

Email Marketing Trends 2017

10 Email marketing experts give their views and examples of the future of email marketing

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10 Email marketing Experts give their views and recommended examples for the future of email marketing

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1. Email Design

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Foreword

From the report sponsors Pure360

Year after year, email is consistently proving its worth by delivering one of the highest return on investments of any marketing channel¹, as well as driving billions in retail sales². It is clear that email is growing into a well established marketing tool. However, as email marketing automation technology continues to evolve, are marketers delivering the best customer conversations and results that the technology can deliver?

In truth, marketers are evolving to become increasingly sophisticated in their use of marketing technologies; only just realising its true potential. This is reinforced by the vast amounts of customer data that marketers now have access to; knowing who their customers are, what they have purchased and what they are likely to purchase next.

As we are all aware, marketers have long had to make do with only understanding customers' email open and click activity, but by combining demographic and behavioural data from online and offline touchpoints, they are now able to predict future trends and activity. This is where email becomes our greatest tool.

Marketers now have the technology and the ability to combine all of this data into a centralised view of their customers' journey; both their online and offline interactions. They are able to gain indispensable insight into their customers' transactions, preferences, interests, views and conversations. In short, it should no longer matter where the customer interacts, as technology allows the marketer to view almost everything.

By identifying trends, patterns and opportunities we are now able to pinpoint the perfect time to reach out to our customers with relevant conversations; prompting their next move along the buying journey. We are no longer restricted to using email as a reactive tool that simply delivers personalised communications, instead email has transformed into a conversational channel that has the power to trigger behaviour, change minds and predict what the consumer wants and needs, even before they know.

It is from this unprecedented clarity on our customers' relationships with our brands that we can start to fully realise the power of email.

Alongside this evolution, automation and machine learning are further freeing the marketer from hours of data manipulation and analysis. As well as being able to predict future activity, marketers can save time and increase relevancy by triggering automatic email responses to customer behaviour. For the marketer, this results in less time spent pouring over data and more time spent creatively improving customer relationships.

Which brings me neatly to an exciting development within email in 2017; the new-found possibilities in email design. As mentioned, marketers no longer need to focus on trying to understand their customer and build rules to contact them (the machine is helping with this now!), which allows them more time to connect with the consumer in new and imaginative ways.

These ways include (but are not limited to) animation which firmly grabs the customers' attention, interactive content which helps the marketer tell their brand story, and video which works to inspire and engage with recipients from their very first click.

We can now deliver more content than ever before, with innovative campaigns that take our

1 Source: [DMA National Client survey](#)

2 Source: [Custora E-commerce Pulse](#)

ability to reach out to the consumer to a whole new level.

So, from here, we can see email becoming less of a standalone, hero platform and more of a fully integrated, conversational tool that can turn our new-found insight and creativity into exciting brand experiences. Building stronger, longer lasting relationships.

As marketers it is our duty to deliver the very best conversations and experiences for our customers. We now have the technology at our fingertips, so let's start to make the most of it.

I hope you enjoy the report and are keen to unleash the power of email throughout 2017. We look forward to taking the journey with you.

Komal Helyer, *Head of Marketing, Pure360*

[LinkedIn](#) | [Twitter](#)

About Pure360 – the report sponsors

Pure360 offer marketing automation powered by email.

We provide UK marketers an unrivalled combination: the powerful, data-driven Pure360 Marketing Suite and an industry-leading, Maturity Model, focussed on accelerating customer results across email, mobile, web and social.

We deliver best in class results for over 1,400 customers across the retail, travel, publishing, finance and agency sectors.

Pure360 customers include Tetley, innocent, Park Holidays, Financial Times, Hastings Direct and Capita.

Our [Maturity Model](#) delivered through our best practice framework and account managers, is proven to take brands through a marketing maturity journey; helping them to improve customer lifetime value, enhance their customer experiences and drive deeper brand engagement.

With the Pure360 Marketing Suite marketers are fully equipped to:

- ✓ Easily build stunning and responsive campaigns with a cutting edge Drag & Drop Editor
- ✓ Deliver multi-channel dynamic email and SMS campaigns
- ✓ Accelerate results by integrating with third party systems including Faststats, Magento, Salesforce and more
- ✓ Grow databases with competitions through social media with the PurePromotions module
- ✓ Increase revenue and recapture lost revenue with the PureTargeting module
- ✓ Gain a 360 view of their customer with the PureIntelligence module

The Pure360 team are focused on delivering what really matters, results. We are committed to putting marketers' success at the heart of everything we do, whilst also helping marketers to put their customers at the heart of their digital marketing.

[Pure360](#). Improving results together. Be part of the journey.

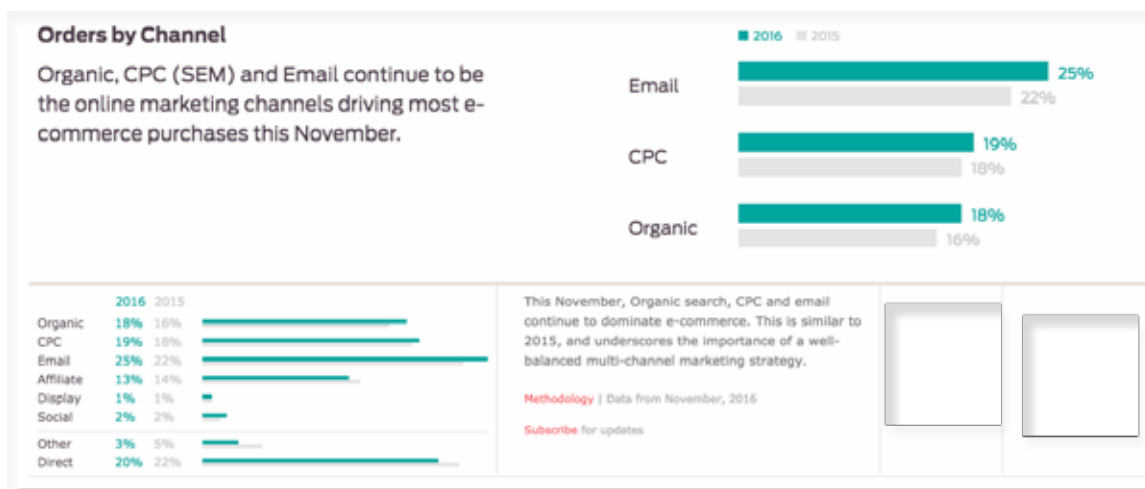


Introduction

Email marketing: still worth taking seriously

The aim of this guide is to showcase some of the latest Email marketing and marketing automation techniques deployed by brands to engage their subscribers and develop purchase intent. It stays to keep up-to-date with the latest approaches to email marketing techniques given its importance to all types of business.

In 2017, Email can still be considered as one of the top sales drivers for digital marketing channels. The latest Custora Pulse channel orders benchmark³ based on real analytics data derived from over 500 million anonymized US shoppers amounting to \$100 billion in e-commerce revenue, from 400+ online retailers shows that email is the most important channel driving orders.



Email competes with organic and paid search amongst the main channels driving orders. Email marketing delivers far higher sales volumes than social media (2%) or display (1%) when measured by last click attribution.

Given the ongoing importance of Email marketing for customer acquisition and retention in most organisations, understanding and testing the latest email options and techniques we cover in this guide is essential for businesses to stay engaging and competitive 'in the inbox'.

But, we should also take care to get the fundamentals right. Organisations aiming to achieve significant results with email marketing, would do well to establish a strong foundation first, says Michael Leander, CEO of consultants GIDMA and a [global marketing speaker & trainer](#). He recommends these steps:

"First, create a solid and committed strategy backed by top management. Next, aim to establish one data repository, a strong content and offer strategy aligned with the interests of the target audience across the customer lifecycle. The ability to track and use behavioural and transactional data, and automate certain processes along with a realistic view on which resources are required to get results. He reinforces the importance of meaningful measurement:

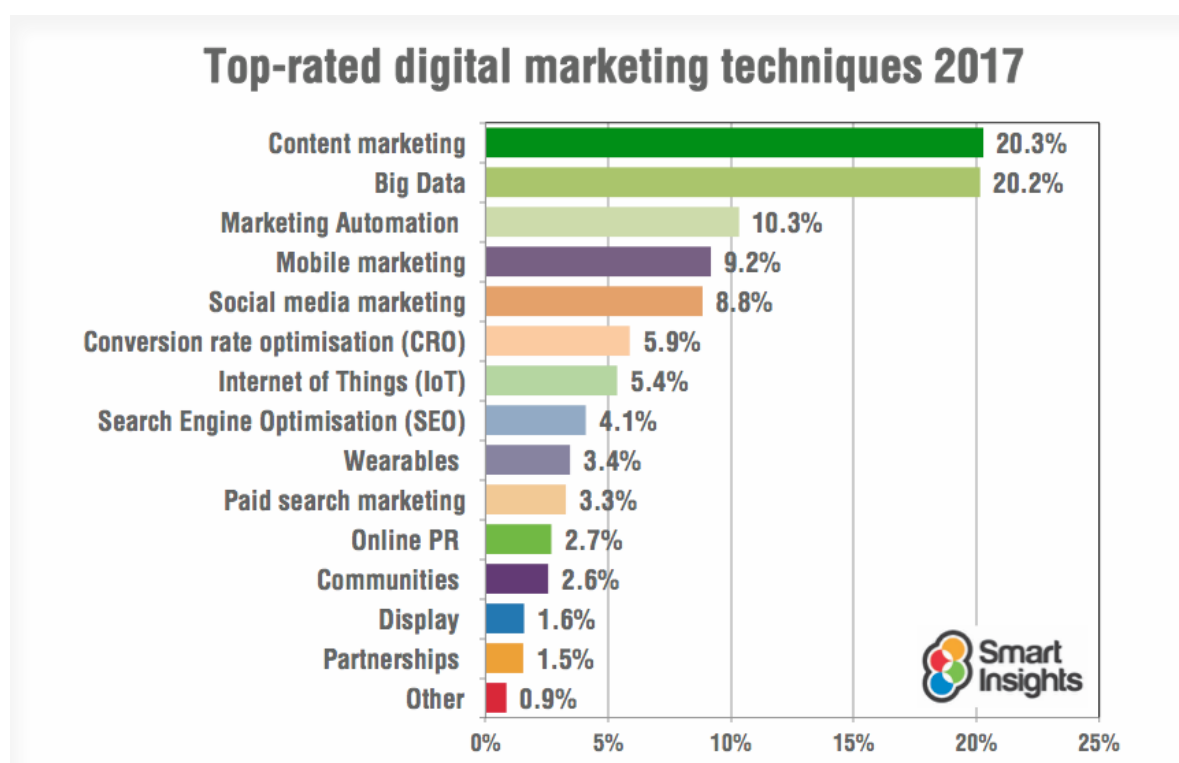
'The biggest generic trend this coming period will be FOCUS on commercial outcomes. Email marketers need to focus relentlessly on achieving monetary or brand awareness objectives.

³ [Custora Ecommerce Pulse - November 2016](#)

Open rates and click through rates are yesterday's news. Measurement should focus on monetary values generated and/or real engagement, which will help audiences move towards a meaningful action. Likes are not a currency. Neither are open rates or clicks. Real actions are. All the while not forgetting that building strong relationships with an audience is still key!

I hope to see much more experimentation happen in the coming period. Experimenting with new tactical element and different approaches is a relatively quick method to learn what works'.

Marketers who read Smart Insights agree, email marketing remains important. The Smart Insights readers poll asked marketers to select the single digital marketing technique which they thought would give their business the biggest commercial benefit in 2017. Big Data and Marketing Automation including behavioural email marketing were in second and third position behind content marketing which is also a key part of email marketing.



How is this guide structured?

We selected some of the key success factors in email marketing as we see them, and then asked email marketing specialists to give examples of these and other trends. To structure the report we have grouped the trends in three areas:

1. Creative

We start here since many advances in email are enabled by changes to the way emails can now be rendered on email readers on the latest generation of smartphones and tablets.

2. Targeting

Improving segmentation and targeting to increase relevance and context for subscribers is a key approach. We look at the latest predictive intelligence approaches.

3. Multichannel integration

As with other communications, email effectiveness can be boosted when combined with other channels including social media. We showcase some examples in that area.

A Big 'Thank you' to our contributors

Creating this report would not have been possible without the generous time of the contributors to give their examples and guidance. Many thanks to all of the email marketing experts from several countries we consulted with to share their opinions of the latest trends.

- [Kate Barrett](#), Email marketing consultant at [Shine a Light Media](#).
- [Bruno Florence](#), France, Email marketing expert. Publisher [Pignonsurmail](#) blog.
- [Dan Grech](#), Email marketing consultant, previously Email Marketing Manager at NET-A-PORTER
- [Michael Leander](#), Denmark, Global Speaker and trainer. CEO at consultants [GIDMA](#).
- [Kath Pay](#), UK, Email marketing consultant, trainer and marketing director at [Holistic Email](#).
- [Jordie van Rijn](#), Netherlands, Independent consultant and publisher of [Email Monday](#) and [Email Vendor Selection](#).
- [Elliot Ross](#), UK, CEO of [Taxi for Email](#) which offers Campaign building for brands and agencies. .
- [Torsten Schwarz](#), Germany, Email and Marketing Automation Author, Speaker & Consultant who is CEO of [Marketing-Boerse.de](#).
- [Tim Watson](#), UK, independent Email consultant at [Zettasphere](#).
- [Chad White](#), US, author of "[Email Marketing Rules](#)" and Lead Research Analyst at Salesforce Marketing Cloud.

About Smart Insights

[Smart Insights](#) provides actionable marketing resources to help businesses succeed online.

Our Expert members use our planning and management templates, video courses and guides to map, plan and manage their marketing using the RACE Planning framework.

See these [reasons why Expert members use our resources](#).

More than 150,000 members in over 100 countries use our blog, marketing templates and weekly Digital Marketing Essentials newsletter to follow best practices and keep up-to-date with the developments that matter in digital marketing.

Smart Insights Expert member Email marketing advice

We have grouped our member resources on our [Email marketing Toolkit](#). If you're serious about improving your Email marketing we recommend our in-depth [7 Steps guide to Email marketing](#) which shows how to develop an email strategy and gives tips on making your emails more effective. Other resources for Expert members include:

- ✓ [Email marketing effectiveness audit spreadsheet](#)
- ✓ [Email campaign calculator spreadsheet](#)
- ✓ [Email contact strategy template](#)
- ✓ [Marketing Automation implementation guide](#)

About the author

Dr Dave Chaffey is CEO and co-founder of digital marketing management advice site Smart Insights.

He is author of 5 bestselling books on e-commerce including *Total Email marketing (2003 and 2005)* and *Digital Marketing: Strategy, Implementation and Practice (6th edition 2015)* and was recognised by the Chartered Institute of Marketing in 2004 as one of 50 marketing 'gurus' worldwide who have helped shape the future of marketing.



For our Expert members – The Smart Insights Email Marketing and Marketing Automation toolkit

This sample guide will introduce you to some key issues for improving your email marketing. For more strategic AND practical recommendations, Smart Insights Expert members can consult the other resources in the [Email marketing and Marketing Automation toolkit](#) in the members area. We recommend you:

- ✓ **Score your capability using our interactive benchmarking tool** which gives you a score for 7 areas of Email marketing and then recommends where to focus
- ✓ **Download our ebooks on best practices** including our 7 Steps guide to email marketing and marketing automation guide.
- ✓ **Download our actionable templates**, including contact strategy and email forecasting spreadsheets to help you plan your campaigns.



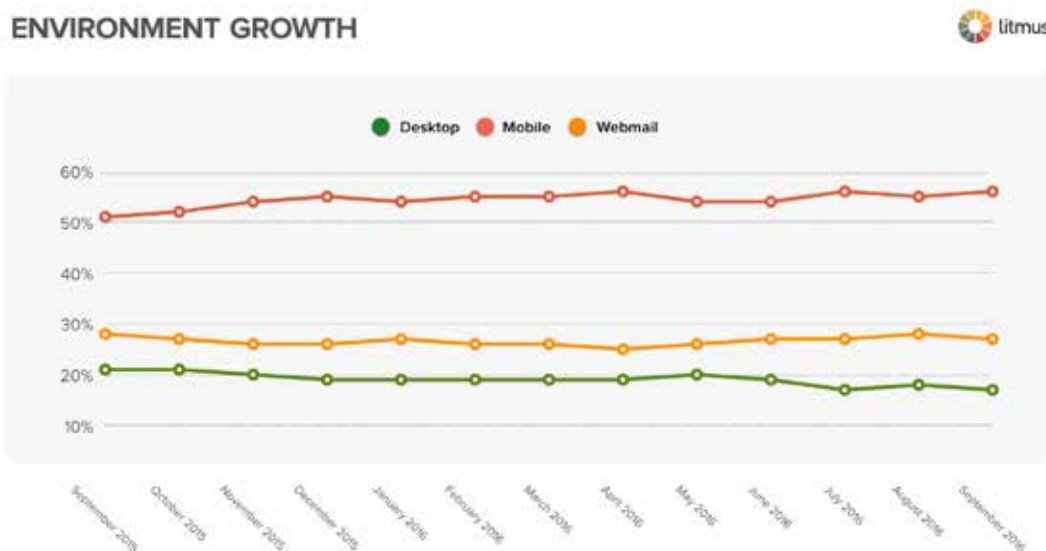
If you have any questions on selecting an email provider or any other aspect of digital marketing, do ask us via our [Digital Marketing Answers community](#).

ONE

Email Design (Creative)

Trend 1. Progressive design

With many consumers and business people now reading their emails on smartphone and tablet devices, there has been a major trend to responsive design over the last two to three years. The latest statistics of the email reading environment from Litmus show that mobile email adoption is not growing as it once did. Instead mobile use is static, at just over 50%. Desktop and webmail remain important platforms also and it's still important we provide great experiences on these which support the outcomes brands need. **Kath Pay** consultant at [Holistic Email Marketing](#) says, 'the tipping point for mobile email is now behind us. It's no longer a question of IF you are optimising your emails for mobile, but HOW you're optimising for mobile AND desktop'.



Elliot Ross CEO of [Taxi for Email](#) advocates the use of *Progressive Email Design* to get the balance right. It's similar to adaptive web site design. He says:

"One thing we have to embrace as marketers is the idea that emails don't have to look the same in every email client. Instead, we should focus our effort in providing the best experience for the platform the recipient happens to be using. This thinking is key to unlocking things like CSS animation, advanced mobile enhancement and live content. These things don't work everywhere, but where they do, they significantly enhance the experience – so providing the message is readable everywhere, why not surprise and delight users when we can?"

Kath Pay explains other approaches to consider:

"Mobile-first" commonly refers to a single-column layout with large texts and buttons. It's also known by "scalable" or "fluid" due to the use of percentages in widths rather than pixels when the design is larger than the standard 320px mobile width. As you can see in the example below, there is very little difference between the desktop and mobile versions – and both

work well.

In this example of ‘mobile first’ the desktop version is on the left and the smartphone version is on the right.



“Responsive” emails are designed to alter their layout or content depending on defined circumstances, commonly the width of the screen. They can also be known as progressive

1. Email Design

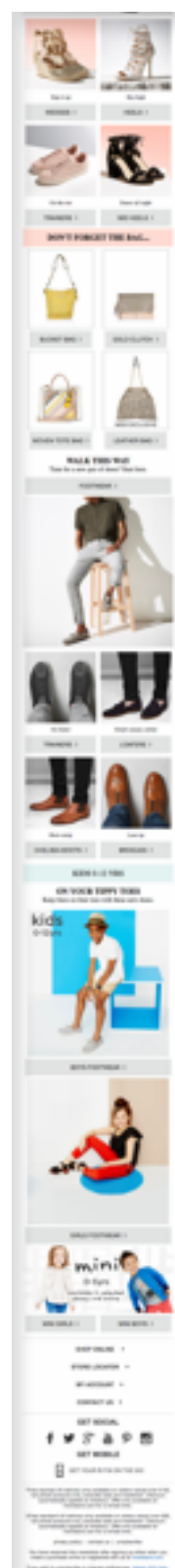
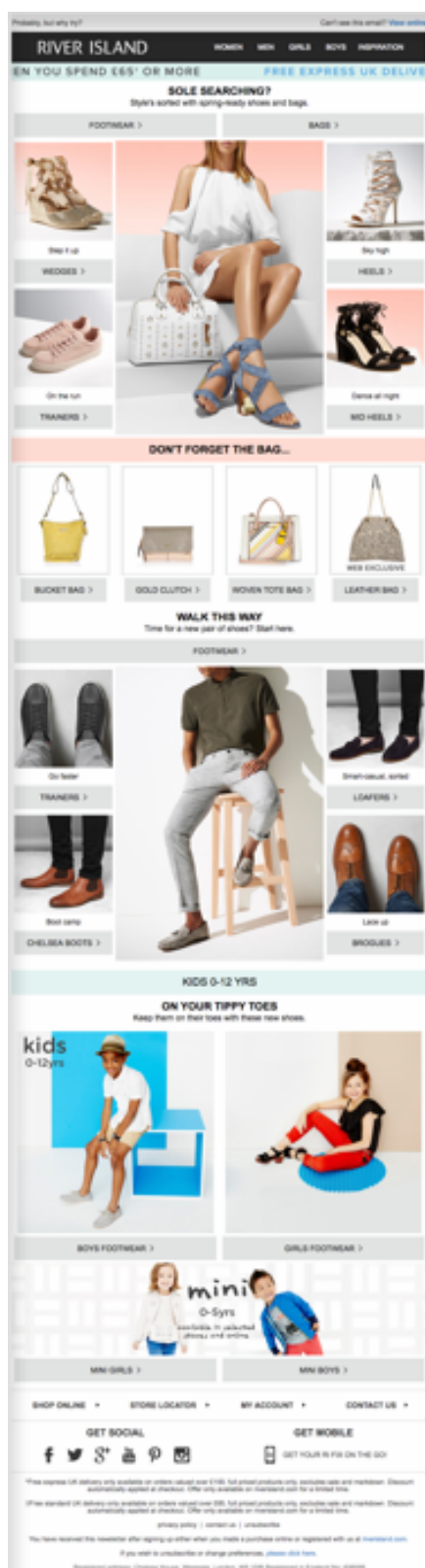
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or adaptive. Under responsive there are different techniques that allow for the creation of robust emails across screen types. This includes media queries, conditional statements, and percentage widths to name a few. The most popular responsive coding method at the moment is known as Hybrid, or spongy, primarily developed to resolve Gmail's historic lack of header style and media-queries support, it is still a robust and largely future proof approach to responsive coding for email. River Island designs their email to be responsive- dependent upon the device.

Again, in this example of 'responsive design' the desktop version is on the left and the smartphone version is on the right.



Trend 2. Interactivity and animations

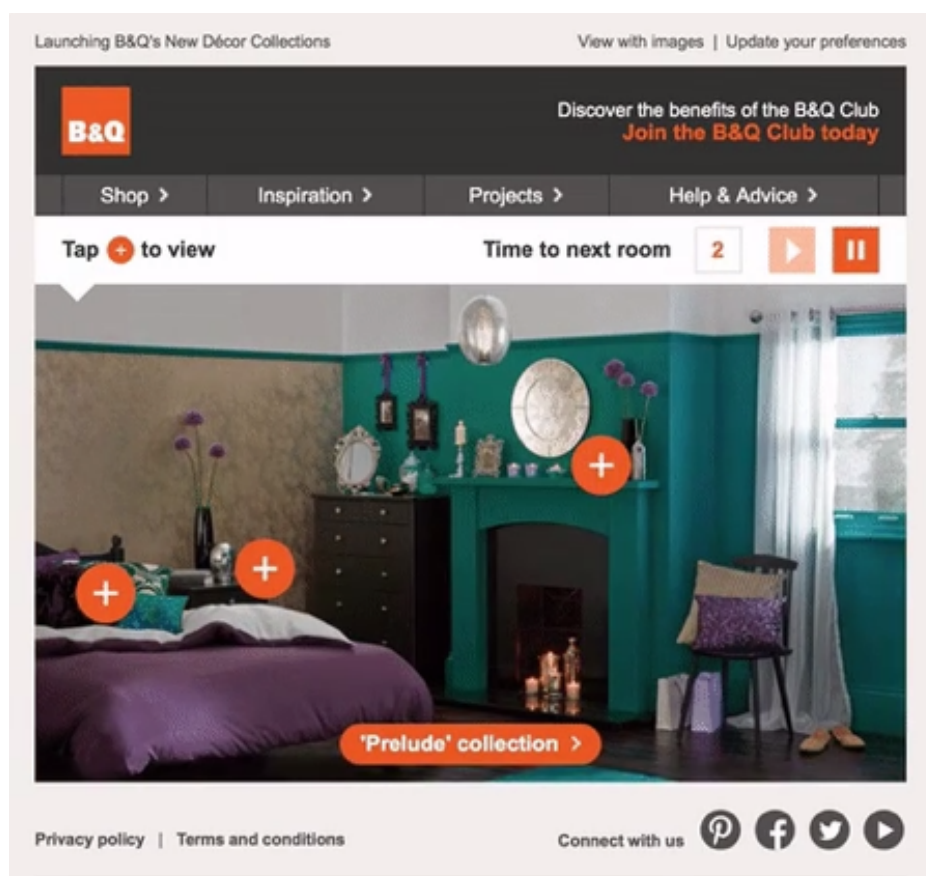
Chad White of [Litmus](#) calls out interactivity as the trend he believes that marketers are most excited about in 2017, based on a Litmus poll of more than 1,200 marketers during December. He explains:

'Interactivity allows subscribers to click inside an email to bring up new content or take other actions within that email. Hamburger menus, email carousels, quizzes, search bars, and even add-to-cart functionality are all possibilities.'

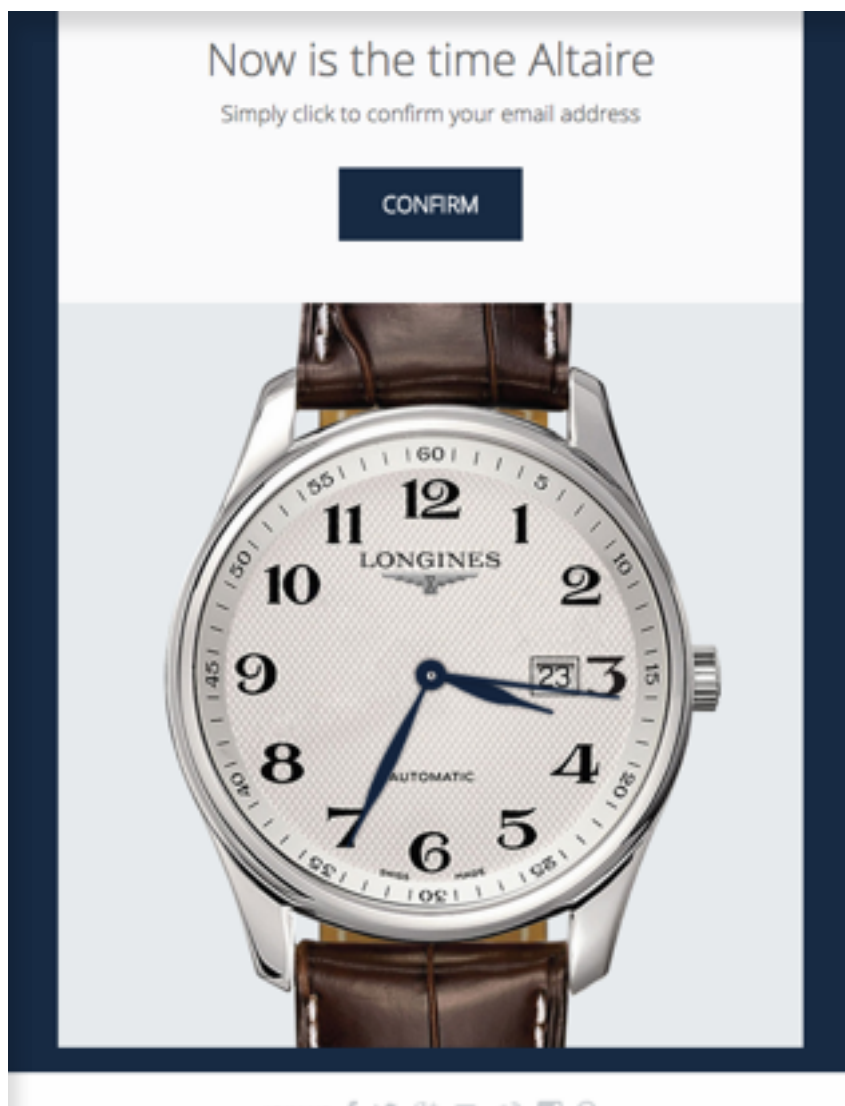
While lowering barriers to action for subscribers, email interactivity causes some challenges for marketers. First, beyond the actual email coding, interactivity isn't supported by all email clients. However, more than two-thirds of the average email sender's subscribers will be able to experience interactive emails. Fallbacks will need to be used to properly serve those subscribers using less sophisticated email clients.

And second, interactivity affects tracking and attribution. Since interactivity pulls action from the landing page into the email, click rates become a little less important and in-email engagement becomes more important. You need to measure in-email engagement using new metrics like "email interactions," which are special opens that are triggered by engaging with interactive email elements. This change in email success measurement can be the trickiest issue when trying to get buy-in from executives to do interactive emails'.

Kath Pay gives us some awesome examples of interactivity. She says *'these examples show that interactive emails don't need to simply be attention-getting or fun, but can also be part of making the purchase journey easier and smoother. Email is no longer a static push channel that just clicks away to a website, it is now possible to complete a shopping journey within an email client or have interactive search functionality within the email. B&Q have sent some incredibly interactive emails over the past couple of years, including this email which uses both a carousel and hotspots'.* [View email in action.](#)



Using Altaire's technology, the Longines watch email tells the correct time locally, no matter where you open it in the world. The recipient sees (and hears) moving watch hands.



Elliot Ross, is more cautious about the take-up of interactivity. He explains:

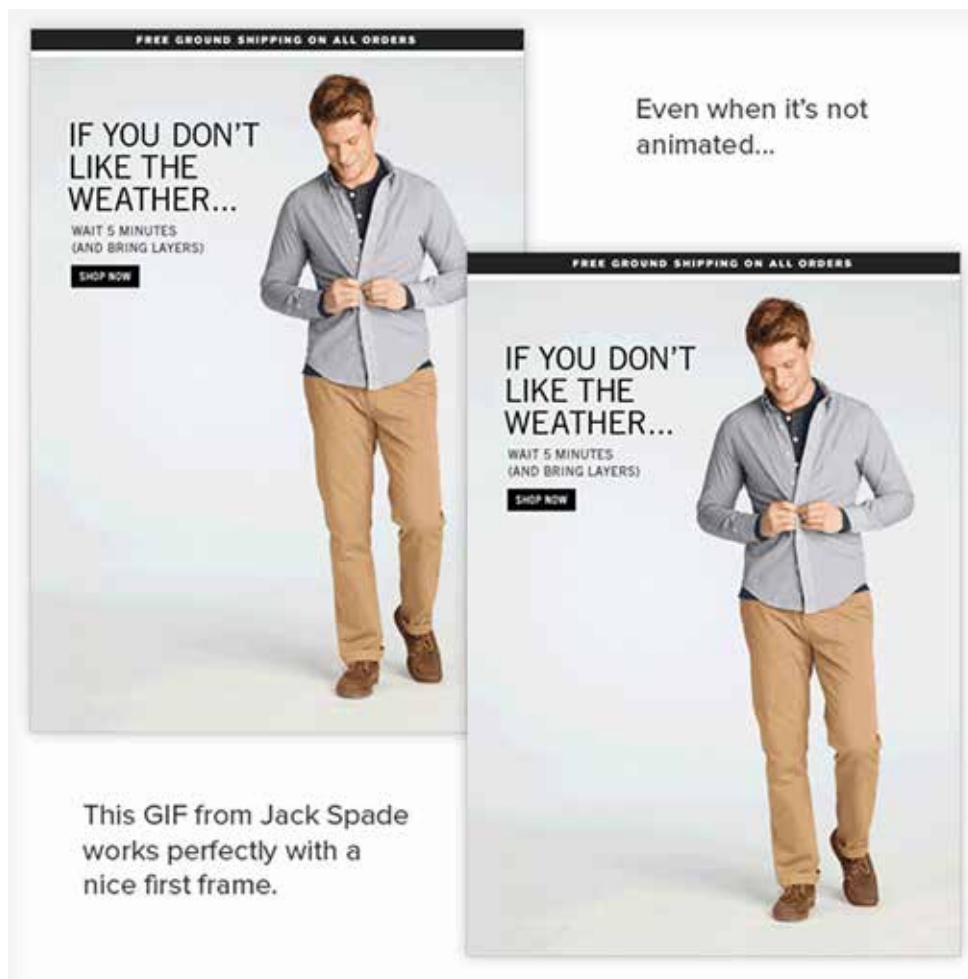
'I'm cautiously optimistic about interactive email, that is the ability to include drop down navigation, product carousels and even shopping carts within an email. It's early days, but whilst there are a lot of distracting, flashy ideas, there are also opportunities to genuinely improve the inbox experience for users. The challenge we have as marketers and designers is finding those and implementing them correctly'.

Animated Gifs are another, more well-established approach for engaging readers amongst more advanced email marketers, particularly at retailers. This approach has potentially become more effective with more email readers now downloading images by default.

Email marketing consultant, **Kath Pay**, explains:

"Animated Gifs are a great way to capture the readers attention. Email has been traditionally a static channel, but by using animated gifs and cinemagraphs you can now provide a vibrant, live email that engages the audience. These can be quite powerful, especially if they need to support the Main objective or Call-to-action of the email as seen in this example".

In this example from Litmus⁴ the first frame is still effective on email readers which don't support animated .gifs.



Trend 3. Using video in email

HTML5 now enables videos to play within email rather than relying on a click through to play in a web browser. However this ability hasn't been enabled within all email clients. Kath Pay advises:

"By using media queries you need to ensure that you offer a video-animated gif or static gif if the email client isn't HTML5 video enabled. For example, this email⁵ received 1.25 million views with 38.9% of the audience receiving full video with audio in the email whilst 45.6% receiving an animated .GIF or animated .PNG silent video".

Chad White of Litmus explains how video is now ready for 'prime time':

In January 2013, I made what seemed like a not very radical prediction at the time: "Video in email will finally take off." Then Apple dropped support for HTML5 video in all of its email clients, slamming the brakes on this promising trend.

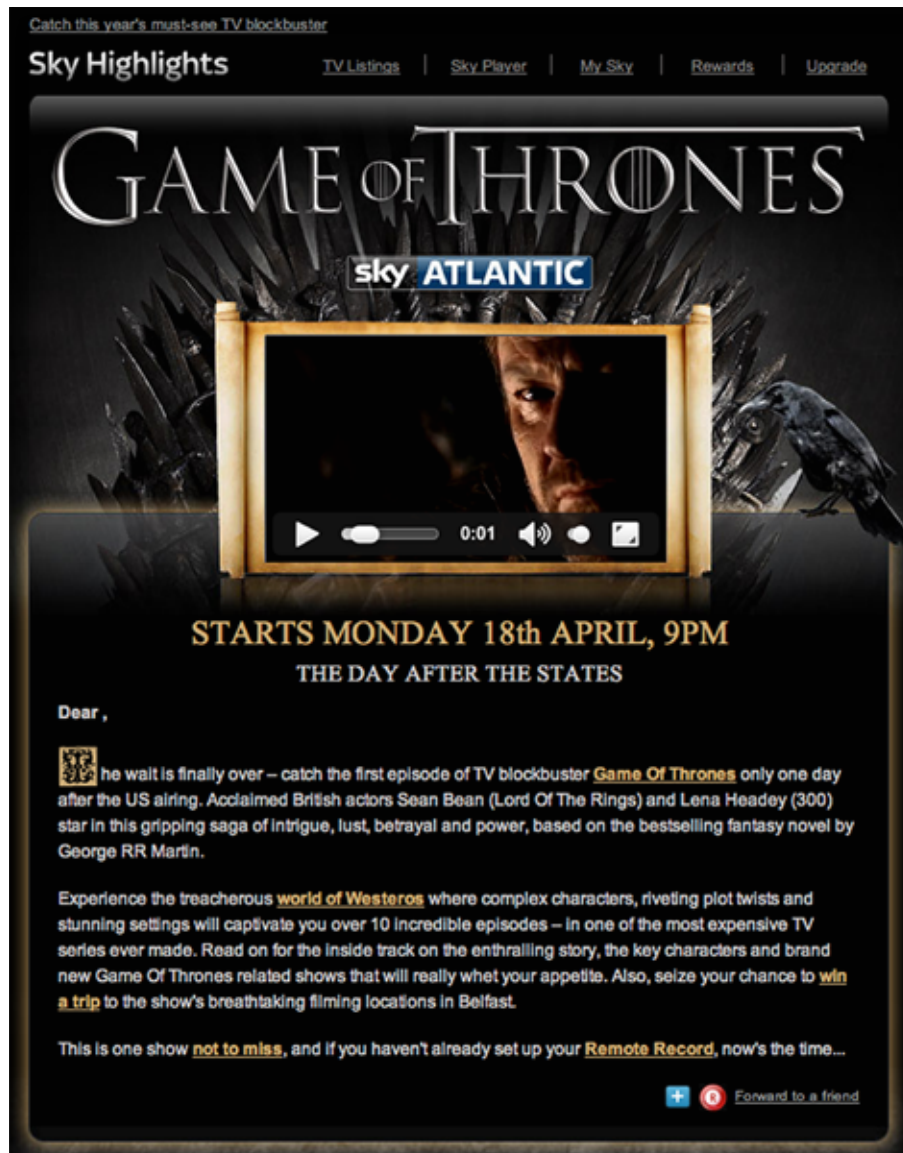
Now, with the launch of iOS 10, HTML5 video support is back! As of November, more than 53% of emails were opened in Apple email apps, which is more than enough to justify trying it. Just be sure to build in a fallback for subscribers using email clients that don't support HTML5 video.

⁴ [Litmus: A guide to Animated GIFs in email](#)

⁵ [Liveclicker example](#)

Many brands have been building out their video content capabilities in recent years, so this new support is timely and should be welcomed by brands. Consumers understand video consoles, which should make the education curve for video in email relatively short.

This was one of the first examples of a major brand using video, but examples have been lacking in recent years as companies have used animated GIFs as a more reliable alternative.



TWO

Targeting to create more contextual emails

Although, as email marketers, we get excited by design style and trends, the reality is that it is relevance based on the sophistication of targeting which will have the biggest impact on response to our emails. Although targeting approaches based on different customer profiles and interactions are well established, in this section we look at examples of more dynamic targeting using a range of data sources to create emails which are more in the context of subscriber interests. Email marketing consultant **Tim Watson** of [Zettasphere](#) explains:

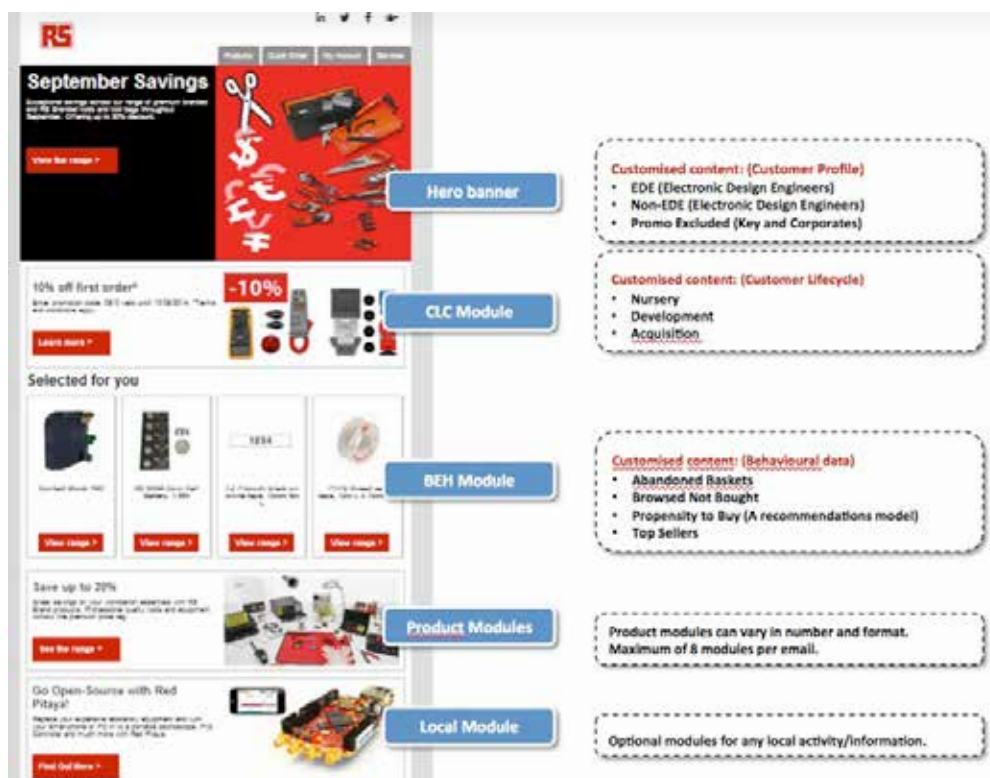
'The best brands will be capturing behaviour across channels using it to improve customer targeting. The exact channels are brand specific, but in most cases that means across email clicks, website browse, mobile App and purchase behaviours.'

Approaches to capturing user interests such as preference centres are dead in all but a few specialised cases. Brands not using behaviour in 2017 will be brands stuck in the past.

The cost point of doing this is coming down to levels that means there is ROI in the extra effort needed. Some ESPs are building in such capabilities; there are many third-party middleware solutions that add this capability as well as the option for larger brands to use full enterprise-level marketing clouds'.

Trend 4. Dynamic customization and personalisation

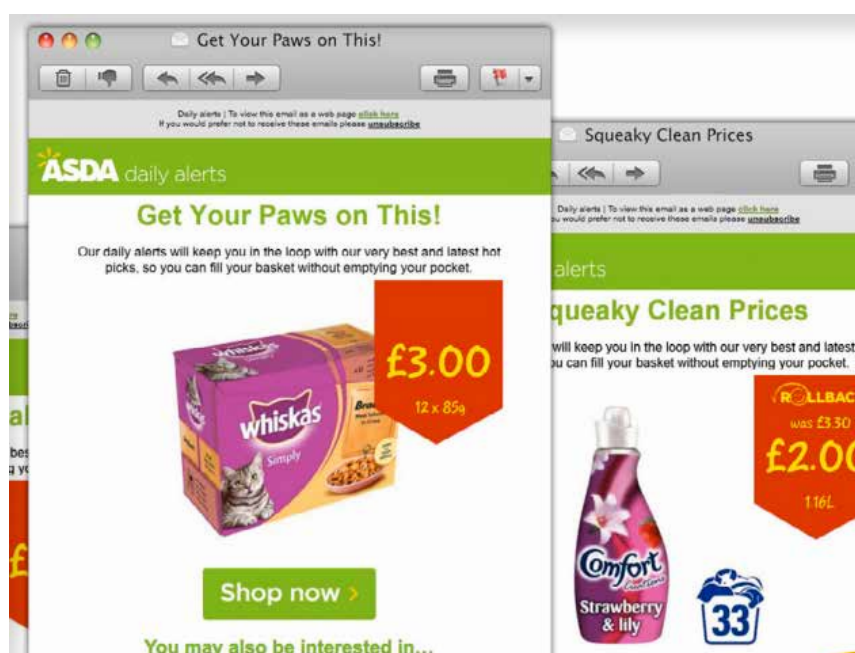
Using dynamic content insertion to tailor content based on rules about the individual subscriber is an established approach, but it's becoming more sophisticated now it can be combined with Machine Learning. We're now seeing more examples taking integration of different data sources to the next level. For example, in this complex B2B example presented by Harriet Mitchell of RS Components at the Smart Insights Digital Impact conference shows how a newsletter can be tailored according to rules using many different data sources.



The potential of dynamic content to deliver more relevant emails for consumers and at the same time for over-worked email marketers is tremendous given the time personalisation can take if it's not fully automated.. **Dan Grech** explains the common situation in many businesses.

I am at war against manual processes. From first hand experience I have seen that email, as one of the most valuable marketing channels, is being driven through hours of manual CSV work. For example, juniors, freelancers, interns are extracting CSVs of personally identifiable information about customers from one system, running some queries and cleaning, then uploading it to another system - often an ESP. Then they must manually create content blocks and countless dynamic rules for each email. How granular do some take it? Down to category, propensity, size and colour preference. That's a lot of SKUs.. Sounds familiar? It doesn't have to be this way!

Here's an example of how Dynamic content can help. Walmart brand Asda use the Kickdynamic service to pick up subscribers propensity to buy certain categories, sizes and colours through their previous behaviour and display the most relevant products in newsletters. The product stock, deals, pricing is all correct at the time of opening the email. It's a one-time setup, data is then fetched from an API or feed then converted into marketing assets in milliseconds, saving the Asda team 2 days a week using Content Automation. Asda's 'Daily Alerts' show the best deals and Rollback items available online - naturally the process for building each email was long and intricate, taking four days and involving a cycle of activities under threat of those dreaded last minute changes. Now, any price changes to products featured in emails that have already been sent can be updated instantly.



Trend 5. Machine Learning and Predictive Intelligence

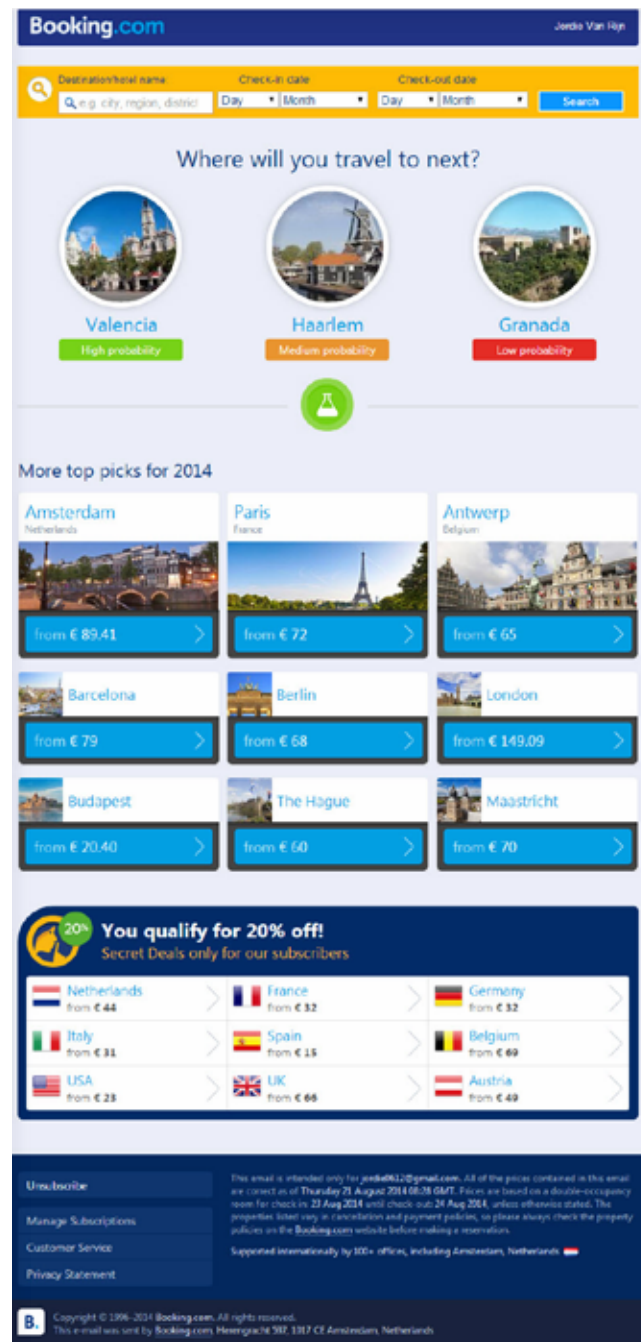
Predictive intelligence involves applying propensity models to identify the combination of content and offers to most likely to generate a response. It's a more advanced approach to the similar concept of "Next Best Product" used by retailers to recommend products based on previous purchases.

Email consultant [Jordie van Rijn](#) of [Email Monday](#) and [Email Vendor Selection](#) explains:

“I’m seeing more use of predictive intelligence to suggest offers and content based off of a combination of profile and interests and behaviours within segments. When linked with external data that can be very powerful.

This functionality was typically implemented in third-party systems, but middleware solutions and sometimes is now being offered as a core feature within email and marketing automation tools.

In this example⁶ Booking.com shows three destinations and the likeliness that the subscriber will be traveling to them, giving us a peek at the predictive models that normally would only be evident behind the scenes.



[Chad White](#), author of Email Marketing Rules also sees “Predictive intelligence” as part of a

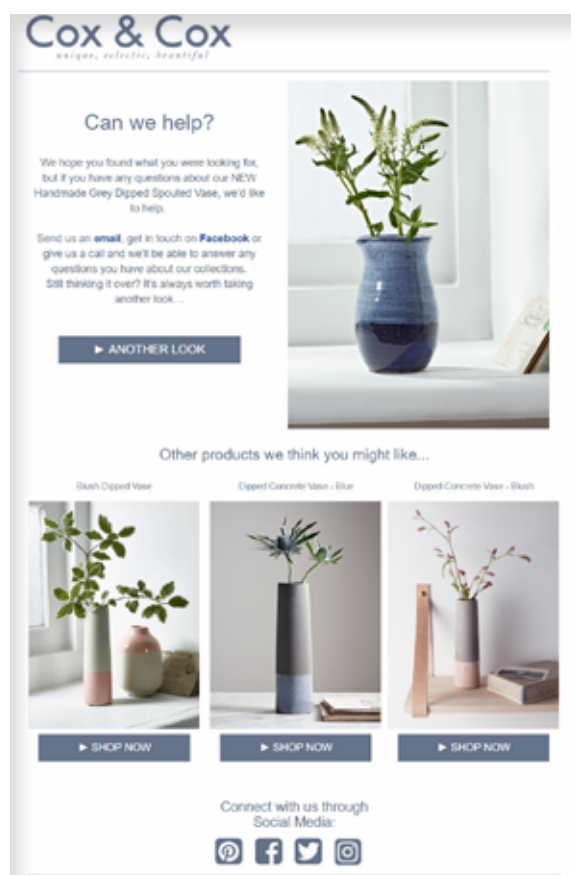
⁶ [Email examples: Booking.com](#)

major trend. He says:

“Creating more relevant, one-to-one communications is a key strategic imperative for all email marketers, and predictive intelligence is a great complement to other personalization, automation, and segmentation efforts. Plus, it really moves the needle on email marketing revenue in a pretty significant way.

“It’s a great way of harnessing Big Data to inject personalized recommendations into your emails—particularly, your transactional, cart abandonment, and browse abandonment emails. Powered by analytical insights into individual and group behavioral patterns, predictive intelligence enables dynamic content offers to be the most relevant to maximize response”.

Here’s a great, subtle example of a browse abandon recommended by Email marketing consultant **Kate Barrett** of [Shine a Light Media](#).



Kath Pay sees Machine Learning as one of the major recent developments. Here is her analysis and explanation: *‘Machine learning, at its simplest, is a method of data analysis that allows computers to learn – to analyse, predict and act – without explicit instructions or programming.*

We’ve used data this way for years – think of triggered emails – but we’ve always had to write the rules. Machine learning doesn’t wait for you to write an explicit rule. Instead, its algorithms act on and learn from data to take the next steps on its own.

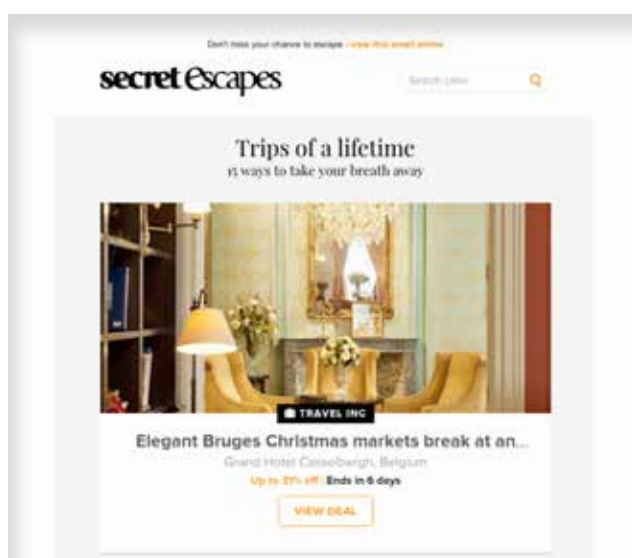
Machine learning makes sense of all the data that floods in through every customer touch point: before the first contact, during the whole prospecting process, the first sales, on through either loyalty or abandonment’.

There are now quite a few providers who can plug easily into your Email Service Provider –

here are a couple that Kath Pay has been taking a look at:

Jetlore – This content company builds user profiles using semantic attributes instead of specific products and natural language processing instead of database tags. It re-ranks content according to user interactions in real time and makes real-time changes in content before the subscriber opens the email based on website behaviour.

Machine learning tracks the content displayed to ensure an adaptive, personalized, consistent and non-repetitive experience for each subscriber. Secret Escapes uses Jetlore to personalise their emails 'serendipitously' so that the deals you've most recently looked at are prioritised in the order of deals listed within the emails.



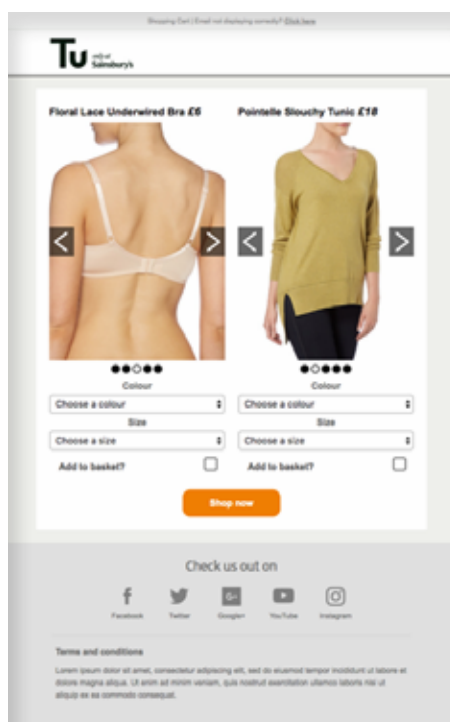
Personalisation is just a hypothesis until you test it. Machine learning uses a training data set to apply rules automatically and continually. Instead of manually testing, getting a result that suits the majority of your audience and moving on, your material is constantly being refined and improved as more data comes in so that tailoring can occur at an individual level. Here are some examples from Kath Pay.

Wylei uses a series of advanced algorithms to make smart content decisions for your emails. The cloud-based Automated Relevancy Engine parses subscriber data, contextual data learned in the moment of open, and real-time campaign performance data to make a hyper-targeted decision on what will yield the best response and as such delivering the right content to the most applicable subset of your database or segment. Next time, this is where the machine learning starts and continually refines and improves the results as your audience changes.

Altaire analyses all available data (e-commerce transactions, CRM history, opens/clicks, contextual e.g. location/time/device, 3rd party data e.g. weather) and makes marketing predictions as to what is the best product offer to show each email opener individually, at that single moment in time. Altaire's Active Content Platform then creates brand assets in real time (collated from a library of product sku information) and makes them available in our cloud to be called by the email at the moment of open. The customer sees products and offers which are more and more personalised to them individually, based on recent, most relevant behaviours. They respond more and buy more products, growing customer lifetime value.

As the next example shows, they have also combined interactivity to select products into

these 1:1 real-time emails to deliver a personalised, customer-centred marketing email.



[Touchstone](#) gives a virtual subject line testing service. By testing your subject line, not only will you gain accurate results but you will also free yourself up to be testing other factors of the campaign. With Touchstone you simply upload your historic data – subject lines, opens/clicks/conversions and enter the subject lines you would like to test. Touchstone then analyses all the data and with 99% accuracy and gaining a statistically significant sample size is no longer an issue.

THREE

Lifecycle and multichannel integration

A renewed focus by marketers on prospect and customer engagement, conversion and retention has led to the appearance of a new phrase in the digital marketing lexicon:

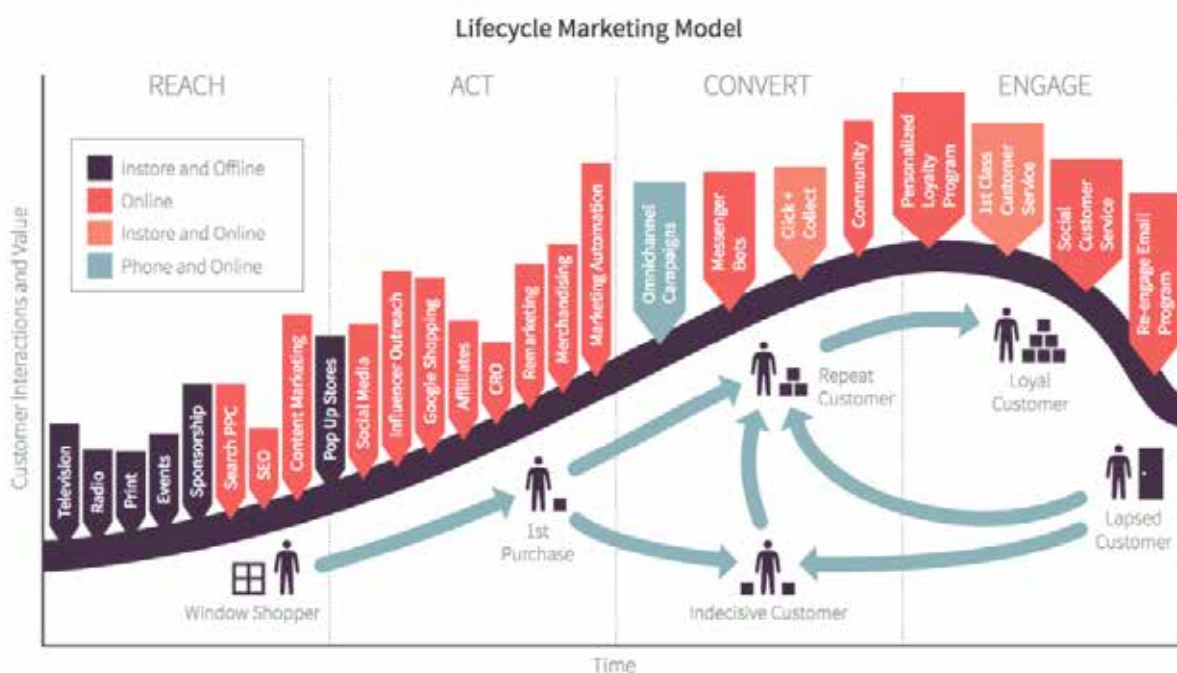
Customer lifecycle marketing, or simply lifecycle marketing.

We define lifecycle marketing as:

'Creating a managed communications or contact strategy to prioritise and integrate the full range of marketing communications channels and experiences to support prospects and customers on their journey'.

Trend 6. Customer lifecycle integration

To help show the importance of lifecycle marketing, the visual below highlights some of the many online marketing channels you must integrate to get the best results from digital marketing today. From an email marketing perspective, all of these channels give options to encourage email sign-up or to plan follow-up action. So reviewing opportunities for automation across the whole lifecycle is a must-have if you are serious about email marketing.



Tim Watson expands on how to use lifecycle marketing strategically:

Behavioural data also naturally allows more lifecycle marketing; treating suspects, prospects, new customers, regular, lapsing and lapsed appropriately. Turning a one-time buyer in a multi-purchaser is the initial starting point for anyone who doesn't yet have any lifecycle targeting.

Personalised discount offers fit hand in glove fit with lifecycle marketing. Who gets a discount, by how much and when individually targeted based on the lifecycle using and traditional RFM models. However, personalised offers are proving slow to become wide spread due to the

relatively low penetration of capable solutions. The trend in 2017 will be for an increase but likely to remain at a small percentage of brands with this capability.

Brands with a very large number of SKUs, or highly varied content and a diverse audience are using behaviour to target content within emails. Highly dynamic emails in which much if not all of the content is specific to the individual. This is modern day segmentation.

eBay is a great example of the challenge and solution. eBay emails are full of content target based on personal behaviours; items browsed, purchased, added to watch lists or recommended based on others with similar behaviours. With the range of products on eBay and a huge diverse customer base this is the only way eBay can maintain relevance at scale.

Kath Pay has a great infographic looking at lifecycle options specifically for emails. If you select the right Email Service Provider and plan implementation carefully, many of these emails can be automated and personalised using the techniques described in the Smart Insights toolkits which cover specific techniques like Welcome email and win-backs.

Lifecycle Communication



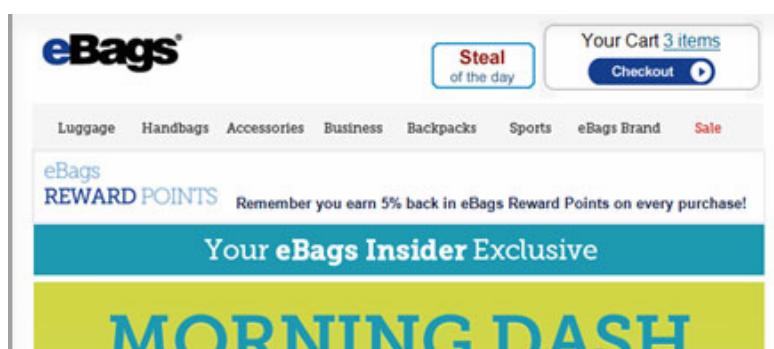
Torsten Schwarz sees more sophisticated approaches to deliver relevant emails based on data collected across channels. He explains:

“Yes, dynamic customization and predictive intelligence are the ultimate goal. Both are easy to attain if you have a wide choice of suitable content and enough data on your recipients (and if the data pools are connected). If these conditions are not fulfilled, it is no excuse for getting around targeting. As an alternative to big data, a marketing manager is needed, who knows both the company’s products and the customer’s needs. Personas represent a group of customers with similar needs. The marketing manager as a human being decides which combination of content suits best for the different

personas. This sounds old-fashioned but is better in order to achieve long term loyalty. Only if the variety of both content and audience is too complex for a human being to overlook, automated systems with big data are stronger”.

Trend 7. Integrating different systems

Sending Abandoned Shopping Carts emails is a common practice amongst retailers. Integrating these reminders into the newsletter is a less common approach, since it is technically more difficult to integrate this type of data. This example from eBags shows a more integrated experience with “Your Cart” integrated into the newsletter.



Commentator **Jordie van Rijn** comments:

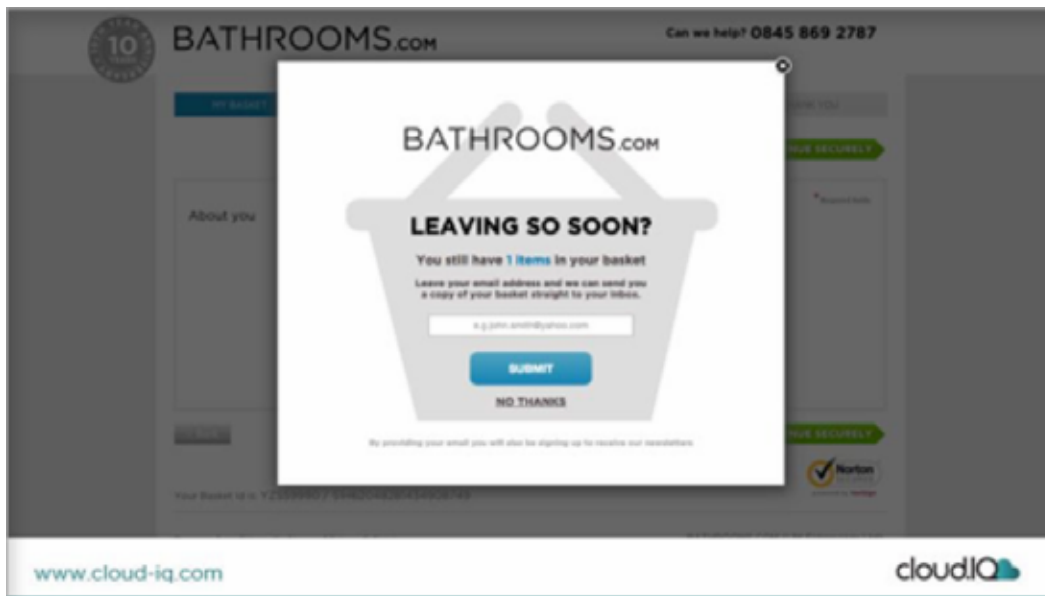
“I’m hoping that more senders will pick up this nifty technique, why not integrate the “you left something in your basket” into the normal newsletter?”

Trend 8 – Improvements to re-marketing sophistication

Abandoned shopping cart emails are an established approach, but this requires someone to have added something to their basket including an email address. What about when someone hasn’t yet given any profile information? This is what Kath Pay calls ‘*Remarketing to unknowns*’. She explains: To address the issue of 18% of true abandoners leaving after putting items in the cart but before starting to check out, a simple but successful remedy is to offer an overlay that offers to send the basket items to the potential customer via email. Something along the lines of “Leaving so soon? You still have xx items in your basket. Why not leave your email address and we’ll send a copy of your basket items to your inbox” can be extremely effective — both for growing your marketing database and for conversions.

Although they’re a little further up the purchase funnel, the results can be astounding, as a this case study from a client of cloud.IQ discovered:

- ✓ 4.22% of those presented the overlay asking for their email address, provided it.
- ✓ Of those who provided their email, 53.19% clicked through the email to their basket
- ✓ Of those who clicked through to the cart, 46.98% purchased.
- ✓ The AOV of purchase was 71.49% higher than the basket value (i.e. when they abandoned).
- ✓ The uplift of this campaign against the total of sales for this period was 3.13%.
- ✓ The ROI was 11,387%!



In this section, we have seen examples of lots of different types of technical integration. As a final point, it's worth noting that integration should also cover campaign integration and using Email marketing as part of storytelling. We agree! Elliot Ross of Email Taxi explains:

"We really have to approach email design in the context of other channels. To a user, it doesn't matter whether a message from a brand comes via email, an app or a billboard – it's their experience that counts and we need to make sure that this is consistent across the board. We need to think less about what email can do on its own, and more about how it works in relation to other interactions with a brand, marketing or otherwise."

"It's great that we can get incremental results by tweaking things like subject lines and colours of buttons, but this year more brands will realise that content and the brand story are the key to real uplift. I'd like to see a return to using a good old bit of copywriting, with some thought on what users want and how they should engage with your brand. If anything, aligning the marketing approach with that used on social media will help here."

Further examples and resources

We hope you have found the examples and techniques in this report interesting and inspiring!

Do let us know any comments to [@SmartInsights](https://www.facebook.com/smartinsights) or <https://www.facebook.com/smartinsights>.

In the meantime, here are some further resources to take your email marketing to the next level.

Smart Insights Expert member Email marketing advice

We have grouped our member resources on our [Email marketing Toolkit](#). If you're serious about improving your Email marketing we recommend our in-depth [7 Steps guide to Email marketing](#) which shows how to develop an email strategy and gives tips on making your emails more effective. Other resources for Expert members include:

- ✓ [Email marketing effectiveness audit spreadsheet](#)
- ✓ [Email campaign calculator spreadsheet](#)
- ✓ [Email contact strategy template](#)

Pure360 Resources

- ✓ [Simplified series of best practice guides](#)
- ✓ [Case studies](#)
- ✓ [Articles](#)

Example galleries of dynamic content emails

- ✓ [Live currency and weather](#)
- ✓ [Email newsletter examples](#)
- ✓ [Pure360 Email Examples Pinterest board](#)
- ✓ [Really Good Emails](#)