

Is Your Retail Marketing Email Campaign Driving Your Customers Crazy?

By Rieva Lesonsky
May 20, 2016

A targeted retail marketing email campaign is a great way to bring customers into your store and build customer loyalty for your retail business. But are your retail marketing emails having the opposite effect from what you intended? If you're sending emails too often, a recent survey cautions, you could be driving customers away.

Retail Marketing Email Bombards Us

The average consumer subscribes to 2.3 retailer email lists,

according to [First Insight](#), which polled consumers about their email habits. But even with that small amount of subscriptions, the average consumer gets 13.1 emails per week from those retailers. And some consumers (6 percent) get a stunning 40 emails per week from retailers. Now, I love a good sale as much as the next shopper, but even I think that's too much! How many retail marketing emails is too many? While just 21 percent of consumers who get five retail emails a week think that's "too many," two-thirds of those who get six or more retail

emails a week say that's too many.

When you send daily email to customers, you're bound to experience diminishing returns. In fact, consumers in the survey say they open just one in four retail emails that they receive. No wonder, since respondents say 95 percent of retail emails they get are "not at all relevant" to their needs and interests. More than eight out of 10 survey respondents say the plethora of irrelevant emails is a sign that the retailers they patronize don't really understand them. As a result, nearly half say that

Is Your Retail Marketing Email Campaign Driving Your Customers Crazy?

By Rieva Lesonsky
May 20, 2016

they've unsubscribed from a retail email list within the past six months.

Retail Marketing Email Best Practices

So what do customers want from your retail marketing emails? Here are some best practices to consider:

- **Limit the number of emails.** More than six out of 10 consumers surveyed say their *favorite* retailers send just one or two emails per week. When your emails are infrequent, they're more likely to

be perceived as special and will get more attention.

- **Personalize your emails and offers.** Use data you collect about shoppers' past purchasing behavior to create customized offers aligned with products they have purchased in the past. For example, if a customer consistently buys children's books from your bookstore, send them emails about children's books — not about self-help or spirituality. There are retail loyalty apps you can use that collect information

about customers' purchases, or you can go the low-tech route and offer customers different email subscriptions to choose from. For instance, you could offer customers the choice of getting emails about specific product categories, in-store events, or general special offers (there may be some customers who *like* getting every single email your store has to send, so give them that option.)

- **Avoid sending generalized emails.** Four out of 10 survey respondents say

Is Your Retail Marketing Email Campaign Driving Your Customers Crazy?

By Rieva Lesonsky
May 20, 2016

they would go out of their way to buy from a retail store that doesn't send them irrelevant email offers. Sending an email that just promotes a sale at your store without personalizing it to customers' interests

is today's equivalent of taking out a print ad in every publication you can think of. Just as with print advertising, you'll get better results from narrowly targeted emails.

Sending targeted and timely retail marketing email remains one of the most effective ways to drive retail traffic — but only if you use them wisely to show customers you understand them.