

Best Practice Guide

Design for email marketing

So, you've been asked to provide a design for an email marketing campaign that will reach a database of potentially 1000's?

With such a big audience and a very small amount of time with which to engage them, the stakes are high. We want to help you get the very best results for your client so we've put together some best practice tips for creating an optimum layout for your email marketing design.

1. Dimensions

Your email campaign should be a maximum of 600px wide

2. Preview Panes

Bear in mind that the majority of recipients begin reading an email within a preview pane (this can be horizontal or vertical). So it's worth while putting the most important information or call to action at the top of the email. This way you can hopefully grab the attention of your preview pane recipients before they head off elsewhere!

3. Getting past spam filters

Spam filters cause a headache for email marketers. However, there are clever tricks to help gain you entry to your recipients' inbox. Try to avoid the following:

- Using spammy phrases like "Click here!" or "Once in a lifetime opportunity!"
- Going crazy with exclamation points!!!!!!
- USING ALL CAPS
- Colouring fonts bright red or green
- Coding sloppy HTML (if we're handling the HTML conversion then not to worry!)
- Sending an email that's nothing but one big image

4. Delivering your design to different email clients

Just like with different versions of web browsers, email clients handle HTML in different ways. We think it's important that you are aware of this as it can mean that your designs will look different whether you are delivering to an Outlook recipient or a Gmail recipient (for example).

So you don't get any nasty surprises once the email has gone out ensure that you or your digital agency run the campaign through some delivery software – this will allow you to see how your designs look in different email clients.

5. Creating measurable designs

You can track the success of your campaign via the number of clicks and opens you receive. However, to really obtain some insight into your database via your campaign then why not incorporate some really strong call to actions within your design and copy. This way, you or your digital agency can monitor the types of messaging that is most popular amongst your audience. Then you can use this information for future campaigns to improve success. Types of call to actions to consider: download pdfs, competition entries, buy now (for e-commerce clients), sign up (data collection) etc

6. Supplying designs for HTML conversion

If you've commissioned eight&four to build and manage your campaign (and you are handling the design) then there are a few things to take into consideration

- Please provide your designs to us as **layered PSD files** – in this format we can easily extract all the elements to convert the design online
- Please do not exceed a design width of more than about **600px**