

# Improving Your Engagement Rate with Subject Lines

CRM Tech Tips for Email Marketing

June 2020

# Do your emails stand out?

**72% of people  
choose emails their  
preferred method  
of contact**

**64% of people say  
they open an email  
based solely on the  
subject line**

**Average email  
open rate across  
all industries in  
15-25%**

**What's your average open rate?**

## The Ultimate Goals of your Email Subject Line

**1** Capture the audience's attention in the first 3 – 5 seconds

**2** Get your message into your customers' inbox and avoid being flagged as spam or blocked

**3** Showcase the “what's in it for me” factor to get your customer's attention immediately

**4** Focus your subject line solely on your customer

## A G E N D A

- Best Practices for Engaging Subject Lines
- Proven Strategies for Effective Subject Lines
- Achieving Customer-Focused Subject Lines

# Best Practices for Engaging Subject Lines

**Subject lines are like first impressions – a good one will likely lead to success**

(or a second date)

## INCLUDE PERSONALIZATION

# 74%

of marketers say targeted personalization increases customer engagement.

Brands see an average increase of 20% in sales when using personalized experiences.

- Personalization ranges from basic to complex.
- Inserting the subscriber's name in the subject line is a simple and most often used tactic of email personalization.
- A more complex tactic uses a subscriber's birthday, gender, behavior patterns, or dynamic content.

### Examples of Personalization:

Hello Jane

Welcome back Jane

Jane, you still have items in your cart.



## A/B TESTING

**A/B testing** compares two variants of an email with only one varying factor.

Once the test completes, it tells you which option won or was most favored.

**A/B Testing** can also be used in real-time to push the winning subject line.

Testing different variants can help with choosing the best option for future campaign strategies.



## BE CONCISE

You have 3 – 5 seconds to capture a subscriber's attention. Less is more.

According to Massey University's Online Writing and Learning Link (OWLL) define three types of readers as:

- Skimming
- Scanning
- In depth

**GOAL – Subject lines should aim for the scanners**

When scanning, you cover as much of the content as needed to accomplish your purpose

***Subject Lines with  
50 or fewer characters  
outperform longer ones.***

## DON'T FORGET THE CALL TO ACTION

Your call-to-action should grab your audience's attention.

Telling your audience what action to take is the nuts and bolts of an actionable [call-to-action](#), (CTA).

In the examples below, *click*, *shop*, *order*, and *book* are the CTAs.

### Examples of call-to-actions within subject lines:

“**Shop** today for TVs under \$300!”

“**Order** by Sunday for 1-day shipping.”

“**Book** today! 15% off your next visit.”

[CLICK HERE](#)

Be sure to use a strong verb that makes the command distinct.

# AVOID

SPAM WORDS

# 21%

of email recipients report email as Spam, even if they know it isn't, reports Convince & Convert.

# 69%

of email recipients report email as spam solely based on the subject line, according to OptinMonster

**BE MINDFUL OF . . .**

- Protecting your sender reputation by carefully selecting your choice of words.

- Review this list of [475 Spam Trigger Keywords to Avoid in 2020](#).

## GET THE TIMING RIGHT

It's time to rethink your sending practices.

With so much competition, now more than ever, it's essential to stay alert to the best timing based on your audience preferences.

And, tie in subject lines that are appropriate for when your customers are viewing their emails

### EXAMPLES

Segmented customers who open in AM – sent at 6AM EST

“Good morning, Jane! Are you ready to see the shoes that you were dreaming of?”

Segmented customers who open in PM – sent at 6PM EST

“Long day, Jane? We have a pair of shoes that your feet will thank you for”



# PROVEN STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL SUBJECT LINES

## TIME IS RUNNING OUT... USE A SENSE OF URGENCY



Words to use in subject lines to **show urgency** are "limited", "last chance", "alert", "breaking", "important", or "urgent".

Crafting a subject line that has a limited supply or limited time gives recipients a sense of scarcity.

According to Hubspot, "emails with subject lines that have time-sensitive words are likely to boost open rates by 22%."

## OFFER INCENTIVES



Offering incentives is an ideal way to get your customers to click on your subject line.

To build customer loyalty and increase engagement, start by inserting an offer.

Subscribers will click for savings, freebies, or special offers.

Incentives should be simple, distinct, believable, and motivate your audience to click.

### **Examples of subject lines with incentives:**

"25% off your favorites"

"A little luxury at a great price"

"Your Final Notice: \$10, \$20, or \$30 OFF?"



# USE

# HOW TO

# STATEMENTS

How-to subject lines have promises associated with them.

It offers to teach or demonstrate steps to fix or accomplish a specific task or problem that is relevant to your subscribers.

How-tos are excellent options for subscribers who are looking for solutions.

## Examples of how-to subject lines:

"How to Survive Your Next Overnight Flight"

"How to email a busy person (including a word-for-word script)"

"Need a day at the beach? Just scratch n' sniff your way to paradise..."



## USE QUESTIONS

- If you want to boost your open rates, try using open-ended questions in your subject lines.
- Using questions are helpful when it answers an issue of concern to your audience.
- To successfully write a question subject line, make sure it's relative to your audience or something they can empathize with.

### **Examples of using questions in your subject lines:**

"Is this the hottest career in marketing?"

"How Have You Progressed Since the Third Grade?"

"Did you miss out on some of these new features?"

## TRY USING NUMBERS



- According to Campaign Monitor, "using numbers in your subject lines increases email open rates."
- A recent study that analyzed 115 million emails suggests email open, and reply rates are higher when a number is present in the subject line."

### **Examples of using numbers in your subject lines:**

"212 blog post ideas"

"9 Disgusting Facts about Thanksgiving"

"10 bizarre money habits making Millennials richer"

# Focus on Your Customer

## MAKE SURE YOUR SUBJECT LINE IS . . .

### **BENEFICIAL & RELEVANT**

- Understand why your customers signed up to receive your emails and tailor your subject lines accordingly
- Getting customers to open your email encompasses a combination of subject line best practices, not just one.
- Making sure your subject line delivers on showcasing how it's beneficial to your customers is key to boosting your email open rates.

### **COMMUNICATED EFFECTIVELY**

- Identify the main goal of your email or campaign and use subject lines that can help your customers understand what you are wanting them to do
- Focus on how what you're offering can benefit them.
- If your products or services are similar to your competitors, find that one unique selling point (USP) that differentiates what you're offering. And use it in the subject line!

## PERSUADE THROUGH CONVINCING ARGUMENT

- Apply the rule of reciprocation - provide customers with something directly of value and of benefit to them, and they will repay you with a click. And boost your open rate through reciprocation.
- When crafting a robust and effective subject line, keep the selling point, goal or call to action in mind.
- Determine how your offer is beneficial to your customers. Make sure the value and what it means for your customers are clear.
- The one commonality between each of the email subject line best practices is that each one should show how it's relevant or beneficial to your customers. So they feel compelled to click.

## USE YOUR BRAND'S VOICE

Subject lines are a taste of what is in the body of an email which is an extension of your brand's voice.

## SUMMARY

BRANDS HAVE A SHORT WINDOW OF TIME TO CAPTURE ITS AUDIENCE'S ATTENTION. A STRONG SUBJECT LINE STRATEGY IS NECESSARY FOR STRONG ENGAGEMENT & RETENTION OF CUSTOMERS

- 1 FOLLOW BEST PRACTICES**
- 2 CREATE A STRATEGY PLAN**
- 3 FOCUS ON YOUR CUSTOMERS**



# QUESTIONS