Strategies, Tactics and Trends for EMAIL MARKETING
Survey Summary Report

Research Series Conducted in Partnership with Leading Providers of Marketing Technology and Digital Marketing Agency Services.
Methodology

Ascend2 benchmarks the performance of marketing strategies, tactics and the technology that drives them with a standardized online questionnaire and a proprietary 3-Minute Survey format.

This survey was fielded to a panel of marketing influencers and marketing research subscribers.
Email marketing has been constantly developing for more than twenty years, and you can’t expect to generate new leads and acquire new subscribers using obsolete strategies and tactics.

But what works, and what doesn’t, in email marketing today?

To help you answer this question, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded the Email Marketing Survey. We thank the 272 marketing influencers who responded to this survey during the week of January 20, 2019.

This Survey Summary Report, titled Email Marketing, represents the opinions of all the market segments responding to the survey. Specific market segments from the survey are reported on separately and exclusively by our participating Research Partners.

This research has been produced for your use. Put it to work in your own marketing strategy. Clip the charts and write about them in your blog or post them on social media. Please share this research credited as published.
Increasing engagement and improving brand awareness are primary objectives for a 67% and 59% majority of marketing influencers, respectively. Engagement is now a frequent topic of conversation as companies strive to increase waning email open and click rates.

What are the PRIMARY OBJECTIVES for an email marketing strategy to achieve?

- Increasing engagement: 67%
- Improving brand awareness: 59%
- Increasing lead generation: 47%
- Increasing conversions: 39%
- Increasing list growth: 20%
- Improving personalization: 19%
- Improving list data quality: 16%

Email Marketing Survey
Conducted by Ascend2 and Participating Research Partners
Published February, 2019
Only about one-in-five marketing influencers (21%) describe the success of an email marketing strategy as very successful, or best-in-class compared to competitors. However, two-thirds (66%) consider their strategy somewhat successful at achieving their objectives.

Which best describes the SUCCESS of your email marketing strategy at achieving the primary objectives?

- Very successful (best-in-class), 21%
- Somewhat successful, 66%
- Unsuccessful, 13%
CRITICAL CHALLENGES

While increasing engagement is a top challenge to email marketing success for half (50%) of marketing influencers, increasing lead generation and conversions and improving list data quality are the next most critical challenges for 42%, 40% and 38%, respectively.

What are the most CRITICAL CHALLENGES to the success of an email marketing strategy?

- Increasing engagement: 50%
- Increasing lead generation: 42%
- Increasing conversions: 40%
- Improving list data quality: 38%
- Increase list growth: 30%
- Improving personalization: 29%
- Improving brand awareness: 28%
The total budget for the time, resources and expense consumed by email marketing will continue to increase, however, only moderately for a 61% majority of marketing influencers. 27% say that total expenditures will decrease to some extent.

Which best describes how the TOTAL BUDGET IS CHANGING (time, resources, expenses) for an email marketing strategy?

- Total budget will increase significantly: 12%
- Total budget will increase moderately: 61%
- Total budget will decrease moderately: 21%
- Total budget will decrease significantly: 6%

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OBJECTIVES VERSUS CHALLENGES

Analyzing how marketing influencers view the difference between primary objectives and critical challenges provides a valuable perspective for developing priorities for a successful email marketing strategy.

Comparing the strategic objectives and challenges of email.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary Objectives</th>
<th>Critical Challenges</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing engagement</td>
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A majority of marketing influencers believe that a combination of personalized messaging and single-topic/dedicated email creates the most effective type of email used for marketing purposes. Meanwhile, only 17% consider plain-text email effective.

**What are the most EFFECTIVE TYPES of email used for marketing purposes?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Email</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Personalized messaging</td>
<td>62%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single-topic/dedicated email</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple-topic/e-newsletter</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Milestone/birthday email</td>
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<tr>
<td>Automated/lead nurturing</td>
<td>28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transactional/eCommerce</td>
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<td>Plain-text email</td>
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HOW EFFECTIVENESS IS CHANGING

While nearly two-thirds (64%) of marketing influencers say email effectiveness is improving moderately, a total of 21% consider email effectiveness to be worsening to some extent.

Which best describes how EFFECTIVENESS IS CHANGING for the types of email used?

- Effectiveness is improving significantly: 15%
- Effectiveness is improving moderately: 64%
- Effectiveness is worsening moderately: 18%
- Effectiveness is worsening significantly: 3%

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DIFFICULT TYPES OF EMAIL

Personalized messaging is considered a difficult type of email to deploy by nearly half (47%) of marketing influencers. The difficulty of personalization has grown significantly as hyper-personalization, involving artificial intelligence, has become more prevalent.

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While difficult types of email (like personalized messaging driven by artificial intelligence) are driving the need for outsourced specialists, 39% of marketing influencers say they still only use in-house resources to deploy the types of email used.

Which best describes the RESOURCES USED to deploy the types of email used?

- In-house resources only, 39%
- Combination of outsourced and in-house resources, 49%
- Outsourced to a specialist, 12%
Types of email that are far more effective than difficult to use (for example, single topic/dedicated email), are more likely to be included in an email marketing strategy than types that are much more difficult than effective (for example, automated/lead nurturing).

Comparing the effectiveness and difficulty of email.

- **Personalized messaging**
  - Effective: 62%
  - Difficult: 47%

- **Single-topic/dedicated email**
  - Effective: 57%
  - Difficult: 15%

- **Multiple-topic/e-newsletter**
  - Effective: 35%
  - Difficult: 39%

- **Milestone/birthday email**
  - Effective: 29%
  - Difficult: 15%

- **Automated/lead nurturing**
  - Effective: 28%
  - Difficult: 39%

- **Transactional/ecommerce**
  - Effective: 27%
  - Difficult: 32%

- **Plain-text email**
  - Effective: 17%
  - Difficult: 26%
RESEARCH PARTNER PROGRAMS

Our Research Partner Programs rapidly deliver content of interest to your marketing influencers, and a guaranteed number of leads, in just two simple steps:

1. Choose **marketing topics** of interest to your audience.
   - Or create a survey topic of your own (limited availability)

2. Choose an exclusive segment for each topic chosen.
   - Success Benchmarks
   - Leadership Benchmarks
   - B2B Benchmarks
   - B2C Benchmarks
   - Enterprise Benchmarks
   - SMB Benchmarks
   - Agency Benchmarks
   - And more!

Learn more about Research-Based Marketing at [Ascend2.com](http://Ascend2.com).
These are just a few of the leading marketing solution providers that partner with us on research-based marketing programs.