

Best Practices in Email Marketing

The Ultimate Email Marketing Guidebook: Increasing Subscriber Engagement

Breakthrough Examples of How Brands are Raising the Email Marketing Bar

PUBLISHED BY

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INTRODUCTION

Increasing subscriber engagement is the top priority for email marketers in 2011, according to a November 2010 StrongMail survey of over 900 business executives – and rightfully so.

Engagement is fast becoming the most talked about challenge for email marketing, right behind “relevance.” The increased focus on engagement is being driven by a variety of external forces, not the least of which is the movement by ISPs to begin using engagement as a metric for inbox consideration. As a result, marketers are looking at defining or refining key engagement metrics for their business. This process is complicated by the fact that not all marketers define engagement the same way and even fewer agree on what it means to be engaged.

Of course, there are the standard metrics that most email marketers are familiar with, like opens, clicks, spam complaints and unsubscribes; however, the rise of engagement filtering by ISPs is introducing new criteria that marketers need to measure. Microsoft, for example, is beginning to look at such factors as messages read and then deleted, messages deleted without being read, messages replied to, and even the frequency of receiving and reading a message from a sender.

As a result, email marketers need to broaden their reporting criteria to capture this expanded set of data points. Equally important, they need to focus on creating programs that get to the inbox and prompt the recipient to interact with them. Continually analyzing data and refining programs accordingly may seem time intensive, but it’s essential for the long-term success of your programs.

There is no time to waste. You need to implement changes now to maximize engagement; otherwise your programs will suffer as the top ISPs shift more weight to the more passive measures of engagement mentioned above.

So how do you tackle the engagement issue in 2011? One of the best ways to start is by looking at examples from marketers who are successfully generating engagement in current campaigns. This whitepaper outlines best practices from 13 different campaigns that you can expand on to better engage subscribers in your own email programs.

What are your most important email marketing initiatives in 2011 (check your top three initiatives)

Increasing Subscriber Engagement

52%

Improve Segmentation and Targeting

49%

Integrating Social Media and Email Marketing

43%

GAP BRANDS – GIVE AND GET PROGRAM

OBJECTIVE

Leverage the existing subscriber base to drive program participation from their friends and networks.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

What better way to endear and engage your subscribers than through a charitable program? The Gap leveraged an altruistic motivator to drive engagement from its existing subscriber base by enabling recipients to donate a percentage of their purchase to a non-profit of their choosing. The recipient was also encouraged to share a discount with their friends to drive additional purchase and thus additional donations to their selected organization.

GIVE & GET
NOV 11-14

Give & Get is Here!
Enjoy 30% Off

You're invited to our biggest holiday event—and you have the chance to do something good!

Simply click here to pick a non-profit. Send your friends their own 30% discount and share the savings on social networks like Facebook. The non-profit you choose will receive 5% of what ALL of you spend.

Choose a non-profit to get 5% **CLICK HERE TO START >>**

Share the 30% discount with friends

Shop 4 days only, November 11-14

At Gap, Banana Republic, Old Navy, Gap Outlet and Banana Republic Factory Store, in-store or online

With this email or the online promo code at checkout

Everyday FREE Shipping on any order over \$50*

In-Store Barcode (for multiple uses)
MJ6YVV88JV6N

Online Promo Code (for one-time use)
MJ6YVV88JV6N

It's Better to Give and Get!
PICK A NON-PROFIT AND SEND THE DISCOUNT >>

FIND A STORE: Gap Old Navy Banana Republic Gap Outlet Banana Republic Factory Store
SHOP ONLINE: Gap Old Navy Banana Republic
GET EMAILS: Gap Old Navy Banana Republic Piperlime Athleta

WHY IT WORKS

The message is direct and to the point, "Get 30% off November 11-14, ship free and support a non-profit."

A series of email communications were centered around the program encouraging continued engagement during the promotional period – with results posted to Facebook providing insight to the overall impact the recipient had on the charity.

The recipient is encouraged to save the message and engage with it frequently during the defined time frame for the discount code.

The offer is compelling and encourages the recipient to not only take action themselves, but to share the experience with the friends.

THE BOTTOM LINE

In order to engage your email recipients, you must provide them with content/offers that they care enough about to actually interact with.

CROCS – LAST CHANCE FOR FREE OVERNIGHT SHIPPING

OBJECTIVE

Drive engagement through other communication channels.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Crocs recognizes that people are on-the-go more than ever and not necessarily tied to their computers awaiting offers and information from their favorite brands. So in addition to providing a vehicle for recipients to self-select preferences, Crocs has also defined the unique value proposition for engaging with them via mobile channels as well.



WHY IT WORKS

The messaging sets proper expectations for what the recipient will receive with each daily deal.

Explicit instructions for subscribing to mobile alerts by simply texting "DEALS" to a short code.

Other channels for engaging with the brand are provided via Facebook and Twitter – allowing the customer to choose how, when and where they engage with Crocs.

To further enhance the email experience, the recipient is provided with a means to update preferences to best ensure that the content is relevant and valued.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Allow the subscriber to provide you with information about their preferences in content and engagement – even if it is in supplemental channels like social or mobile.

GAMESTOP – eREWARDS OPINION PANEL

OBJECTIVE

Enable recipients to earn rewards program points while providing them a voice and opinion within an organized opinion panel.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Email is a two-way communication street that frequently has no outlet aside from hitting the “reply” button – and even that method is frequently not available. GameStop is not only providing a mechanism for giving their email recipients a voice, but they are rewarding them for the behavior.



WHY IT WORKS

A feeling of exclusivity is generated with the “By Invitation Only” subject line.

The message is designed and optimized for image suppression and mobile rendering – allowing the recipient to see the entire message.

GameStop clearly states that it will reward the recipient for sharing his/her opinion – giving the recipient a voice.

Recipients are offered a solid value proposition in “the more you share your opinion, the more you earn” program. And as a bonus, they are able to earn valued prizes, like GameStop gift cards, driving further engagement with the brand.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Your email subscribers want to be heard. Sometimes engaging them is as simple as asking for their feedback or opinion.

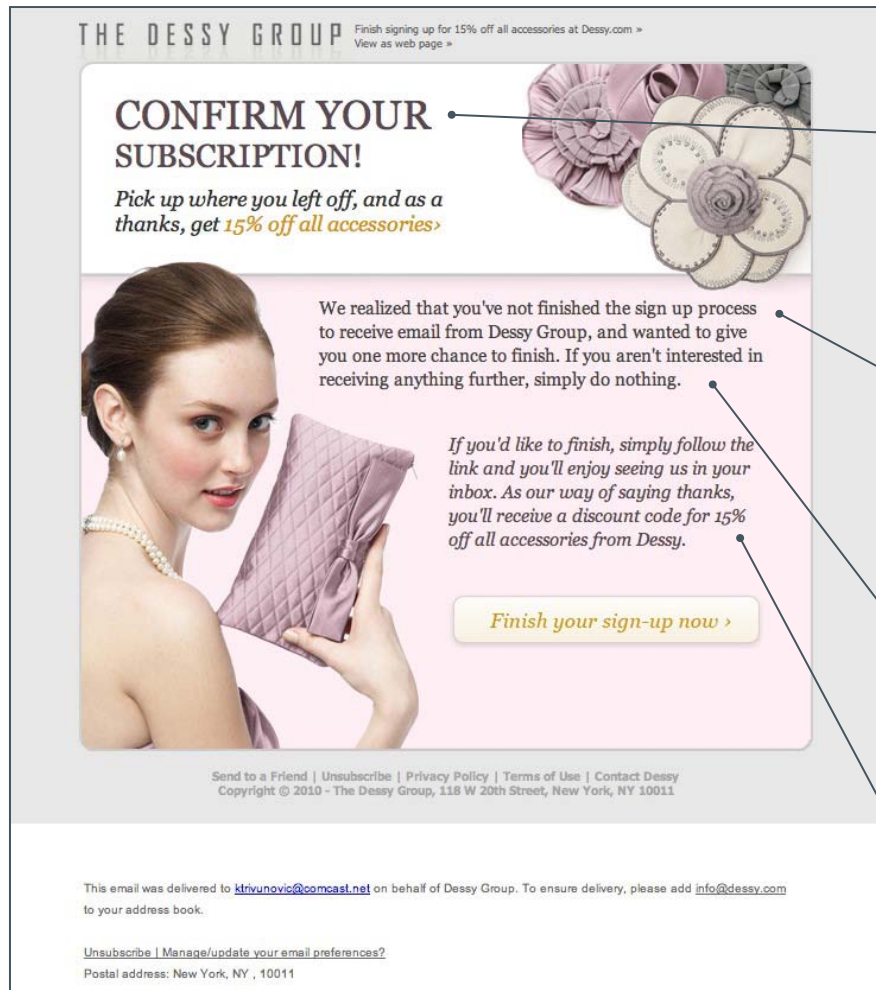
DESSY GROUP – SUBSCRIPTION CONFIRMATION

OBJECTIVE

Convert those who have abandoned their double opt-in email subscription.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

In order to engage with your email subscribers, they need to be email subscribers. When you have a double opt-in email program, not everyone confirms their subscription immediately or at all. An easy way to ensure the highest number of conversion is to follow up (one-time) with a reminder.



WHY IT WORKS

A gentle reminder to complete the process comes within a week of abandoning the conversion process so that the recipient still remembers the act of subscribing.

Periodically, confirmation messages can get bulk-folded, lost or overlooked – resulting in an unintentional abandon. As a result, a quick reminder email might be the first message they see about completing their subscription.

If the abandon of the subscription process was entirely intentional, there is no need to fret – Dessy demonstrates their commitment to the opt-in by promising no further communication if the recipient chooses to do nothing at all.

To further incentivize the conversion and ongoing engagement, Dessy is providing a percentage-off incentive for a purchase.

THE BOTTOM LINE

People are busy and your email isn't necessarily their number one priority – sometimes a simple follow-up is all you need to send to engage a recipient.

FANDANGO – SUBSCRIBER APPRECIATION

OBJECTIVE

Thank FanMail subscribers for being part of the Fandango email program.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

As a way to thank subscribers for engaging with Fandango via email, the brand entered them into a sweepstakes to win movie tickets – presumably the reason subscribers engage with the brand in the first place. To drive engagement with the email program, Fandango set the expectation to keep an eye out for email from them on November 15 to find out who won.



WHY IT WORKS

Recognizing your subscribers and thanking them for engaging with the brand keeps the messaging human and personal.

By reestablishing the value proposition and cadence of the FanMail email subscription, Fandango reinforces the desired behavior of engaging with their email messages.

Recipients are told to keep an eye out for their email – not only getting them in the habit of checking their inbox for email from Fandango, but also encouraging them to engage at a specific moment in time.

Providing a periodic and unexpected gesture of gratitude can go a long way in the email channel.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Telling your recipients what to look for, when to look for it, and why to care sets expectations appropriately and encourages longer-term engagement.

UNITED AIRLINES – PROFILE UPDATE

OBJECTIVE

Encourage members to update their preferences and opt-in to receive email.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Bribery. The strategy here is to give the recipients something they want (miles) in exchange for something United Airlines wants (email permission), which is an extremely effective message for recipients who like to “earn and burn” miles.

Earn 1,000 bonus award miles when you update your Mileage Plus profile today.

To ensure receipt of our emails, please add Mileage.Plus@email.united.com to your Address Book.

Planning & booking | Reservations & check-in | **Mileage Plus®** | Services & information

Mileage Plus®
UNITED

Update your member profile today and earn 1,000 bonus award miles

Dear Jan Smith,

There's a lot to be gained from staying on top of the current news and offers from the world's leading airline – like **1,000 bonus award miles** for instance.

Update your Mileage Plus® [member profile](#) today and choose to receive emails from United®. You'll earn 1,000 bonus award miles in the process and get the inside scoop on news that matters to you, like:

- **Fare sales.** Get the best deals on airfare before anyone else.
- **Travel Options by United®.** Learn how to customize your trips on United with more legroom, priority boarding or additional award miles.
- **New routes.** Learn when we'll be flying to and from the destinations you frequent.

Earn 1,000 bonus award miles when you:

1. Visit [My Profile on united.com](#)
2. Login to your account
3. Choose "United Offers & Announcements" in the Email subscriptions section

Update now >

Stay in touch with United and earn 1,000 bonus award miles today.

Your Mileage Plus member

UNITED | [My Mileage Plus](#) | [united.com](#) | [Partner offers](#)

[Change your email address](#) | [Update your email preferences](#) | [Privacy policy](#)

Offer terms and conditions (MPS550)

1. This offer is valid only for recipients of this mailing, and you must be a Mileage Plus member to participate in this offer.
2. To earn 1,000 bonus award miles, members must provide a current valid email address at [united.com/myprofile](#) and remain opted in for the following email subscription category through February 28, 2011: United Offers and Announcements.
3. Bonus award miles can only be earned once for each Mileage Plus account and will be posted three months after your email profile is updated.
4. Bonus award miles do not count toward elite status.
5. This offer is combinable with other offers.
6. Offer subject to change without notice. Other restrictions may apply.
7. Award miles accrued, awards issued and bonus offers are subject to the rules of the United Mileage Plus program.
8. The Mileage Plus program, including accruals, awards and bonus miles offers, is subject to change without notice. Taxes and fees related to award travel are the responsibility of the passenger. United and Mileage Plus are registered service marks. For complete details about the Mileage Plus program, visit [mileageplus.com](#).

[Additional Mileage Plus terms & conditions](#)

WHY IT WORKS

United is providing a clear and appreciated exchange of information. They are concise about what the recipient needs to do, why they need to do it and what they get in exchange.

The value proposition for receiving email is clearly stated, setting appropriate expectations in advance of the conversion.

The messaging is focused and specific to the purpose of the message with a strong and simple call-to-action of “Update now.”

THE BOTTOM LINE

Sometimes the promise of value in content just isn't enough. You may find that when it comes to incenting engagement, bribery can be very effective.

UNCOMMON GOODS – CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT

OBJECTIVE

Leverage a creative use of the email canvas to engage recipients with desired messages.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Thinking outside of the proverbial 650 pixel box can often do wonders for engagement. Leveraging creative elements within the message to encourage scrolling through to the end or clicking through to find an answer to a question can drive incremental engagement behavior.



WHY IT WORKS

The creative delivers an experience that stands out from all the other email being received – piquing enough interest to engage.

Not only is the creative engaging and fun, but it is timely and relevant to the season at hand. As a result, the visual resonates strongly with the recipient upon receipt.

The products are not the feature of this campaign, in fact they are not even presented in the main section. Instead, the message is about engaging with the brand in a fun and clever way. They did feature products in their Thanksgiving message; however, it was done in a unique manner that complemented the creative they were displayed on – versus the traditional presentation of sales that email recipients have become so used to.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Let your creative juices flow. Leveraging unique and complementary applications of creative design elements can capture the recipients' attention and drive increased engagement.

INTERCONTINENTAL HOTELS GROUP (IHG) – DOWNLOADABLE CONCIERGE

OBJECTIVE

Announce the release of the new iPad application, providing a mechanism for recipients to download.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Analyzing customer data to understand the strength and demographic of your brand can be the secret to engagement success. While IHG manages the largest loyalty program in the world, they know that not all of their members are the same. Properly segmenting program participants that show loyalty to the Intercontinental Hotels & Resorts brand drives increased engagement because the message is most relevant to that audience.

The screenshot shows an email from Priority Club Rewards. The header includes the logo and navigation links: Reservations, Earn Points, Redeem Points, Offers. The recipient is Jan Smith, Membership #: 7887565, with a 'Log In' link. The main subject is 'Downloadable Concierge' with the subtext 'BE "IN THE KNOW" - ON THE GO'. The body text addresses 'Dear Kristin' and promotes the free Concierge Insider Guides iPad App, highlighting features like collective knowledge, personal recommendations for over 120 destinations, and a 'DOWNLOAD NOW' button. Below this are three promotional tiles: 'Priority Club Member Benefits' (points never expire, no blackout dates), 'Stay Impressed with Holiday Inn® Hotels' (exciting changes), and 'Lowest Internet Rate, Guaranteed' (beat any other site). A 'Book Your Travel' section includes a search form with fields for Destination, Check-In Date, Check-Out Date, Rooms, Adults, and Children, and a 'GO' button. At the bottom, there are three columns: 'Priority Club® Rewards' (links to Reservations, Earn Points, Redeem Points, Offers, Member Benefits, Customer Care), 'NEW: A Free Night Every Year' (plus 30,000 points after first purchase, 'Learn More'), and 'Manage Your Account' (check balance, update profile, 'View Account'). The footer lists IHG brands (InterContinental, Crowne Plaza, Hotel Indigo, Holiday Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Holiday Inn Select, Staybridge Suites, Canopy by Hilton) and provides subscription information for JANSMTIH@YAHOO.COM, including instructions on how to change email preferences.

WHY IT WORKS

The audience is right. The entire database of email subscribers was not hit with this message. Only those who fell into the definition of the “target audience” got this message.

The message is focused and succinct, providing a clear and concise message with a clear call-to-action.

Further reinforcement of the launch of the “downloadable concierge” appears as secondary messaging within other communications. This exposes it to those who may not have seen it as part of the launch - as well as providing repeat impressions to those that did.

The data does the driving. A fundamental understanding of targeting and segmentation drives success in engagement.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Proper targeting and segmentation of your email audience increases the relevance of your message, which ultimately drives engagement.

BROOKSTONE – MYSTERY COUPON


OBJECTIVE

Drive shopping traffic to the site.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

During the holiday season, everyone is looking for a deal, which the retailers help communicate via their email communications. Typically consumers know what that deal is before they start shopping – but Brookstone decided to drive engagement with a little bit of mystery. The expectation is properly set – but in order to know what the recipient has “won” – they need to shop and proceed to checkout.

Select [here](#) to view an on-line version of this message.



FREE SHIPPING ON ORDERS OVER \$90* | PROMO CODE: SHIP90

Gift Ideas | Electronics | Massage | New@ | Best Sellers | SALE

the
GIFT
EXPERTS

Mystery Coupon

SAVE \$5—\$50

on orders of \$50 or more**

4 Days Only | Order by 12/18 | Online Only

Shop Brookstone.com and enter your Mystery Promo Code 89410 at checkout to see your savings.

Shop Now >

shop by price

\$35 & under

\$50 & under

\$75 & under

\$100 & under

shop top gifts

[new@brookstone](#)

[only@brookstone](#)

[gifts for him](#)

[gifts for her](#)

[birthday gifts](#)

[special offers](#)

In order to ensure prompt delivery to your inbox, please add "Brookstone@Offers.Brookstone.com" to your address book or approved sender list.

Watch for our Brookstone catalog in the mail. Ordering online is easy; go to [Brookstone.com](#) and enter the item number in the search box. To request a catalog, [select here](#). To find a store near you, [select here](#).

Mystery Coupon—what will YOUR savings be?

*Free Ground Shipping for contiguous 48 U.S. states only. Requires minimum qualifying \$90 merchandise purchase. Taxes and gift wrapping charges do not count toward the minimum qualifying purchase for this offer. Offer excludes flat shipping fees and shipping surcharges. Cannot be combined with any other offers. Note: Qualifying minimum purchase for free ground shipping offer is calculated for each shipping address. Limited Time Offer.

**Offer valid online only. Use promo code 89410 at checkout. Gift cards, tax, Protection Plus Plans, plus Able Planet®, Canon®, Cinemin®, Panasonic®, Parrot® AR. Drone™, PowerPlate™, SmartShopper™, Sonos®, Sony®, Tivoli®, Tom Tom® and WowWee® products do not count toward the minimum purchase for this offer. This promotion cannot be combined with any other offers or discounts. Cannot be used on returned or repurchased merchandise. No cash value. Duplicates, facsimiles or photocopies of this coupon are invalid and void. Limited time offer.

To speak to a Customer Service representative, call 800-926-7000.
Brookstone Customer Service
1 Innovation Way
Merrimack, NH 03054

WHY IT WORKS

The timing of the message is extremely relevant to the season and the “sales” state of mind.

Expectations are properly set in that recipients know they will receive a minimum of \$5 off and up to \$50 off a \$50 purchase.

Before they know exactly what their discount is, recipients need to go to the site and actually shop, place items in their cart and proceed to check out. While not all recipients are going to take advantage, those who do are likely qualified and engaged customers.

The message is all about the discount. There are no products featured, which further drives interest into clicking through to the site to see what deals recipients can find.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Leave a little to the imagination. You don't always have to spell out all the details in your message – give them a reason to click through and engage.


BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS – 5 DAYS OF THANKSGIVING

OBJECTIVE

Drive subscription to an email mini-series.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

BHG understands that its subscribers' engagement may increase around seasonal events like Thanksgiving. Providing subscribers with relevant, targeted and timely content around a very specific event can further engage – and drive eyes to the site.



Better Homes and Gardens | **Our Best Thanksgiving Recipes & Ideas**

Dear KARA,
Sign up to get started!
Sign up today to receive 5 days of Thanksgiving inspiration from the experts at Better Homes and Gardens. You'll get:

- Delicious (and easy) **main dish** and side dish recipes your family will love
- Decadent **desserts** made with your favorite fall ingredients
- **Centerpiece** ideas and other fall decorating inspiration
- Plus, exclusive tips and **time-saving** tricks

Get started today to plan the perfect holiday get-together for your friends and family.

Sign Up Now >>

Your Privacy Guarantee
Because we respect your online time and Internet privacy, please be assured we will never share your e-mail address with third parties. For more information, see our [Privacy Policy](#). Your Email: [ktrivunovic@comcast.net] is in our mailing list. If you'd rather not receive special offers from us by e-mail, please go to www.bhg.com/bhg/profile/member/optout/?email=ktrivunovic@comcast.net. Please allow up to 10 days for your request to be processed.
Meredith Corporation, 1716 Locust, Des Moines, IA 50309

WHY IT WORKS

The recipient is provided a mechanism to request five days of email communications that are specific and relevant to them – but once it's done, it's done.

The content is laser focused and specifically addresses a need that many have around that time of year – planning the Thanksgiving menu.

The interest in engaging with this program was requested, not assumed – giving the recipient a choice on participation.

THE BOTTOM LINE

There are periods of time when your customers are more engaged with your brand and your content – capitalizing on these moments can drive more long-term engagement.

TICKETMASTER – THE NEW TICKETMASTER.COM

OBJECTIVE

Announce the launch of the new Ticketmaster website.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Customers and recipients are often engaged with a company's email communications or sales efforts – but how often are they asked about a brand's business decisions? But that's exactly what Ticketmaster has done. Getting recipients engaged at a deeper level with the brand itself can foster greater loyalty.

The screenshot shows an email from Ticketmaster with the subject line "Allow us to REINTRODUCE OURSELVES...". The email features three numbered sections: 1. "My Favorites with Events" showing a list of upcoming events for a user named Debbie. 2. "Friends on Ticketmaster" showing a social feed of friends' activities. 3. "You recently viewed..." showing a list of recently viewed events. At the bottom, there is a red button that says "Unveil the new Ticketmaster.com!" and a footer with links for "Retail Outlets", "Unsubscribe", and "My Ticketmaster".

ticketmaster®

Allow us to
REINTRODUCE OURSELVES...

➔ **Tell us what you think - you could win a \$500 Ticketmaster Gift Card!**

New look, new attitude, plus new (and improved!) features:

- 1 My Favorites with Events**
Hello Debbie.
Don't miss your favorite upcoming events.
• Jack Johnson
• Megadeth
• Norah Jones
• Rufus Wainwright
- 2 Friends on Ticketmaster**
Everyone Friends
Matt is attending THE ROCKSTAR ENERGY DRINK MAYHEM FESTIVAL... at First Midwest Bank Amphitheater on April 27
24 minutes ago
Lisa purchased tickets to Glee at House of Blues Anaheim on May 2
18 hours ago
- 3 You recently viewed...**
Keith Urban
STAPLES Center
• Dave Matthews Band
• Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey...
• Carrie Underwood

While you're exploring ... click **Our Fan Guarantee** at the bottom of the page, and look for our new **Interactive Seat Maps** on many events that let you pick where you sit! Plus click any artist, team, or show name to find handy **fan reviews**, and write one of your own.

Unveil the new Ticketmaster.com!

Tell us what you think - you could win a \$500 Ticketmaster Gift Card!
See official rules for details. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY.

[Retail Outlets](#) | [Unsubscribe](#) | [My Ticketmaster](#)

WHY IT WORKS

The message highlights the changes in functionality to the website – clearly and concisely.

Functional changes are tied directly back to how they improve and enhance the experience for the recipient while on the site.

Ticketmaster directly solicits feedback from the recipient on their experiences with the site – requiring them to actually go to the site and interact.

As a thank you for taking the time to provide their feedback, Ticketmaster includes an incentive for engaging.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Let your customers in on your business decisions – especially those that are forward facing and apparent to them. Get their feedback or opinion on things you've changed, or plan to change, so they feel like a part of the bigger picture.

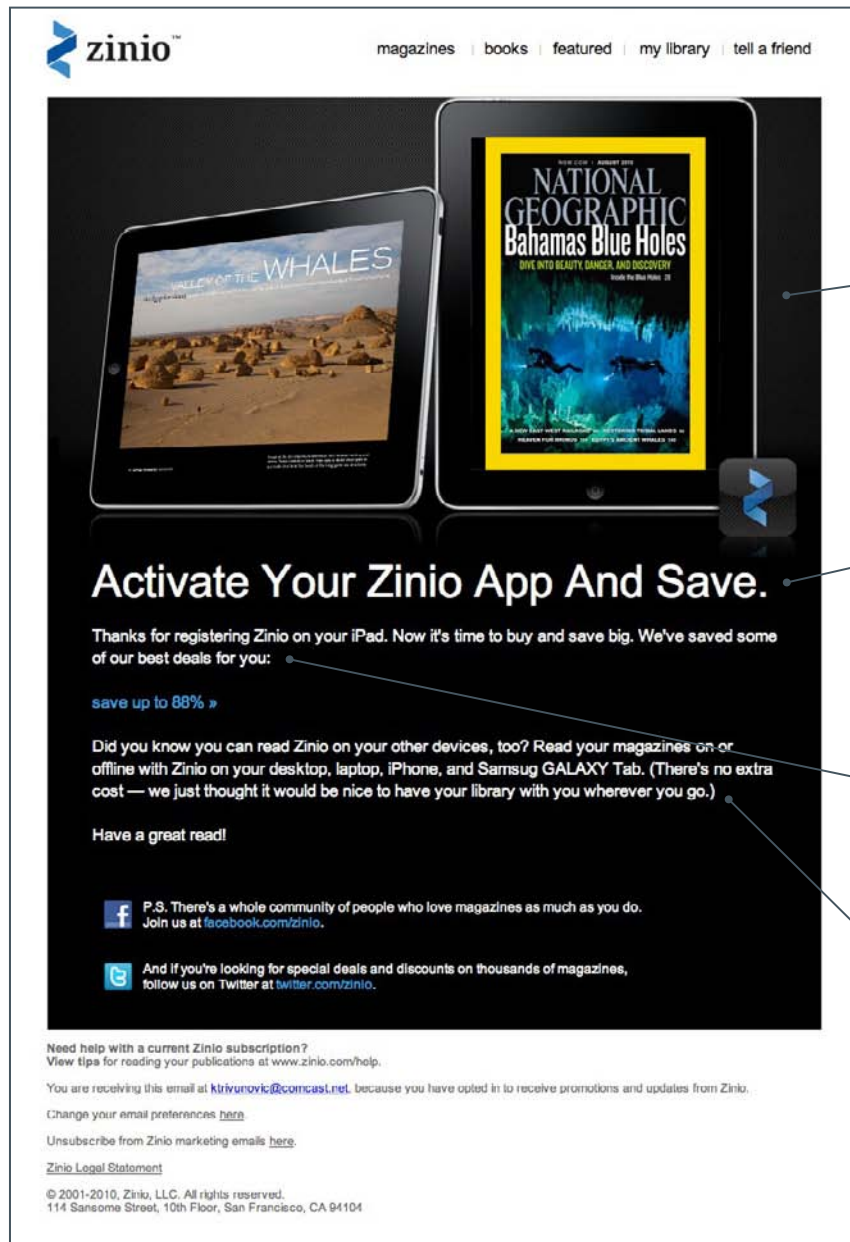
ZINIO – ACTIVATE YOUR APP

OBJECTIVE

Drive further engagement with the Zinio iPad application.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Zinio recognizes that recipients are most engaged, and the brand top-of-mind, at the onset of the relationship. Leveraging email to further educate the recipient on how to get the most out of their application can produce more loyal and engaged customers and users.



WHY IT WORKS

Message imagery is dynamically generated based on the device registered, providing immediate visual relevance for the recipient.

The timing is right. This message doesn't come immediately. Instead it comes a few days following registration, prior to activation, which is a critical time to drive increased interaction with the applications.

A gentle up-sell message encourages the recipient to take advantage of special offers and deals reserved "just for you."

Educational information is clearly presented to the recipient with brief details on the ability to view content on other devices - expanding the reach of Zinio from one device to multiple locations.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Direction and education at the beginning of a relationship can drive long-term understanding of your product/service – keeping customers engaged.

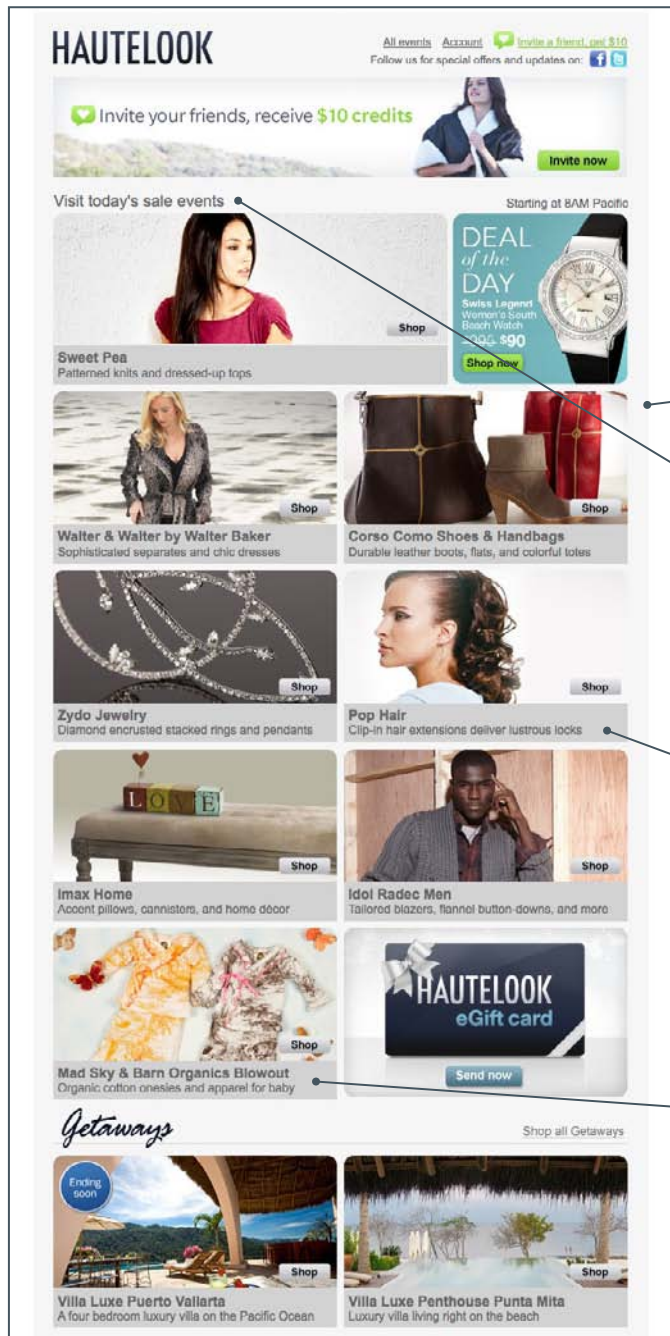
HAUTELOOK – DYNAMIC RELEVANCE

OBJECTIVE

Drive recipients to the site for flash sale deals.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

HauteLook recognizes that what is relevant to the recipient today may not be tomorrow – and by leveraging site behavior and interaction with sales, they drive further engagement by dynamically prioritizing the content within each message.



WHY IT WORKS

What is relevant to a recipient is constantly changing. On one day, they may be in the market for kids' clothes and tomorrow it may be something for the home. By embracing this "moving target" mentality, HauteLook can better present information to the recipient in a dynamic hierarchy.

HauteLook tested brand affinity and saw a significant lift in conversion by reminding previous purchasers of the brand's next sale.

Relevance is a high priority because deliverability is so critical to HauteLook's revenue model.

Each day, HauteLook features 18 sales across 7 different categories. In order to maintain relevance for its subscribers, its daily email alerts dynamically prioritize the sales presented based on previously subscriber engagement.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Understanding how a subscriber has engaged with previous content will allow you to prioritize future content and drive long-term engagement.

CONCLUSION

While there is no standardized definition of engagement within the email industry, one thing is for sure: your subscribers' engagement with your email program will have some effect on your deliverability in the future. Get ahead of the curve and start making it happen now. Having a more engaged audience will not only help safeguard future deliverability, it will lead to more satisfied and profitable customers.

There are four steps to generating meaningful engagement with your customers:

- Define what it means to be "engaged" with each of your email programs
- Determine how you will measure engagement
- State your engagement goals and objectives
- Get your subscribers engaged

Increasing engagement over the long-haul means really evaluating your programs and the value proposition they bring to your audience – as well as looking at internal processes for getting your email out the door. You may find it necessary to combine existing programs into one, seamless communication, to further segment or target your audience for a specific program, or cut a program altogether. Review the Engagement Strategy checklist at the end of this whitepaper and get started today – before the ISPs make those decisions for you and relegate your messages to the bulk folder.

ABOUT STRONGMAIL

StrongMail enables marketers to forge meaningful, profitable and long-lasting connections with their customers through email marketing and social media. With our unique combination of technology and services, StrongMail takes a fundamentally different approach that offers many distinct advantages.

StrongMail's dedicated solutions offer the lowest cost of ownership of any tier-one solution and easily connect with customer data for superior relevancy and performance. StrongMail's email and social CRM agency provides groundbreaking strategic and creative services to help marketers listen, learn, engage and influence best customers.

It's these differences that have led Fortune 2000 brands to switch to StrongMail. Learn more about StrongMail or follow us online at www.twitter.com/StrongMail or www.facebook.com/StrongMail.

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THE BOTTOM LINE: SUBSCRIBER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY CHECKLIST

- ☐ In order to engage your email recipients, you must provide them with content/offers that they care enough about to actually interact with.
- ☐ Allow the subscriber to provide you with information about their preferences in content and engagement – even if it is in supplemental channels like social or mobile.
- ☐ Your email subscribers want to be heard. Sometimes engaging them is as simple as asking for their feedback or opinion.
- ☐ People are busy and your email isn't necessarily their number one priority – sometimes a simple follow-up is all you need to send to engage a recipient.
- ☐ Telling your recipients what to look for, when to look for it, and why to care sets expectations appropriately and encourages longer-term engagement.
- ☐ Sometimes the promise of value in content just isn't enough. You may find that when it comes to incenting engagement, bribery can be very effective.
- ☐ Let your creative juices flow. Leveraging unique and complementary applications of creative design elements can capture the recipients' attention and drive increased engagement.
- ☐ Proper targeting and segmentation of your email audience increases the relevance of your message, which ultimately drives engagement.
- ☐ Leave a little to the imagination. You don't always have to spell out all the details in your message – give them a reason to click through and engage.
- ☐ There are periods of time when your customers are more engaged with your brand and your content – capitalizing on these moments can drive more long-term engagement.
- ☐ Let your customers in on your business decisions – especially those that are forward facing and apparent to them. Get their feedback or opinion on things you've changed, or plan to change, so they feel like a part of the bigger picture.
- ☐ Direction and education at the beginning of a relationship can drive long-term understanding of your product/service – keeping customers engaged.
- ☐ Understanding how a subscriber has engaged with previous content will allow you to prioritize future content and drive long-term engagement.

For information on how StrongMail's Strategic Services team can help you fine-tune your email programs to increase engagement, please contact us at **800-971-0380** or **info@strongmail.com**.