



Six Tips to Improve Email Delivery Rates

Want to learn more?

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1. Use opt-in form instructions

Provide clear, step-by-step directions that indicate how subscribers can guarantee delivery of your emails straight to their inboxes. After registrants complete an opt-in form on your website and click “submit”, direct them to a page which suggests they add your email address to their address books. Then, to make the process nearly foolproof – and keep people from abandoning the task in frustration - provide specific instructions for each of the major ISPs (AOL, Yahoo, Gmail, Hotmail etc.)

2. Use emails as reinforcement vehicles

In all of your email communications, make sure you include a line of copy – at the top of the message - reminding subscribers to add your email address to their address book. Placing this reminder at the top of the email ensures it will be read even if your content is blocked due to the users’ preference settings and gives them the opportunity to add you right then and there.

For example:

To view all images and links, please add Weekly_WorkZ_News@mail.vresp.com to your address book now.

3. Host your newsletter

Combine both images and text in your emails. Then, if graphics are stripped from your emails due to the recipient’s preferences, at least they are left with text they can read. If you must use an image as the dominant form of communication (we know, some graphic designers won’t have it any other way!), then insert a link at the top of the email that lets people read the message without interference.

For example:

“If you have trouble viewing this newsletter - [click here](#) for the online version.

Use the link to redirect the reader to a page where you host the newsletter. This increases the probability that your email will get read and that subscribers will add you to their address books.

4. Use a filter

Run your email through a spam filter before you launch your campaign. If words get caught in the filter, replace them with alternatives that will pass the test before proceeding with your mailing. This easy-to-perform trial may dramatically reduce the risk of your email being mislabeled as spam.

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5. Meet the Challenge Response

Make sure you reply to any “challenge responses” you receive. A challenge response is an attempt to verify the sender of an email and that the administration of the list is not being mismanaged. When a challenge response is initiated, the sender will receive a message asking you to respond with a particular code. Simply enter the password; doing so marks you as a responsible emailer and may prevent the loss of a relationship. If managing these responses becomes burdensome, you might consider hiring a part-time employee to handle this task.

6. Market to those that want to hear from you

If you know people “double opted-in” - meaning they checked a box requesting an email and took a second step to click on a link in an email to subscribe - segment them in a separate list. Slowly, over time, add your clickers and openers to that “responsive” list. Your goal should be to transfer as many people as you can onto that list, since it will be the one with the highest response rate and the lowest complaint rate. Just because you have a prior business relationship with someone doesn't mean they want to communicate with you via the email medium, so work diligently to manage your list so you can easily determine your core recipients.

Employing these practices will improve your message delivery, but don't view them as a one-off solution. As with most relationships, quality email relationships grow with time and care. Reinforcement is key. So don't be afraid to let your customers know you love them by launching a new campaign. After all, they're only a click away.

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