



The anatomy of an email





So you got done drafting your story about an upcoming sales campaign, adding pics of bright red “ON SALE” signs and have now sent the email on its merry way with a laconic “We’re having a sale” subject line? If you want to see a boost in your sales numbers after sending out a campaign, you might want to put a bit more love and care into your marketing emails from hereon. There’s more than one element to be dissected when it comes to the anatomy of an email so let’s get started!



The secrets of a subject line

Subject line is the first thing your subscribers will see in their inbox when it comes to your marketing email. If you want this to be love at first sight, it's worth putting some effort into. Studies have proven that shorter subject lines come with a higher open rate. A 2018 study by Statista showed that the biggest open rates were received by subject lines containing 10-20 characters (35.5%). The open rate was around 33% when 20-30 characters were used and up to 40 characters in the subject line came with a 30% open rate.

The simple rule of "less is more" applies here. Don't forget that nowadays people use many different devices to read their emails, so do take into consideration how your subject line is going to be displayed on all of them. You should never go over the 130 character mark.

We strongly advise you to also consider the tone of your subject line. All caps and multiple exclamation marks may come off as if you're screaming at them. The goal is to get your subscribers to open the email, not toss it in the trash folder out of sheer fear. Numbers and stats are welcome as long as they're relevant and

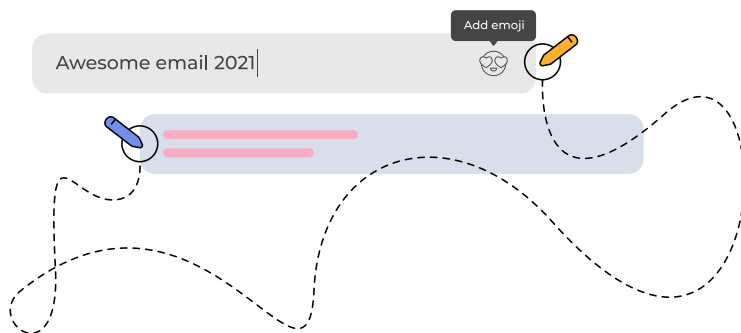
don't take up the whole space like the winning numbers of Powerball. The right audience will definitely be intrigued by a subject line that reads "How 35 influencers gained over 10 000 followers". That's probably why this exact subject line boasted a 57% open rate.

That's the kind of intrigue that'll surely help increase your open rates. Ask a question in your subject line, say something surprising or emphasize the limited time of the offer ("Your final chance to get 30% off ends in 3 hours") - curiosity and the fear of missing out are both driving forces behind boosting those open rates. Remember that the subject line should never be misleading ("Money has been added to your account") or contain spam-words that'll send your email straight into the spam folder.

Subject line is your chance to make things personal. Personalized subject lines can boost open rates up to 26% and will help with creating a long-lasting relationship with your customers. However, personalizing is not just about calling someone by their name. Use all the data you've got - think location, purchase history, browsing history in your ecommerce store or even the devices they use to read their emails on.

To add some excitement to your subject line, make use of emojis. Be careful not to turn your subject line into a photo series how-ev-

er. Adding a little plane to a vacation deal or a chocolate bar to a candy shop campaign, can definitely make your email more enticing.



Important tips

- Keep in short and sweet: 10-20 characters - open rate 35.5%; 20-30 characters - open rate 33%; up to 40 characters - open rate around 30%.
- Take into account how the subject line is displayed on different devices.
- Avoid all CAPS and multiple exclamation marks.
- Use numbers and statistics but don't go overboard.
- Build interest - ask a question, say something surprising, emphasize urgency.
- Don't be misleading - subject line has to be relevant to the email.
- Personalize - personalization helps to increase open rates by up to 26%.
- Use emojis, just not too many.

Do some pre-work with a preheader

A preheader (or a preview text) is a short piece of text displayed right next to the sender's name and subject line in the inbox. The preview text plays a supporting role to the subject line. Make sure your preheader and subject line are related to each other and that the chosen text will give your readers a short summary of what's to come in the email. You can use up to 140 characters, which is about 6-11 words.

Trust us when we say you want to make good use of those 140 characters as adding a preheader will help increase your open rates and avoid complaints regarding spam. This is your opportunity to direct your subscribers to do a certain activity or scare them a little with a bit of FOMO. Let your imagination run wild but don't forget that any misleading info is an absolute no-go.

Need some inspo to craft the perfect subject line and preheader combo? Here's some help:

Subject: Don't miss our email marketing expo!

Preheader: Hurry up - only a few seats left!

Important tips

- A short piece of text displayed next to the sender's name and subject line.
- Has to support the subject line and give a brief overview of the email.
- Up to 140 characters - about 6-11 words.
- Adding a preheader helps to increase open rates and avoid being labeled as spam.
- Emphasize urgency and create FOMO.
- Avoid misleading information.

What's the deal with the sender's name and address?

The sender's name has to create trust between you and the subscriber. Otherwise your carefully crafted marketing email will end up in the trash bin right next to the email from the long lost Nigerian prince. The name you choose should be easily identifiable and remain the same throughout your campaigns.

Usually it's not wise to use people's names unless they're a household name like Oprah. If you really want to add a person's name add the company name to it as well to make the recognition process a bit easier for your subscribers (e.g. mickey@disney.com). However, we highly suggest opting for a brand or company name instead.

In case the emails you send have various topics, make use of segmentation and use different senders. Send out your invoices from `invoices@company.com`, while bookings could be sent from `bookings@company.com`.

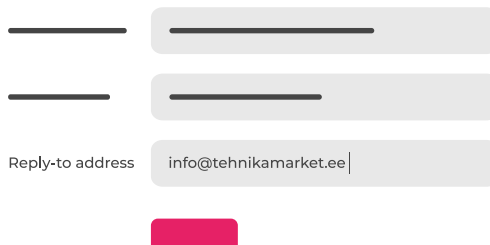
Important tips

- Choose an easily recognizable name.
- Always use the same name.
- Prefer using a company or brand name - avoid people's names or add a brand name to them.
- If you send emails with very different topics, use different email addresses (e.g. invoices@company.ee vs bookings@company.ee).

No-go for the no-reply

The reply address is just as important (if not more) as the sender's address. It's a solid no on the no-reply address. If you strip your subscribers of the possibility to respond to your emails you'll make them feel as if their opinion doesn't matter. Marketing emails should create the possibility of a dialogue between the company and its clients. A no-reply address will turn that dialogue right into a monologue recited by you.

If you pass up the chance for letting your subscribers respond to your emails or don't monitor the responses, you'll end up hurting your business. More often than not your subscribers will send you some constructive feedback on how you can better your brand and business. IF you miss this kind of feedback, it'll soon reflect in your sales numbers as well as in customer loyalty. A no-reply address can also damage your domain reputation and thus hinder the delivery rate of your emails.



Important tips

- Don't use no-reply addresses.
- If you don't give your contacts the possibility to respond to your emails, you seem like you don't care about them and you'll miss out on valuable feedback.
- Monitor incoming responses and optimize your marketing strategy accordingly.
- Start a dialogue with your customers - you'll build trust and customer loyalty.
- A no-reply address might harm your sending and domain reputation and lower your delivery rates.

Make the header turn some heads

Once you've covered the so-called exterior of your newsletter, it's time to dive in a little deeper. The first thing the subscribers see after opening your email is the header. To make this a pleasant and memorable welcoming, there are a few things you might want to remember.

The golden rule is to make sure the header lets your subscribers know right away which brand and business is behind this newsletter. Unless your not into selling riddles, it would be wise to leave the guessing games aside here.

When it comes to the header, once again - less is more. Don't overcrowd the header with crazy fonts and endless images. Leave the neon lights to Las Vegas. If you're looking to add a menu to the header, keep the amount of points optimal. A regular header should be no more than 70 px high, while one with a menu could go up to 200 px. As the header most probably does not contain the main message of your email, it shouldn't take up too much space. Sure you might be tempted to add every image of a cute kitten or a fabulous Ferrari to your newsletter. Do keep in mind

Important tips

- First thing your readers see when they open the email.
- Eye-catching, but not too long.
- State clearly what is the brand and company behind the email.
- Less is more - prefer simpler fonts and colors.
- If you're adding a menu, don't add too many points.
- Regular header should be up to 70 px, header with a menu should be up to 200 px.

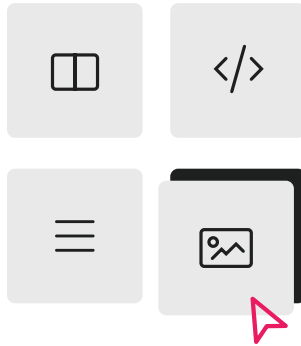
The perfect amount of pics

however, that your newsletter is in fact not a photo album and your message is best conveyed through words.

The ideal ratio of images to text is where images make up about 20-50% of the email. If you get too carried away when adding images, you're bound to wind up in the spam folder. You should also keep in mind that a lot of ESPs have forbidden displaying images by default, so make sure you're using ALT-text to describe the images used.

Although a picture says more than a thousand words, we strongly recommend putting your message into words when it comes to marketing emails. Otherwise you risk your words never being displayed at all. On the other hand, it's best not to use over 80% of text within your newsletter so the content remains easily scannable and digestible. There have been a few arguments over that however because studies show that simple text only emails tend to perform slightly better. The only way to know for sure is to test different options.

Going back to the images for a sec, it's better to use your own original images rather than stock photos. Don't forget to add links to the images to direct the readers onto your website or blog. In this case smaller is better so keep your images under 600 kb.



Important tips

- Should not take up more than 20-50% of the content.
- Use relevant images and add ALT-text.
- Use text to relay your message.
- Don't forget that many ESP-s have forbidden displaying images by default.
- Too many images may lead your email to the spam folder.
- Don't use over 80% of text.
- Prefer original photos rather than stock images.
- Add links to your website or ecommerce store to the images.
- Images should not be more than 600 kb.
- Simple all-text emails have proven to bring better results.

Put your message into words

Writing content for your newsletter can be quite a challenge but memorable and engaging content is what helps a business stand out. Let your imagination run wild but don't forget to follow your brand voice. Who is your audience? Should you use a highly professional or a more laid back tone? Before you start typing away, figure out the main goal of your email.

Personalization is one of the main priorities. Approach them by their name, give examples specific to them, recommend products and services based on their purchase history etc. Every email is your chance to win your readers over and thus build customer loyalty.

You're not writing a novel so keep the paragraphs short and sweet. Channel your inner Freud to figure out what kind of words and phrases could grab your readers' attention. How can you convince them to take the desired action?

Use your emails as a way of helping the subscribers. Offer them some sort of a free value in the form of downloadable files, e-books, webinars, promo codes etc. Who wouldn't like some free stuff, right?



Important tips

- Use original and memorable text to help your readers recognize your brand easily.
- Follow your brand voice.
- Know your audience - should you use a more formal or informal style?.
- What is the purpose / goal of the email?.
- Personalize according to location, browsing history, purchase history etc.
- Keep the paragraphs short and easily digestible.
- Offer free value - ebooks, promotional codes, downloadable files etc.

Time to take action!

One of the main elements of a newsletter is the CTA button. You're most likely trying to get your subscribers to push that CTA button to direct them to your ecommerce store, a new landing page or get them to sign up for an event. Whatever your goal may be - use the CTA button to make it clear.

The placement and design of the CTA button bear a critical importance. Your readers should have to use a magnifying glass to hunt the button down. Use colors and intriguing words to make that CTA button stand out. The text on the button should be short and easily understandable (eg. "Sign up here!", "Read more", "Download the ebook" etc.). Don't use multiple exclamation marks to avoid sounding aggressive.

It would be best to use a single CTA button within the entire newsletter. In case your newsletter is longer and you need more opportunities to get your subscribers to act, have one main CTA button and add links to the images or phrases as supporting CTAs.

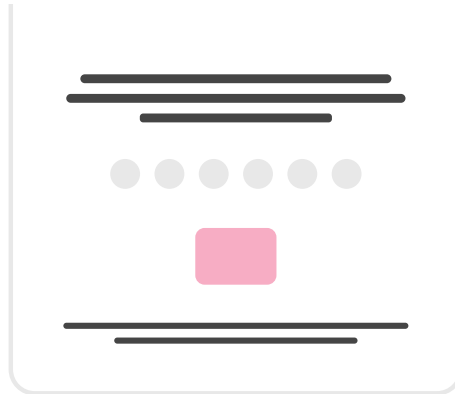
Important tips

- CTA-button directs your readers to take certain actions.
- Make it easily distinguishable.
- Direct people to your blog, website, landing page or get them to sign up to an event.
- Placement and design are crucial.
- Make the CTA-button stand out and text easily readable and understandable - use eye-catching colors and fonts.
- Avoid multiple exclamation marks.
- We suggest having one main CTA-button. Add smaller CTAs to images or words and phrases within the text.

What about the footer?

Email footer is the spot for all of your contact information. Add the address of your business, customer support info, a link to your website, your logo and social media channels.

Obviously no one is in the business of losing clients, but it's a must to add an unsubscribe link to the footer. In case your readers don't want to hear from you anymore, they have to have the possibility to opt out.



Important tips

- All the important information regarding the company should be displayed in the footer.
- Add contact address, customer support email address, phone number, logo, link to your website and social media accounts.
- Don't forget to add the unsubscribe link.


In conclusion

Drafting a marketing email is quite a science and every wrong step can lead to an unsubscribe. An enticing subject line and engaging content will most definitely help with your email marketing results. Practice makes perfect so don't forget to test, test and then test some more to find the perfect anatomy for your emails.




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Email: info@smaily.com
Support: support@smaily.com
Billing: billing@smaily.com
Skype: [sendsmaily](https://www.skype.com/people/sendsmaily)



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