

# HOW TO WRITE THE PERFECT EMAIL



A 15-Point Checklist for  
Optimizing Marketing Emails



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: Improve ROI with Optimization.....	3
Chapter 1: Email Marketing Essentials.....	4
Chapter 2: Email Optimization Checklist.....	12
Conclusion: Send Better Emails.....	36



## INTRODUCTION

# IMPROVE ROI WITH OPTIMIZATION

When done correctly, email marketing serves as a tried-and-true way to get readers to download content, convert prospects on special offers, and upsell existing customers. And according to [Econsultancy](#), "Three-quarters of companies agree that email offers "excellent" to "good" ROI," which proves that this area of marketing is certainly worth your attention.

But these positive results don't just happen by chance. They can only be obtained through optimizing your emails. We know that there are 14 specific areas that have been proven to boost both clickthrough and conversion rates once optimized.

And with the help of today's guide, we'll show you exactly how to do that so you can reap the positive ROI benefits of email marketing.



## CHAPTER 1

# EMAIL MARKETING ESSENTIALS

“Email use worldwide will top 3 billion users by 2020,” according to [Media Post](#), and it’s only going up from there.

That’s why it’s important to focus your time and attention on email marketing in addition to social media, paid advertising, and search engine optimization. It’s one form of marketing that’s not going anywhere anytime soon, and rightfully so.

With emails, you can foster a deeper, one-on-one relationship with your audience. By making a few simple changes, your emails will appear more personal and authentic than any other marketing efforts you take (more on these later).

This builds trust with your customers because even though you’re not actually face-to-face with them, it feels as if you are.

And as Neil Patel points out on [Quicksprout](#), email subscribers are amazing for your engagement rates. Patel’s email subscribers “drive 41%” of Quicksprout’s blog comments.

He also says that his email subscribers are “3.9 times more likely to share [his] content via the social web” after they read about it in his email and head over to his site to check it out.

Plus, the truth is, your target audience wants to hear from you via email. “72% of people surveyed actually prefer to receive promotional content through email, as compared to 17% who prefer social media,” according to [MarketingSherpa](#).



## Why Your Emails Need to Be Optimized

It's important to understand what exactly email optimization entails and why it's so crucial for your campaign.

In the same way that you optimize your website for search engines, your goal with email optimization is to prompt your readers to take action.

When your email arrives in their inbox, readers have two options: open it or delete it. If your email is not properly optimized, chances are, it will fall into the trash bin, and you've missed your chance to connect.

On the flipside, when you optimize your emails, you encourage your reader to not only open the email, but also read it in its entirety -- and complete your desired action.

You can compare this to having a compelling meta description and title for your blog posts. When these items are done right, users can't help but click the link to learn more. The same thing happens with optimized emails.

So if improving your clickthrough rates and converting more leads are top priorities for your brand, optimizing each email you send is a must.

## How to Determine the Goal of Your Emails

To optimize effectively, you need to have a strategy in place. This means you'll want to start with an overarching goal of what you hope to accomplish with your brand's email marketing.



## CHAPTER 1

# EMAIL MARKETING ESSENTIALS

Are you looking to increase sales? Engage with your current subscribers more? While it's perfectly fine to have more than one goal, you should ensure that each email only focuses on one goal at a time so you're not overwhelming your readers. Through our optimization tactics, we'll show you how to hit more than one goal without distracting your reader from the primary focus.

Speaking of which, it's important that you also narrow the focus of every email so readers aren't pulled in multiple directions.

Try to answer questions such as:

- What are we trying to accomplish with this email?
- What actions do we want readers to take?
- How will we prompt readers to take this action? (i.e., using buttons, CTAs, or by clearly spelling it out in the content of the email)

Once your goal is determined, move on to what [metrics you'll use to track](#) to measure your success.

If growing your audience is your goal, keep an eye on your subscriber list growth.

When you want to send your readers to your latest opt-in guide, the number of leads sourced from email should be a key metric.

Every marketer should also pay attention to:

- Clickthrough rate
- Conversion rate
- Bounce rate
- List growth rate
- Email sharing/forwarding rate
- Overall ROI



## CHAPTER 1

# EMAIL MARKETING ESSENTIALS

A common misconception for many is to only worry about the open rate and unsubscribe rate, but these metrics can be misleading.

In the first case, an email can be counted as “unopened” if the recipient turned on the image-blocking feature in their email provider settings. So even if they do open the email, it won’t be marked as read for your stats.

As for the unsubscribe rate, many readers won’t bother to go through the inconvenient unsubscribe process. They’ll just delete your emails without opening them at all, or worse, mark them as spam (yikes!).

This is why we always recommend using clickthrough rates to accurately gauge user engagement.

## How to Write Better Marketing Emails

### 1) Imagine that You’re Only Speaking to One Person

Whether you’re optimizing your email or just writing the content, you should always do so as if you were speaking directly to one person in your target audience.

Imagine your ideal customer standing right in front of you and use the same language that you would use in-person. Speak (or in this case, write) to your one reader as if you already know them.

This can be tricky to tackle at first, but it will get easier over time as you understand more about who your ideal customer is.

One easy way to sound more conversational is to use second person pronouns -- “you” and “your”. This is a simple adjustment that makes the email about the reader, not your company.

## 2) Use the Right Tone to Connect with Your Audience

Another area to nail down before you start optimizing is the tone of your emails.

Conversational and informal tones work well for adding a personal and fun approach to your emails. This is the best way to connect with your readers on a deeper level.

A more formal tone should be used in serious communication or if the brand's image is also more formal.

You also have the option of using a promotional tone. With this, impactful visuals filled with bold calls-to-action are all that's needed to convey the right message.



Domino's

WELCOME  
to the  
INNER CIRCLE

Now that you're getting Domino's emails,  
you'll be the first to receive our best  
oven-baked deals, online-only promotions,  
local offers and coupons like the one below.

**20% OFF**  
your ENTIRE order  
ONLINE ONLY

ORDER NOW

Excludes delivery charges, gratuities, and taxes. Applies to menu priced items ordered online.

ONE TIME USE PROMO CODE: WLCM20-CXKD4WPWW8  
Expires on 6/30/16

[Image Source](#)





## CHAPTER 1

# EMAIL MARKETING ESSENTIALS

### 3) Avoid Using Big Chunks of Text

Movable Ink found that in Q2 of 2016, [68% of emails were opened on a mobile device](#), so it's essential to break up your writing into smaller chunks of text that work on small screens.

We're talking no more than three (short) sentences per paragraph here. Anything more and you'll make it hard for your reader to absorb the information. All that text is just too overwhelming on a tiny device screen.

With that in mind, let's talk about how to break up your text even further for maximum readability.



Hi Devan,

Welcome to your tour of the HubSpot Marketing Blog! For the next three days, you'll receive a smattering of our best posts. Then, your daily subscription will turn on automatically.

Today, we're surfacing a type of post that's been a staple on our blog for a long time: the tactical blog post. We're on a mission to help people all over the world up their marketing game, so we love to share advice, examples, and templates for mastering new skills in marketing.

Here are some of the tactical posts that our readers have especially loved (we think you'll love 'em too):

- [How to Optimize Your Content for Google's Featured Snippet Box](#)
- [24 Awesome Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram & Pinterest Features You Didn't Know Existed](#)
- [How to Use Excel: 14 Simple Excel Shortcuts, Tips & Tricks](#)
- [15 Email Newsletter Examples We Love Getting in Our Inboxes](#)
- [What No One Tells You About Your Career When You're 22](#)

Feel your marketing knowledge growing stronger? Good -- that's what we hoped for.

That's all for today. Tomorrow, we have some posts featuring something else marketers love: original data.



Stay tuned!

Cary Stec | Editor, HubSpot Marketing Blog



## CHAPTER 1

# EMAIL MARKETING ESSENTIALS

### 4) Use Bold, Italics, and Bullet Points for Emphasis (But Never Excessively)

Subheadings, bold and italic formatting, and bullet points allow readers to quickly scan your email before digesting it completely.

The key is to highlight only the most essential elements. These points of note should align with the original goal of your email instead of distracting readers. But you don't want to distract the reader with too much formatting. This will make your email hard to read and may turn off others immediately.

### 5) Timing is Important

While timing doesn't exactly have to do with writing better emails, it is important to ensure that your emails are actually read -- and a big part of that has to do with timing. According to data uncovered by [Kissmetrics](#), here's how a 24-hour day breaks down:

- 6AM–10AM: Readers tend to open emails relating to retail promotions and events
- 10AM–Noon: Most employees are busy plugging away and not checking their personal emails
- Noon–2PM: Readers are catching up on the news and reading their favorite magazine's updates; not the best time for marketing emails
- 2PM–3PM: Another dead zone when readers are busy working
- 3PM–5PM: As the hectic work day takes its toll on the population, they become more interested in emails that relate to financial services during this time
- 5PM–7PM: This time works well for holiday promotions but is otherwise considered a "working period" because all other types of emails go unnoticed



## CHAPTER 1

# EMAIL MARKETING ESSENTIALS

- 7PM–10PM: Since readers are busy relaxing after their work day, they're more likely to open promotional emails that include discounts on clothes and other retail purchases
- 10PM–6AM: This is the ultimate dead zone; the majority of email marketing efforts will prove ineffective during these hours

Now that we have those foundational elements under our belt, let's take a look at how to optimize each of your emails.

When [205 billion emails are sent out each day](#), your brand's emails need to stand out and compel your target audience to take action.

But all that pressure to create an email that raises your conversions and clickthroughs can be overwhelming.

That's why we've created this 15 point checklist to optimize your marketing emails and ensure that you send out the best email every time.



## CHAPTER 2

# EMAIL OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST

### 1) Write a Clear, Attention-Grabbing Subject Line

Aside from the actual sender, your subject line is the first thing your recipients will read. It's also the one thing that motivates them to open your email or disregard it.

As you can imagine, it's important that your subject line stands out in cluttered inboxes filled with other promotional messages. Your sole focus here is to get readers to actually open and read your email.

To do this, keep [these guidelines](#) in mind:

#### *Short and sweet is best.*

Lengthy subject lines are guaranteed to be cut off, especially on smaller mobile screens. We think the sweet spot for subject lines is 50 characters or less. To shorten your subject lines, pull out the most important keywords and create a new, simplified subject line from there.

#### *Personalizing gives you an added boost.*

By adding the recipient's name to the subject line, it's as if you're speaking directly to them. According to [Statista](#), this simple step increases the open rate for emails from 11.4% to 17.6%.

You can add a name or location to your subject line, such as, "Jane, we couldn't wait to share this with you", or "What to do this week in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida."

This subtle personalization adds just the right touch to prompt recipients to open your email.

#### *Be clear about what's inside.*

To get readers to open your emails, they need to know what's in it for them. The best way to do this is to clearly explain what they can expect by taking this action.



## CHAPTER 2

# EMAIL OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST

Are you delivering a new ebook or are you sending discounts their way? Whatever it is, be sure to state this in your subject line.

### *Choose action-oriented verbs.*

Copy with strong, action-oriented verbs helps readers visualize taking the next step you suggest, and it creates a sense of urgency in the reader who won't want to miss out on your offer.

Use action-oriented verbs just like you would use a call-to-action in your subject lines and watch your open rates skyrocket.

### *Exclusivity goes a long way.*

Using a subject line that makes readers feel as if they received an exclusive invite or gift is a surefire way to increase your clickthrough rates.

The reason this works so well is because it's our human nature to want something special or to achieve an exclusive status. When we feel a brand is treating us special, we pay attention.

Some examples include:

- "Jane, we have a special present inside for you!"
- "Here's your exclusive invite, Mary"
- "Mike, you're invited!"
- "Our gift to you"
- "Here's a special gift for being a loyal customer"

### *Watch out for spam triggers*

Spam filters are so strong these days that sometimes perfectly acceptable email subject lines get filtered out without your recipient ever knowing.



Check out [this article](#) we published for a complete list of all the spam triggers you'll want to avoid in your subject lines.

### *A/B test your subject lines*

"Nearly half (47%) of marketers say they sometimes test alternate subject lines to optimize email performance," according to [MarketingProfs](#).

This figure should be much higher since A/B testing your subject line is the best way to uncover what really resonates with your audience.

For example, you may find that questions in your subject line increase your clickthrough rates more than action-oriented verbs. However, you won't know this until you A/B test.

What works well for one brand may not necessarily be a good fit for yours. That's why A/B testing is more important than following any best practices.

## 2) Use an Actual Person as the Sender

How your name displays in the "from" field of your email may seem like an insignificant detail, but it's one that leads to an impactful effect. From our [own experience](#), we discovered that when emails are sent from an actual person's name, the open and clickthrough rates increase.

This is a trick any brand could benefit from learning, and here's why it works so well: When sent from a person, emails come across as much more personable. From a recipient's perspective, it's as if that person took the time to handwrite a note made just for them. Combine this sentiment with your picture and/or signature at the



## CHAPTER 2

# EMAIL OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST

bottom of the email and it comes across as even more personal.

Now, to do this right, you may need to play around with your “from” name.

For B2B emails, the sender’s full name, plus the company’s name, is a good place to start. You’ll see this as “Full Name, HubSpot”.

For casual or informal correspondences, you could use both a first and last name or you may find that just a first name works well, too.

You can also check whether your recipients prefer to open emails from your CEO, sales reps, or their account managers.

In the same way that you A/B test your subject lines, test your open rates to see which “from” name leads to the best results.

Just remember to only test one item at a time to control the variables and read the most accurate results. If you’re testing subject lines, don’t mess around with the “from” name, too.

### 3) Optimize the Preview Text

Another often-missed area when it comes to emails is the preview text. This is the sentence that follows the subject line.

Take a look at these examples to see what we mean:

Essentially, this area should be treated like a meta description where you write a custom description to entice readers to open the email and learn more.



## CHAPTER 2

# EMAIL OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST

Contrary to this example, so many [brands waste this space with descriptions](#) such as:

### 1) *Is this email not displaying correctly?*

Recipients won't know what your email is about until they open it (if they do).

### 2) *View in browser*

Again, this does not need to be the first thing potential readers see. Keep this in the body of your email so readers can follow those instructions after they open the email.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="star"/>	<input type="dropdown"/>	HubSpot Blog, Marketing	49 of the Best Snapchat Drawings We've Ever Seen - Get some creative inspiration from various Snapchat artists who take their Snaps to
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="star"/>	<input type="dropdown"/>	HubSpot Blog, Sales	The Insanely Simple 2-Minute Productivity Tip We All Can Use - Learn how one small change to your morning routine can make a big diff
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="star"/>	<input type="dropdown"/>	HubSpot Blog, Marketing	What Successful Marketing Looks Like Today: 8 Foundational Principles [Infographic] - Your daily roundup of the latest posts from the Hu
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="star"/>	<input type="dropdown"/>	HubSpot Blog, Sales	9 Things Salespeople Do That Make Them Seem Desperate - Desperation sends prospects running. Avoid these nine behaviors at all co

Utilize the pre-header text space as your last chance to get your readers to open your email. Spend time crafting the perfect, action-oriented (and super short) message and higher open rates will follow.

## 4) Include Consistent Company Branding

**theSkimm** Inbox **Daily Skimm: Pumpkin and spice and...we forget the rest** - Is this email not displaying correctly? <http://cli>

Whenever it comes to your brand's messaging, the overall look and feel should be consistent across the board. And email is no exception.

**NYTimes.com** **NYT Living: Your Weekend Recap** - View in Browser | Add [nytdirect@nytimes.com](mailto:nytdirect@nytimes.com) to your address book. TI

Recipients who open your emails should know almost instantly who's sending it based on the look.

To achieve this, use the same imagery, color scheme, language, and tone for every email you send. Your emails don't need to be exact replicas, but they should be



stamped with your company's unique style.

Email templates save time while still achieving a consistent look. For these, add your logo, company colors, and any other branding elements -- such as unique social sharing buttons -- that set your brand apart.

You can always move on to more involved designs as you progress, but for now it's okay to keep things simple.

For those ready to progress from a basic template, simplicity is still key here. If you overload your design, it's going to take too long to download, and you'll compromise your open rates.

Remember, you want the design to enhance your message, not take it over. If your design is getting in the way of your message, you'll end up decreasing your clickthrough rates -- the exact opposite of what you're trying to achieve.

## 5) Personalize the Content

In the same way that you personalized your subject line, you should also personalize the content within your email.

According to research conducted by [Aberdeen Group](#), personalized emails show an increase in clickthrough rates of 14% and an increase in conversions by 10%.

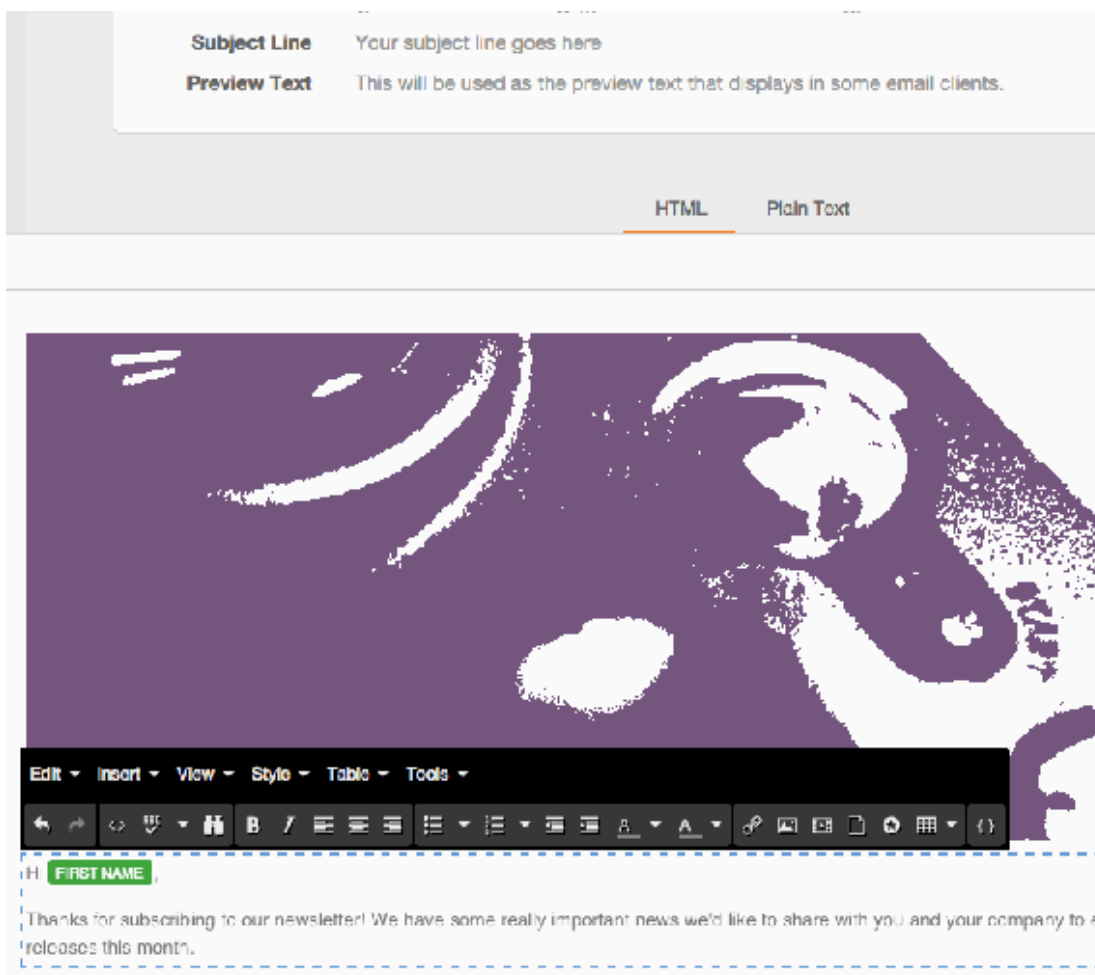
To get started with personalization, the simplest thing to do is address your recipient

by their first name in your email greeting. You can do this using [personalization tokens](#) in HubSpot or another email provider.

## 6) Segment Your List

Research by the [DMA](#) points out that, “Segmented and targeted emails generate 58% of all revenue.” Additionally, they learned that “marketers have found a 760% increase in email revenue from segmented campaigns.”

This should come as no surprise. By segmenting your list, you’re able to deliver the right messages to the right people.





## CHAPTER 2

# EMAIL OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST

Your customers will also appreciate your efforts since “74% of online consumers get frustrated with websites when content (e.g., offers, ads, and promotions) appear to have nothing to do with their interests,” the DMA analysis continues.

Think about [segmenting your main list](#) in the following ways:

### *Lifecycle Stages*

When you understand exactly where your email subscribers are in your buying process, you and your team will know precisely what type of emails to send them. After all, you wouldn't want to send the same email to an existing customer that you would to a lead or a marketing qualified lead (MQL).

Here's how to determine [where your email subscriber fits in your buying cycle](#):

- **Awareness:** Your prospect realizes and expresses that there's a problem
- **Consideration:** Your prospect labels and clearly defines the issue at hand
- **Decision:** Your prospect determines a possible solution or approach to solve the problem

These three categories are perfect starting points for segmenting your email list. You'll be able to send promotional emails to your subscribers that are targeted and personalized for every step of your sales funnel.

### *Buyer Personas*

You should have an idea of who you're targeting with your emails. For many brands, that's more than one person. This means you're likely to have multiple buyer personas.

To keep the messaging on point and to deliver the most value to your audience, separate your list based on the unique buyer personas you have. Use factors such as age, geographic location, and gender as starting points for separation.



## CHAPTER 2

# EMAIL OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST

### *Content Engagement*

Next, take a peek at your email analytics to see if there are any glaring trends.

With a marketing automation tool, you could segment your list by customers who have downloaded a certain number of ebooks or visited a certain number of blog posts. Targeting these highly engaged prospects and customers with special offers or exclusive content is a great way to provide more value.

You should also review your analytics to see how you can improve the performance of your email list. You may find that a portion of your list really gravitates towards certain topics while another rarely opens your emails about these subjects. Use these insights to segment your list naturally.

### *Interest Level*

Taking engagement one step further, you could also segment your list based on your respondent's interest level.

For example, in a seven part email series, you may find that a smaller percentage of readers opened all of your emails in the series while most only opened the first few. This gives you two different lists to segment.

However, the first list, though much smaller, is highly targeted. These are people who took the time to complete the series, meaning they'll be much more inclined to hear what you have to say once that's all done.

### *Past Purchases*

Two more areas that offer helpful insights include a user's browsing history and past purchases.

In the first scenario, you can send promotional emails anytime an item that



## CHAPTER 2

# EMAIL OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST

someone's been browsing for goes on sale. You could also use cart abandonment emails to uncover why your prospect never completed the sale.

On the other hand, you wouldn't want to send these types of emails to someone who has already made a purchase with you. Instead, thank-you emails and cross-sell ones are much more appropriate. This is a perfect example of why segmenting your list is so crucial.

By sending readers emails that specifically pertain to them, you'll see higher open rates, engagement rates, and clickthrough rates. You also won't see as many readers hitting your unsubscribe link as a result. The key is to segment your list so the right person receives the right message.

## 7) Value Proposition and Context

Now you have to deliver on the promise you made in the subject line. You'll do this by starting your email with what you have to offer and why your audience will find this valuable.

Use short and easy-to-understand language that clearly states what's in it for your readers.

You should also:

### *Back up your claims*

Supporting statistics can help emphasize the problem you're identifying and solving for your audience. As soon as you present your offer and the problem, back it up with statistics proving how much this affects your readers.



## CHAPTER 2

# EMAIL OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST

Be specific about the benefits: What exactly are your readers going to get? If your email includes a special discount, be sure to spell out exactly how much that is numerically.

Or if you're including free worksheets or templates with your downloadable guide, mention how many of these readers will truly receive. This makes the offer much more tangible and real.

### *Keep it clean*

Including too many calls-to-action or an overwhelming array of bold, underlined, and italic text is only going to turn off readers. Instead, view your email as a way to guide your readers to take action. A clear roadmap works best here.

By the time your reader opens your email, they should see the offer, supporting data, and a visible button or link for them to take the next step.

Try to add a few links throughout the body of your email just in case your reader has a technical issue with your button or if they prefer to use hyperlinks instead. You don't need to add more than one or two links and each one should point to the same URL.

### *Jog your reader's memory*

Remind your reader how they got to this point. Did they opt-in somewhere on your website or are they a referral from another website? By explaining what list the person subscribed to, you'll reduce your reader's fears and anxieties.

You could also start the relationship off with a welcome email. Confirm what they signed up for and what types of emails and the frequency of communication they should expect from your brand.





## 8) Write a Focused Call-to-Action

Earlier in this ebook, we mentioned that every email should have one single focus. This is the goal that you'll want to use for your call-to-action.

So if you're looking for readers to register for your webinar, your call-to-action should state this specifically. If you want readers to download your latest ebook, let them know this.

According to [WordStream](#), "Emails with a single call-to-action increased clicks 371% and sales 1,617%."





## CHAPTER 2

# EMAIL OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST

To reap these benefits, you need to tackle two key areas:

- Your call-to-action text
- Your button

For your call-to-action text, use specific action verbs. Words like “**Register** Now” or “**Download** Your Copy Today” encourage readers to get moving.

Your CTA text should stay between the 90 and 150 character count to keep clear and concise. You should also avoid using vague terms such as “submit.”

As these two examples show, your text should create a sense of urgency. Words like “today” and “now” help to do that by informing readers to take action now or face the possibility of missing out. If readers don’t take action immediately, they may forget to later down the line as their to-do list distracts them.

But remember, your CTA text should align with the content of your offer. Don’t try to trick people into performing an action when they’ll only be disappointed with the result.

Using the same two examples above, the offer is either a free seat at the next webinar or a digital copy of something readers can download. By stating this explicitly, readers know exactly what they’re getting themselves into.

Once you have your call-to-action text nailed down, you can move on to the button.

The button itself is just as important as the call-to-action. It needs to stand out and should capture your reader’s attention.

Ideally, you want your button to live “above the fold” for those readers who don’t make it all the way through your email. At HubSpot, we place ours just below our value proposition for this exact reason.



We also know that readers are going to be the most excited about our offer after they've read how the content or tool will benefit them. Placing the button below that info increases the chances of them taking the next step.

**Bonus tip:** The more you can make this "button" look like an actual clickable button, the better. [Copyblogger](#) found that when you take this step, you're likely to see a 45% boost in clicks.

So while your call-to-action may seem like just one small step in your email plan, it's one worth paying loads of attention to. Be sure yours stands out, clearly communicates value, and prompts readers to take the next step. To do this, use a clean and simple design with a pop of color and pair this with concise, action-packed text. ([Download a set of 50 call-to-action templates here.](#))

## 9) Add a Relevant Image

Including images in your emails can help solidify your branding and improve your engagement rates.

But there's a fine line here. Current estimates report that as much as [43% of Gmail users have the image blocking feature enabled](#). This means your message could go completely unnoticed if it's crammed in one large image.

To avoid this dilemma, use images to break up text instead of using them as the body of your email.

Hi there,

Every year, HubSpot surveys thousands of the world's foremost marketers and salespeople. We ask them about their most pressing priorities, the challenges they face, and the strategies they plan to add in the year ahead. All of these insights are then consolidated into a master report: [The State of Inbound](#).

This year, the State of Inbound looks to the future of marketing and sales. We cover **ROI benchmarks** for inbound campaigns, **which channels** marketers should add to remain relevant, **data-backed steps** for marketing and sales to collaborate better, and much more.

[Get the Free Report Now →](#)

Unlike other industry reports, this one is completely free. You can download it right now at no cost and **start preparing your business for the #FutureOfInbound**.

All the best,  
Kipp



**Kipp Bodnar (1-888-HUBSPOT)**  
Chief Marketing Officer, HubSpot



For example, if your email is promoting your latest ebook, use an image that gives readers a peek at the actual cover or table of contents. If you're selling a seat at your next conference, include a picture from last year.

But be sure to reduce the file size of any images to prevent long load times. (If you're a HubSpot user, the email tool automatically compresses images in emails so they load faster. For non-HubSpot users, try out a tool such as [Compressor.io](#), [Compressjpeg.com](#), and [Jpegmini.com](#).)

## 10) Highlight Social Sharing Links

Growing a loyal audience is a top priority for most marketers. One of the most effective, low-effort ways to do this is by including social sharing buttons in your emails.

These buttons make it so your readers can share your email as if they were passing along a book or movie recommendation to a friend. By adding social sharing links, you make it quick and easy for readers to share what they just read with a simple click. An added benefit of this social activity is that your brand can gain new fans and followers in the process.

All of this will come your way thanks to a few simple social media links in your emails.

## 11) Include a Secondary Call-to-Action

For those who make it all the way down to the bottom of your email, it's time to encourage them to move further along your sales funnel. That's where a secondary call-to-action comes in.



## CHAPTER 2

# EMAIL OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST

Think of this as the P.S. at the bottom of a letter, or in this case, your email. It's your last chance to grab your reader's attention.

On top of that, it's your last opportunity to encourage them to take action.

- Use this valuable space to:
- Provide one last benefit that you haven't mentioned in the body of your email
- Cross-sell complementary items
- Guide readers to your blog, social media channels, or your latest offering
- Prompt readers to start their free trial or call sales

A secondary call-to-action shouldn't take away from the main focus of your email. The P.S. should support your goal. If you ask your reader to take too many actions, they're likely to take none at all.

For those who have already opted into your offer and are looking to do more, the P.S. can continue to build their engagement. The key is to balance a call-to-action that compliments instead of competes.

## 12) Add an Unsubscribe Link

Including an unsubscribe link should go hand-in-hand with linking to your privacy policy. It's another move that's mandatory and can be set on autopilot once it's done.

According to [CAN-SPAM regulations](#), you must include an unsubscribe link with every email you send. If you don't, you could face costly fees, or even litigation since this is a legal requirement.

Additionally, you'll also put your sender credibility at risk if you don't include an



unsubscribe link. This hurts your reputation in both the short and long run. So as a best practice and legal requirement, don't skip this step.

Your unsubscribe link should be visible and clearly marked. You don't want to deceive people into staying on your list. If users can't find your unsubscribe button, they'll just report your emails as spam, which ends up hurting your sender credibility even more.

### 13) Optimize for Mobile Screens

As we pointed out earlier, [68% of emails are opened on a mobile device](#), and mobile content consumption isn't slowing down anytime soon.

Optimizing your emails for mobile screens is a must, especially if higher clickthrough rates are what you're after.

[According to LiveClicker and The Relevancy Group](#), the biggest turnoffs for users when it comes to mobile emails includes:

- "Too small to read and interact with"
- "Website and landing pages not mobile optimized"
- "Not well formatted for mobile phones"

To get started, adopt the same "mobile first" strategy that you use with your website. Essentially, your content, images, and everything else must scale to a smaller screen size.

Tackle the following items right away:

- Reduce your image file sizes so they download faster
- Resize your images to accommodate narrower (and vertical) screens
- Bump up the size of your font for links and call-to-action buttons so those of us with "fat thumbs" won't have trouble getting around



## CHAPTER 2

# EMAIL OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST

On top of that, you should also use a responsive email design that automatically adjusts for mobile, tablet, and desktop screens. Following these steps will prepare your brand for any device your user prefers.

Now, if you have the coding capabilities in-house, create a responsive grid template that you can step on and reuse as needed. Without getting too technical, this involves creating classes for each section of your email. You'll create these directly in your email provider's CSS editor tool.

For those who are limited on resources, using a professional, pre-made email template is the best option.

According to [Fulcrum Tech](#), "Email marketers who used responsive design achieved a click-to-open rate of 14.1%, which was 40% higher compared to brands that sent only non-responsive emails."

The key is to view and test your emails on different screen sizes and for different email clients to see how readable your emails are.

## 14) Test, Test, and Test Again

In addition to testing how your email looks on each screen size, you should also run A/B tests to maximize your clicks and user engagement.

At HubSpot, we think these tests are the most effective:

### *Visual Style Tests*

Some readers may not appreciate a highly visual email. Some just like it plain and



## CHAPTER 2

# EMAIL OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST

simple.

To find out what your customers prefer, use the plain text email approach. Here, you'll swap any and all visuals for a plain email that looks as if you sent it from Gmail or Outlook.

If your branding relies heavily on imagery, dropping your visuals may not be an option. That's where the visual or text CTA test can be ideal.

Find out if your customers are more likely to click on a visual call-to-action, such as a button, or if a simple link is enough to get them moving. With this option, you only have to make one small, subtle change instead of messing with the entire email. This makes it an ideal place to start.

### ***Structure Tests***

Another area to test includes playing around with your layout and rearranging your content to improve clicks. So if you've been using the same email newsletter template for a while, try something new by moving the middle or last section up at the top and surprising readers.

In the same way that you changed up the order of your content, try moving your CTA. So if you've been ending each email with your call-to-action, move it to the center of your email to see if that improves results.

### ***Time/Day Tests***

As we mentioned earlier, the time you send your email can make a world of difference, but it's also important to find the right day too. That's where testing both the time and days of the week makes the most sense.



## CHAPTER 2

# EMAIL OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST

Before you send out your next batch of emails, test out different times and days to see which ones come back with the highest engagement.

Keep in mind, the type of email you send could alter those results so you'll have lots to test.

For example, some people don't have the time to read a lengthy update before they start work on Monday. A short, quick burst of information has a better chance of being absorbed during this time. However, as the week progresses, people usually find some extra time to catch up with brands they like so sending this kind of an update on Wednesday or Thursday makes more sense.

Find what works for your brand by testing both the time/days and the types of emails you send.

### ***Content Tests***

The last thing to test is the content itself.

To do this, replace the content in the main area with something new.

So if you're always using one area in your newsletter for your latest article, try placing a top performing article there instead. Test this out on a random group of your subscribers to see if this change piqued their interest -- and therefore, the clickthrough rate.

You could also test promoting your latest whitepaper or ebook in your blog subscription emails. If you don't see much engagement, you don't need to include these updates in your emails.



In the same way that you segmented your list, you could also segment your content as your last test. This works well for anyone targeting multiple levels in an organization or for brands with several buyer personas.

Change up your offers to target the different personas specifically. You may find that some of your audience actually loves when you deliver your latest whitepaper to their inbox while others may not even notice it.

As with any A/B testing, you should only alter one item at a time. If you test too many changes, you won't know which one is responsible for the engagement or lack thereof.

Plus, by doing this, you'll start to uncover valuable insight that will help make your email marketing efforts both effective and efficient in the future.

## 15) Use Email Templates

Feel ready to send your first email but aren't quite sure where to start? That's where templates come in.

If it feels like you live in your inbox all day, well, you might be right.

[Workers use almost a third of their time](#) at work reading and responding to emails.

How can you get some of that time back? Email templates.

These templates will make the act of writing emails a lot less time-consuming.

Without templates, you may sweat the details of how you've worded a message.

This may only add a few minutes to your day, but when you multiply that across the volume of emails you send, those minutes can quickly turn into hours.





## CHAPTER 2

# EMAIL OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST

When you consider the types of emails marketers are likely to send on a repeat basis, you can easily boil it down to a short list of email templates that can be used to give all those hours back to you.

### *Newsletter*

Keep your contacts engaged with your brand by sharing content that you both care about.

When creating a newsletter, make sure that your content flows together nicely from beginning to end and is relevant to your readers. If don't - a bad newsletter could quickly turn into an uninteresting mush of content that people automatically ignore, archive, delete, or straight up unsubscribe from.

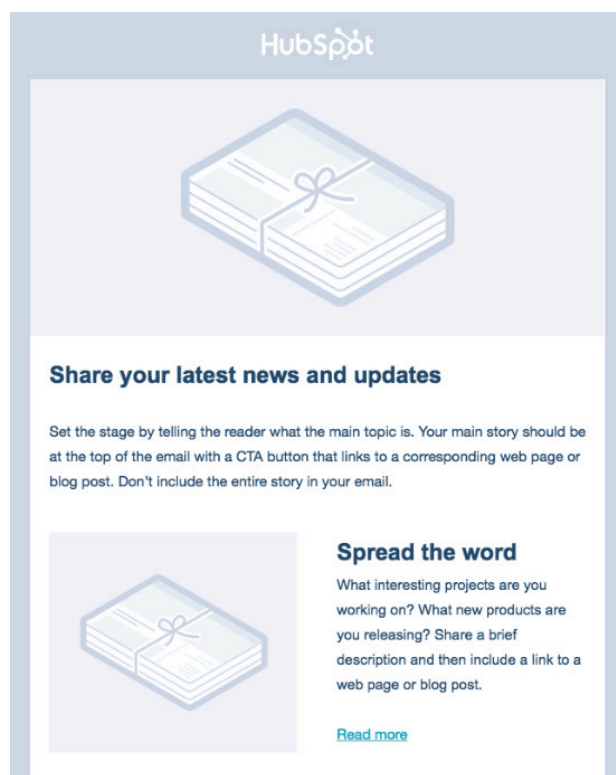
That's why it's so important to use a newsletter template. With the right template, you can

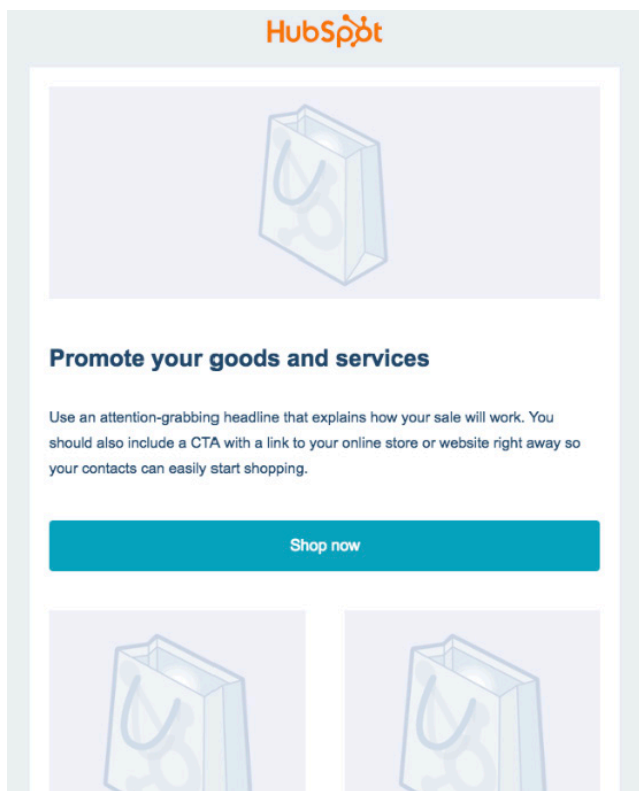
[keep your newsletter content, simple, clear, organized and compelling to your audience.](#)

### *Promotion*

Use a promotion email template to sell your products and services and promote your latest deals.

You might think that it'd be hard to love an email from a company whose product you





haven't used. But with some [fun copy, whimsical cartoons](#), and a neatly structured layout that's easy to follow - a promotional email can feel like a personal tour through your company's product offerings.

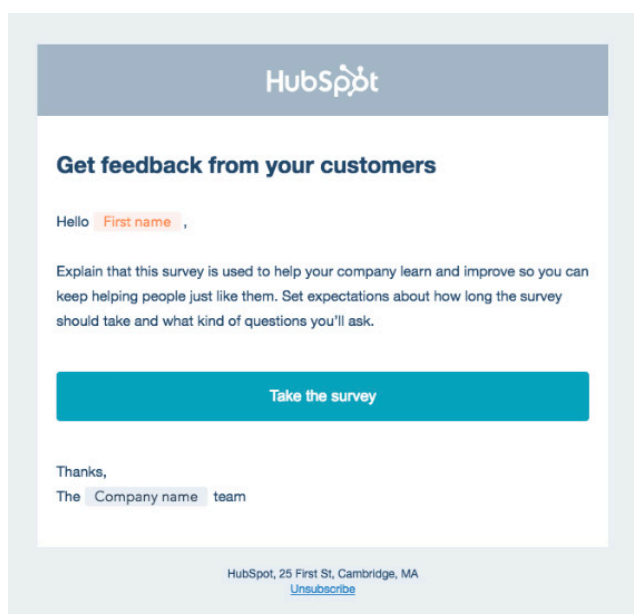
Plus, the right template will offer a clear call-to-action so that your subscribers know exactly where to go so they can get their hands on your product.

### *Feedback*

Send an email to your customers or users to ask for feedback on a recent sale or other interaction.

Customers feedback is like gold - and to get good feedback, you need to send a good feedback email.

Set up an [automated feedback email](#) for when your service has been provided or the product your customer bought has been delivered. These kinds of emails should be clear and concise. With a template, you could be up and running in seconds.



### Welcome

Send an email to your new customers to welcome them to your product.

You've heard how important it is to make a good first impression. Show up late for an interview? That's a bad first impression. Eat a ton of garlic and forget to brush your teeth before a date? Also a bad first impression.

It turns out the "make a good first impression" principle holds true not only in face-to-face encounters, but in email interactions as well. When you send a welcome email to a new blog or newsletter subscriber, you're making a first impression on behalf of your brand so it's important to [plan and execute an effective welcome email](#).

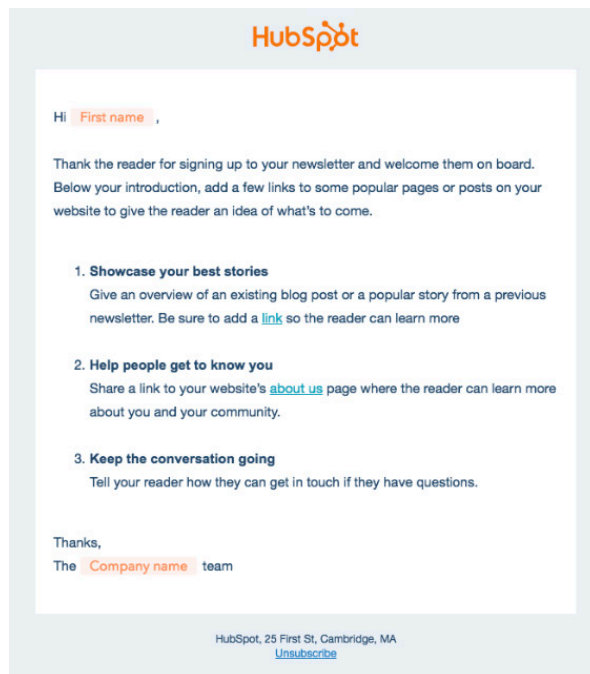
To help ensure you're making the best first impression, use a tried and true template that won't steer you wrong.

### Plain Text

Plain text emails have minimal formatting so your reader can really focus on what you have to say.

In the world of email marketing, opens and clicks are pretty valuable, which means markets are always testing ways to improve these metrics. We'll tweak subject lines, calls-to-action, images, headers, content - the list goes on.

Through all of this testing, there's one hard truth we've discovered: Aside from [proper list segmentation](#), nothing boosts opens and clicks as well as an old school, [plain text email](#).





## CONCLUSION

# SEND BETTER EMAILS

Email is one of your brand's most powerful marketing tools, so it's essential that every email you send is optimized. By doing this, you'll increase your open rates, clickthrough rates, and engagement with your target audience.

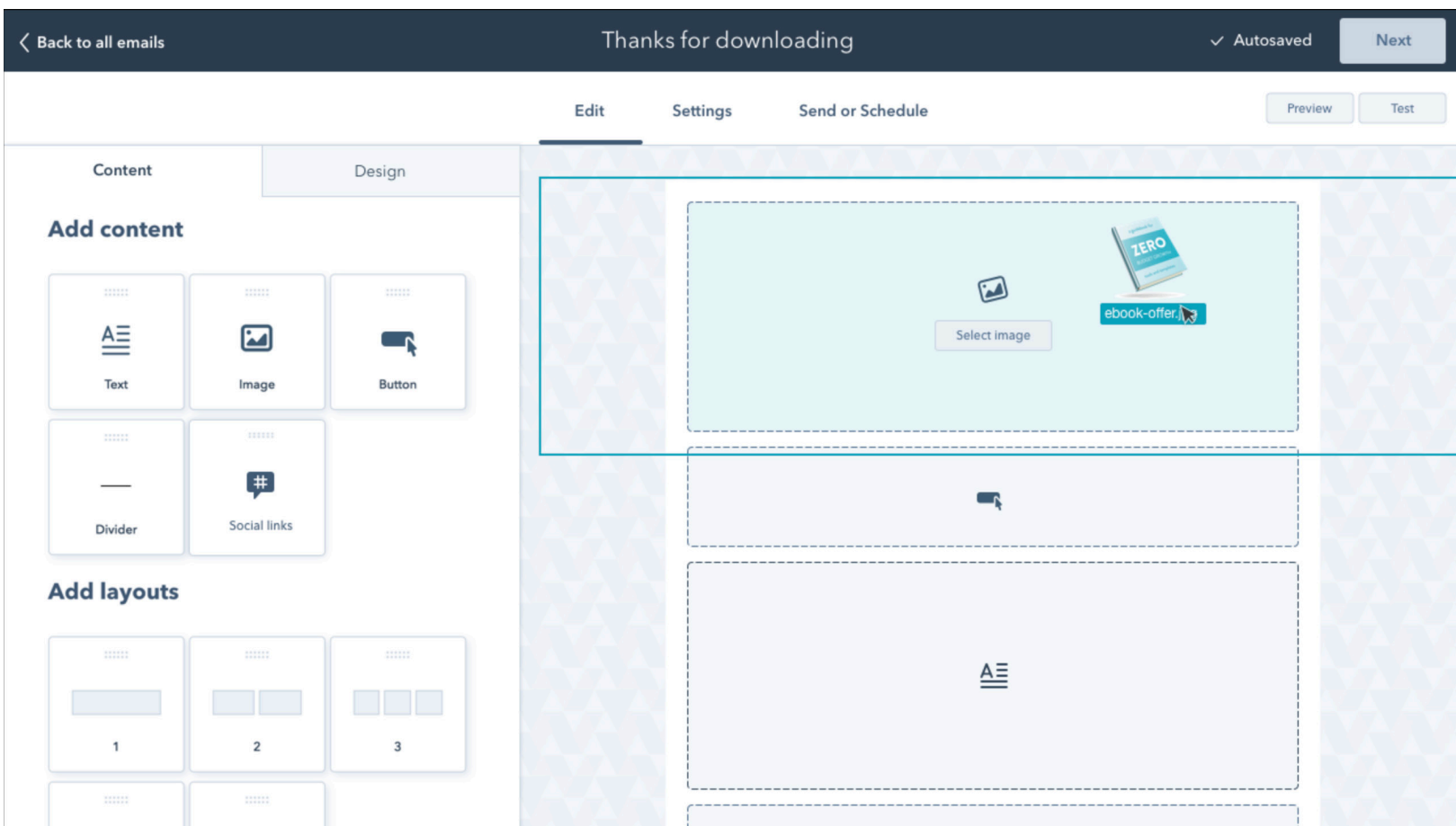
You'll also deliver highly relevant messages to the right people so that your brand builds trust and solidifies your relationship with your customers. All of these factors will ultimately encourage growth for your brand.

To do this effectively, start with your subject line and work your way through this checklist every time you send out an email. After a few times, creating optimized emails will become second nature for you. Watch those metrics, and you'll start to see the rewards of your hard work in no time!

# EMAIL MARKETING, DONE RIGHT

## Start Marketing Right, All in One Place

All the tools you need for converting traffic into leads, engaging them with email, and tracking them with helpful insights and analytics along the way.



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