



Internet consulting for non-profit organizations

Winning Strategies for Using Email Effectively

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Email Structure

- Importance of the FROM line
 - Used to determine whether or not to delete an email
 - Is your send email recognizable?
- Importance of the SUBJECT line
 - What motivates people to open the email
 - Is the full text viewable, even if FW: or SPAM precedes it?
- Should you compose in HTML or Text?
- Use (and abuse) of Signature Lines for contact information and promotions
- Will people really open Attachments? Say in the email that there are attachments.



Email or Newsletter...?

- Do you have that much content?
- Can you support an editorial schedule?
- Is your content really "news they can use"?
- Is there a genuine demand for this?
- Call a Spade a Spade...



Message Composition

- Keep the purpose of the email narrow & focused
- Embed direct links
- Use exemplary grammar and composition; it's your brand
- Watch being "overly casual" or trendy with language
- Jargon is a sure path to misunderstanding
- Always spell check
- Have someone else check your work, especially for outgoing emails
- Make your "call to action" clear
- Provide a message summary at the top of long emails



Personalization



- The greater the number of personalization elements, the higher the response rate
- Types of personalization elements:
 - Name
 - Last program attended or last transaction
 - Program-specific logos or images
 - Membership status
 - Region/geography
 - Interest areas
 - Signatures



Message Presentation



- Use of branding/imagery
- Use of stationery and colors
- Do you expect the email to be printed?
- What is the likelihood your audience can support the presentation you've created?
- How important is it to have your brand/identity associated with the content?
- Does the graphical treatment lend value to the message or detract from it?



Stationery and Signatures



- Stationery should **enhance** your brand; not detract from your message
- A simple logo file may be enough
- Keep contact info with your emails
- Variations on your "signature"
- Watch overkill on Signature lines



Reader Engagement

Anticipate the questions the reader would have

Engage the whole person

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Timing Your Campaigns

- Consider:
 - When do you want them to receive the email?
 - How long does it take for your emails to be received?
 - What have been your email patterns?
 - Can you schedule the delivery based on variables?
 - What offline media might coincide with the email? (news broadcast, magazine?)
 - What are the psychographics (behaviors) of your readers?
 - (i.e. teens open email after school, professionals first-thing in the morning)
 - What are the time zones of your readers?
- 62% of emails opened between Tuesday – Thursday
- 80% of emails opened between 5am and 5pm PST.
- News-oriented emails are best received (expected) early in the morning
- A high % of SPAM sent during middle of the night and on weekends; don't compete with them

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A Good Example for Customer Relationship Management

- Clear purpose - New member introduction
- Strong branding – reinforce to new client
- Imagery – conveys “personality” and service relationship
- Personalization to recipient
- Links to valuable content and services
- Short, value-packed, pleasant

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A Good Example for Marketing

Identifying logo

Engaging photos

Call to action

Peer testimonial

Personal tone

Opt-out instructions

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eMail Pet Peeves

- ⊗ Not deleting the "paper trail" or previous emails before forwarding
- ⊗ Not deleting the distribution list before forwarding
- ⊗ Don't CC the world
- ⊗ CC-ing yourself (what's up with that?)
- ⊗ Don't request read receipts (esp. on a listserver)
- ⊗ *Think* before you press [send]
- ⊗ Arguments via email
- ⊗ Forgetting to add the attachment
- ⊗ Zip files via email
- ⊗ Emotional issues discussed in email
- ⊗ Repeated *"I am out of the office"* responses
- ⊗ Using email as a way to avoid conversation
- ⊗ Emails to confirm that you got their email
- ⊗ Cancellation emails that don't reference the event

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