Why reputation is important when it comes to email marketing

By Charles Mburugu   29 Sep 2015

Email marketing is an efficient and easy way for businesses or service providers to stay connected with clients. It is much easier to reach your target audience via email.

Here are some of the reasons why email marketing is still so popular:

- It is cost effective
- You can approach your audience directly instead of waiting for them to come to you

- It has proven to be very useful for the marketers who do it right

In today's world where spam has taken over our inboxes, it is really hard for legitimate emails to reach their audience. Most emails are rejected as spam and almost never reach your inbox. Email providers have become more difficult to get through over the years, since they have improved their spam filtering algorithms by moving away from filtering spam only based on content or keywords, to looking at sending behaviours that matches with spamming practices.

This kind of filtering is known as reputation filtering. While this helps to keep the spammers away, permission-based marketers also struggle to reach the inbox due to lower reputation or unorthodox methods which reduce their sender score. In this situation the best option is to build your reputation and keep a regular check on your senders score.

What makes up a reputation?

Internet service providers (ISPs) consider sender reputation as a very important factor. If you have a poor sender reputation, even genuine marketing emails might not reach the inbox of the recipient. As a result, it becomes more difficult to use email marketing for your business.

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Therefore, due to the increasing incidences of spam, most internet service providers have had to reinforce their filters.

To build a reputation for your IP addresses, the first thing you need to understand is the basic difference between spam and legitimate email marketing. Email marketing is permission-based messages that will be sent to people only if they agree to receive them. While spam is a mass mail sent to as many people as possible, legitimate emails are sent to a smaller and more targeted audience.

Here are some tips for building a good reputation:

- Do not email more than 1-2 times per week. Send limited and useful mails
- Make the reader look forward to your email; make it as engaging as possible
- Include your legitimate physical address in all mails
- Provide unsubscribe links and instructions. Every email should contain these instructions to ensure people unsubscribe instead of reporting spam
- Make sure your messages are sent to the right demographic groups
- Act on the emails reported as spam. Remove the emails reported as spam this will prevent repeated reporting
- If you notice problems with your deliverability, check if you are blacklisted or not
- Remove inactive subscribers who haven't opened your emails in over a year
- Prompt users to add you to their address book. This ensures your place in their inbox
- Improve your senders score. This will reduce the likelihood that your entire IP address will be subjected to filtering criteria by email providers. Instead, the focus will be on individual email campaigns

- At the top or bottom of the page, include buttons to your social media platforms

The following are some examples of responsible and successful email marketing campaigns:

1. Buzzfeed

BuzzFeed is unbeatable when it comes to creating catchy, irresistible headlines. And they have been successfully using their signature methods to attract attention into their email marketing campaigns. Their emails are easy to read and designed to bring their subscribers back to the Buzzfeed site. In each email, Buzzfeed uses original content from their site and also uses a small snippet along with a link to entice people to click through and read the full content.

2. Dropbox

Dropbox made their way into our inboxes by sending us cute and funny emails. Thanks to a pair of whimsical cartoons and an emoticon, they are back on our lists. They keep their emails short and sweet to emphasize the message that they don't want to intrude. Instead, they want to remind the recipient that they exist and want to help. When sending these kinds of emails, be sure to include an incentive to come back to using your service.

ABOUT CHARLES MBURUGU

HubSpot-certified content writer/marketer for B2B, B2C and SaaS companies. He has worked with brands such as GetResponse, Neil Patel, Shopify, 99 Designs, Norton, Salesforce and Condor. Portfolio: https://charlesmburugu.contently.com/ LinkedIn: https://ke.linkedin.com/in/charlesmburugu

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