



10 Email Marketing Resolutions for 2010

Ring In the New Year with Email Marketing Resolutions to Grow Your Business

A New Year is here, and with it comes another round of New Year's resolutions. As you think about your own New Year's resolutions, we wanted to share 10 New Year's email marketing resolutions to help you grow your small business in 2010.

1. **Grow Your Email List:** Growing your email list is key to your business growth since the more customers you have on your list, the better it is for your business. Here are 6 smart ways to collect good email addresses:
 - ✓ Place email opt-in forms on your website, blog, and social networking sites such as Facebook. Use a VerticalResponse email [opt-in form](#), free!
 - ✓ Include a link to an opt-in form in your Tweets and Social Media profiles to extend the reach of each of your emails.
 - ✓ Collect email addresses and the OK to mail at the point-of-sale. If you have a storefront, ask your employees to collect email addresses, or place a guest book at the register. You can even collect email addresses during phone and online transactions.
 - ✓ Display a friendly pop-up window to new site visitors, asking them if they'd like to subscribe to your email list. Try not to be too pushy with pop-ups by including the benefits of signing-up for your list in the pop-up.
 - ✓ Send [direct mail postcards](#) and ask your prospects/customers to sign up to receive special "email only" offers and discounts.
 - ✓ Remember to avoid sending email to people who aren't expecting to hear from your company. VerticalResponse's recommendation is that you should only email people who have agreed to receive email from your business.

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10 Email Marketing Resolutions for 2010 (cont.)




2. **Create an Email Marketing Plan:** One of the best ways to get organized is by creating a plan. Create an email schedule with your preferred email launch dates. Then work backwards from your launch date – through all your due dates – to reach your start date. This will help make sure that you are working with achievable deadlines. For examples of various planning documents, check out our marketing [business forms](#) in the [VR Marketing Lounge](#). Become a member of the lounge (if you aren't already), and you can access the business forms for free!
3. **Develop an Email Welcome Program:** Email welcome programs are a positive way to get loyal customers. If you don't have a welcome program, now is a good time to create one. We suggest starting with a warm welcome email thanking people for signing-up. Then decide how often to mail, and send a welcome series of 3-5 emails that offer helpful information at the right time.
4. **Segment Your List and Provide Relevant Content:** When it comes to email dissatisfaction, irrelevant content is the biggest offender, rating even higher than mailing too much. What this means is that your business should try to provide relevant content to your customers. VerticalResponse recommends doing this through list segmentation. Ways to segment your mailing lists include:
 - ✓ **Email response rates:** Segment based on people who open and click vs. those who don't.
 - ✓ **Purchase history:** Segment based on past purchase behavior.
 - ✓ **Demographic:** Segment based on demographics such as gender, location, age, and other specifications you may have in your data.
5. **Do Email Tests and Use What You've Learned:** Test, test, test. It's easy to say you'll conduct email tests, but even harder to get around to doing it. We recommend creating an email test schedule, and committing to testing at least one thing a month. Easy things to test are subject lines, copy length (short vs. long), time and day of the week to mail, call-to-actions and creative. Split your email list in half, where half of the list receives one version, and the other half receives the other version. Track your results, and use them in future mailings.

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6. **Pay More Attention to Subject Lines:** Subject lines are like the envelope of a direct mail piece. You can use a subject line to entice customers to open your email and see what's inside! Since subject lines are a key component to getting your email opened, try to keep these 6 things in mind when writing them:
- ✓ **Personalization:** Include personalization (such as first name) in your subject lines to see if it improves your open rate.
 - ✓ **Length:** It's generally good to keep your subject lines concise. Avoid going over 50 characters if you can help it, or the message could get cut off.
 - ✓ **Benefit Oriented:** Mention what benefits your customers will receive.
 - ✓ **Call-to-Action:** Include a call-to-action in your subject lines that will make people want to open it.
 - ✓ **Keep it Fresh:** Try not to reuse the same subject line over and over; test subject lines to see what your audience responds to best.
 - ✓ **'From Labels':** 'From labels' can be just as important as subject lines, because they tell the recipient who sent the email. If you include your company name in the 'from label,' you won't have to repeat your company name in the subject line.
7. **Listen to Customer Feedback:** Email a survey asking your customers what they think about your emails, such as frequency, content and relevancy. Consider these findings as you make email plans for 2010. If you are not sure how to get started with surveys, you can try VerticalResponse surveys and get 25 FREE survey responses. Learn more about [VerticalResponse surveys here](#). Also, you can join the VerticalResponse Live Survey Demo every other Thursday at 10 a.m. PST. Check out our [events calendar](#) to see the demo dates and register.
8. **Monitor Email Results:** The next step after sending an email is to track your results. We suggest tracking open and click rates, revenue and conversion, unsubscribes, and bounces. These can be key to discovering the success of your emails.

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9. **Integrate Social Media and Email:** It's easy to see how email and social media work together. Here are some ways you can use them together to create more buzz around your business:
- ✓ **Post Your Email to Social Networks:** Instantly publish your emails to Twitter or Facebook using the [VerticalResponse Social Sharing feature](#).
 - ✓ **Link to Social Networks in Your Email:** Include links in your emails to your company social network pages such as Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn, Twitter and Yelp.
10. **Monitor Competitor and Industry Email:** Subscribing to mailing lists in your industry allows you to see what competitors and colleagues are doing with their emails. You can use this information as a benchmark – and possible best practices – for your business. Ideas of emails to subscribe to include:
- ✓ Email belonging to leading businesses in your industry
 - ✓ Direct competitor's emails
 - ✓ Industry-wide online newsletters

This might seem like a lot, but you have the whole year to make email marketing improvements for your business! Start small; you don't have to tackle all these resolutions at once. You could try making it a goal to try one resolution each month.

Happy New Year from VerticalResponse, and good luck with your small business email marketing resolutions for 2010!

Start Your Resolutions & Send Email Today!

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