent by [Ray Tomlinson in the 1970's](#), and since then, we've been sending so many different types of email.

All of these types of email are important to not only your professional life but to your personal life. They are important because you are engaging in conversation, and email is one of the main ways we have conversations and communicate in all the different sectors of our lives. And by [2020 email use worldwide](#) will top 3 billion users.

While your personal emails are important we are going to focus on your email marketing strategy. Which will help you reach your audience, continue to nurture a relationship with them, and have conversations that help you and your customers grow.

But "doing email marketing" is not as easy as it may seem. It's not as simple as quickly drafting a message and hitting the "send" button. You have to build a healthy email list, make sure you're complying with email regulations, and segment your contacts so you're delivering the right messages to the right people, at the time and so much more.

Email marketing is now more than ever rooted in every part of our inbound strategy. Focusing more and more on data and segmentation your email marketing is fueling your inbound strategy with syncing closely to your CRM and contact database as well as the information on your website.

You are collecting more data and to send great emails you are segmenting them to create a highly personalized experience for your contacts.

This is why having an inbound email marketing strategy will help you keep your email marketing on target and show your company a return on investment. Whether you're a company of one or 5,000, your email marketing strategy needs to be clearly defined to help you reach your goals.

So how do email and inbound come together to fuel your inbound strategy and generate ROI for your business?

Your email marketing strategy is one part of your overall inbound strategy. You'll develop this strategy to market your products and services and nurture relationships in a human and helpful way through the use of the email channel.

For a lot of people, email marketing is an interesting part of inbound marketing. To some, it still is one of the prime examples of outbound marketing. The word spam is enough to scare us away from hitting send. And to those who rely on purchased lists and emailing people who have never opted in to hearing from them, it should be scary.

By using these 'outbound' tactics of sending email, marketers are not having conversations with the people on the receiving end of their email.

This is why it's SO important to remember that there is a human on the other end of your email send who will be reading that message.

Creating an inbound email marketing strategy means you're creating a human, helpful, and customer-driven conversation and experience, and this is what will lead to impactful results for your business.

So where do email and the inbound methodology intersect?

First let's review the inbound methodology. Let's talk about what it is, how it can help your business grow, and how email fits into the process.

The inbound methodology is made up of the four stages of inbound. These stages are attract, convert, close, and delight.

The first stage is attract, where you'll attract strangers and turn them into visitors. This can mean many things for you - using blogging and social media and optimizing your website.

These are all mediums for publishing and distributing content that people can choose to consume on their own terms, not channels for forcing people to engage with your message. And as technology continues to evolve and develop, there will be more and more mediums for you to use to attract strangers and convert them into visitors.

And once you've attracted your new visitors, the next step is to convert them into leads by gathering their contact information. Again, it's their choice as to whether they're willing to share their contact information in exchange for access to your content.

And after you've attracted the right visitors and converted them into leads, it's time to turn those leads into customers. And this is where we see email primarily live, in the close stage of the inbound methodology. This is where you'll use email to nurture your leads by sending them the right message, at the right time, every single time.

Email will then continue to support your inbound efforts after someone is already your customer. You'll use email to engage with and delight your customers and turn them into happy promoters of the products and services they love.

In our world today, trust is more important than ever. Word of mouth is how people develop trust with a brand. Your customers are the ones who will help you continue the buying process for others by sharing their experiences with their friends, family, and colleagues. And once this occurs then the whole inbound methodology will begin again.

While our world today continues to evolve and new products and services appear daily, there are many ways to have conversations with your visitors, leads, and customers. Email marketing continues to be one of the practices that consistently fuels and delivers ROI for your business, and when it's used properly, in collaboration with all of the other conversational tools, you can build trust.

By creating a great email marketing strategy, you're creating a sustainable, helpful, and human experience to develop relationships with your customers and help them grow.

## Video Title: How to build an effective email marketing strategy

Building an effective email marketing strategy means adding three important pillars to your email marketing tool belt.

And as you implement your email strategy, keep these top of mind, as they're the context and lens through which you should view all the information you learn about email.

The three pillars you need to build an effective email marketing strategy are: the significance of segmentation, the power of personalization, and the impact of data-driven analysis.

Let's take a closer look at each of these.

Email remains at the heart of successful marketing, sales, and customer efforts, but competing for attention in the inbox has never been more challenging.

Segmentation is seemingly simple but important. Segmentation is what helps you send the right person the right message at the right time.

Creating an inbound email experience and conversation means focusing just as much on the context of your message as the content you deliver.

The [DMA](#), a Data & Marketing Association, found that 77% of email marketing ROI came from segmented, targeted, and triggered campaigns. Bringing context and content together helps you write the greatest emails in the world and make sure they connect with your audience and don't waste their time or yours.

Segmentation, at its core, brings together two key inbound concepts: buyer personas and the buyer's journey.

Sending the right email at the right time to the right person means knowing who that person is and where they are in their buying journey.

Buyer personas are semi-fictional representation of your ideal customer based on real data and some select educated speculation about customer demographics, behavior patterns, motivations, and goals.

And the buyer's journey is the active research process someone goes through leading up to a purchase. The buyer's journey is made up of three stages: the awareness stage, the consideration stage, and the decision stage. Each stage represents the experiences your potential customers go through.

By using the information, you have on your contacts in these categories, you will be able to create segments of people who want similar content. Segmentation is the act of thinking in groups and creating these segments to send the most contextual messages.

Segmentation shows that context is just as valuable as content in your email marketing strategy. A second way you can add context to your emails is with personalization.

Take, for example, what Alex Williams, creative director at Trendline Interactive, [states](#) about personalization:

"New machine learning and data science-based features and platforms will give email marketers the ability to harness their content and data to prophesize relevant information to mass audiences in a personal way."

You have the information needed to have a highly personalized conversation with your contacts. To effectively build trust with the people on the other side of your emails, you have to create a personalized conversation that engages them with content they're interested in.

Personalization is so much more than adding the first name of the recipient to your email. It's about creating a contextualized and individual experience. While there are many channels that will allow you to do this – and more are created each day – email is a channel that continues to offer so much room for creativity and experimentation in developing that highly personalized experience.

And if you're connecting your emails with a contact database, you can continue to learn about your contacts and personalize even more. This type of email is called behavioral email. Behavioral email is defined as the practice of sending automated, targeted emails to your contacts based on the historical interactions they've had with your company across channels.

And when you send behavioral email, you're creating a highly personal experience for your contacts.

This brings us to our last pillar: the impact of data-driven analysis.

Analysis is one of the most important pillars you have as an inbound professional. In a world that is always changing, where your customers consistently change the way they live and work, analysis helps you evolve with them and not be left behind.

Your customers continue to want a frictionless experience. By analyzing your emails consistently and having email as one of the core parts of your inbound strategy, you will give your customers what they need to continue the conversation with you.

With all the information you have at your fingertips, with the behaviors of your contacts and from previous interactions with them, you are leaving money on the table if you are not consistently analyzing the data.

To implement data-driven analysis into your email marketing, you will want to keep in mind this framework: First, track the metrics that matter - this will be different for you and your business than me and my business. Second, understand what those metrics indicate about the success of your emails - what is moving and improving vs. what is slowing down. And then third, apply what you've learned to optimize and improve each email you send.

These are the three pillars to drive your email marketing strategy: the significance of segmentation, the power of personalization, and the impact of data-driven analysis. Remember to keep these in mind as you develop your email marketing strategy.

## Video: What does an email marketing strategy look like?

What does an effective email marketing strategy look like? I want you to take a second and think about this question. Do you have goals around your email strategy? What do you use to send out email? How do you measure your success?

Go ahead and find a pen and paper or open a note on your computer and jot down what you think the important aspects of your email strategy are. And I am going to do the same!

*Professor Courtney Sembler writing aspects of email strategy.*

Ok! Now that might have been difficult, or you may have a whole list describing what your email marketing strategy looks like. Your email marketing strategy may look a little different than mine or another company's, but when it comes to implementing, there are three things that every successful email marketing strategy should have in common: Software to implement and track your emails, an understanding of your full-funnel conversations, and clearly defined goals.

These aspects are what will help you implement a sustainable strategy that yields growth and success for you and your business.

It might seem obvious that having software is a part of your email marketing strategy, but understanding what you want that software to do for you and how it can help you be successful is a very important piece of your overall strategy.

You will need an ESP, which is an Email Service Provider, you can use to send one-to-many emails. There are a ton of companies out there that do this. And you will have your pick of the combination of features you need. And while I am not here to tell you which one to get, I do have some recommendations of what your ESP should be able to do for you.

The most important thing your software should do is be connected to a contact database. This does not just mean a place where your contacts are housed but also one that tracks both the qualities and behaviors of your

contacts. If these two are connected, you will have all the information at your fingertips for personalization and segmentation, which are two pillars in the foundation of your email marketing strategy.

In addition, your software should be able to analyze your email sends, giving you deep information into what went well and what can be optimized. The software you use should be able to track deliverability and send automated emails based on user activity to help you send the right email at the right time to the right person.

Your software should make your day-to-day easier and help you do everything from email to the other parts of your inbound strategy all in one place.

Great software will be able to drive and sustain your email marketing strategy and help you collect the right information to continually optimize your strategy.

Understanding your full-funnel conversation strategy is another important element in developing a successful email marketing strategy.

Your contacts are not interacting with your emails in a bubble. They are also reading your blogs, engaging with you on social media, and even connecting with you via a chatbot. Understanding all the ways you are having conversations with your contacts will guide your email strategy. While I think we can all agree that email is great, it can't do everything.

You have to understand where email works and where other channels might work better. Because there isn't anything more frustrating than having a great conversation but in the wrong channel. Take for example, the other day when I was trying to have a conversation with my mom over Facebook Messenger. Sadly, I got no reply. It wasn't the right channel, but when I sent an email, a reply came right back.

As inbound professionals, you want to be conversational with all the types of interactions you have with your prospects and customers. From emails you send to messaging over live chat. Delivering the right information at the right time on the right channel is where you're providing the most human and helpful experience and, in turn, creating the most value for your prospects.

This brings us to goals. Without goals behind your emails, you will not know if your emails are successful or not.

Setting goals for your email marketing strategy and then for each individual email you send will help you understand how successful your emails are.

If you do not know the goal of your email send, then the person on the other end will not understand why they are getting the email either, which could lead to unsubscribes.

Setting goals in all parts of your inbound strategy is important - define WHY you are doing something.

Simon Sinek the author of, 'Start With Why' solidifies this idea with a bigger picture. He states that, "People don't buy what you do but **why** you do it."

Setting goals will help your contacts understand why you are sending the email and why you do what you do. Your email marketing success relies on being human and helpful every time you hit send.

While your email marketing strategy might look a little different than mine, applying these three things will help you implement your email marketing strategy: Software to implement and track your emails, an understanding of your full-funnel conversations, and clearly defined goals.

Email continues to grow and evolve in our changing world. It might not be the new and shiny thing, but it's what works for having highly personalized and contextual conversations with your contacts.

Matt Blumberg founder of ReturnPath states that "Reaching the inbox isn't your goal – engaging people is." Creating these conversations and engaging with your contacts is how you will create a successful email marketing strategy that will help your contacts grow and in turn help you grow your business.