Email on Acid

Engaging Email Content:

How to Earn Attention and Drive Action

Meet Your Panel of Email Marketing Experts

Laura Horkey
Email on Acid

Micah McGuire
ProWritingAid

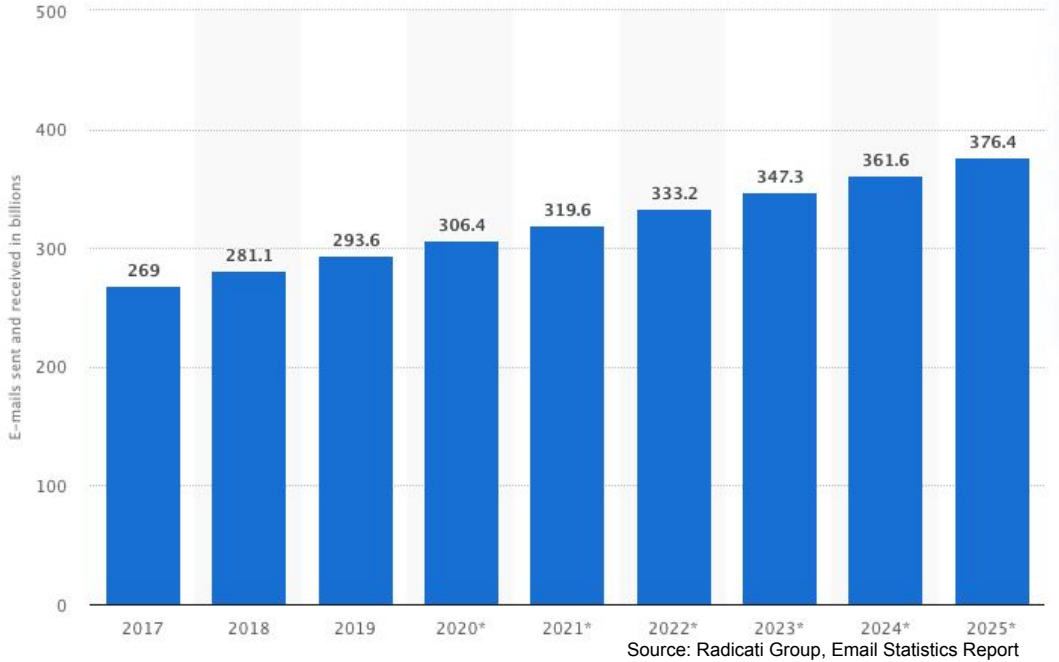
Kelly Lamano
Really Good Emails
Sunshine Media Marketing

The Challenge

How do we get subscribers to engage with email in a world full of digital distractions?

Inbox Overload is REAL!

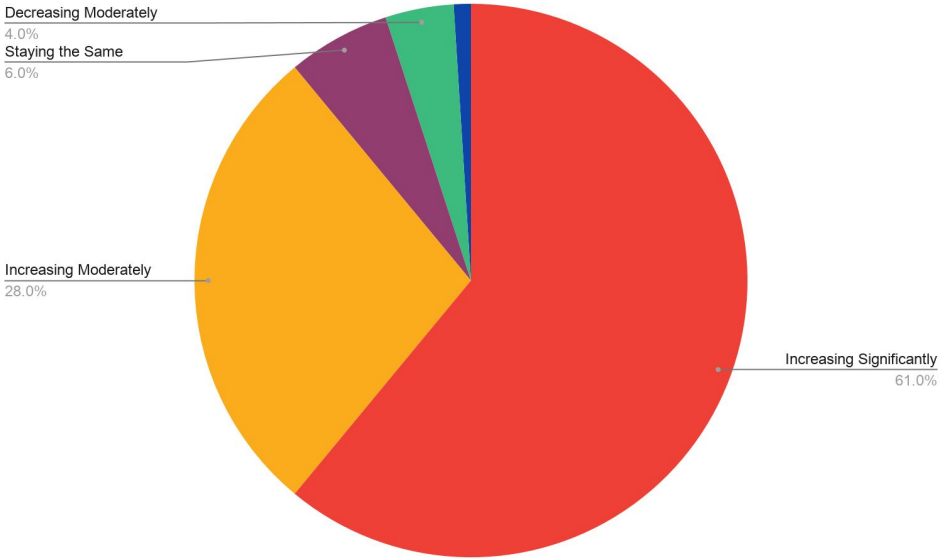
319.6 Billion Emails Sent *Per Day* in 2021



Source: Radicati Group, Email Statistics Report

Inbox Overload is REAL!

89% of Top Marketers Plan to Increase Email Campaign Send Volume in 2021



Source: Email on Acid/Ascend2 2020 Survey

Inbox Overload is REAL!

Average Email Metrics Across Industries

- Open Rate: **18%**
- Click-Through Rate: **2.6%**
- Click to Open Rate: **14%**

Source: Campaign Monitor 2021 Email Marketing Benchmarks

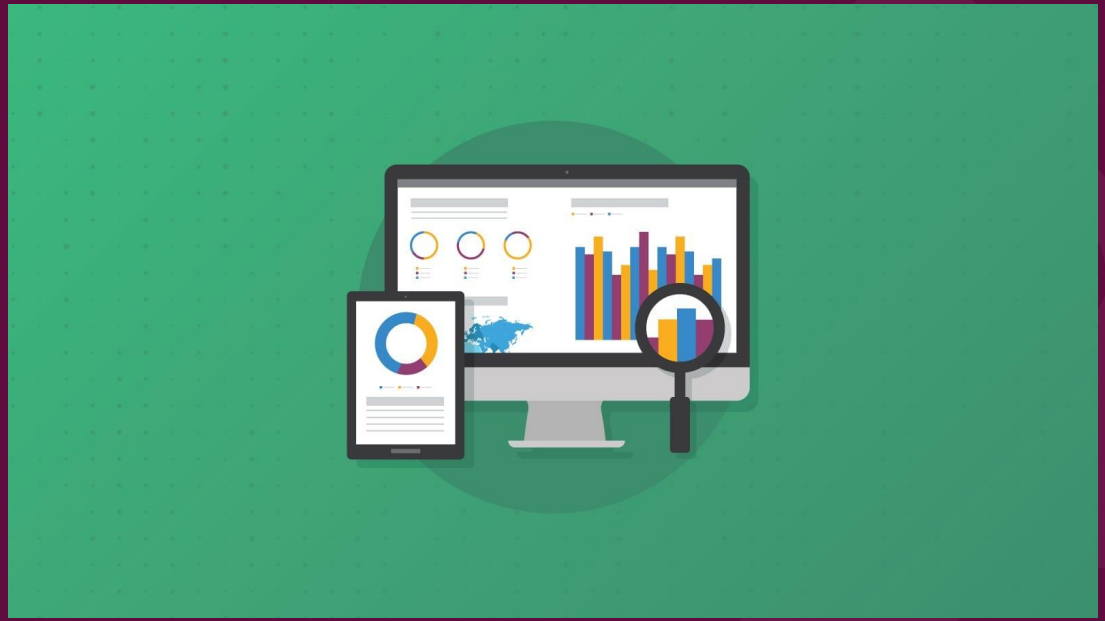
How Can You be ***Better*** **than Average?**

The Strategy

Have you done your research?
Do you know your audience?

Do Your Research First

What works? What doesn't?



Know Your Subscribers

Email marketing and personas

Know Your Subscribers

Align email marketing with customer journeys

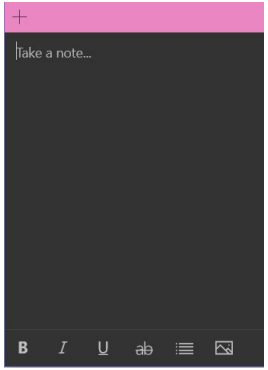
Email Strategy: Process and Timeline

- Brainstorm content outside of the ESP
- Write the email draft in...
  - Google Docs
  - Evernote
  - Digital sticky note
  - Physical notebook
- How far in advance do you need to plan?

Email Strategy: Process and Timeline

- Create a review process with your team (or yourself)
  - Who will write the email copy?
  - Who will design the email template?
  - What email assets do you need from clients?
  - Who will test the email on different browsers and devices?
  - Who will schedule the email campaigns?
  - Who will review the campaign reports?

Planning: Notion + Sticky Notes + Google Docs



4/2/21 Newsletter

Subject Line:
Annie, are you OK? Are you OK, Annie?

Header Text:
Probably OK is good enough

Body:
What we would've sent on April Fools' Day if we could be bothered to send emails on their correct dates. It seemed like April 2 would be... ok.

We might be late to the "new year, new me" game, but we've reflected on where we're at with RGE and where we want to be. We considered our passions, excitement for email, and our sense that all of you are family. We talked about it for about 5 minutes. It was good. Now, we're rolling out some changes.

"Really Good" felt overly ambitious. I mean, have you even lived through 2020? Really Good feels like a bridge too far. At first, we felt you deserved better, but we're just trying to make it through the day—ya know?

Meet Realistically OK Emails. We're still your probable source for email ~~inspiration~~ viewing. But we're resetting our standards as we come to terms with the fact that email, like us, is tired, and possibly eating its feelings.

With the new name and new logo, we give you OK practices:

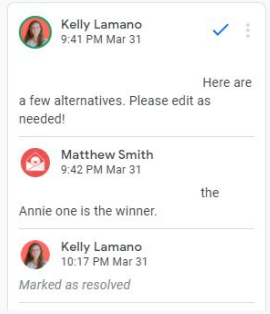
- Build your next email with images only. It's just easier.
- Don't include live text in your email, it's just too rambunctious.
- Add title tags to all elements in your email template. Why not.
- Leave all table roles blank to avoid spam filters. Eat a can of spam.
- Craft a subject line no shorter than 80 characters. Size matters.
- Leave out the preview text and preheader. We want to see the "View in Browser" text in the inbox. It adds mystery.

CTA button text: ??

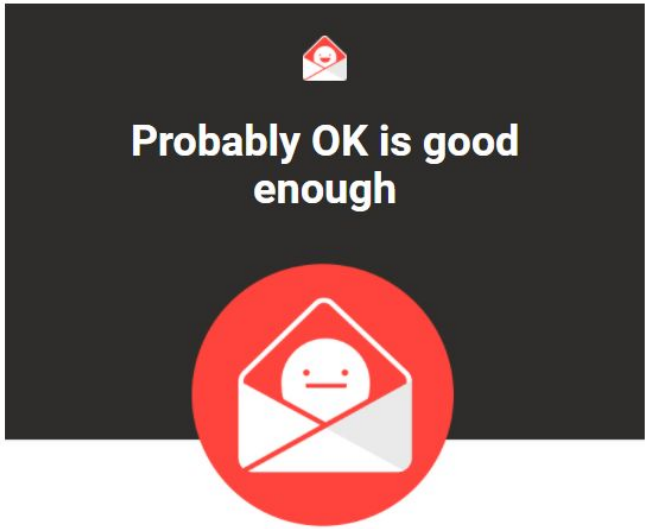
Update text in the template

- Change *Email GIF of the week* to "Email JIF of the week"
- Change *See it in the email* to "See the 10MB animation"

See it in the email



Final Newsletter with Team Collaboration



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Clicking here is OK too

Articles we thought you'd enjoy because somebody wrote them

Copywriting

What kind of writing encourages more subscriber engagement?

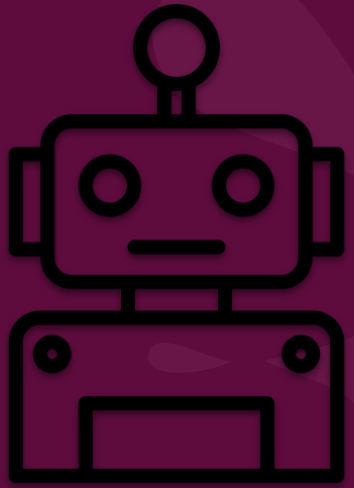
Engaging Email Content

HOW TO EARN ATTENTION AND DRIVE ACTION

Brand Voice and Style

Corporate vs. Conversational | A.I. vs. Human

OR



Engaging Email Content

HOW TO EARN ATTENTION AND DRIVE ACTION

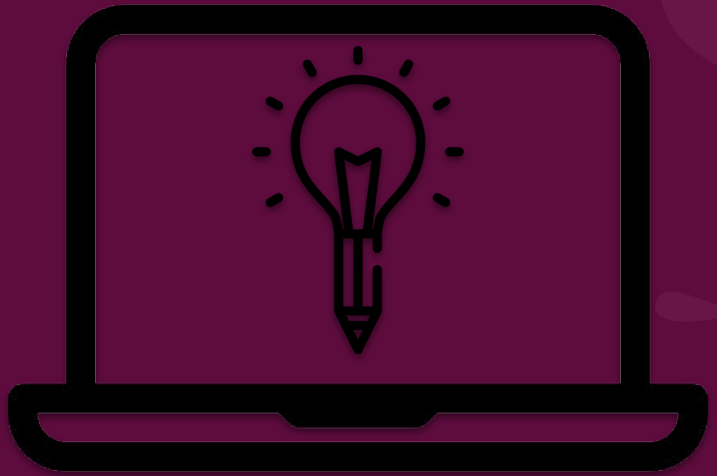
Email Copy Decisions

Long format vs. Short format

OR

Working Through Writer's Block

How do you get good ideas for email content?



Writer's Block: Talk to Your Team

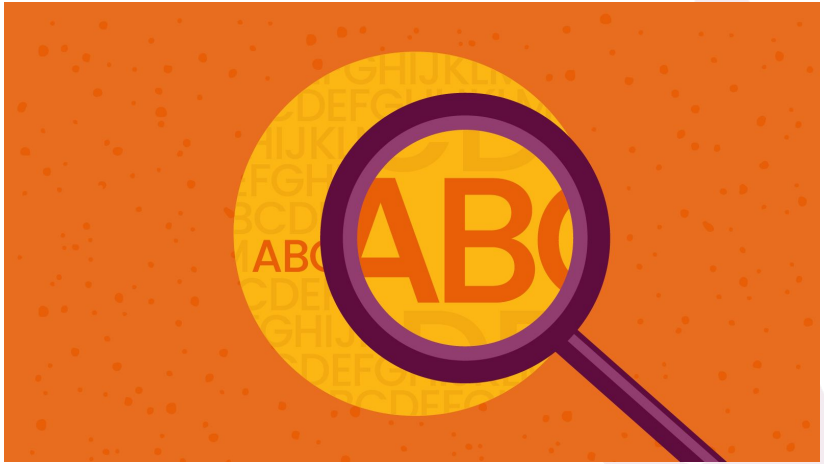
- Feeling stuck after vacation?
- Uninspired working remotely?
- It's OK
- Tell your team how you're feeling
- Ask for help
- Reflect on your workload, habits, and breaks
- Get inspired by song lyrics, shows, pop culture

Content Inspiration & Resources

- Copyblogger
- Copyhackers
- CoSchedule
- Content Marketing Institute

Email Engagement = Email Readability

- Word Choice
- Length
- Reading Level
- Copy editing



What Makes an Engaging Subject Line?

- Word Choice
- Length
- Emojis?
- Front-loading information
- Preheader/Preview text
- Personalization

Successful Subject Line Examples

Personalization and FOMO

Subject: Mary, Earn double points today only

Successful Subject Line Examples

Pain Point (Problem/Solution)

Subject: Stop wasting time on mindless work

Successful Subject Line Examples

Curiosity and Urgency

Subject: Last Day to See What this Mystery Email is All About

GRUBHUB

Successful Subject Line Examples

Cleverness/Humor

Subject: Pairs nicely with spreadsheets

WARBY PARKER
eyewear

Successful Subject Line Examples

Personal and Simple

Subject: Hey

Note: Most of us aren't on the same level as Barack Obama.

Engaging Email Content

HOW TO EARN ATTENTION AND DRIVE ACTION

What are your subscribers saying?

Is your copy working or do you need to update it?

Subscriber Quotes

THIS is why I read every email you send.

I'm a 41-year-old dude with hair past my shoulders and a crazy beard that makes me look like a character that wandered out of a Dostoevsky novel. And yet...I'm also a total Swifty.

So this subject line made me love your (already delightful and brilliant) email marketing that much more.

Stop trying to be funny when clearly you are not.

Just give me what I signed up for.
I don't want to sift through bad attempts of stand-up comedy just to find what I am looking for.

Email Design

What makes your emails more eye-catching and engaging?

Engaging Email Content

HOW TO EARN ATTENTION AND DRIVE ACTION

Email Design Trends

For 2021 and Beyond ...

- Dark mode
- Clean and simple layouts
- Bold typography
- Pops of color
- Animated graphics
- Stopwatches and countdowns

Winning Email Design Examples

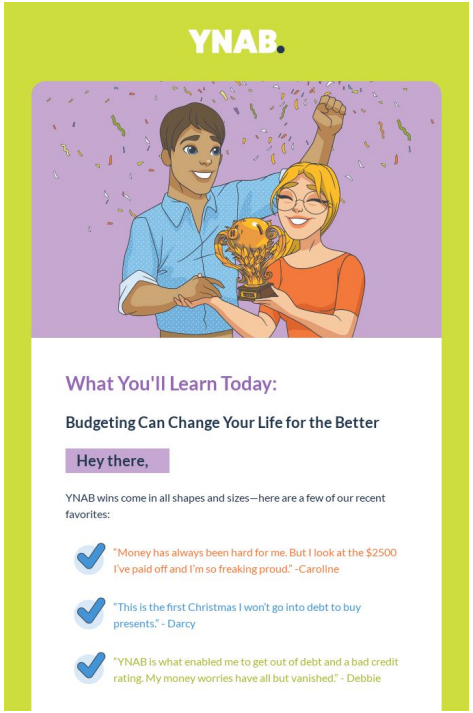
Spotify

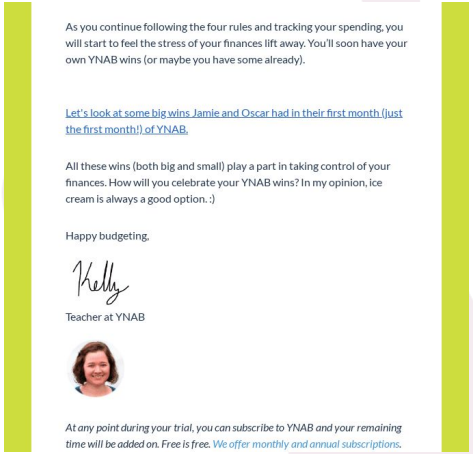
- Year-end review
- Personalized
- Fun GIF
- Minimal amount of text
- Centered text works here
- Entices the subscriber
- One, simple CTA

Winning Email Design Examples

YNAB

- Onboarding email
- Custom illustration
- Note from teacher
- Easy to scan
- Checkmark bullet points

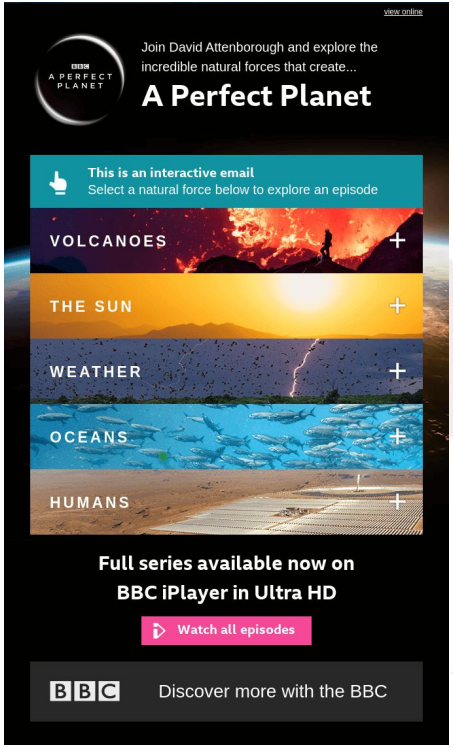


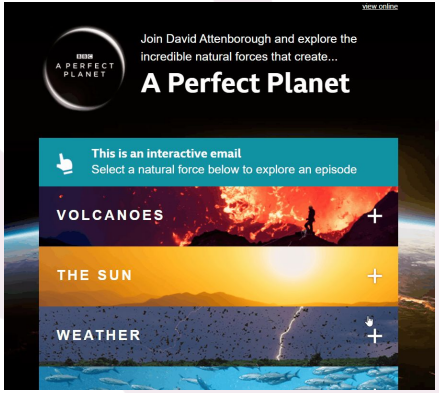


Winning Email Design Examples

The BBC

- Interactive
- Accordion
- Background changes when you click the plus sign (+)
- Works well with the product: Engaging, educational, high-def video content

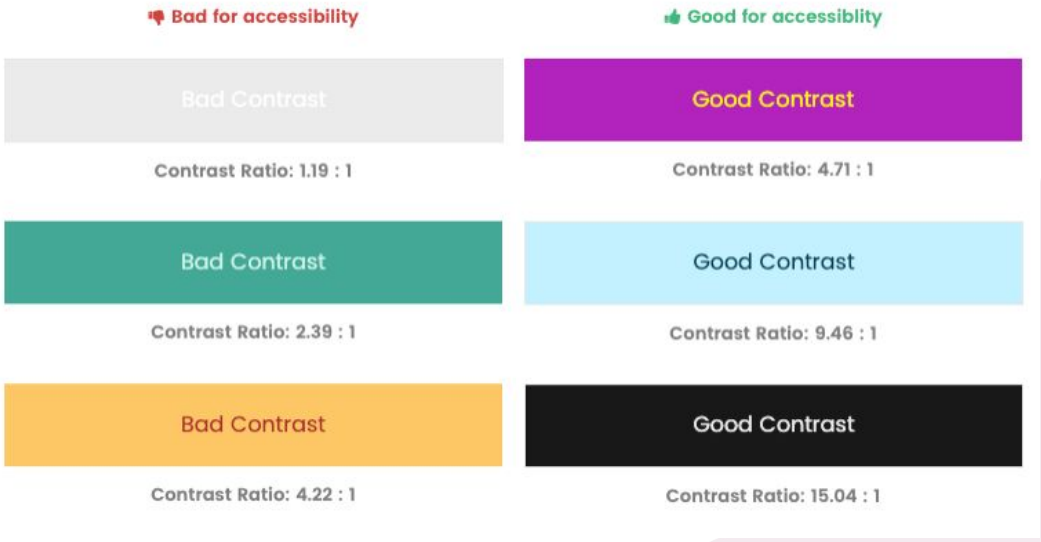




Accessibility and Email Design

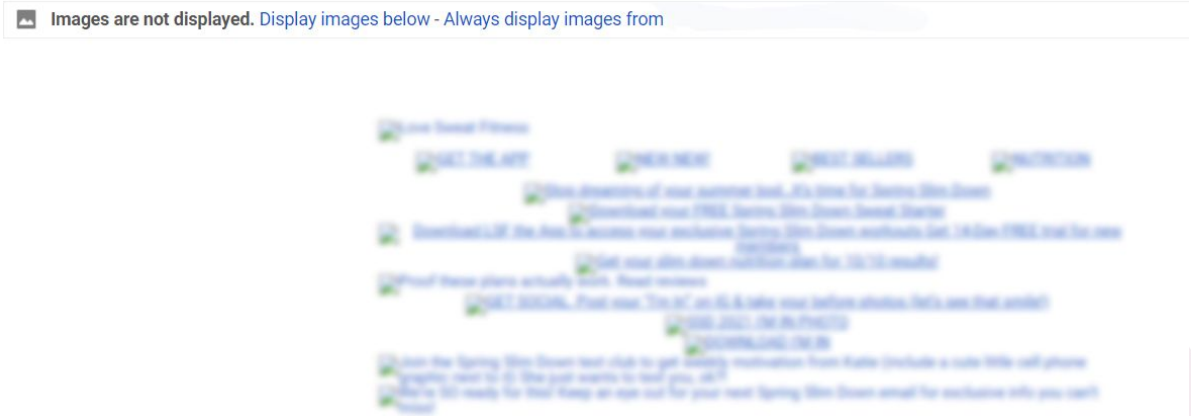
Key Considerations:

- Live text vs. Images
- Clickable links
- Optimize for screen readers
- Alt text for images
- **Color Contrast Ratio**
- Font size



Accessibility and Email Design

All-image email



Underline linked text

What opportunities are there when sending survey emails? In this week's Feedback Friday, we sat down with Chris Vasquez, the survey pro behind Would You Rather, to look at the impact of the first question, the buttons, and ways to increase your participation and completion rates.

Calls to Action (CTAs)

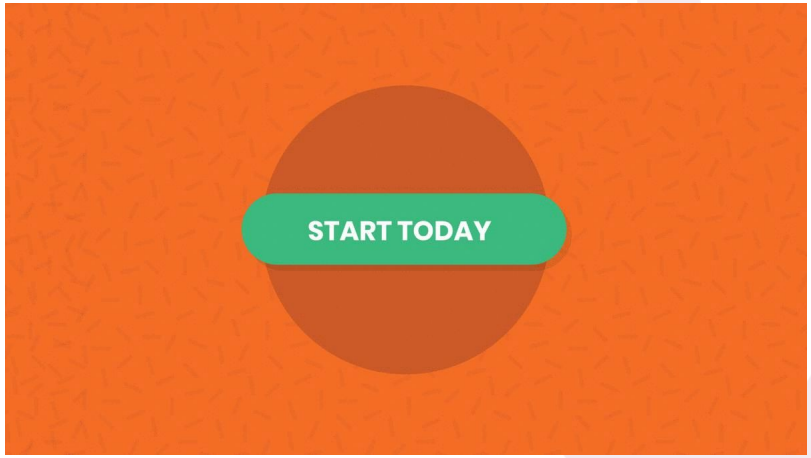
What encourages more people to click-through and convert?

Effective CTA Word Choices

- Get
- Start
- Free
- Your/You
- Download
- Now
- Subscribe
- Try
- Book
- View/Watch
- Discover
- Learn more
- Join
- Find out
- Shop
- Sign up
- Redeem
- Reserve
- Give me ...
- Yes, I want ...

Effective CTA Button Design

- Make them look clickable
- Size them for clickability
  (Min: 44x44 px for Mac / 34x26 px MS)
- Use contrasting colors
- Place them strategically
  (Consider subscriber flow)
- Use white space



Effective CTA Button Design

START WITH BASICS

PRE-ORDER

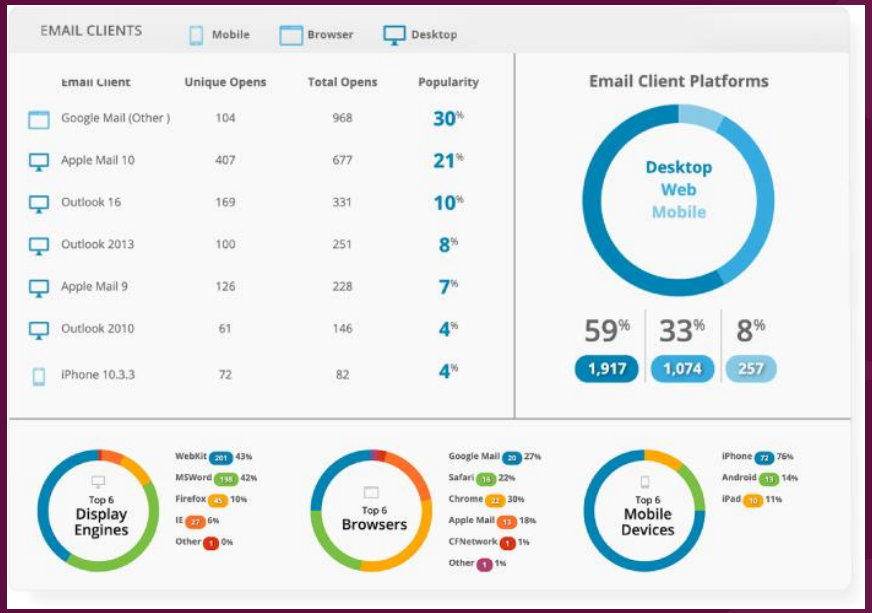
Add a line

Measurement & Continuous Improvement

What metrics define success?
How do you improve results?

Engagement Metrics

Know Your Subscribers: Clients and Devices

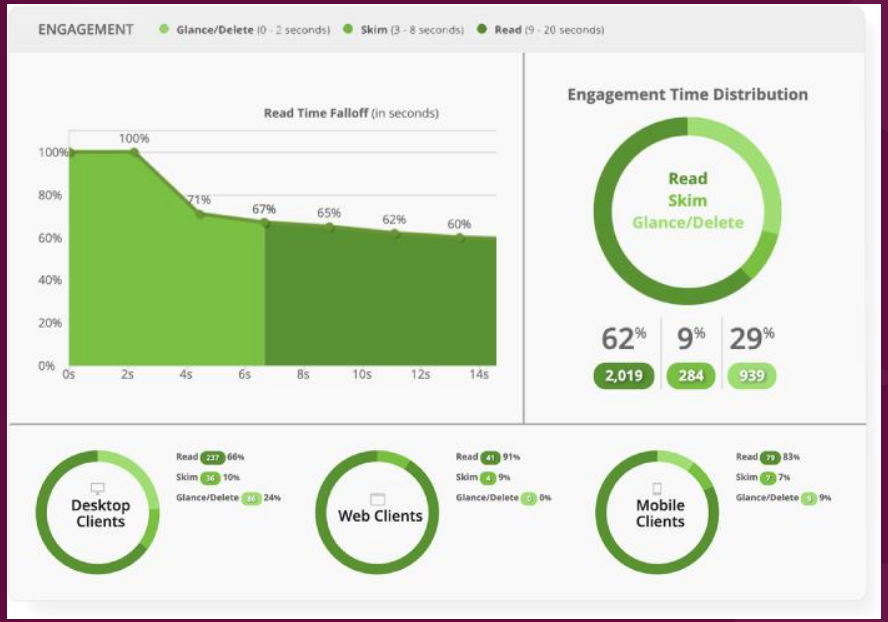


Engaging Email Content

HOW TO EARN ATTENTION AND DRIVE ACTION

Engagement Metrics

Read | Skim | Delete



A/B Email Testing

Uncover insights and make improvements

- Subject lines
- Sender name
- Send time
- Images
- Split test design/layout
- Messaging
- Calls to action

How We Can Help with Email Engagement

ProWritingAid

https://prowritingaid.com

SUNSHINE MEDIA MARKETING

https://sunshinemedia.marketing

https://emailonacid.com

Really Good Emails

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Email on Acid

Engaging Email Content:
How to Earn Attention and Drive Action

Q&A

Email on Acid

Engaging Email Content:
How to Earn Attention and Drive Action

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