Introduction to Email Marketing

Objectives

Students will learn the basics about email marketing:

- Email's place as a marketing method
- How to set up an email campaign
- How to find your target audience
- What kinds of messages you can send with email marketing
- How to evaluate your campaign
- The best practices of email marketing
- Ways to make your campaign more effective

Prerequisites

Students should be familiar with generalmarketing terms and concepts. They should also have a basic understanding of Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Pay-Per-Click advertising (PPC) and social media sites.

Materials

Download:

- Handout 1: How to Build Your Email List

- Handout 2: What Kinds of Marketing Emails Can You Send?

- Handout 3: Key Email Marketing Terms & Definitions

Lesson Description

This 90 – minute lesson gives marketing students an overview of why email is a prevalent marketing method and how an email marketing campaign functions.

It can also be broken into 2 separate lessons of approximately 45 minutes by stopping either before or after section D (types of marketing messages) depending on the progress of your class.

Potential homework assignment: have students sign up to a business' mailing list, then write and/or present a brief explanation/critique of the experience and what they would do in order to improve that experience in order to increase subscribers' engagement and conversions. Critiques could focus on the subscription process and/or email messages received after signing up.

(Note: as not all businesses begin sending emails to new subscribers immediately, some students may not be able to critique the emails of the business they have selected, and would need to either focus on the subscription process or select another business to analyze.)

Lesson Outline

A. Email's Place As A Marketing Method   8 minutes

- What is email marketing?
- Why is it different from other marketing methods?

B. Setting the Stage: Key Issues   20 minutes

    1. Legal Considerations

- CAN-SPAM
- EU Privacy and Electronic Communications Directive
- Canadian Email Laws: Bill C-27

    2. Best Practices:

- Permission
- Spam
- Privacy

    3. Deliverability

- Definition
- Keeping it high

C. Building a List of Email Subscribers   18 – 20 minutes

- Do: *Use Handout 1 Here*
- Don't: purchase lists
- Proceed with caution: renting lists

D. Types of Marketing Emails   10 – 12 minutes

- Formats: *Use Handout 2 Here*
- *Promotion vs. relationship-building*

E. Evaluate and Revise Your Campaign Based on Performance Stats   8 – 10 minutes

- open rate
- click-through rate
- unsubscribes
- spam reports

F. Ways to Make Your Campaign More Effective   20 – 30 minutes

- Personalization
- Segmenting
- Analyzing your Results
- Feedback: getting and using it

Lesson Plan In Detail

A. Email's Place As A Marketing Method

1. What is email marketing? (Sending marketing messages through email

2. Why is it different from other marketing methods?

   - It lets businesses target people who are already interested in their products
   - It automates the sales follow-up process
   - Assembly requires minimal time and effort
   - Conversion can be a long-term process. Email is there before, at and after the sale.
   - Its conversational, 2-way nature allows for relationship-building
   - It has the highest ROI of any marketing method
     ◦ Statistics that show the effectiveness of marketing through email:
       http://www.email-marketing-reports.com/basics/why.htm

B. Setting the Stage: Key Issues

1. Legal Considerations

   - CAN-SPAM (US)
     The Federal Trade Commission's breakdown of the Act:
      http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/business/ecommerce/bus61.shtm

   - EU Privacy and Electronic Communications Directive (Europe)
     The official directive as per the European Parliament: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32002L0058:EN:NOT

   - Bill-C27 (Canada)
     A discussion of the bill and its implications:
     http://www.internet-security.ca/internet-security-news-018/bill-c-27-id-theft-law.html

2. Best Practices:

   - Permission-based email marketing
     Sending emails only to those who have voluntarily subscribed
     A detailed explanation of what constitutes permission:
     http://help.godaddy.com/topic/543/article/580

   - SPAM
     Any unsolicited, bulk email
     An easy-to-read explanation of spam:
     http://spam.abuse.net/overview/whatisspam.shtml

- Privacy
    Refusing to compromise or share subscriber information
    Four threats to privacy marketers must protect against:
    http://www.emailprivacy.info

3. Deliverability

- Definition:
    The ability of your emails to be delivered as intended
    A beginner's guide to deliverability:
    http://www.email-marketing-reports.com/deliverability/introduction.htm

- Keeping it high:

    Send relevant, useful messages that subscribers want
    How subscriber engagement affects deverability:
    http://www.clickz.com/clickz/column/1697627/the-new-rule-deliverability-engagement

    Use an email service provider to manage it for you
    What email service providers handle: http://www.emailtracer.com/content/email-providers/basic_information_on_email_account_providers/what_is_an_email_service_provider.html

C. Building a List of Subscribers

1. Do: Grow your list organically, using the strategies in Handout 1

2. Don't: Purchase pre-assembled lists of email addresses

    An explanation of the consequences: http://www.twowriters.net/spam.htm

3. Proceed with caution: When it comes to renting lists

    The pros and cons of renting:
    http://www.email-marketing-reports.com/basics/bulk-email-lists.htm

D. Types of Marketing Emails

1. Formats: each serves a different purpose, as described in Handout 2

2. Promotion vs. Relationship-Building
    Why building relationships leads to successful promotions:
    http://www.aweber.com/blog/email-marketing/new-email-marketing-approach.htm

E. Evaluate and Revise Your Campaign Based on Performance Stats

- Open rate
    Measures the percentage of recipients who open each email

- Click-through rates
  Measure the percentage of recipients who click on each link in an email

- Unsubscribe rate
  Measures the percentage of recipients who unsubscribe after each email

- Spam complaint rate
  Measures the percentage of recipients who report each email as spam

F. Ways to make your campaign more effective

- Personalization: Using automated fields to fill in information specific to each subscriber

  A summary of common ways to personalize marketing emails: http://www.email-marketing-software-resource.com/rc/email-marketing-personalization.html

- Segmenting: Dividing your list into groups to target each with the most appropriate messages

  11 things a business might segment by: http://emailuniverse.com/ezine-tips/?id=1323

- Scheduling and timing your emails: Setting up emails to arrive at the most appropriate times

  An explanation of how a business could increase response with scheduled sends: http://www.aweber.com/blog/email-marketing/send-windows-restaurant-example.htm

- Analyzing Your Results

  Programs like Google Analytics can help you keep track of the traffic and sales generated by your emails.

  How to use Google Analytics: http://www.google.com/analytics/features.html

- Feedback

  Soliciting subscribers' reactions helps you cater to their preferences

  How to ask for feedback (and what to do with it afterward): http://www.aweber.com/blog/email-marketing/how-to-collect-testimonials.htm

Handout: How to Build Your Email List

To market through email, businesses first need to gather email addresses of people who will receive their messages. These are their **subscribers**.

By growing an email list, businesses assemble a group of people who are interested in their information, as well as the means to directly contact them whenever they have something to say. The more people on the list, the farther their message will spread and the larger their base of customers and prospects will grow.

The subscribers could be current customers or new prospects, and there are many ways to find them.

Finding Subscribers Online

Web Forms

Web forms are a popular way to collect email subscribers. Once a subscriber submits the form, their information is automatically added to the business' email list.

Post-Purchase

Companies who enable customers to make purchases on their websites often automatically add those customers to their email lists after a purchase.

Forward Requests

By asking readers to forward marketing emails to friends who would be interested, companies grow their list temporarily. By including a link to subscribe in the email, they can retain some of that growth.

Share-With-Your-Network Buttons

These buttons give subscribers a way to post an email on their social networks with one click. If their contacts are interested, they can sign up themselves via a link in the email.
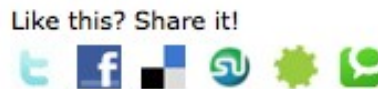
Pay-Per-Click and Search Engine Optimization

By paying search engines to display them prominently in search results or applying SEO tactics, marketers can increase web traffic to their sign-up pages.

Finding Subscribers Offline

In-Store Kiosks

A sign-up sheet or a fishbowl for business cards can attract subscribers, especially with a contest or coupon as an incentive to sign up.

On Print Materials

If a company uses order forms or other paper mailings, they can include a place to write in an email address and subscribe.

Checkout Requests

Customers can be asked if they'd like to subscribe at checkout, as part of the process of ringing them up for their purchase.

Businesses can use paper and pen or marketing automation software that syncs with their point of sale system to automatically add the addresses to their email list.

Handout: What Kinds of Emails Can You Send?

Follow Up Series

Follow up series (sometimes known by other terms like *drip* campaign or *autoresponder campaign*) consist of a sequence of emails that are sent automatically after a prospect signs up to an email list. The content of these messages depends on the business that is sending them, however it should relate back to the initial request for information.

The first email in a follow up series is often called a *welcome email*, because it serves to welcome new subscribers, thank them for signing up, and set expectations about what sort of emails will follow. An example of a welcome email appears below.

Newsletters

Email newsletters offer an informative and/or promotional compilation of articles, suggestions, requests, offers or advertisements that relate back to a prospect's initial request for information.

Here you can see an example of an email newsletter for the online chat software Campfire.

Transactional Messages

Transactional emails focus on an event that has recently happened. It could be receipt of a purchase, a subscription request or reservation. They sum up completed transactions and potentially promote additional sales.

Digests

Sent to subscribers on a regular basis, a digest is like a campaign's Sunday's New York Times. It lists everything subscribers might want to know and links to a company's recent articles, blog posts and other relevant online activity.

Promotional Postcards

Usually promotional in content, email postcards consist of one large image with accompanying text, making them quick and to the point to read. Note the simple messaging and focus on the offer in this postcard email from Loft.

Catalogs

Catalogs are purely promotional. Unlike postcards, they're made up of a list of products, usually represented by small pictures, a name and a few details such as price.

News Alerts

News alerts are brief. They're a tip, a quote, a bit of exciting news that answers the question, "What's going on?" Promotional content doesn't fit in here. Instead, alerts are meant to really keep subscribers up-to-date with initiatives they're interested in.

FRAGILE DAY ⁓BY⁓ WILDERLAND

Dear Aweber,

The unimaginable Gulf Oil Spill has left us all with an intense combination of emotions, from sadness to anger to helplessness. How could this happen? And now that the leak has been stopped, what can we do as individuals to help fix this horrific environmental disaster?

Musical duo Wilderland answers the call by releasing their new song "Fragile Day" with 100% of all proceeds benefiting the habitat affected by this tragedy.

- **Click here to watch the Fragile Day video and download the song**

Heralding from the mountains of Ashland, Oregon, Wilderland features singer-songwriters Scott Blum and Kat Sanchez. A veteran from the music industry, Blum (multimedia producer for Peter Gabriel, Soundgarden and many others) balances the exquisite vocal stylings of Sanchez who had been a member of a wide range of local bands most of her life.

After writing several original songs, the musicians began collaborating with renowned underground DJ and multi-instrumentalist Rara Avis (Desert Dwellers, Shaman's Dream) to realize their musical vision. It was during these studio sessions that the Gulf Oil Spill tragedy happened which deeply affected all involved in the project. Ironically, the song "Fragile Day" was being worked on at that very moment, and when explaining the song's lyrics to Avis, Blum realized that a powerful synchronicity was afoot. The song included the lyric *"Fish are dimming while they're swimming / Blackened ocean of foam"* which, although written nearly two years prior, was about fish dying because of an oil spill. Credit is given to Blum's wife Madisyn Taylor who suggested that "Fragile Day" be released immediately with all proceeds benefiting the habitat affected by the oil spill.

Also touched by the environmental tragedy, music industry superstars Toby Wright (Grammy award winning producer of Alice in Chains, Korn, 3 Doors Down, etc.) and Stephen Marcussen (mastering engineer for the Rolling Stones, Stevie Wonder, Seal, Cher, Paul McCartney, etc.) both contributed their expertise to this worthwhile project.

You can download two versions of "Fragile Day" by Wilderland with 100% of the proceeds donated to three important charities helping the habitat affected by the Gulf Oil Spill Tragedy. These organizations include The Gulf Restoration Network, EarthShare and the WILD Foundation.

Visit www.FragileDay.com to watch the emotionally powerful video and download the song to support this worthy cause.

- To Your Success,
  Yee Shun-Jian
  http://RichGrad.com
  Personal Development for the Book Smart

Handout: Key Email Marketing Terms

CAN-SPAM: A federal law that regulates commercial email.

The law can be defined in four parts:
1. It bans false or misleading header information
2. It prohibits deceptive subject lines.
3. It requires that your email give recipients a way to opt out of receiving emails.
4. It requires that commercial email be identified as an advertisement and include the sender's valid physical postal address.

Confirmed Opt-in: a process by which a subscriber gives a company permission to email him/her at the email address used to join that company's email list, by confirming (responding to) a confirmation email asking the subscriber to click a link.

This process ensures that only the owner of the email address is signing that address up to an email list.

Deliverability: the ability of an email to be delivered to subscribers' inboxes as intended.

Email marketing: form of marketing that uses email to communicate commercial messages to an audience.

Personalization: Sending an email that contains the recipient's personal information, making it look as though the email was sent to only that recipient.

The most common use of personalization is to include the recipient's name; however, personalization can be used to include many other types of information about the recipient.

Return on Investment (ROI): The ratio of gain or loss on a particular investment. If you invest $500 in a marketing campaign and earn $750 on that campaign, your ROI is 150% (750/500).

Email marketing is recognized as a medium which on average yields extraordinarily high ROI compared to other marketing media.

Segmentation: A process of grouping your list into smaller subgroups based on certain criteria. An example of this would be email subscribers on your list who purchased a given product, but not those subscribers who have not yet purchased that product.

Spam: Unsolicited bulk email. Email experts occasionally disagree about the precise definition of spam, but in general they agree that it means any email sent in bulk to people who did not request that email and/or do not want to receive it.

Welcome Email: An initial email sent to new subscribers. It commonly thanks them for signing up and sets expectations about what sort of emails to expect.

Web Form: A form located on a web page making it possible for someone to join an email list by submitting his/her email address and possibly other information such as a name.