



RightNow's Top 20 Best Practices for Email Marketing Get Delivered, Get Read—Get Results!

1. Send Email only to people who have opted-in.
2. Ensure that the content is relevant.
3. Target your campaign to specific audiences.
4. Make it easy to unsubscribe.
5. Never purchase or rent mailing lists.
6. Be up front with contacts.
7. Ask contacts to add the “From” address to their address book
8. Test mailings before sending to your whole list.
9. Include Your Privacy Policy and Your Physical Address
10. See RightNow's list of subject header SPAM Flags—avoid these words.
11. Implement a thorough SPAM complaint, bounce and Reply email resolution policy. Never put your subject header IN ALL CAPS.
12. Be aware of ISPs Acceptable Use Policies.
13. Honor abuse reports.
14. Never attach documents instead use links.
15. Publish your authentication to your branded domain name.
16. Build your reputation with ISP in advance and carry out warming on your IP address.
17. Review invalid contact reports.
18. Ensure that you have cross-organizational support.
19. Ensure that your content is internally approved, including by your legal department.
20. Make it easy for contacts to update their profiles.

TOP 20 Best Practices for Email Marketing

For a more detailed discussion, please see our whitepaper [Email Marketing Best Practices](#).

1. Send Email Only to People Who Have Opted In.

Getting people to agree first to receive your information is key to positive campaign results.

2. Ensure Your Content is Relevant.

Relevant and personalized information is more likely to be accepted by your contacts and will be less likely to be marked as SPAM.

3. Target Your Campaign to Specific Audiences.

The narrower the better. By tracking demographics, previous campaign history, offer acceptance and interests stated in the customer's profile, over time you should be able to deliver increasingly timely messages demonstrating ever-greater levels of specificity.

4. Make Unsubscribing Easy.

We recommend making Unsubscribe single click options at the top of your email.

5. Never Purchase or Rent Mailing Lists.

They frequently contain SPAM Traps that flag your email as SPAM to ISPs.

6. Be Up Front with Contacts.

Always ask them to opt-in, and be very clear what they are opting in for.

7. Ask Contacts to Add The "From" Address to Their Address Book.

This helps emails get through to the in-box.

8. Test Emails to Sections of Your List

Give ISPs a chance to see what kind of emails you are sending. Test randomly selected segments of your audience to try out different approaches. For example, try different subject lines or body copy to different groups of the same or very similar audiences.

9. Include Your Privacy Policy and Your Physical Address.

Your privacy policy should explain how the contact's personal information is going to be used. All emails governed by CAN-SPAM must contain a physical address or valid P.O. Box of your organization.

10. See Our List of Subject Header SPAM Flags—Avoid These Words.

Some of these words may surprise you—words and phrases like "Call Now", "Buy Direct", "No Fees", "Order Now", "Please Read" and even "free" can prevent email from getting through. See our whitepaper on [Email Marketing Best Practices](#) for a more extensive list.

11. Implement a Thorough SPAM complaint, Bounce and Reply Emails resolution policy.

To ensure clean contact lists and prompt follow-up of legitimate customer replies, implement a process to handle “out of office” replies, unsubscribe requests, SPAM complaints and general replies.

12. Be Aware of ISPs Acceptable Use Policies.

Because they can change, stay abreast of acceptable use policies to ensure email deliverability over time.

13. Honor Abuse Reports.

Treat them like unsubscribe requests. Set up and monitor accounts such as abuse@yourdomain.com or postmaster@yourdomain.com.

14. Never attach documents.

Now common triggers for SPAM filters, avoid attachments and include links to information instead.

15. Publish Your Authentication to Your Branded Domain Name.

Use email authentication technologies like DomainKeys/DKIM and SPF/Sender-id to help ensure high email deliverability.

16. Build Your Reputation with ISPs in Advance.

Today email marketers must establish a reputation score to ensure high email deliverability. Build your list of opted-in contacts through a series of mailings, testing your content and subject headers to see if they get flagged as SPAM. Warm up your new IP address with multiple consecutive mailings to larger and larger “chunks” of your total list, building your reputation score by sampling email deliverability. Check out the Sender Score FAQs at <https://www.senderscore.org/faq.php> for more info on areas that ISPs monitor.

17. Review Invalid Contact Reports.

Your list is a living document; audit and revise it regularly.

18. Ensure That You Have Cross-Organizational Support.

Like any marketing initiative, be sure you’ve done the inside work to ensure effective support from all within your company.

19. Ensure Your Content is Internally Approved, Including by Your Legal Department.

Ensure that you and your vendor comply with all laws governing email marketing. Good sites to monitor are www.spamlaws.com and www.findlaw.com.

20. Allow Contacts to Easily Update Their Profiles.

Put the link to do so at the top of your email. The more current this information, the better you know your customer.