

E-mail Marketing

Irritating Spam or a Professional Marketing Medium

There is no question the e-mail is the communication medium of the early 21st century, but can it be used as part of a professional marketing campaign, or is it just yet another source of unwanted junk clogging up our lives, and our computers?

The answer depends primarily on two things; relevance & respect. **Relevance**, because if the message is relevant it will generally not be considered junk, and **Respect**, because if you are going to use e-mail as a commercial communication medium you must respect a recipients decision whether or not they wish to continue receiving your messages.

E-mail marketing is currently receiving a lot of attention both within the UK marketing industry, and within the EU. In August 2002, the EU E-commerce directive came into force. Primarily the directive considers personal data usage in e-commerce & e-marketing and, with particular relevance to e-mail marketing, acceptable use of e-mail addresses within marketing campaigns.

It is not possible to go into this directive in detail here, but a full review it and its adoption within the UK is available at www.marketinglaw.co.uk. I would recommend that anyone planning to use e-mail as a marketing tool, should take a look at this site.

This said, e-mail has been proven to be an excellent and highly cost effective promotional medium. By following the simple steps below, you can ensure you maintain a professional image in your market:

10 steps for professional e-mail marketing

- Always identify yourself & your company clearly in the e-mail
- Always give people the opportunity to remove themselves from your mailing list
- **RESPECT** requests to be removed
- Target your audience as carefully as possible (think quality rather than quantity when building e-mail target lists)
- Keep messages short punchy, (reference your website for more detail)
- Make content generally interesting (industry news, technical info hints & tips etc) rather than just including info about your own company
- Consider e-mail in the long term. Build profiles of your recipients and use this to ensure that messages are **RELEVANT** (Good data management is key to a successful E-mail campaign)

BSA Marketing is a marketing services company, with significant experience in this new field of business to business marketing. Duncan Wright, is a Director at BSA marketing.

“In our experience, if you follow the steps set out above, few people object to receiving marketing e-mails, and they can form a valuable tool in your marketing arsenal.”

“The final thing to consider is why you are sending the e-mail.” Says Wright “It should be seen as part of a wider e-marketing strategy, rather than as an end in itself. The primary aim of all good e-mail campaigns should be to drive web site traffic. The e-mail should give recipients a reason to visit your website, and your website should give them a reason to use your products or services.”

More information on building a professional e-mail marketing strategy can be found at www.bsamarketing.com

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