DIGITAL TOOLBOX ℠

Email Metrics

Learn to use data to improve your email campaigns

by **roundpeg**

Web Audit and Action Plan

How does your website stack up?

No one designs a website to deliberately turn of clients, prospects, and search engines. Unfortunately, all too often that is the result. So take a good look at your website.

Are you welcoming visitors and turning them into prospects or turning them of sending away to find your competitors? If your website is out of date or is missing elements visitors have come to expect, then you're disappointing them at every turn. But you can change that!

Start with a quick quiz to assess where you are, then look at the action steps for each section of the quiz and start planning your improvements.

What are Reports and Analytics?

No matter what software you use for your email campaigns, there is almost always a way to view data from past emails.

<u>Reports</u> contain data from your past emails about how many people opened your email, clicked a link inside or unsubscribed from your list, among other things.

<u>Analytics</u> is the process of pulling meaningful data from your reports to use to create an action plan for your next campaign.

First Steps – Identifying Success Metrics

Before you can make sense of any data collected from reports, you need to define what your goals and objectives for your email campaign are.

Goals are generally longer term:

- Driving repeat business

- Increase revenue or market share

- Increase brand awareness

Objectives are more immediate and specific:

- Increase subscribers to my newsletter

- Increase purchases at my online store

- Increase traffic to my website

As you think about your objectives the more specific you can be, the easier it will be to measure your success or failure.

Actionable goals and objectives answer two simple questions: How much? - When?   Here are some examples of objectives with a specific quantity and timeline in mind:

- Add 100 new subscribers to your newsletter monthly

- Increase average revenue per client by $500 by the end of the year

- Increase web traffic by 1,000 visitors each month

- Sell 100 new units this month

So, what are your objectives? If you are getting ready to send out an email campaign what are you hoping to accomplish? Brand awareness is nice, but for small businesses, marketing should generate a specific response. Write down your specific desired outcome so you will be able to measure your results when the campaign is over.

What are the **objectives** of your email campaign?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Viewing Your Reports – Common Terms

No matter what software you're using to send emails, the information in your reports will by and large remain the same. Take the time to familiarize yourself with the following concepts:

Send – This is the number of people who you hope to reach with the email. Unfortunately, people are busy and not everyone will open your email. Comparing the total sent to the number of people who open the email will give you insight into how good your list is and how interesting your subject line is.

Opens – The number of people who saw your email in their inbox and were willing to give you a few minutes of their time. Typically expressed as a percentage, this number gives you a quick snapshot of the level of interest of your audience over time.

With so many messages being delivered to the average consumer or business owner, open rates have fallen in recent years. These days a 15 - 20% open rate is average. However, you can improve this by sending more targeted emails to segments of your list, writing more interesting subject lines, and removing people who haven't opened an email from you in a year or more.

Clicks or Click-throughs – This is the number of people who clicked on a link inside your email. The **Click rate** typically expressed as a percentage helps you compare the different types of offers and incentives.

Bounce - When an email is undeliverable it is said to "bounce." There are several reasons an email will bounce. Some you can control like old, outdated email addresses or addresses with spelling errors. There are also reasons, such as your email being blocked by a spam filter or company policy or a temporary service outage at the delivery point. Use the bounce report to clean up your list, correcting any errors in your control.
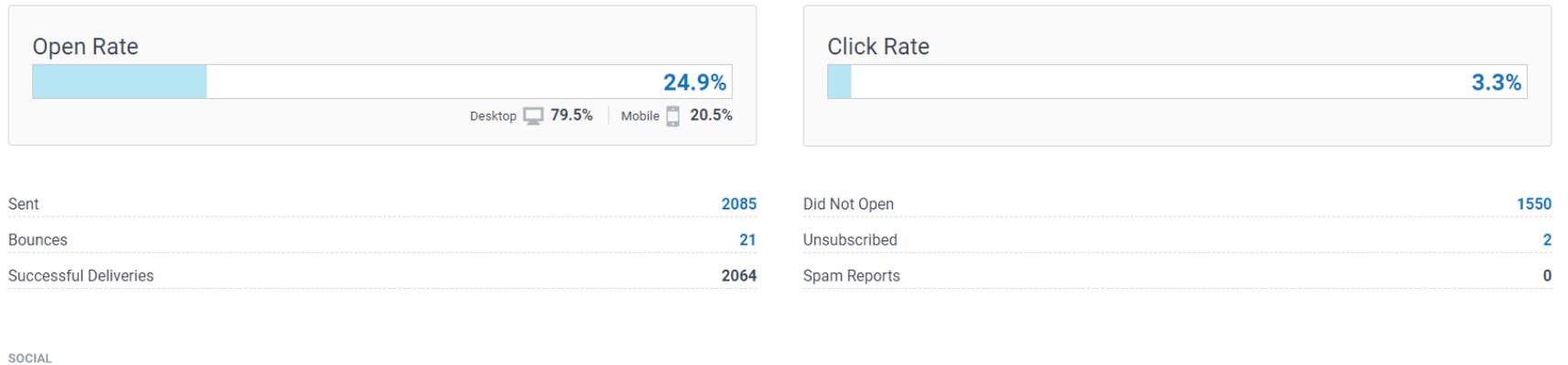
Opt-out – Someone who received your email decided to unsubscribe from your email list.

Spam – This is more serious than a simple opt-out. In this case, the recipient received your email and does not believe they gave you permission to send email to them. If your spam complaints exceed 1/1000 you could find yourself in serious jeopardy of being prohibited from using certain email tools.

Avoid spam complaints by only mailing to a permission-based list and reminding people from time to time how they ended up on your list. They may still choose to opt out, but they won't file a complaint against you.

Viewing Your Reports – At First Glance

When viewing the basic information from a report, you're likely to see something akin to this:

Open Rate		Click Rate	
	24.9%		**3.3%**
Desktop 🖥 79.5%	Mobile 📱 20.5%		

Sent	2085	Did Not Open	1550
Bounces	21	Unsubscribed	2
Successful Deliveries	2064	Spam Reports	0

SOCIAL

What do all the numbers mean? Let's take a moment to digest the information presented here:

- The email was sent to 2,085 addresses.

- There were 21 emails which **bounced**, meaning this is an extremely clean list so the email was delivered to 2,064 recipients.

- Of those 2064 recipients, 515 opened the email, giving us an **open rate** of 24.9%.

- Of the 515 open the click through rate of **3.3%** means 17 people clicked on one of the links.

- 2 of the recipients unsubscribe but none of the recipients marked this email as **spam**,

These are just numbers. Turning the reported numbers into action is where analysis comes in.

Transforming your reports into action

Opens

When you first start an email campaign, you'll likely see a great open rate – but the honeymoon period won't last long. Open rates will probably be the most volatile of all your performance metrics and can vary depending on your content, time of day and relationship with your customers.

Keeping your open rate high normally requires some experimentation. If your open rate isn't as high as you'd like it to be, try one of the following changes:

Frequency:

If your main business is in large product or project sales (e.g. a home improvement company), customers aren't likely to be bothered to hear your weekly news. Adjust the frequency of your emails based on your consumers' habits and get the most out of your work.

Subject line:

Often a culprit of low open rates, your subject line should be short (4-7 words) and should promise the customer value, such as saving them money or helping them avoid misfortune.

Content:

If your emails don't contain relevant, engaging content, there won't be reason for contacts to open future emails.

Timing:

The same email with the same subject line could be received much differently depending on when a contact receives it. Think about when your customer base makes decisions for your industry and target those specific tendencies.

Clicks

Clicks or click-throughs are where your bread is buttered. If your campaign isn't driving web traffic or conversions, it's not doing its job. Experimentation and adjustment with specific pieces of your emails can make a world of difference in getting your audience to click through. Some of the most important parts of getting cliks are:

Calls to Action:

Give your readers a reason to click through. Simply listing your URL address won't compel the average person. Encourage your readers to "Schedule an Appointment," "Get A Quote," or even just "Get In Touch," with hyperlinks to appropriate places on your website.

Visibility:

Make sure your calls to action and clickable pieces are easily visible. Buttons and images tend to work much better for getting clicks than simple hyperlinked text.

Mobile friendliness:

Over 50% of emails are opened on mobile devices. Be sure your emails are easily readable and your calls to action are easily seen and clickable on all devices.

Length:

Don't make your readers search for your links. Your email doesn't need to contain a wealth of information, just enough to invite your audience to go to your website.

Putting click data to work

Your readers use clicks to tell you specifically what they are interested in. If your campaign has more than one call to action, compare the data to see if one offer seems to attract more attention.

Link	Unique Clicks
https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/more-than-a-few-words/id438174063	1
https://wp.me/pfpna-kXB	7
https://www.roundpeg.biz/	1
https://wp.me/pfpna-Ice	11

But don't stop there! It is nice to know which links are more intersting but the power of the click is the ability to see who was interested. Drill down and you can find the name of the people who clicked each link. Now you have a starting point for your next sales conversation!

OPENS AND CLICKS – STRANGE SCENARIOS

Usually your open and click rates will feed off each other – as one increases the other is likely to as well. But what if you see one metric flourish while another stagnates? If you see either of these scenarios, it means you're doing some things right, but there are some flaws in your campaign.

High open rate, low click rate

If you're experiencing this, good news is you're getting your audience's attention and you've earned your spot in their inbox. The bad news is that the attention is going to waste, meaning no traffic or conversions for your business.

To get your campaign back on track, try one of these strategies:

- Make your calls to action strong and visible – your clickable links need to be big and bold.

- Try segmenting your audience. Maybe you're catching them at the wrong time of day or day of the week. When would your target customer make the decision to buy your product?

Low open rate, high click rate

Though uncommon, a low open and high click rate can result from the same campaign. When this happens it is usually an indication that only a part of your community is interested in the subject matter. The good news is the people who are interested are really interested.

In this instance, you should focus your energy on segmenting your list. Instead of treating all your readers as if they are the same, start disecting the list, sending more detailed information on a more regular basis to people who open and click through. These are your real prospects, so give them the attention they deserve.

What You Can Learn from SPAM and Bounces

SPAM

If your spam complaints are running more than 1/1000, it means you aren't running a truly permission-based list. Use the permission reminder to let people know how they ended up on your list and give them a chance to opt out.

I know it is hard to say goodbye, but if they aren't interested in hearing from you they are actually costing you money. You are paying for names you can't send to and this gives you a false perspective on the size of your prospect pool.

Opt-out

If opt-outs are increasing to more 2% per campaign, it indicates that you are not fulfilling the expectations of your customers. Either you are delivering information they are not interested in, or you are simply sending too many emails.

To address an increase in opt-outs try segmenting your list, sending more focused emails to smaller, better defined lists. Then dial back on the frequency. You may simply be sending too much email.

Also look at your sign-up form, what promises are you making? What do people expect? Compare what you are delivering to what you say you are going to send and give people a chance to sign up for specific lists instead of everything you send out.

Bounces

There are several reasons an email will bounce. Each has a different action plan associated with it.

Suspended

These email addresses which were once valid, but aren't any longer. Perhaps someone has left a company or simply changed their email address. When you find suspended emails this is an opportunity to reach out to the company through other channels (in person, via phone or direct mail) to see if you can get a new email address or the name of the person you should be sending information to.

Non-Existent

In this case, you have an email that is simply not valid. The most common cause is a typo. So review the list, go back to the original data entry point to see if you can correct. Adjust and resend. If it bounces again, treat it like a suspended email and try to reach out through different channels.

Undeliverable email

When an email is marked undeliverable it means the receiving email server is temporarily unavailable, was overloaded, or couldn't be found.

A server that can't be found could have crashed or be under maintenance, so this may just mean waiting to send the email to the address again. However, if this email address repeatedly bounces on multiple emails, it may mean the server is gone for good.

It makes to try a resend to all undeliverable emails at least once to see if the message goes through

Mailbox full

If your contact has so many emails in their inbox that they can't receive more, your emails will bounce back until there's space for them.

Sometimes, this can mean that the contact is no longer using that email address.

As with a non-existent email address, you may want to follow up with the contact by phone or mail to check whether the address is valid.

Vacation/Auto-Reply

If someone goes on vacation or can't check their email, your emails to them will bounce.

It's important to note that, unlike with other bounce categories, this type of bounce means your email was successfully sent to the inbox.

Carefully monitor how often this email address ends up in this category. If months go by and the person hasn't returned from vacation, you may want to consider removing the contact.

Blocked

If the email addresses are placed within the "Blocked" category, the receiving server has blocked the incoming email.

This is often the case among government institutions or schools, where servers can be stricter when it comes to receiving emails.

To resolve this issue, you need to get in touch with the contact and request that their system administrators unblock your sending IP address by putting you on a white list.

Send Your Next Campaign

Armed with your objectives and goals, look at your last campaign. What can you learn from the data to improve your next one?

If you think you need a little more help, reach out to our team. We would love to help:

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