

2019 Email Best Practices

OPTIMIZE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVE ENGAGEMENT

I. Content Guidelines

A. Subject Lines

- i. Limit characters to ~50
- ii. Avoid using all CAPS
- iii. Avoid excessive punctuation (i.e., no “!!!”)
- iv. Provide preheader or preview text when possible
- v. Consider A/B testing two different subject lines
- vi. Be cautious of words or phrases known to trigger spam filters
 1. These words do not guarantee spam filtering will occur but they heighten the risk
 2. Example words and phrases at higher-risk of triggering spam filters
 - a. “100% free”
 - b. “Free offer”
 - c. “Satisfaction guaranteed”
 - d. “Risk free”
 - e. “Limited time”
 - f. “Now only”
 - g. “Offer expires”
 - h. “Time limited”
 - i. “Get it now”

B. Body Content & Formatting

- i. Avoid using “dear” in the salutation
- ii. Avoid using all CAPS
- iii. Use standard font colors and sizes
 1. Particularly avoid red font
 2. Keep body font between 10pt-12pt
- iv. Avoid excessive use of target keywords (don’t repeat the same phrase)
- v. Include both an html and text version of the email

C. Images & Multimedia

- i. Balance the image-to-text ratio: ideal is 20% image to 80% text
- ii. Optimize for mobile/responsive design
- iii. Use max image width of 600px
- iv. Keep important messaging outside of images
- v. Include alt text for images
- vi. Avoid use of videos or Flash
- vii. Image-only creative will not be accepted

D. Links

- i. Keep call to action focused and easy to identify
- ii. Give the reader multiple options to engage (repeat call to action placement)
- iii. Make graphics clickable
- iv. Place important links high in the email
- v. Avoid clickable long-form URLs
 1. i.e. <http://www.nurse.com/articles/23897/b/27c>
- vi. Instead, use descriptive link text to relevant, trustworthy pages
 1. i.e. [Read the article here.](#)

E. Code/HTML

- i. Avoid using JavaScript
- ii. Avoid “messy” code (i.e., superfluous lines with no purpose)

II. Segmenting & Targeting

- i. Leverage existing segments (based on location, specialty, education.) to send more relevant and narrowly-targeted content
 1. Higher relevance = better open rates and engagement (clicks)