



GENRES OF EMAILS

One of the most appealing qualities of email marketing is its versatility. There are many different types of email campaigns that can be leveraged as fundamental components of any digital marketing strategy to drive results. The key is finding the campaigns that work best for your brand and the specific business goals at hand.

For example, email marketing can be used to gain brand awareness and visibility, boost engagement, acquire new customers, retain existing ones, and more. While email marketing is an umbrella term that covers a variety of unique strategies and campaigns, there are certain benefits and challenges that come with each campaign type.

First, there are emails that are sent out in a series or sequence, and then there are emails that are stand-alone.

LET'S GO OVER 3 SEQUENCE EMAILS FIRST.

1. **Welcome Sequence.** A welcome sequence is the first email sequence your subscribers receive after they've confirmed their email address. Welcome sequences are great, because you get to show up in a way that you can control and really share with your new subscribers what you're all about. Your welcome sequence is probably one of the most important sequences you'll ever write. Why is this critical in your email marketing strategy? Because it is sent at a time when someone has said they want to learn more from you and statistically, this email will have the highest open rates and engagement of any you'll ever send.

2. **Standard Promotional Sequence.** The primary focus of a promotional email sequence is to get the word out to potential customers about your product or service and to lead them through a process of warming them up to buy. Promotional email sequences will generally include 3-10 emails spread out over the course of a few days or weeks and they promote a specific event, product, or service. The ultimate goal of an email promotion is to get your subscribers to buy from you. The offer in the email is usually offered for a limited time (when the sequence ends), so the subscriber will feel the need to take immediate action.

3. **Newsletters.** Newsletters are very popular and are usually sent out on a consistent schedule. They often contain the company's blog content, upcoming events, and any updates about your company that would be of interest to your subscriber. Sent on a regular basis—such as monthly, bimonthly, or quarterly—newsletter emails are a great way for businesses to reinforce their industry expertise, build loyalty and engagement with subscribers, as well as grow a list of qualified prospects and customers.

NEXT, LET'S COVER STAND-ALONE EMAILS

There are two broad types of stand-alone marketing emails:

1. Engagement emails
2. Transactional emails

Engagement emails are more about storytelling. While transactional emails are directly related to making and closing a sale.

You'll see from the examples that these two types aren't mutually exclusive and also, some of them can be sequence emails. In some cases, an engagement email might have a transactional element to it. Keep this in mind as you go through the different types of emails listed below.

Engagement Email

The goal of engagement emails is more for branding and storytelling, rather than directly making a sale. Their purpose is to keep subscribers interested and engaged with the brand, even when they aren't in a buying mood.

When they're finally ready to buy or when your business has a special offer, subscribers will already have an active relationship with you even if they've never made a purchase before.

You can be more creative with these emails. In some cases, adding extra visuals or embedding links to audio and video can work really well.

Engagement Emails

1. **Welcome Emails.** Welcome emails can be a stand-alone email if you choose. They are the first email your subscribers receive after they've confirmed their email address. Since this is their first interaction with your brand in their inbox, make it memorable and worth their while. After all, subscribers are highly likely to open and click welcome emails compared to other types of promotional emails, according to a study from Experian. Because the welcome email is high-engagement, it also works as a great transactional email. The above Experian study also found that welcome emails have higher transaction rates and revenue per email than other transactional

emails. This is why it's typical for welcome emails to also offer discounts or free shipping to new subscribers.

- 2. Tutorials and Tips Emails/Educational.** You should also send instructive and educational emails that help subscribers in a way that's relevant to your business. These usually come in the form of how-to tutorials and tips. They can be simple or in-depth—depending on what your products do and what your subscriber needs. Instruction emails are a great way to familiarize your subscribers with your products or services. This can be especially useful when it's unclear how your business can help them solve a problem or attain a goal. Teaching them something new can also help them make quick positive changes in their lives that they can associate with your brand. A Tutorial/Tips email can be a stand-alone or a sequence. For example, BeardBrand, which sells beard grooming products, sends a 5-day grooming tutorial to new subscribers. Each installment of the tutorial includes multiple videos. Some even include links and reviews to the products used in the video. In an example of mixing transactional elements to engagement emails, the 5-day tutorial ends with an offer of a free mustache comb to go with the subscriber's first order. Educational Emails — These types of emails should help solve a problem or answer questions that an organization's subscribers may have. A good opportunity to send educational emails, for example, is to highlight new content on your website or to share an interesting article or blog.
- 3. The Free Gift Email.** Did you know that the average office worker receives 121 emails per day? So, if you want your email to be one of the few that's actually opened, you need to give free value now and again. An exclusive, free gift email sprinkled into your email marketing campaign will work like magic to keep your subscribers engaged and, well, subscribed. So what kind of a free gift should you send? An easy way to start is with something downloadable. For example, Slides sends out a huge pack of free design resources to download.

4. **Customer Stories.** Customer stories are generated from interviewing or studying your customers. These stories could be about their success with your products or services, their personal stories, and tips to other customers like them. Their stories could also come in the form of pictures or video they've taken. Because these stories come from other customers, it builds a sense of community. Subscribers are able to identify with other buyers, sharing their interests and experiences. Udemy, an online learning marketplace, saw a 35-percent increase in content engagement when they started sharing customer stories on their blog. Apply this concept to your email campaigns, and subscribers will be looking forward to your future emails and keep opening them.

5. **Brand Stories.** Unlike customer stories which talk about your brand from your customers' perspective, brand stories come from you or your team. This works great if there's a compelling personal story behind your brand. This will give your subscribers ways to identify with your brand. Your brand's stories can have other positive effects as well. Studies have found that customers who are exposed to a brand's stories were more likely to describe the brand positively and pay more for their products. You don't need a Hollywood-worthy origin story for your business to capture people's attention. Sometimes the story of how your products are made, the stories behind certain business decisions, can also help give your subscribers something engaging to look at and relate with.

6. **Re-engagement Emails.** It's possible that some of your subscribers will not be as engaged as others. This could be because their level of interest was low to begin with, it's been a while since your last update, or they're just not that interested in your emails. Whatever the reason, it's important to encourage them to re-engage with your brand. A study of re-engagement campaigns found that around 12-percent of those receiving re-engagement emails read them. If these numbers

seem small to you compared to the other types of emails on this list, consider that re-engagement campaigns are meant to win back customers that are inactive or uninterested. Getting 12-percent of these customers engaging with your brand again is no small feat. According to the study, there are two types of re-engagement emails that work well. The first is an email with “miss you” or “come back” in the subject line. The other re-engagement email you could use is to indicate a dollar-off discount in the subject line, which performs twice as well as those with percentage discounts.

7. **Order Status Emails.** For companies with e-commerce sites, this series of emails keeps customers informed about the status of their orders and typically includes order confirmation, shipment confirmation, shipment tracking, delivery confirmation, and receipts. Transactional emails such as these typically have average open rates that exceed 75%; however, few marketers use these opportunities to build customer relationships and grow revenue.
8. **Birthday/Holiday Emails.** Sending birthday or holiday wishes to your subscribers is a great way to keep your organization top of mind. And because of the fantastic targeting, these emails tend to get a remarkable response. To send birthday wishes, you would have to collect date of birth information on your sign-up or subscriber profile forms. By also including a special offer or coupon in these emails, you can help boost interest and possibly new sales, as well. According to one study, birthday emails generated more than two times the revenue of bulk mailings to the same customers.
9. **Anniversary Emails.** Celebrating a subscriber’s anniversary for joining your email list is another excellent opportunity for keeping your company top of mind and encouraging sales. On average, anniversary emails generated almost seven times more revenue compared to bulk mailings to the same customers one study found.

10. **The Value Email.** There doesn't have to be some direct conversion goal behind every email you send. In fact, if you want your conversion focused emails to be effective, you have to first earn your subscriber's trust. A value email is where you simply provide value with no strings attached. It could be a blog post, a dose of inspiration, or a simple tip. These emails are where you really start to build a relationship with your audience, and they are an absolutely critical component to a high-converting email marketing campaign. FiveThirtyEight gives incredible value with their daily digest email. They have curated all of the interesting news stories for the day, and get right to the bottom line so their subscribers don't have to read all of the stories themselves in order to sound smart when discussing current events with their friends and colleagues.

Transactional Emails

Just as their name implies, transactional emails are relevant to transactions your subscribers have had with your business. Unlike engagement emails, their objective is to initiate or close on a sale.

They could also be used to send or request updates on customer orders. Because of this, they are always triggered by specific customer actions and sent automatically. Engagement emails, on the other hand, can also be sent in real-time or on a pre-planned schedule rather than automatically triggered.

Here are some of the transactional emails you can use in your marketing campaigns:

1. **Cart Abandonment Reminders.** One type of transaction email that's essential for any online store is cart abandonment emails. These are the emails that you send out when potential customers add items to their online shopping cart, but don't follow

through on a purchase. These could provide an opportunity to increase your potential profits since approximately two-thirds of shopping cart transactions are abandoned. A good cart abandonment email includes a prominent call-to-action and some compelling copy to remind the customer why they should complete the sale.

2. **Time-Sensitive Promotions.** Time-sensitive promotional emails include an offer that will expire soon. This offer could be about the limited availability of the product or service, or it could be a discount that's only available for a limited time. When sending out these types of emails, the subject line has to be clear about the time sensitivity of the email. Otherwise, customers might not feel the urgency to open it immediately.
3. **Cross-Sell Recommendation Emails.** Use customers' purchase histories to create email campaigns with information about other products you sell that they may be interested in purchasing. For example, if a customer recently bought a smartphone, you know he or she may also be in the market for such accessories as cases, covers, and screen protectors. One study showed, for instance, transactional emails that include cross-sell items have 20% higher transaction rates than those without them.
4. **Sales Announcement Emails.** If your business has a new product/service or a special promotion based around a product line, send out an email—or a series of emails—to announce the news and help pique customers' and prospects' interest.
5. **Reorder Emails.** If your company sells a product that needs to be reordered regularly, such as vitamins or ink cartridges, you can use a reorder email program to remind customers before they run out. Coming up with an effective reorder email strategy for your products/services could result in a significant boost in sales and revenue. In one case study, an air products company generated about \$2 per email sent, thanks to a three-part triggered email series that reminded customers to

replace their indoor air filters. Of the customers who clicked through to the company's website, 53% made a purchase.

6. **Receipts Emails.** It's standard for online stores to send order confirmation or receipt emails once a customer completes a transaction. But rather than just reiterating the order details, there are many other things you can do to make your receipts bring in additional returns. The email receipt can include a download link so you can get the product instantly. The email receipt can also ask the customer to review your product or service. The email receipt can include coupon codes that your customer can use on their next purchase, which gives them an incentive to be a repeat customer. Another way to encourage additional purchases via your email receipts is to show customers related products that they can buy in the future. You can even add encouragement to the customer or a positive quote. Finally, you don't always have to use receipts to directly encourage additional sales, but you should always use it to reinforce your brand. Drab text-only emails with just the order details are forgettable and are missed branding opportunity.
7. **Event Emails.** With these emails, you can create a comprehensive email campaign around your events—including webinars, presentations, and conferences—to help build interest and encourage participation. Event emails would include invitations, follow-up invitations, reminders, and thank-you emails.
8. **The Connect-via-Social Campaign Emails.** The social campaign email is one that crosses channels from email into social media and potentially back again to email. It's an email marketing campaign that seeks to engage people in their newsfeed. You have plenty of options with this one, from Facebook to Instagram. A social campaign might use email marketing to ask users to pin pictures of recipes made with the gadget to Pinterest, or post them on Facebook, or tweet with a hashtag. The

possibilities are endless! (For some fantastic examples of Facebook contest promotions to inspire you, check out Wishpond).

9. **Sales Follow-ups.** If you're selling a physical product, odds are your customers have to wait a bit before they receive their orders. You can use this time to send post-transaction email updates on the status of their order, whether it's shipped, delivered, or arrived. Just like email receipts, it's best if these emails are maximized for their branding opportunity. Don't just send order update details in plain text. You can also add the following: Other necessary order information (expected arrival dates, what your customer has to do to receive their order or check its status), contact information for customer support, in case they have any questions or concerns, and promos for future purchases.

10. **Review/Testimonial Requests.** When a customer is satisfied with a purchase, you can email them a request to send in a review or testimonial. When posted on your online store, social media pages, or on third-party review sites, these good reviews will serve as social proof that can help build trust and confidence among incoming customers. They even make your other emails more effective, since the presence of reviews on email campaigns can increase clickthrough rates by 25-percent. Amazon has a simple way of soliciting these reviews—they just ask upfront how many stars you'd rate the product. The presentation of the request is visual. At a glance, users understand what is being asked of them. Once you click the image to leave a star rating, you'll be taken to a page that allows you to both leave a star rating and a written review. Don't make the mistake of only soliciting completely positive or five-star reviews. Research from Northwestern University shows that conversions tend to plateau or go down when average star ratings go beyond four stars.