



E M A I L M A R K E T I N G

STRATEGIES IN CONTENT & DESIGN FOR 2018





THERE WERE MORE THAN 3.7 BILLION EMAIL USERS WORLDWIDE BY THE END OF 2017, A REMARKABLY LARGE AUDIENCE FOR MARKETERS TO IMPACT.

But growth of this proportion also means inevitable saturation. Each time a marketing channel floods, user behaviors change and marketers are forced to adapt their strategies. The average number of business-related emails sent and received is set to soar, from 121 each day now to at least 140 each day in 2018.

How can marketers earn greater open and click-through rates when audiences are already exhausted by the sheer number of emails flooding their inbox?

The answer lies in how new behaviors are changing the way subscribers prefer to receive information and in how these behaviors translate into new email marketing best practices.

EMAIL MARKETING & BEHAVIORAL IMPACT

Two major developments are reshaping how subscribers interact with email: the rise of mobile web surfing and the growing popularity of video content.

- ▶ The number of [mobile-only internet](#) users now exceeds desktop-only in the U.S. However, the vast majority (78 percent) of internet users surf the web using a combination of both.
- ▶ We're now in a mobile era, with [mobile representing 54 percent of all email opens](#).
- ▶ By 2017, experts predict video will control [69 percent of consumer internet traffic](#).
- ▶ Globally, IP video traffic will be [82 percent of all consumer Internet traffic](#) by 2021, up from 73 percent in 2016. Global IP video traffic will grow threefold from 2016 to 2021, a CAGR of 26 percent. Internet video traffic will grow fourfold from 2016 to 2021, a CAGR of 31 percent.



EMAIL CLIENTS & DEVICES

What these statistics point to is the necessity for email marketers to ask themselves, what are my subscribers using to access and manage their email? The answer to this question will set the foundation for how you approach the creation of content and design.

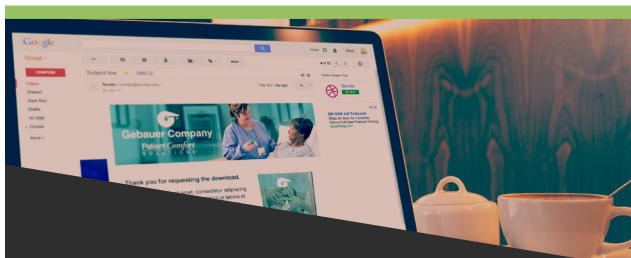
Litmus, an email testing and analytics provider, [tracked almost 1 billion emails](#) every month throughout the entire year of 2015 to gather insight on this question. The company compared user rates in January of 2015 and in November of 2015 to illustrate how rates fluctuated throughout the year leading into the holiday season. What they discovered builds an even stronger case for why mobile users must be a priority.

IN TERMS OF USER RATES:



IPHONE HELD THE NO. 1 SPOT

with a 33 percent user rate in December 2016 that fell to 31 percent in June 2017



EMAIL LANDED IN THE NO. 2 SPOT

with 21 percent (up 1 percent from December 2016)



IPAD TOOK THE NO. 3 POSITION

with 11 percent (down 2 percent from December 2016)

Android was the fourth spot (9 percent) in December 2016 and fell to the seventh spot (4 percent) by June 2017, getting surpassed by Apple Mail, Outlook and Samsung. Windows Live Mail ranked the lowest.

IN 2016, MOBILE STEADILY DOMINATED EMAIL CLIENT MARKET SHARE, BEGINNING AND ENDING THE YEAR AT 54 PERCENT. WHILE MOBILE STILL CLAIMS THE MAJORITY OF EMAIL OPENS, OPENS IN WEB-BASED EMAIL PROGRAMS HAS BEEN ON THE RISE—GROWING 4 PERCENTAGE POINTS IN THE PAST YEAR TO A TOTAL OF 31 PERCENT OF ALL OPENS.





6 BEST PRACTICES FOR EMAIL MARKETING IN 2018 & BEYOND

1

ADAPT FOR MOBILE USERS

Sixty-six percent of brand marketing emails are viewed on mobile devices. As of February 2017, [mobile devices](#) accounted for 49.74 percent of web page views worldwide. That means **you must provide an exceptional viewing experience for all types of devices and email clients.**

To do this, we recommend incorporating mobile-first design and responsive design into your approach. More on this to come.

2

CREATE EMAILS WITH CONTEXT

Contextual emails are highly personalized emails sent based on specific qualities about an individual or group of subscribers. The goal of contextual email is to send the right information to the right person at the right time.

TO DO THIS EFFECTIVELY, MARKETERS NEED

THREE THINGS:

ONE

As much data about their contacts as possible

TWO

Email automation software

THREE

List segmentation

There are dozens of ways to segment your email lists, including: demographics, survey results, geo-location, purchase history, email activity, event attendance, industry, job title, specific campaign interactions, etc. Using email automation software, you can also send contextual emails based on live triggers.

3

BE BRIEF

Attention spans are dwindling (less than that of a goldfish) and subscribers who check their email via mobile device are usually skimming. Keep your messaging short or risk readers missing the tail end of your content, which often includes an important call-to-action.

According to a Constant Contact study, about [20 lines of text and three \(or fewer\) images get the best click-through rates](#). But this number varies greatly depending on industry. As always, test with your audiences to find the ideal length.





4

MAKE SUBJECT LINES SHORT & PERSONAL

30 characters or less is the subject line sweet spot to increase open rates. To really grab attention, use your subscriber's first name, mention a location relevant to theirs, include some other bit of information that aligns with their interests or challenges, or create urgency by giving a timeframe like "offer ends."

SOME EXAMPLES OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE SUBJECT LINES INCLUDE:

5 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD [SUBJECT]

STOP [PAIN POINT] NOW

HOW TO MAKE [SUBJECT] THAT WILL [BENEFIT]

5

CREATE POWERFUL PREVIEW TEXT

Subscribers use preview text to screen which emails they will open. Make it captivating and leave them wanting more. Once again, keep it short ([40 to 50 characters](#)) and consider how this text will look in the body of your email (your subscriber will see this text before and after they open your message). Make sure preview text works in conjunction with the subject line; the two should make sense with one another.

40-50 CHARACTERS

6

USE VIDEO & GIFS VS. STATIC IMAGES

In one study, 40.83 percent more people [engaged with an email](#) that included a video thumbnail as opposed to one that did not. Forrester reported that including video in an email leads to [200 to 300 percent](#) increase in click-through rate. (Note: compatibility issues between email clients and video formats may be problematic and will require testing).

Graphic Interchange Format, also known as a GIF is the rapid display of multiple images to create the illusion of motion. They are widely compatible with email clients and will also help email campaigns stand out.



JOINING THE MOBILE REVOLUTION

Worldwide, more people are using their mobile devices to check email and surf the web than any other means. Studies indicate this will only continue to increase in the years to come. It's officially a multi-screen world, and the only way for email marketers to survive is to fundamentally shift their approach. Don't just appease mobile users with "mobile friendly" email content. Wholeheartedly join the mobile revolution with *responsive design* and *mobile first design*.

MOBILE FRIENDLY (not recommended)

means the display will appear the same on every mobile device. The problem with mobile friendly is that it's not mobile ideal. Every device has different parameters, and designing for just one means others will likely experience inconveniently sized text, messy layouts and confusing navigation features.

RESPONSIVE DESIGN

responds directly to the device being used (including resizing the font and image, changing the email layout and increasing readability by merging or segregating columns). Responsive emails will optimally load according to the varying parameters of each device.

MOBILE-FIRST DESIGN (also known as Progressive Enhancement)

is an approach to responsive design that focuses on designing for mobile devices first, then adding more features and content for larger screens. In other words, it's the practice of ensuring that emails or web pages look and function optimally for users on mobile as the first step.



MOBILE FIRST ALSO MEANS CONTENT FIRST.

U.S. CONSUMERS
NOW SPEND

5
HOURS
PER DAY

on mobile devices.
With all that time
spent, we need
to get our point
across as directly
as possible so
people remember.

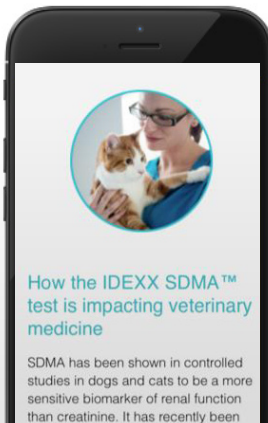


TO GET YOUR POINT ACROSS MORE QUICKLY, DO THESE THINGS:

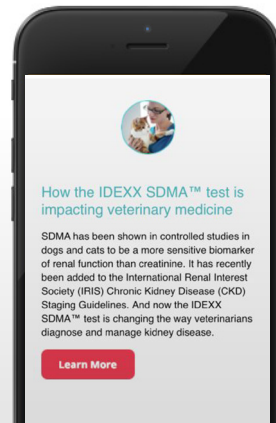
IA

Prioritize content up front and focus on the information most relevant to the subscriber.

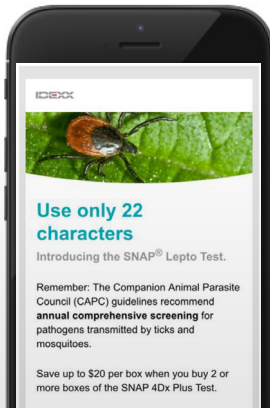
KEEP IN MIND THAT IMAGES REQUIRE CUSTOM CODING FOR CONSISTENT SIZING ON RETINA DISPLAYS.



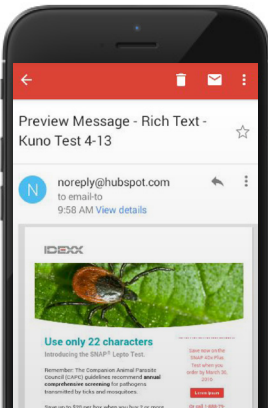
iPhone 5s
(Non-Retina)



iPhone 6
(Retina)



iOS Mail
App

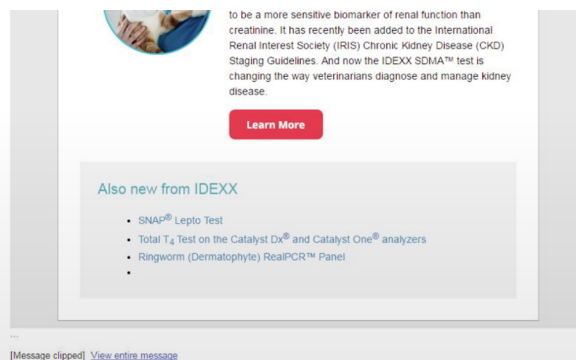


Gmail
App

CONSIDER A SINGLE-COLUMN DESIGN, AS MULTIPLE COLUMNS MAY CROWD THE SCREEN.

Note: Gmail ignores responsive column stacking, which will contribute to inconsistencies in the viewing experience.

EMAIL WILL ALSO CLIP MESSAGES LARGER THAN 102KB, SO BEWARE.





WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO SEND?

To get more opens, click-throughs, traffic to your blog and, ultimately, more conversions — timing is everything. The following information used [10 studies](#) involving billions of emails to more than 20 million recipients to determine the best day and time to send email marketing campaigns.

Keep in mind, these timeframes are just starting points. Details like age group, location, gender, industry and especially occupation will impact the optimal send time/day. For this reason, marketers must test different timeframes and days with their audiences and track results to identify trends and determine their audience's preference.

BEST DAY TO SEND EMAIL:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1 | TUESDAY |
| 2 | THURSDAY |
| 3 | WEDNESDAY |

BEST TIME TO SEND EMAIL:

- | |
|--------------------------|
| 10:00 A.M. TO 11:00 A.M. |
| 8:00 P.M. TO MIDNIGHT |
| 2:00 P.M. |
| 6:00 A.M. |

OUR EMAIL MARKETING BEST PRACTICES ARE JUST THAT – PROCEDURES WE KNOW FROM EXPERIENCE TO BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE.

BUT ULTIMATELY, YOUR EMAIL MARKETING SUCCESS WILL BE
DETERMINED BY THREE FACTORS:

ONE	TWO	THREE
The quality of your message	The degree to which you understand your audience	Your ability to engage subscribers

If there's one takeaway you can draw from this guide, it's that you are officially marketing to a multi-screen population who prefers video content and switches fluidly from desktop to mobile device. Catering to this fact through content creation and design will help you **improve messaging, create a better user experience and captivate subscribers by delivering information in the place, time and format they favor.**

CREATE BETTER EMAILS IN 2018

Email is only one part of a strong inbound marketing strategy. At Kuno, we help leading companies create and implement marketing strategies that get real results. To find out more, schedule a call today.

