



Lesson 11 – Email Marketing

Key outcomes

- To understand the concept of e-marketing
- To understand the importance of effective subject headers
- To understand the benefits of effective email signatures
- Understand important considerations when it comes to conducting e-marketing campaigns
- To understand the benefits of using email marketing software
- To become aware of some of the potential email marketing softwares

What is emarketing?

E-marketing (or email marketing), is the marketing of products or services via email. Specifically the term is usually used to refer to:

- Sending emails with the purpose of enhancing the relationship with those on your database by providing them with relevant content, and a better understanding of your area of expertise and key business offerings
- The broadcasting of messages to encourage customer loyalty and repeat business
- The sending of emails with the purpose of converting prospective clients through calls to action within the broadcast
- The writing and scheduling of an automated series of messages
- Email marketing is popular because it offers:
 - Wide, targeted distribution
 - Is inexpensive - compared to other marketing investments such as direct mail or printed newsletters
 - Generally provides a good ROI (return on investment)

- Pushes the message - as opposed to a website that waits for customers to come in and email is 'going to them'
- Trackable - An advertiser can track users via web bugs, bounce messages, unsubscribes, read-receipts, click-throughs, etc. These can be used to measure open rates, positive or negative responses, correlate leads/sales with marketing.
- Measurable – unlike some traditional forms of media
- Generates repeat business affordably and automatically
- Is widely used and accepted
- Can be forwarded on once or multiple times and hence starts 'viral marketing'
- Green - email marketing is paper-free

As you have discovered throughout this program there are many potential business objectives you can set out to achieve through your website and digital marketing strategies, however the importance of funneling your marketing into your database should not be under-estimated. Indeed the size of your database and the frequency you communicate with them can greatly increase the value of your business.

Just consider if you were looking into the possibility of buying a business. If a large, active and highly relevant database came with the deal would your interest be piqued?

It is also important to remember that unlike social media networks, you own and control the data on your database.

E-marketing stats

Here is some recent research that demonstrates the power of email marketing:

There were 3.146 billion email accounts worldwide at the end of 2011 (Radicati Group) and 85% of worldwide internet users access email (Ipsos).

59% of B2B marketers say email is the most effective channel in generating revenue (BtoB Magazine).

|

Investments made in email marketing will grow from \$1.3 billion in 2010 to \$2 billion by 2014. - Forrester Research

Trends in Emarketing

According to Comscore, young people are using email less and less. Email usage declined by 34% among U.S. 18-24-year-olds in 2011.

A growing number of emails are also being opened on mobile devices. 27% of emails were opened on a mobile device during the second half of 2011 up from 20% during the first half of 2011 (Knotice). And yet, according to eConsultancy, more than a third of email marketing companies have no strategy in place for email on mobile devices.

For a range of other emarketing stats from 2012 see this link:

<http://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/33901/The-Ultimate-List-of-2012-Email-Marketing-Stats.aspx>

Getting Started

Essential:

- Access to a professional e-marketing program/software
- A database/list to market to
- Set objectives and benchmarks – like any business activity, there is no point embarking if you have not first considered what it is you are trying to achieve
- A desire and a commitment to see it through
- An open, flexible approach

Ideal:

- An existing website that you have access to and can either quickly and easily make changes yourself, or have changed quickly and easily by others at a cost that will not prohibit you from making changes
- Google Analytics installed so you can evaluate the effect of emarketing broadcasts.
- Offline systems in place to measure enquiries resulting from emarketing activities i.e. procedures in place and staff trained to ask anyone calling in or walking in ‘how they heard about you’ with the option to track ‘email broadcast’.

Why Microsoft Outlook/Express/ Hotmail etc just won't do

Whilst it is possible to send out bulk emails via Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft Express, Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo and other email programs, there are a range of issues associated with sending large, regular broadcasts and maintaining your database.

A good emarketing software will help you keep compliant with ANTI-SPAM laws (more on these below), allowing people to automatically subscribe and unsubscribe or update their details, saving you on the need to self-administrate your database (which is labour-intensive and risks

mistakes).

Good emarketing software will also:

1. Track your results, telling you who's opening, clicking, and coming back for more. This will help you write more relevant content in the future. Allow you to place merge tags in your templates to personalise our campaigns with subscriber names, sharing links, videos, polls and more
2. Add social sharing buttons to your template, or share a link to the web version of your campaign after it goes out
3. Segment your list based on engagement, location, social stats and more, so you can tailor your message to the people reading it
4. Create and schedule automated messages that make your subscribers feel special and encourage engagement

There are a number of important considerations when selecting the right emarketing system for you. Some of these include:

- Charging structure – some charge a flat monthly rate, some per email, some on the size of the database and or/users. What would suit your needs?
- Level of support – some offer support via telephone inside Australian working hours, others offer a strictly online service
- Level of development – whilst they may be a good system now, do they have a good innovation / product development team to stay at the cutting edge
- Client database limit – If you have a big database (or plan to) can they cope with your database size? 10,000, 100,000, 1m??
- Delivery speed – once you hit send will your email go out immediately, within the hour or longer? Can you schedule your email to go out at a delayed time or date?
- Opt-in requirements – Can you import your existing contacts to the system quickly and easily or will they need to go through an opt-in process, which may result of some unsubscribes?

Email Marketing Programs

Check out the suitability of the following email programs for your business by clicking on the website links below.

For each item click on the 'features' page and the 'pricing' page and consider the software suitable to your needs. You will note many price based on the size of the database you have (or anticipate you will have) and how frequently you intend to distribute broadcasts.

Mailchimp.com [<http://mailchimp.com/>] – Mail chimp offers a free plan for up to 2000 names and a range of other monthly and pay as you go plans. They have many integrations and have continued to innovate through the years, and continue to be recognised as an industry leader in the emarketing world.

Constant Contact [<http://www.constantcontact.com/welcome.jsp>] - Constant Contact is another popular emarketing system out of America. You pay based on the size of your database in US dollars.

Vision6 [<http://www.vision6.com.au/>] - Vision6 is very popular and is an Australian system but it's definitely not the cheapest solution around. Many large corporations and Government agencies use this system. Not only will you pay monthly access fees (which tend to be higher than others out there) you'll also pay based on how many messages you send - not good if you want to get into your emarketing in a big way!

Mad Mimi [https://www.madmimi.com/service_agreements/choose_plan/] - If you term yourself a bit of a 'techno-phobe' i.e. someone who is afraid of technology, this solution could be just what you've been looking for. It's also one of the most cost effective options we've seen, and one of the simplest to use.

A Weber [<http://aweber.com/?322475>] - These guys have been doing emarketing for a long time and really know their stuff. Apart from having most features you would expect from an emarketing system (templates, tracking etc) they also have extras such as comprehensive subscriber management tools, which allow you to manage 'subscriptions' to your database, be that automate digital product delivery and post-purchase email campaigns. They also have auto responders which once you start using you'll wonder how you ever lived without them!

Campaign Monitor [<http://www.campaignmonitor.com/>] - Campaign Monitor makes it easy to attract new subscribers, send them beautiful email newsletters and see stunning reports on the results.

Active Campaign [<http://www.activecampaign.com/>] - Engage your customers with easy to use email marketing from ActiveCampaign.

Cake [<http://cakemail.com/>]- An email marketing tool, for agencies and small businesses alike. Know of another emarketing system you use and love? Share it with the group on the Private Facebook thread.

Importing your database

Once you have an emarketing system in place, you need to import your existing database (if any). Depending on the system you are moving your contacts from, and to, (and your technical ability) you may need some professional assistance with this process.

Growing Your Database

Once you have completed this process it's time to grow your database!

Here are 12 ways you can start growing your database now:

- Tell your clients, associates, and friends
- Ask your existing database for referrals
- Put a sign up form on your home page and every page of your website
- Incentivise your website browsers to join your database by offering a free goodie for new subscribers - free article, report, resource list, e-book, etc
- Plug your database sign up (and incentive) in your e-mail signature
- Get content published in OTHER broadcasts, with a call to action or link to your website at the end of the article or clip
- Get your content published in article directories, with a call to action or link to your website at the end of the article or clip
- Announce the ability to join your database on all the directories you are listed on
- Do shout outs via social media reminding people that they can join your email database
- Advertise the ability to sign up to your database (with incentive) on the back of your business cards
- Become active in a few online forums where your ideal readers hang out

- Create a database sign up form on your Facebook page. For a sample see: <http://www.facebook.com/AdamNobelRealEstate> (note, getting this into place requires knowledge of coding. You may need professional assistance to achieve this)

Effective Email Communication

Here are 10 top tips to writing an effective emarketing communication

1. Consider who you are targeting with your communication. Is it:

- A prospect (customer acquisition)
- A repeat customer (up-sell and cross-sell)
- A reactivation i.e. the win-back / retention candidate
- With the reader firmly in mind, write effective, relevant copy. If you're not a wordsmith, get professional assistance

2. Including articles? Keep it brief. The sole purpose of a newsletter article is to grab the reader's interest so that they click on the link and read the full text.

3. Consider what you want the reader to do as a result of reading the newsletter? Book into an event? Buy a product? Contact you? Make sure this is clearly communicated.

4. 80% of whether a user will open an email, is in its subject header. Carefully strategise your subject header. Avoid subject headers such as 'Winter Newsletter'. This is uninspiring and does not give the reader any compelling reason to open or read the message.

5. Avoid the spam filters - To make sure your emails don't get flagged as spam - and deleted before they even get to your subscribers - avoid using words such as 'Free', '£££', 'Save', 'Discount', etc., in both the subject line and the content of your email.

6. The Power of Personalisation - By simply starting your email with "Hi [subscriber_name]" instead of the boring "Hi there", you can increase both your reading and click-thru rates by up to 650%. Why? Put simply, it's because your subscribers feel like they already have a relationship with you as you've addressed them by their first name.

7. Timing is everything – In short send on Tuesday / Wednesday to enjoy an increased response. Studies conducted by online research analysts have shown that the best days to perform a mail-out to your list are Tuesday and Wednesday, as this is when people are more receptive to communication.

8. Share the responsibility - Get your whole team involved in coming up with ideas for your next newsletter. Establish an ideas folder or Google Doc or spreadsheet for ongoing collaboration.

9. Images - Using proactive royalty free images at key points will draw the readers eye to key points within the newsletter and keep them reading.

10. Meet your legal obligations – clearly identify yourself and offer an unsubscribe link on all communications.

How Often To Send EMarketing Campaigns?

How often should I send an email broadcast out? The answer to this commonly asked question will vary greatly depending on your objectives and will depend largely on who your database are, and what is realistic for you to commit to. Whilst it is great to shoot for a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly broadcasts which your database will come to 'expect', it is also important to send out broadcasts with quality content, and not just because you are due to send out a newsletter.

Frequency may also change over time as your database becomes more active, receptive and they build confidence and trust in you and what you're sending.

Results generally come about over a period of time, that's why the tracking and measuring is so important.

What stats do you need your emarketing system to provide and should you monitor after any given campaign?

- Unique open rate - the number of emails opened for the first time
- Unique click-through rate – how many people clicked on certain links
- Link popularity – which were the links within the email that the most people clicked on
- What time did it take for your email to be opened (this will dictate how far out you will need to send an email campaign in terms of promotions with a set time frame)
- What was your bounce rate
- Which day of the week has the highest open rate percentage

Important Considerations

Companies and individuals considering doing emarketing must make sure that their activities do not violate spam laws such as:

- United States' CAN-SPAM Act (Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing Act)
- The European Privacy & Electronic Communications Regulations 2003
- The Australian Spam Act 2003 and the Spam (Consequential Amendments) Act 2003 became operative on 11 April 2004
- Internet provider's acceptable use policy.

If your business uses any form of e-marketing you must understand and meet the following three key requirements of the Spam Act.

To comply services typically:

1. Consent- make sure you have consent to contact the recipient and can prove you have obtained it
2. Identify- include accurate information to identify yourself or your organisation as the authorised sender of the message i.e. a valid physical address
3. Unsubscribe - make sure your messages have a functional, ideally 'one-click' unsubscribe facility, so that recipients can unsubscribe at any time.

A word of caution

To grow their email database, some marketers purchase lists. This is not a practice we recommend as sometimes these lists are full of invalid addresses and for people who are not interested in hearing from you. If you consider the anti-spam laws above, you may also be in breach of these.

Email Signatures – Lazy Person's emarketing!

You're probably familiar with e-mail signatures - they're the few lines of contact information that many of us put at the bottom of every e-mail we send. They are what we call 'lazy person's emarketing' because just by sending emails to anyone, on any topic, you have the potential to passively communicate a message, including a nudge to join your database (with an incentive).

If you don't know how to amend your email signature and you use Microsoft Outlook, see this link: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/outlook-help/insert-a-signature-in-a-message->

HP005242753.aspx. If you use other programs, search through the help files or online for assistance for that particular program on how to set them up.

There are also cool apps such as <http://www.wisestamp.com/> which helps you create a great looking email signature which works on Gmail, Verizon, Postbox and Rockmelt. There is a free option or a paid option [<https://www.plimus.com/jsp/buynow.jsp?contractId=3101374&referrer=573493%5D>] available with more functionality.

Here are a few ways that can get more leads, more referrals and more sales through your email signature:

- **Full contact details** – Whilst this may seem so obvious we're always amazed at how many people don't include their full contact details on their email signature, OR they do on their initial emails but not on replies! It is a big no-no and could seriously affect the effectiveness of your email communication. So make sure you have your full contact details i.e. name, position, company, landline, mobile (if you want to give it out), your email, your social media links (Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter accounts) and maybe even your Skype or other IM (instant messaging) IDs and working hours so people know when and how to contact you.
- **Logo that links to your website** – In fact, you might as well link the majority of the signature to the page you want people to go to on your website from your email signature (it might not be the home page – it might be a sales page you are pushing at the moment). Don't underestimate how much traffic you can get from your good old email signature. To do this place a hyperlink on the logo by right clicking on the logo and going edit hyperlink. Place the relevant web address in the spot and save. Test it out and hopefully you're set.
- **Awards** – Have you won any local, regional, national or trade awards? If so include them in your signature! This might add some credibility to your message, particularly if you are contacting someone for the first time or trying to win over a prospective client.
- **Accreditations** – do you belong to any trade associations or regulatory boards? Could these associations again give some credibility to your message which will help you win someone over? If so – include it!
- **Environmental and legal policies** – do you have a spam or privacy policy? Include it! Do you discourage people to print your emails unless necessary in an effort to save the environment? Include it!

- **Charities** - Do you support any nominated charities? Include it!

- **Special offer/upcoming event/key information you want people to know** – Perhaps you're having a special sale now or you're giving away a free report, e-book, or emarketing subscription. Remember, e-mails get forwarded around all the time, so take advantage of this free exposure.

- **Make money off your signature** – can you broker a deal whereby someone wants to sit as a 'sponsored link' at the bottom of your email signature because they want exposure to the types of people you email?

Summary

In summary...

1. Get an e-marketing system and enter any names you do have
2. Think of ways you can grow your list and start implementing strategies to do so
3. Segment your database into the client groups that apply to you
4. Start communicating with them, and commit to continue to communicate with them, in a timely, relevant fashion
5. Note down in your Digital Marketing Plan your objectives related to E-marketing.

For people starting out some suggestions include:

1. Establish plug for database on email signature
2. Establish sign up form on prominent location of website
3. Set up an initial database-building campaign
4. Establish referral incentives
5. Write e-newsletters ahead of time
6. Broker strategic alliance cross-promotional deals

For people starting out some suggestions include:

1. Increase open rates i.e. 10 % to 20 %
2. Increase in referrals
3. Start tracking click throughs on offers/links/articles
4. Decrease opt out rates
5. Survey customers on content they want
6. Automate internal processes better

7. Increase amount of communication customer or prospective customer receives and hence level of customer service

Want more on emarketing?

Download this great ebook from HubSpot:

http://www.hubspot.com/Portals/53/docs/ebooks/an_introduction_to_email_marketing_final.pdf

THAT'S ALL FOR NOW!