

Tools you can use to your e-mail marketing advantage

Do you take advantage of everything your ESP (Email Service Provider) offers? Our research shows that many e-mail marketers don't. A June 2008 Return Path study revealed that an alarming 60% of marketers surveyed don't send welcome e-mails to new subscribers.

The same study also indicated that while 70% of the companies surveyed collected more than just an e-mail address at the time of sign-up, three-quarters of that group failed to use additional information to further personalize and customize their e-mails.

These numbers astonish, given the fact that most ESPs on the market today allow for easy set-up and automation of these crucial, relevance-boosting e-mail tactics. Why let these simple, seamless methods for boosting ROI, campaign performance and increased relevance slip through your fingers?

Here are e-mail features, offered by most ESPs, that you should use to your advantage.

Automated triggers

A great tool for your e-mail marketing arsenal, triggers are most effective when used with transactional messages, such as welcome letters, birthday offers, shipping confirmations and more. These messages basically allow marketers to “set it and forget it!” After the initial set-up, qualified customers will receive the appropriate transactional messages based on event or time-related triggers, all customizable by the marketer. This means you have complete control over which customers receive which messages without having to lift a finger. What could be simpler than that? Another perk: transactional messages often have extremely high open and click through rates, as they reach customers currently engaged with your brand and prove extremely relevant — especially, when personalized.

Personalization

If you collect more than an e-mail address at the time of sign-up for your newsletter, use this additional knowledge to make your messages more personal. Otherwise, why do you collect it in the first place? JupiterResearch reports that simply inserting a name into an e-mail increases open rates by as much as 10%. Create segmented lists so that you can send customized, relevant offers based on gender, age or region.

A/B Splits

Testing remains the single most important step in any e-mail marketing message. Many ESPs offer A/B split testing, which gives marketers instantaneous feedback on what works and what doesn't in e-mail design and copy. The tools offered to you require very little extra effort. Yet, they can improve campaign performance and increase customer satisfaction. In the online world, where the customer is king and competition lurks around every corner, they're worth it.