

Key trends in email marketing 2018: What you didn't know about this tried and tested channel

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While wide usage of email has been around since the early 1990s, it remains a tried and tested tool for communication, and particularly for effective direct marketing campaigns.



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In fact, a recent survey by [Getresponse](#) noted that email marketing is even more effective than social media, with the former receiving a thumbs-up from 52% of respondents, versus 50% for social media marketing.

Here are six top trends that you can expect to see on the email marketing landscape during 2018.

Trend 1: Email marketing comes into its own

Expect email marketing to become even more relevant in the years ahead. This is due to the increase in internet connectivity as well as mobile internet access, spurring email on to becoming increasingly ubiquitous. Add to this the fact that email is less costly than other means of communication, with customers often happy to provide their email address. Since email is also used as the primary login to most online services, it is often checked regularly. Thus, it offers a potentially captive audience to effective email marketing campaigns.

Trend 2: Regulation on the rise

This year, watch out for increased regulation, and for it to be taken seriously. In the UK, it is the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), while locally it is the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) act. Each is intended to ensure marketers adhere to the law around data and hold them to account if they deviate. Considering the wave of data breaches, ransomware and fake news present, there is little wonder that earning consumer trust is paramount.

Whatever side of the pond you are on, savvy marketers will heed these concerns, and ensure that they don't breach that fragile trust by continuing to send irrelevant emails, so to ensure they stay on the right side of PoPI.

Trend 3: Email rendering gets easier

Email rendering is set to become easier this year. Problems associated with creating emails that retain their design integrity irrespective of whether they are viewed on mobile or desktop will continue to be addressed. Already we are seeing a host of design tools and principles/standards have now been put in place.

Trend 4: Device friendly email

In 2018, we will also continue to see mobile-friendly emails gain in dominance, particularly as professionals adopt more flexible working hours. As of last year, the majority (55%) of emails were opened on smartphones, with webmail and desktop email bringing up the rear at 37% and 16% respectively, according to [Mediapost](#).

This only exacerbates the need to get subject lines right, bearing in mind that they are the most important part of an email message, followed by the preview text. With this being the only text that is viewed on mobile devices by the receiver, it makes the difference between a click or a delete.

Trend 5: Personalisation and market segmentation will grow in sophistication

Even as there is a great deal of discussion around Artificial Intelligence (AI), we aren't as yet at a stage where we are seeing true AI in the email marketing space. However, we will see more intelligent machine algorithms and patterns.

It is no longer best practice to just personalise a name, content needs to be personalised to gender, age and various other market segments. Data is critical for this, so marketers should be collecting and collating relevant data that can be targeted and segmented. Product histories, recommendations based on previous content/product experience will be key.

If marketers continue to send generalised Black Friday emails at the end of 2018, they will have missed a great opportunity for conversion.

Trend 6: Click-2-call functionality proves its worth

On the local front, this year, watch out for click-2-call functionality. This enables marketers to connect with users based on their interaction with marketing content (for example, clicking on an embedded 'call me' link) and engaging directly with them at the point of interest. We haven't seen this internationally.

Email has a proven positive impact on a company's bottom line and its ROI is often far higher than that of other marketing tools. Coupled with these top trends, and ability to highlight critical business insights and customer behaviours, we're reminded of email marketing's resilience and sustained relevance in 2018 and beyond.

ABOUT GRANT FLEMING

Grant Fleming has held senior management positions at leading tech, mobile and ecommerce companies. His current role is CEO of Leadify, an automated sales fulfilment channel that helps B2B and B2C brands and businesses turn internal IP into income. He drives the productisation and enhancement of this intelligent SMS and email platform allowing users to

customise campaigns, control costs, performance and revenue and eliminate duplicates, overlaps, retargeting and bounce rates. Since launch in 2015, Leadify has processed over 1 billion messages.

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