

E-MAIL MARKETING STRATEGIES

First, you may ask, why e-mail marketing? In today's world with Facebook, Twitter and blogs being more clever ways to communicate on-line, why use email? The simple answer is, because it works!! And works well!

Email marketing is a safe bet because

You can target your audience

It allows the support of sales through other channels. Email marketing supports database integration and segmentation and several other techniques which allow you to improve the targeting of outgoing messages.

It driven by data. Every email campaign sent out generates a lot of actionable data which will help you refine your approach and messages.

And the best part is that it builds loyalty, strengthens relationships and encourages trust.

However, things are not so rosy. The number of e-mails sent daily number billions. Private, business and commercial mails are flooding in- boxes so that they overflow. The in-box is now a fierce battleground for grabbing the attention of a subscriber. As result, e-mail fatigue is very likely, and your specially created message may disappear into the spam folder.

So let's look at effective ways and strategies to keep your email marketing messages from becoming victims of the delete key.

The need is to develop techniques and strategies so that you approach your audience in a way that they are willing to spend a few seconds on your e-mail.

The general goals of an email marketing campaign are:

- Awareness about a product or service: Email can be used effectively to contribute to brand identification, which is one of the fundamental concepts of marketing. Brand identification is about letting people know about you and what you represent, thereby creating an image in their minds. Many a time we pay more for a brand, because of the image we perceive of them.
- Consideration for a specific purpose: Use emails to tell customers about special updates and products. This is a highly effective marketing strategy, as customers might like learning about a good buy or deal.
- Finding a potential buyer
- Try to sell a product, resulting in an immediate sale.
- Retaining customer and developing loyalty and relationships: Use e-mails to build good customer relations. An e-mail, if used positively, can build up your reputation for service and attentiveness. This will result in sales and customer retention increasing.

To achieve these goals, consider the following strategies:

SEND AN INTELLIGENT E-MAIL

An intelligent and effective email is one that begins with a clear understanding of the consumer- his needs, his requirements and his thought process. What does the customer expect when he opens your e-mail to read it? Consider these basic elements of an effective e-mail:

- Respect and value your recipient: The more the number of e-mails, the easier they are to ignore, delete or unsubscribe. With so much choice available, recipients are being selective. Remember, a recipient DOES NOT read all mails! While you may slave over content and try to

make it different, don't forget that at the receiving end is human being! The recipient is actually doing you a favor by reading your mail! The sure-fire route to long-term success is to get your recipient's permission before you market to them, and do respect this permission once obtained! Remember, that unsolicited e-mails are SPAM! This includes ensuring that that all unsubscribes are suppressed immediately and that any customer service replies to outbound mailings are also removed quickly.

- Give that professional touch: You have to pay detailed attention to every aspect of email marketing, to stay ahead of your competitors who vie with you for space in the inbox of your customer! This will include planning the scope of your newsletters or campaigns, design and copywriting the emails, dealing with subscribers, advertisers, contributors, managing the data base and so on. An important aspect of this is the content of the e-mail campaign. Although your copywriters may work slave over the content and deliver the perfect piece, check that it aligns with the search phrases that are used when potential customer visit your site! An example is of the IBM ThinkPad, which were the company's first laptops. Most of their marketing referred to the product as a ThinkPad, and not a laptop, which it actually was. So whenever a person searched for laptop on the web, the keyword used was laptop, and as a result IBM's ThinkPad didn't figure in the search results at all, or did very minimally.