Revitalise your email marketing: grow and engage audiences with email

26 February 2025 webinar

Thank you to everyone who attended the webinar on 26 February and posted a question. Below are the questions that were posted and some brief answers. If you have other questions or would like to discuss any aspect of your email marketing, you are welcome to book a one-to-one meeting. Please use our Ask a Tech Champion form to book a time.

Question and Answers

What if we're not selling anything? How should our email efforts change / what should we track?

Email marketing can deliver your key goals whether you're measuring engagement or revenue. By using clear calls to action in your emails and generating clicks, you have measurable evidence that your contacts are reading your email and want to find out more.

Are there any affordable email platforms? I'm already paying for a web domain, a website host.

Fifty-two percent of the email marketing webinar's attendees are signed up to Mailchimp and it remains a market leader with a free account for up to 500 contacts. Mailerlite also offers a free account up to 1,000 contacts and Brevo offers a free account, but it has a daily sending limit of three hundred emails. Email Service Providers generally charge by number of contacts. To talk through your needs, please do get in touch.

I'm familiar with GPDR, but what is 'PECR'?

PECR stands for the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations. PECR are guidelines that sit alongside Office GDPR. There's a specific section in PECR on email ('electronic mail'): What are the rules on direct marketing using electronic mail?.

'Inactive email address' - how long is this period of time? Is this unique to each organisation?
AND
What period of time would you recommend setting before removing someone from your list?

This is probably best assessed on a case-by-case basis. In general, it is in function of the average purchase cycle, but I would always want to take into account any available behavioural or other purchasing data. I recommend that any reactivation campaigns start with a test campaign using a small number of contacts. Ideally, the campaign should invite feedback and if you are going to remove contacts who don't respond, it should be clear that recipients must respond to stay on the contact list.

We use DotDigital and want to avoid prompting bookers to unsubscribe as they're then added to the suppression list. How would we run a re-engagement campaign?

If your primary aim is to re-engage people, you could test tactics such as inviting feedback; incentives; or a time-limited discount. The Royal Academy of Arts uses a discount in their shop and a cafe offer in their reactivation campaign 'Can we tempt you back?'. I've also seen 'We'd like to hear from you' emails which can provide useful feedback.

I have set up 'what are you interested in' checkboxes on my sign-up sheet in Mailchimp - where does that data go??

That should normally feed into groups. In case it's useful, here's the Mailchimp pages about Groups: https://mailchimp.com/help/getting-started-with-groups/.

What's a good % open rate for our industry?

In general, the open rates that I see are between 30% - 40%.
The Mailchimp benchmarking tool offers the following benchmarking stats:

Industry	Average Open Rate
Arts and Artists	42.2%
Entertainment and Events	37.3%
Music and Musicians	36.9%
Non-profit	40%

We send out monthly newsletters, so it could be several weeks after sign-up until subscribers receive an email. Is there a benefit to sending out a welcome email to engage immediately?

The welcome automated or triggered emails work well because they are timed for each individual and take advantage of the 'honeymoon' phase of the customer relationship. For support in setting up and testing a welcome automation, book a one-to-one.

Could you do another session on creating engaging e-news content?

Currently, our webinar calendar is set for the next few months for content from other Tech Champions, but we will investigate what is possible. In the meantime, please do book a one-to-one to discuss some tactics on driving engagement: book a one-to-one.

From a GDPR perspective, does having an intro sentence at the sign-up page limit you on what you can email your subscribers about? I love the idea of friendly copy but would worry about that statement limiting the topics I can put in my emails.
AND From a GDPR perspective does having an intro sentence then limit you on what else you can then email the list about? Should you keep it quite open?

Many of the sign-up statements on websites focus on the benefits and value of signing up to create an enticing offer, rather than being too specific about email content or frequency of emails. For example:
Be amongst the first to hear latest news and how to support us.
Be in the know about our events as they are announced…
Don't miss out on new events and latest news….

When evaluating email performance, we see open rates and click rates going up and down all the time. We check through our content, language, images, subject lines, previews, timings etc. and sometimes we just can't see a pattern. Would it be fair to chock some things up to 'market variables' or is there something else we're not considering?

I would focus in on the successful emails to see if you can build on success. If you have clear calls to action, those emails with higher levels of clicks should give you some indication of what content resonates with your contacts.

Are there key words that make emails/newsletters bounce back/not get delivered?

Spam filters check for:
- Messages in ALL CAPS
- Colourful and different-sized fonts
- Broken HTML code
- Emails without an unsubscribe button

There are also some common spam trigger words that are associated with schemes, promises and free gifts using terms such as free; giveaway; winner etc. It's also recommended to avoid using words that create a sense of urgency and pressure e.g. Act now; Apply now; Become a member and Call now. For more information and lists of words visit: <u>ActiveCampaign spam words</u>.

In MailChimp I can track my "click rate" and "clicks per unique opens" which is best to track and keep a record of? Looking at the industry benchmarks page on MailChimp that Jacqueline shared it uses "average click rate". Which of my figures should I be using to compare against this?

In Mailchimp reporting Clicks are defined as follows:

Click rate: Percentage of total recipients who clicked any tracked link in the email.

Clicked: Number of recipients who clicked any tracked link. You can click this number in your report to open a list of subscribers who clicked.

Clicks per unique opens: Percentage of recipients who opened your email and then clicked a link.

Total clicks: Total number of times any tracked link was clicked. This count includes multiple clicks from individual recipients.

To compare your average click rate with the one that Mailchimp refers to in the benchmarking, I would use the Click rate from your reports and create an average across a year's worth of your campaigns. The Mailchimp benchmark is just a guide, comparison with your own past performance will always be more informative.

How long should a newsletter be - we're always told short is best but how short?

Unfortunately, there's no one right answer. It will depend on who your audience is and what value you have managed to create regarding your content. You can test different lengths of newsletter to see what works best at driving clicks. As with opening an email – you need to give them a reason to open the email and then give them a good reason to click.
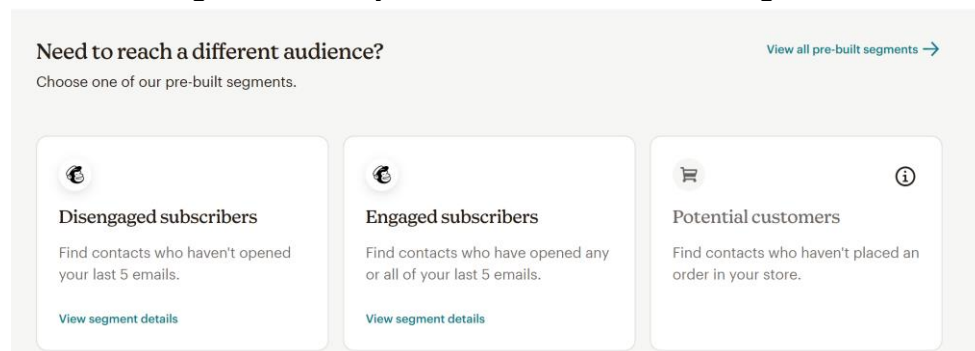
I use Mail Chimp - are there settings somewhere that'll tell you who hasn't been opening the emails?

In Mailchimp, there are some ready-made segments including 'Disengaged subscribers':
1/ Go to Segments in Audience
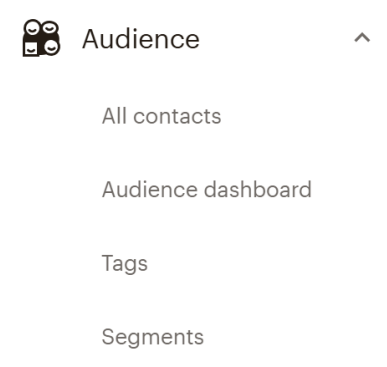
2/ Select 'Segments' and you should see the following:

In this ready-made segment, Mailchimp uses your last five campaigns to define a disengaged subscriber. You can set different parameters to identify your inactive contacts in Segments>Create segment.

Hi there, would love to chat with you one on one and pick your brain, does it cost money to do this?

Funded by Arts Council England, all the Digital Culture Network's support is free. If you work in the creative and cultural sector you are eligible for our free support, irrespective of ACE funding status.

You are welcome to book a one-to-one meeting to follow up on anything related to your email marketing. Please use our Ask a Tech Champion form.