

281 billion and counting: Email is here to stay and it's a good thing

By  Jason Liebenberg

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Two-hundred-and-eighty-one-billion. That's a lot of emails being sent every day by some 4 billion email users around the world. And while many of us feel like we're on the receiving end of about 1 million a day, at least, email isn't going anywhere. Particularly not for marketers and advertisers, and that's because email continues to outperform most other channels when it comes to return on investment (ROI).



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Despite the proliferation and increasing ubiquity of channels like instant messaging and social media, email remains a powerful way for brands to reach their audience, and the reasons for this are simpler than one might imagine.

Preference

Email's user numbers are higher than those of any other digital customer communication channel, which gives it a headstart, but it is also people's preferred form of digital communication. Personalised emails have a 51% open rate, significantly higher than the industry average that hovers around 13%. The click rate on personalised emails is also worth taking note of. At 18%, it too is significantly higher than the 0.9% industry average.



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Much of the research on the topic suggests that the preference for email holds true across industries, including travel, retail and entertainment.

Proven ROI

They say the numbers don't lie and with a potential return on investment of up to 4400%, according to [OptinMonster](#), it's easy to see why marketers aren't unsubscribing any time soon. The main cost factor in email marketing is building the

database, but once you've got that the cost of sending emails is negligible. With email marketing, it is typically also people who are genuinely interested in your product or service who opt-in in the first place, which means you've already got a captive audience.

OptinMonster further highlights that the average open rate for email is around 23%, with a click-through rate of close to 4%, which far outweighs the combined engagement rate of other digital channels.

Personalisation

Stats show that over 90% of consumers are more likely to shop with brands who recognise, remember and provide relevant offers and recommendations. Numbers like these highlight that personalisation is not a nice-to-have but a central part of a dynamic, results-driven email marketing strategy. The strategic interpretation and application of big data not only makes it possible but also relatively easy to create mailers that demonstrate the brand's understanding of the consumer's likes, preferences and needs.



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If email is to retain its competitive edge, it needs to keep evolving to stay contextually relevant. Data is everything these days and email marketing, too, benefits from the strategic incorporation of data insights into its universe. Things like behavioural data and geolocation help to ensure that consumers receive the right information at exactly the right time.

Data is at the heart of concepts such as a single view of the customer (SVOC), hyper-personalisation, and micro-segmentation, which are all key to an organisation's ability to build and create the kind of personalised email communication that customers not only prefer, but also expect.

300 billion and beyond

Ultimately it's up to each organisation to ensure they make the most of email marketing through a strategic, considered and relevant approach. Email's edge is that it prioritises the individual experience and marketers are best served to ensure their efforts seek to retain this edge.

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