

A dark blue envelope is shown from a top-down perspective, with its white card partially inserted. The card has a green header bar at the top. The text on the card is centered and reads 'Email Marketing' in a large, bold, dark blue font, with 'for Small Businesses' in a smaller, italicized green font below it. The entire envelope and card are centered within a large white circle on a green background.

Email Marketing

for Small Businesses



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 INTRODUCTION

Email marketing is one of the most cost effective ways of marketing a small business. Yet many small business owners are intimidated by the idea of sending out an email newsletter.

We put together this guide to help business owners make the most out of email marketing. In this eBook we will provide information for you to develop your email marketing program to get more leads and convert new customers including:

- » *Email Newsletter Basics*
- » *Email Marketing Laws*
- » *Components of Email Newsletters*
- » *Types of Email Newsletters*
- » *Advanced Email Marketing Techniques*
- » *How to Measure Email Success*
- » *Maintaining Consistency with Email Marketing*



WHAT IS AN EMAIL NEWSLETTER?

Email newsletter, email blast, or email campaign. What's the difference? For the most part, these terms are used interchangeably.

No matter what you call it, it is a type of promotional email sent to your entire or segmented email list. For the purposes of this guide we will refer to these promotional emails as email newsletters.

How do email newsletters work?

The purpose of an email newsletter is to provide valuable information to potential clients and customers, to get people interested in your business, and become paying customers.

To send an email newsletter, a business creates a promotional newsletter and sends it in a mass email to their whole or segmented email list.





EMAIL MARKETING LAWS

Like anything in business, there are laws that regulate what may be included in email newsletters, known as the CAN-SPAM Act.

The CAN-SPAM Act applies to all “commercial electronic mail message,” defined by the US Government as “any electronic email message the primary purpose of which is the commercial advertisement or promotion of a commercial product or service (including content on an Internet website operated for a commercial purpose)”.

Only business emails with “transactional” or “relationship” content are exempt from the regulations of the bill, such as email receipts or shipping notifications.

Is the CAN-SPAM Act serious?

Yes. The penalty for simple mistakes can be costly, even if your business is using a third party affiliate to send out the emails.

5 Parts of the CAN-SPAM Act

There are 5 parts of the CAN-SPAM ACT that all businesses must follow:

1. Opt-In Requirement:



Marketing emails can be sent to anyone, without permission, until the individual requests to opt-out. The best contact list however is full of those who have opted into your email list by subscribing to your newsletter.

2. Opt-Out Requirement:



In the U.S., every email MUST include instructions on how to unsubscribe. The easiest way to comply is to include an "Unsubscribe" link in every marketing email.

3. Sender Identity:



The "From", domain, and email address must be accurate and identify the sender.

4. Subject Lines:



The subject line cannot mislead the email recipients about the subject matter of the email content.

5. Contact Information:



Every marketing email must include a valid, physical postal address somewhere in the email body.



3 COMPONENTS OF EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

There are 3 essential things that your newsletter must include.

1. Catchy Email Subject Line

The subject line is the first thing that people read when your email hits their inbox. Your subject line is your email's saving grace; without one, or without a good one, your email will be deleted, or worse, marked as spam. If your email subject line fails to inspire, readers will delete the email. If your subject line is a dud, your email newsletter is too.

EMAIL SUBJECT LINE TIPS:

- Between 30 and 50 characters long
- Grab reader's attention
- Make the email content obvious
- Get creative - ask a question, use humor or wit
- Use numbers for sales and promotions

2. Offer and Strong Call-to-Action

The purpose of a marketing email is to promote your business. Your email newsletter should include a marketing offer and a strong call-to-action (CTA).

A strong CTA directs your email subscribers to a landing page where

they can become leads by filling out a form to become a paying customer. Have them request an appointment, buy a product, or sign up for an event. Push readers to take a single, direct action. Use a command statement with an active verb.

EXAMPLES OF STRONG CTAS:

- [Subscribe...](#)
- [Buy...](#)
- [Download...](#)
- [Register...](#)

3. CONTACT INFORMATION

Always include links to your business's website, social media pages, and phone number in your email newsletter. Doing so encourages potential customers to get in touch and is required by the CAN-SPAM Act.



TYPES OF EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

People subscribe to newsletters because they benefit from the content. Here are 10 email newsletter ideas for your business:



Special Discounts/Offers

Make your CTA a link with an offer for loyal customers or first time customers.



Company News/Highlights

Familiarize people with your business by writing about new products, services, or employees.



Holidays

Market around holidays - provide a holidaythemed gift guide, seasonal tips and information, or changes to your schedule/hours.



Events

Promote upcoming events in your newsletter. Include a description and a link to register.



Behind the Scenes

Offer a behind-the-scenes look at your business. People love to see what's going on!



Solicit Customer Feedback & Reviews

Embed a survey in your newsletter to get feedback or ask for reviews on sites like Yelp and Facebook.



Share Reviews

Reviews are a good way to showcase your products and services. Share glowing reviews about your business in a newsletter.



Industry Info

Provide value with useful industry information like the best products, tools, blogs, or technology.



Customer Success Story

Customer success stories are a great way to inspire potential customers to work with your business.



Advice Column & Insider Tips

Provide useful tips and answers to FAQs in an advice column in your newsletter.





ADVANCED EMAIL MARKETING

Once you're comfortable with email newsletters, take it a step further by using email lists, segmentation, and drip or engagement emails.

Many powerful platforms such as ThriveHive give you the option to create lists from your contacts. Use these lists to segment your customers in different ways.

Segmenting your contacts into lists or using drip (engagement) emails allows you to deliver targeted email content to specific audiences.



Drip and engagement emails:



Drip emails are a series of emails sent to people who have expressed interest in your business. Drip emails “drip” bits of helpful information over time, encouraging people to become leads and customers.



Email Lists and Segments

ThriveHive automatically creates some lists for you to get started right away, but there are many other ways to use segmented email lists. Here are some examples.



Geography

Segment by geography to deliver location specific information to potential customers.



Active Customers

Send customer-specific information or special offers to active, loyal customers.



Inactive Customers

Reengage inactive customers through a special offer or new features.



Open Opportunities

Follow up with open opportunities to convert them into paying customers.



Referrals

Welcome new referral customers and thank customers who referred new clients.



Monthly Birthday/Anniversary

Send special offers during these months. This is particularly useful for fitness centers and studios, photographers, and florists.



Vendors

Don't market your business to vendors who already work with you. Keep this list separate.



MEASURING EMAIL SUCCESS

Like anything else in marketing, email newsletters must be measured. There are a few key metrics that any business owners should be measuring to determine if your email marketing is working for your business or if you're just wasting your time.

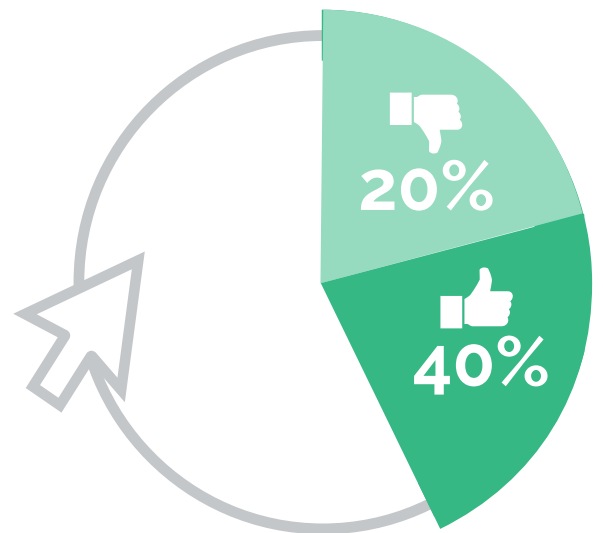
Open Rates

Open rates tell you the number of people who opened your email out of the number of people who received it. A good open rate for a marketing email is anywhere from 20 to 40%.

Click Through Rate (CTR)

The click through rate (CTR) measures the percentage of people who clicked on the call-to-action in your email. CTR varies by industry so it's difficult to provide a percentage goal. Generally, the higher the CTR, the better your email is performing.

Clicks on your call-to-action means that people are interested in the content of your email and have "taken the bait" to sign up, download, purchase, or register for an event that you're promoting in the email.



Good Open Rates: Less than 20% means that your subject lines need work or that your email topic doesn't interest your readers. More than 40% means that you're doing a great job or need a larger email list.

Improve CTR: Place the call-to-action “above the fold,” meaning that the call to action should appear right away, when someone opens your email. If you have to scroll to find your call-to-action, it’s in the wrong place.

Like in a newspaper, the stories “above the fold” are those which get the most attention.

Leads

Perhaps the most important way to measure the success of your email marketing is the number of leads that you generate from your newsletters. How leads are measured is dependent on the call-to-action in your newsletter.

The best way to measure leads through an email newsletter is by including a tracked link in the email. Tracking allows you to take the guesswork out of wondering if your email worked - you’ll know exactly how many leads each email generates.

Unsubscribes

Another important metric is the number of unsubscribes you get. You want the unsubscribe rate to be as low as possible.

If your unsubscribe numbers are high, make sure your email is targeted to your email list. Consider segmenting your list and sending more targeted emails.

Another way to combat unsubscribes is by sending emails less frequently.



 EMAIL MARKETING CONSISTENCY

For best results, you should be consistent with your email newsletters and any other marketing activities. Email marketing is not magic. Like working out at a gym with a personal trainer, you need to do the exercises to see the results.

You wouldn't expect to get a great return on playing a radio ad or running a TV spot just once. Don't expect a great return from sending just one email. See how email newsletters can generate leads by committing to trying it out for a period of time.

Send an email once or twice a month to start and test the effectiveness of your newsletters. Some months may be a dud, but keep at it and you should see results. Remember that customers will open emails differently depending on the time of year and even the time of day that your email is sent.

To get as many customers as possible to open your emails, you need to commit to sending emails over a period of time.

Email marketing doesn't have to be difficult. Follow these tips and you should be on your way to successful email marketing in no time.

ThriveHive is an all-in-one marketing platform that gives local businesses a better website and custom marketing plan. Get the tools and expertise to do all of your small business marketing, all in one place.

[Request a Demo](#) (It's free!)

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 **ThriveHive**