

TESTING, **TESTING, 1, 2, 3:** Email Testing for Everyone



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Testing your emails is an essential practice any business using email marketing cannot afford to overlook. Testing provides valuable information about how your recipients are interacting with your emails, and how to get better results. It is relatively easy and straightforward to test your emails; however, keep in mind that it's something that needs to be done continuously over time because what is successful today, may not be successful tomorrow. So, it's important that you keep an eye on your email response rates and test different elements as needed.

Once you have decided to start testing your emails decide what you want to test and improve. You can start with these basic tests:

- Open Rate
- Unsubscribe Rate
- Click Rate
- Conversion

How to Test for Success

Once you have chosen what you want to test you can plan your process.

1. Create your "control" email. This is the baseline email that you use most of the time.
2. Make a copy of the email.
3. Make the copied version your "Test Copy" and then make the changes you want to test.

Split your list into two equal [segments](#) and send your "**Control Email**" to one half of the list and your "**Test Email**" to the other half. It is important to send the emails at the same time so you get accurate and valid results, unless of course you're testing the day and time of your send. Remember to only test one thing at a time.

Here's a list of the common elements you can test and the corresponding metrics.

1. Open Rate & Unsubscribe Rate

From Name:

Your From Name is usually going to be one of two things, your company name or a person's name. Your From Name should be what your recipients recognize you by and whom they expect to hear from.

TIP

An important thing to remember is that you should keep your From Name consistent. Send two emails at the same time and then compare the open rates and unsubscribe rates for your emails. The From Name with the higher open rate and lower unsubscribe rate will be the From Name you will want to continue to use.

Subject Line:

Your subject line is going to depend on the content of your email and the action that you want your recipients to take. You can test a number of things in your subject line; here are just a few examples to help you get started.

- Call To Action vs. Description of Content
- Percentage vs. Dollar Amount to describe a discount or sale
- Personalization vs. No Personalization
- A sale expiration date vs. no expiration date

Make sure that your subject line is not misleading, otherwise you will upset your recipients and most likely they will unsubscribe from your list. You will find out quickly how your recipients are reacting to your subject lines by your open rate, the most effective subject lines usually get higher open rates.

When to Send:

The most effective day and time to send an email is different for every company and industry. Pick some times when you think your audience will most likely want to receive your email and will want to take action with it. Keep in mind that your newsletters (which tend to be longer) and your sale promotions (which tend to be shorter) may have different optimal days and times for sending. Because there are so many options of when to send your emails, finding the optimal time and day may take more than a couple tests. You can also look at when your recipients are opening your emails in the reporting dashboard of your VerticalResponse account to get some more insight.

How often you send email is also going to affect your unsubscribe rate, so you need to test it and find your “sweet spot”. If you send too much, your recipients may get overwhelmed. On the other hand, if you don’t mail enough your recipients may forget about you.

TIP

Make sure to give your recipients what you promised when they opted-in to your email list.

2. Click Through Rate & Conversion

Click Through Rates and Conversion Rates depend on a lot of the same things. The elements that affect these two metrics range from the voice or tone of your email to the placement of your Call To Action. Here are some ideas about what to test to increase your CTR and Conversion Rate:

Email Content:

- Long vs. Short Copy
- Headlines
- Testimonial vs. No Testimonial
- Using a “% Off” or “\$ Off” in your offer
- Using an offer expiration

Call To Action:

- Button Link vs. Text Link
- Placement of Your CTA: Beginning, Middle, End of Your Email
- Number of Call To Actions in your email
- How your CTA is written – e.g. “Buy Today” vs. “Buy Now”

In addition to email layout and content, your conversions are going to heavily depend on the landing page your links are directed too. Think of your links as a subject line within your email and your landing page as an extension of your email. Just like the subject line in your email, you want to tell the reader what they can expect to get when they click a link and deliver upon that promise.

The success of your email depends on how your recipients react to them. Testing your emails will give you valuable insight about your recipients so that you can deliver what they want. When starting out, put yourself in your recipient’s shoes and think about what you would like to receive from your business, when you would like to receive it and how often you would like to receive it. You will then have a base to start from and can begin testing to optimize the results of your emails.

Testing Resources:

[VR Marketing Blog](#)

[VR Buzz Archive](#)

[VR How To Do Everything Page](#)

[Demos and Webinars](#)