

Permission-Based Email Marketing

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Email Marketing has the Highest ROAS!

ROAS (Return On Ad Spend) is the specific measure of how much you get back for each dollar you spend on a given method of advertising. According to the Direct Marketing Association, email marketing will have a ROAS of \$43.52 for each dollar invested in 2009. While that is a general figure and not specific to Scranton, it's still an indication of how powerful this medium is.

Great! But what does that have to do with you, you may be asking? Simply put, email is probably the best way to:

1. Get repeated messages about your business in front of prospects
2. Keep in touch with your current customers
3. Deliver important news, information, offers, coupons and special promotions to both prospects and customers

Sending out emails is far more effective than sending out direct mail via the USPS. Even better, you can actually track and measure who opens your emails, how many of those opened emails led to a specific action on the part of the reader and much more.

That's because, unlike postal “junk mail”, email automation can include special tracking codes that allow you to know, for sure, who did what with your emails. Best of all, this tracking is done automatically, hands free.

“I Hate Spam!”

Do you hate spam, too? How is permission-based email marketing different from sending out “spam”? The answer is simple: Spam is **unsolicited bulk email**. That means that a spammer didn't get your permission to send you his or her message, whether it's a commercial message or not.

Here's an example of an “innocent” spammer at work. A doting grandfather just got pictures of his latest grandchild. He sends out copied of the pictures via

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email to everyone on his personal contacts list. Okay so far.

Then he gets the bright idea to grab every email address he can find (whether he personally knows the person or not) and sends out a second batch of emails to these email addresses.

Grandpa just became a spammer. Spam does not have to be a commercial message. It just has to be unsolicited and sent out in bulk.

Surprised? Don't be. If you ever received a chain letter, advice on how to avoid a health problem or any other type of email with multiple recipients (none of whom you know), you were spammed.

The Difference is Permission

Here's an example of a type of email that *seems* like spam, but isn't. You gave your first name and email address to a business (opted in) to get a free report, discount coupon or some other “teaser” offer from a company. Then, you start getting repeated emails from this company. Sometimes, you get two or more of these emails a day.

That's not spam. It's annoying, intrusive and pushy, but it's not spam. You may think that flooding your inbox with lots of emails is a dumb idea. Chances are, the company that does this knows for a fact that it works *on their target market* (which probably isn't you).

The point is, if you know the profile of your Ideal Customer, attract this person to your website, blog or other Web-based presence and get his or her permission to send your emails, you can begin to automatically deliver your message effectively, over time.

Repetition is the Key

How surprised would you be to find out that it can take 7 or 8 repetitions of your sales pitch to get someone new to become your customer? On average, that's the amount of exposure businesses have to achieve to get a new client or customer.

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That's also why it can cost 7 to 8 times as much money to get a new customer to buy for the first time as it costs to sell to someone who's already bought from you. Permission-based email marketing can reduce the cost and increase the effectiveness of delivering your message to your target market enough times to get a new buyer.

Getting to Know You

If you just keep sending the same sales pitch, over and over, you probably won't win any points for originality (or get anyone new to buy from you). Instead, each message you send via email should help create and deepen an emotional connection to you and your business.

You do this by delivering good content. What is good content? Good content:

- Answers questions your prospects or buyers may have
- Explains how things work
- Gives tips, techniques, methods and strategies your reader can use
- Warns the reader of threats and weaknesses (and gives solutions)

The most important element of this content is developing and strengthening an emotional connection to the reader. Logic and reason are important, but rapport is most important.

People don't "decide" to do business with you. They either want to or they don't. The only way you can get someone to want to do business with you is to connect with him or her on an emotional level.

Sure, you may be the only solution to their problem within 100 miles. If you make a bad first impression or mess up later on, they'll travel outside the Scranton area to get with someone else who built some rapport with them.

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Targeted Messages: Prospects vs. Buyers

Once someone has become your client or customer, they're in a different group than the prospects you want to entice to buy from you. They're entitled to special treatment.

If you just continue to send buyers the same messages you send prospects, you'll run the risk of turning them off, emotionally. They'll begin to think that all you want to do is drive them to buy more from you.

The key to strengthening the bond between your company and your customers is to give them even more than you've been giving already. That's relatively easy to do. By offering special discounts, perks, free gifts, valuable information and resources that are exclusive to those who bought from you, they get the sense that they are “special”.

One of the most powerful motivators is the feeling that you are an “insider”, a part of “The In Crowd”. People love the exclusive – that which keeps the riff-raff out!

By making your current clients and customers a part of this exclusive “club” and promising your prospects the chance to join it, you leverage this power for yourself.

Here's an example: email a coupon to your buyers, have them print it out and explain that when they present it, they should put it *face down* and slide it to the person who will redeem it. “You don't want to make other people jealous that you're getting preferential treatment!”

Of course, they do want to get preferential treatment. That's what being an “insider” is all about. The more you feel like you are getting an advantage that most other people cannot have, the stronger the emotional reaction.

Summing Up

Permission-based email marketing is cost-effective, trackable and measurable.

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With email marketing, you won't be saying "50% of my ad budget is wasted. I just don't know which 50%!"

If you avoid spamming and annoying people with too many emails too frequently, you can effectively deliver your message enough times that you get what you want: a new buyer.

Good content is what will build a connection with people, not just repeated sales pitches. The more you "overdeliver" to your prospects, the sooner they'll become your customers.

Giving your buyers special treatment can build an even stronger bond with them. The key is to give real value and remind them that they get this because of their good decision to do business with you.

Email marketing, done right, can be the best investment you can make in your business. Make sure you take advantage of it in all the right ways.

Regards,

Vince Runza
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