



*Developing the Perfect
Email Message*

'THE ART OF' SERIES
PART 4

Email Marketing Fundamentals
The Art of Building a Perfect HTML Email Newsletter
The Art of Building a Good Plain-Text Email

Email Marketing Fundamentals

Storytelling is a powerful tool in getting your message across. Emails should tell a tale to engage readers and create a connection. However, no matter how compelling your message may be there are underlying tactics that help boost email deliverability, readability and engagement. Questioning is a good way to gain answers:

Has permission been obtained?

Marketers need to understand that obtaining permission before sending a mail is not an option, it is mandatory. Besides ethical aspects, permission based email marketing ensures better deliverability, response rates and increase in brand affinity and confidence.

When is the right time to mail?

In order not to get lost in the inundation of emails received by a person daily, time is of essence. Depending on the industry you function in, your customers have specific behavior. Usually the weekends are the best time to capture attention; however it varies based on your target audience.

With reference to user behavior, mobile and webmail usage increases over the weekend.

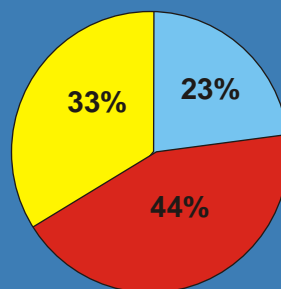
Source: Return Path

Through which devices are email read?

It is important to design emails based on how majority of your customers view their mails. Keeping in mind the torrential introduction of new devices, emails need to be developed to cater to specific gadgets.

Emails are read
44% through webmail
33% on the desktop
23% via mobile devices

Source: Return Path



Webmail
Desktop
Mobile

Are you on your subscribers' 'white list'?

Wholesale buying of lists is a solution of the last decade. It is important to ensure that you are added to address books of everyone on your emailing list. Getting on their white list makes sure your emails do not end up as spam.

The Art of Building a Perfect HTML Email Newsletter

Here are few pointers to ensure your HTML email newsletter is perfect

1. Who is the email from?

Ensure your name or your company's name is evident in the 'From' address tab in order to clearly state your identity to your recipient

2. Who are you sending to?

The 'To' address tab should contain the name of recipient and not just the email id, as this will personalize your message.

3. Make your subject line crisp

Recipients need to know what the mail is about before reading it. The subject line should be direct and not too 'spammy', however it should instil interest.

4. What if the recipient cannot view the message?

Provide a link to enable recipients to view the newsletter / message in a separate browser, in case the message is not viewable in the email.

5. Always give the choice to opt-out

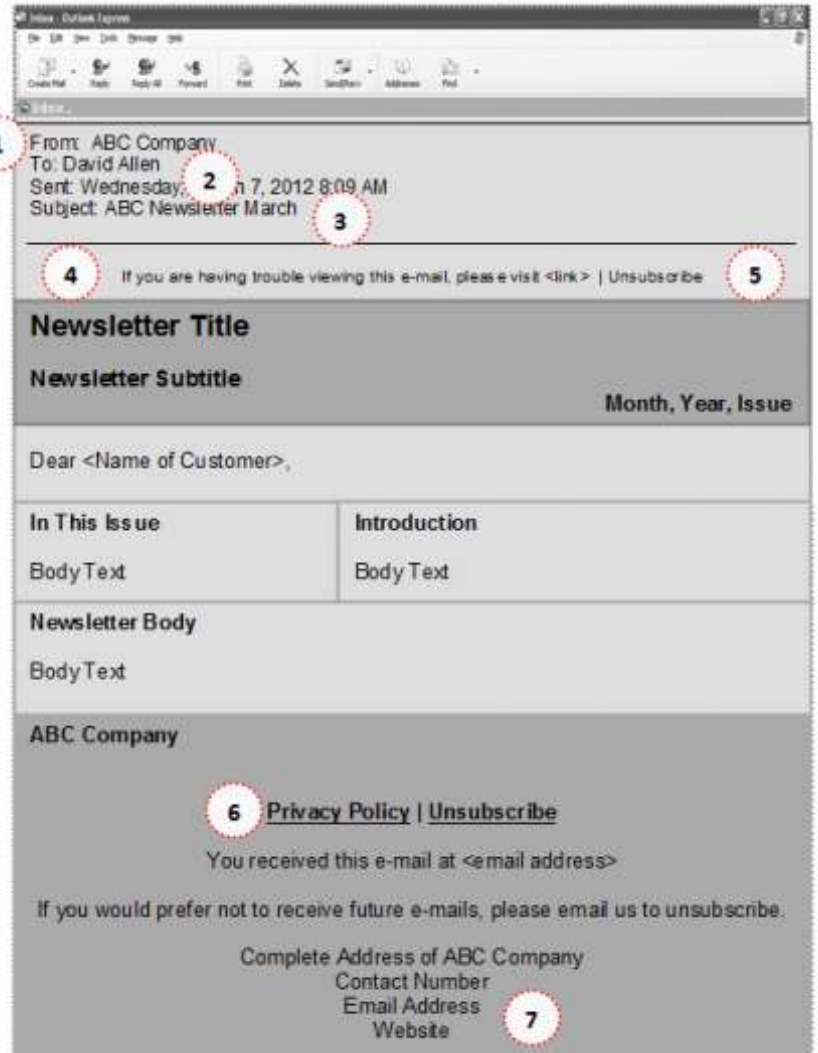
Provide a one-click option to unsubscribe from receiving mails. By allowing recipients to choose whether they wish to receive messages or not indicates your respect to their privacy and preferences.

6. Show that you care

Ensure you add a link to your Privacy Policies to provide recipients with information of how you intend to protect their privacy and utilize their details.

7. Display your credibility

Providing a complete physical address and contact details of your company will add credibility to your email



The Art of Building a Good Plain-Text Email

Don't make your plain text mail an afterthought; while it already is simple in design and visual appeal, unformatted text will only bore readers further. A helpful tip is to use 'plain text editors' like NotePad for

Windows and TextWrangler for Mac. If you use intelligent programs like Microsoft Word it does not allow you to develop “raw” formatted messages.

Prototype of a Perfect Plain-Text Mail

1. The '60 Character' Visual Ruler

A good way to keep your message aligned is by adding a “visual ruler”. Most email applications wrap your after around 60 characters. Therefore a trick that you could use is to type a letter 60 times and use that as a reference for a margin.

2. Divide to Capture Attention

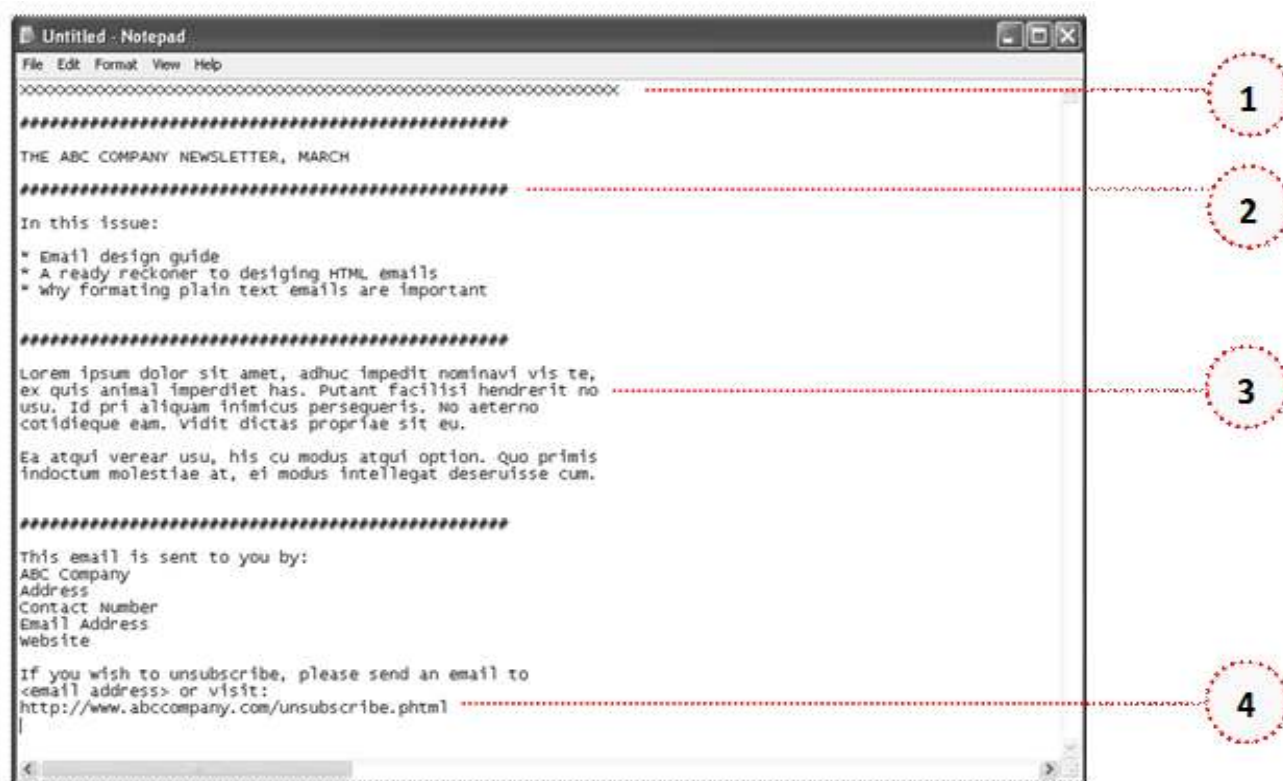
Making a plain text email attractive is a challenge. Creating dividers by using 'visual markers' or bullet points, helps in diverting attention to important parts of the email.

3. The '60 Character' Hard Return

As email apps usually wrap the message after every 60 characters, typing in a hard return after every 60 characters ensures the formatting stays in place to the maximum extent possible.

4. Type the Complete URL

you cannot rely on email applications automatically adding a clickable link to the URL you add. Therefore ensure the complete link is typed to enable readers copy and view the website.



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