

# StoryMails

## Do You Make These Email Marketing Mistakes?

If you're reading this, then sometime in the past someone said to you, "You need to do email marketing."

"It's easy", they said.

"Just build a list.", they said.

"Send offers.", they said.

"Make easy money!", they said.

And at first, I'm sure it was easy. Your list grew, You made sales and your profits climbed. But then you started to hear words like SPAM, Promotions Folder, Unsubscribes and Low Open rates.

NOT easy anymore!

And that my friend is why I wrote this short report. It won't solve all your problems but it will allow you to focus on some simple steps to get back to mining gold from that gold mine that is email marketing! Let's start with . . .

## Building Your List:

Building an email list is crucial for any business looking to maintain a direct line of communication with its audience. Unlike social media platforms where algorithms can limit reach, an email list ensures your message is delivered straight to your subscribers' inboxes. This direct access allows for personalized engagement, fostering stronger customer relationships, and driving higher conversion rates. Additionally, owning an email list gives businesses control over their audience data, which can be crucial for long-term marketing strategies and customer retention.

Here are five effective ways to build your email list:

- 1. Offer Valuable Content:** Create and share high-quality, relevant content. By providing valuable content, you can entice visitors to exchange their email addresses for access.
- 2. Use Sign-Up Forms:** Place sign-up forms prominently on your website, blog, and social media pages. Put the forms in highly visible places. (buried in crowded menus or in a footer no one ever sees, is NOT optimal) Make it easy for visitors to subscribe by keeping the form simple and highlighting the benefits of joining your list.

# StoryMails

**3. Run Contests and Giveaways:** Organize contests or giveaways that require participants to enter their email addresses. This method not only grows your list quickly but also engages your audience in a fun and interactive way.

**4. Leverage Social Media:** Promote your email sign-up form across your social media channels. Use call-to-action buttons and posts to direct followers to your subscription page, emphasizing the unique value they'll receive by signing up.

**5. Utilize Exit Pop-Ups:** Implement timed or exit-intent pop-ups on your website to capture the attention of visitors before they leave. (Pop-ups appearing before the prospect has the opportunity to look around - don't work!) Offering incentives like discounts, free trials, or exclusive content will encourage sign-ups.

By focusing on these strategies, businesses can effectively grow their email lists, enhancing their marketing efforts and driving sustained growth.

## Email Deliverability

Before discussing the various problems regarding Email deliverability it is important to know if your business has these problems. Fortunately there is a simple (and Free) way to find out. Just go to Google and set up a new Gmail Account. Then start sending some emails to this account and watch where they end up. Are they in the Primary Folder, the Promotions Folder or SPAM? Don't link this account to any other Gmail accounts you may have and don't assume that just 1 or 2 emails is a sufficient test. Send 10 or 15 emails to the test account so you can get a general idea of where they are landing

SPAM is obviously not good but you should know the Gmail Promotions Folder is almost as bad. Statistics show that just 10% of all emails in the Promotions Folder are ever read. If you find a significant proportion of your emails are going to SPAM or the Promotions Folder - you are losing a lot of money. Read on . . .

When it comes to ensuring your emails reach your subscribers' inboxes there are technical issues and content issues. On the technical side, three key protocols help improve deliverability: DMARC, SPF, and DKIM. DMARC (Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting & Conformance) is a protocol that allows domain owners to specify how their emails should be handled if they fail SPF or DKIM checks, helping to protect against phishing and spoofing. SPF (Sender Policy Framework) is an email-authentication technique that verifies whether an email was sent from an authorized IP address. By listing the approved IP addresses in the DNS records, SPF helps prevent spammers from sending emails on behalf of

# StoryMails

your domain. DKIM (DomainKeys Identified Mail) adds a digital signature to your emails, which is validated by the receiving mail server to ensure the email's integrity and authenticity.

If these technical terms make your eyes glaze over, it's advisable to enlist the help of your tech guy (or girl) to properly configure these settings. The good news is that you'll only have to address the technical stuff once. Implementing these protocols not only boosts your deliverability rates but Google & Yahoo now require it.

## Email Deliverability - Content:

Beyond the technical aspects, the content of your emails plays a significant role in deliverability. Emails with misleading subject lines, excessive use of promotional language, or a high ratio of images to text are more likely to be flagged as spam. According to a study by Return Path, 21% of emails never make it to the inbox due to content issues.

So, if you think you have a list of 1000 - you don't! Since about 1 in 5 are never delivered, your list size is closer to 800. To solve this issue, focus on creating engaging, relevant content that resonates with your audience. Here are some specific content pitfalls to avoid:

- **Misleading Subject Lines:** Subject lines that promise something too good to be true or don't match the email's content can be flagged as spam.
- **Excessive Promotional Language:** Overuse of words like "free," "guarantee," "win," "sale", or "exclusive offer" can trigger spam filters.
- **Poor Text-to-Image Ratio:** Emails that contain mostly images with little text are often flagged by spam filters. Aim for a balanced mix of text and images.
- **Lack of Personalization:** Generic emails without personalization can be marked as promotions or spam. Use your subscribers' names and tailor the content to their preferences.
- **Irrelevant Content:** Sending content that doesn't match the interests or expectations of your subscribers can lead to high unsubscribe rates and lower engagement, affecting your sender reputation. (this includes repeatedly sending sales/promotion type emails)

Additionally, regularly cleaning your email list to remove inactive subscribers is crucial, as high bounce rates can negatively impact your sender reputation. By paying attention to both the technical and content aspects, you can significantly enhance your email deliverability and ensure your messages reach their intended recipients.

# StoryMails

## The Importance of a Welcome Email

A Welcome Email is a crucial touchpoint that should be sent immediately after a new subscriber signs up. This email serves as an introduction to your company and sets the tone for your future relationship with the subscriber. Much like a firm handshake and a warm greeting at the beginning of a meeting, a well-crafted Welcome Email can create a strong first impression and lay the foundation for a lasting connection. Here are key reasons why a Welcome Email is essential:

- 1. Building a Relationship:** The Welcome Email is your first opportunity to connect personally with your new subscriber. Consider the Welcome Email as the first meeting with a new friend. Imagine you meet someone for the first time, and they greet you warmly, tell you a bit about themselves, and express genuine interest in getting to know you better. You leave that meeting feeling good about the potential for a new friendship. On the other hand, if you meet someone and they barely acknowledge you, provide no information about themselves, and show little interest in you, the likelihood of building a lasting relationship is slim. By providing a friendly introduction, you create a positive initial experience that encourages continued engagement and increases the Lifetime Value of that client.
- 2. Setting Expectations:** In the Welcome Email, you can inform subscribers about what kind of content they can expect, how often they will receive emails, and any other pertinent details about your communication. It is also a great opportunity to ensure your emails are going to the Primary Folder. A simple set of instructions now, will reduce the likelihood of your emails being marked as spam or ignored.
- 3. Making an Offer:** Including a special offer, discount, or incentive in your Welcome Email can immediately provide value to the subscriber, encouraging them to take action when they are most interested in your products. If they make a purchase now it will boost initial sales and also reinforce the benefits of staying subscribed to your list.
- 4. Encouraging Engagement:** Use the Welcome Email to invite subscribers to follow you on social media, join your loyalty program, or explore more about your products or services. This invitation to engage further with your brand can deepen the relationship and increase Lifetime Value of the client.
- 5. Gathering Data:** A Welcome Email can include a call-to-action that invites subscribers to update their preferences or provide more information about themselves. This data can be invaluable for personalizing future communications, and segmenting your lists to ensure that your content is relevant and engaging.

# StoryMails

## Conclusion:

A Welcome Email is more than just a courteous gesture. It is the single most important email you will send. It's a strategic tool that significantly impacts your relationship with new subscribers. By building a relationship, setting expectations, making an offer, encouraging engagement, and gathering data, a Welcome Email paves the way for long-term subscriber loyalty and increased engagement. Much like a strong first impression in any relationship, the Welcome Email is essential for setting the stage for future interactions and ensuring that your subscribers feel valued and connected to your brand.

## The Importance of Email Frequency

Finding the right email frequency is crucial for maintaining a healthy relationship with your subscribers. Sending too many emails makes you — a pest and repeatedly sending sales pitches will cause your subscribers to ignore your emails. This leads to lower open rates, higher unsubscribe rates, and even complaints about spam.

Conversely, if you send emails at a reasonable frequency, offering valuable content each time, you'll become a welcome guest in their Inbox. Informative and entertaining emails will cause your clients to anticipate your emails. They are the key to high Open Rates, high Click Through Rates and higher sales.

## Finding the Right Balance:

To avoid being a pest and ensure you remain a welcome guest in your subscribers' inboxes, consider the following tips:

- 1. Understand Your Audience:** Pay attention to your subscribers' behavior and preferences. Use data and analytics to determine the optimal frequency for your audience. What works for one group may not work for another.
- 2. Set Expectations:** Let your subscribers know how often they can expect to hear from you when they sign up. (in your Welcome Email) If you promise weekly updates, stick to that schedule. Consistency builds trust.
- 3. Quality Over Quantity:** Focus on sending high-quality, relevant content rather than bombarding your subscribers with frequent promotions and flyers. Each email should provide value, whether it's through useful information, special offers, or engaging stories.

# StoryMails

**4. Monitor Engagement:** Keep an eye on your email metrics. If you notice a drop in open rates or an increase in unsubscribes, it might be time to adjust your frequency. Solicit feedback from your subscribers to understand their preferences better.

**5. Segment Your List:** Not all subscribers are the same. Segment your email list based on different criteria, such as engagement levels, purchase history, or preferences. Tailoring your email frequency to different segments can improve overall satisfaction.

By finding the right email frequency, you can ensure that your communications are welcomed and appreciated, leading to happy, engaged subscribers who look forward to hearing from you. Just like a welcome guest at your home, you'll be invited in with open arms, fostering stronger relationships and driving better results with your email marketing efforts.

## The Importance of Content in Email Marketing

Crafting the right content for your email campaigns is essential to keep your subscribers engaged and coming back for more. The type of content you choose can significantly impact how your emails are received and whether they help build or erode your relationship with your audience. Here's a breakdown of the three main categories of email content and their effects on your subscribers:

**1. Flyers and Promotional Emails:** Flyers and promotional emails are the most common type of content businesses use. While they have their place in marketing, sending them too frequently can be detrimental.

Picture this: every time your subscribers open their inbox, they see yet another promotional email from you. Their immediate reaction is, "Oh damn, I'm being sold to again." This leads to email fatigue, causing your messages to go unopened, and increasing unsubscribe rates. Your once-promising email list can quickly dwindle if subscribers feel overwhelmed by constant sales pitches. The key is to minimize promotional content and mix it with other types of emails to keep your audience interested and engaged.

**2. Educational Emails:** Educational emails provide value by offering informative content that can help your subscribers learn something new. These emails are a step up from constant promotional messages, as they give readers useful insights and knowledge. However, it's important to remember that information on the Internet is readily available. While educational content is appreciated, it might not be the primary reason your subscribers signed up for your emails. To stand out, ensure your educational emails are highly relevant, tailored to your audience's interests, and presented in a unique way that they can't easily find elsewhere.

# StoryMails

**3. Entertaining Emails:** Entertaining emails are the gold standard when it comes to engaging your audience. These emails go beyond mere information or promotions; they leave your subscribers with a smile on their face, feeling good about themselves and the person sending the email. Think of these emails as a pleasant surprise in their inbox, something they look forward to reading because it brightens their day. Whether it's a humorous story, a relatable anecdote, or a clever analogy, entertaining content creates a positive emotional connection with your audience. This type of email fosters loyalty, reduces unsubscribe rates, and often leads to higher engagement and conversions because people are more likely to open emails from someone who consistently makes them feel good.

The content of your emails is a powerful tool in shaping how your audience perceives your brand. While promotional emails may be necessary for driving sales, overuse can lead to disengagement. Educational emails add value but must be uniquely relevant to maintain interest. Entertaining emails, however, are the secret sauce to keeping your subscribers happy and eagerly anticipating your next message. By striking the right balance and focusing on content that entertains and engages, you can build stronger, more positive relationships with your audience, leading to greater long-term success in your email marketing efforts.

## **In Conclusion:**

I truly hope you found value in the preceding pages. But, if you're still looking for that "game changing idea", I've saved the most important concept for last. If you get nothing else from this report, let it be this . . .

If you want people to open, read and click through to your site, send them something,

## **They want to read!**

When you do that, good things happen. Spam and Unsubscribes go down. Open Rates, Click Through Rates and Sales go up. If you'd like to see how I make those good things happen every day for my clients, stop by [StoryMails](#) anytime.

Thanks for reading,



Jim  
Chief Scribbler  
StoryMails.com

PS: Image by grandkids. (Far too much hair!)

PPS: Questions, thoughts or ideas? I'm always around, [jim@storymails.com](mailto:jim@storymails.com)

