

Open Rate

Ten tips to make your email newsletter stand out.

BY STACEY E. BURKE

You likely receive multiple email advertisements or newsletters every single day in your inbox. With so much email to wade through, how can you make sure yours is noticed? The significant and often overwhelming volume of email marketing leaves many businesses wondering how to get their emails read by consumers—and one important piece of advice seems to underlie all of the tips: Make yours stand out.

Here are the top 10 tips to make your email newsletter stand out:

1. Mobile

You can't afford to neglect your email newsletter design. And with more than half of all email opened on mobile devices, responsive email design that resizes images and text according to the screen size is a must. Therefore, as in many digital advertising campaigns, it makes sense to create content for mobile rather than desktop viewing. A mobile-friendly design is just the start: You also need to make content choices with a small screen in mind.

2. Branding

Your law firm's email newsletter should be designed to look like it is part of your brand—that includes your logo, color palette, and a high-resolution photo you use across your other digital properties (like social media). This helps recipients quickly recognize you, which boosts trust and therefore engagement. For subscribers, consistency is key, so don't switch email newsletter design templates without a strategy in mind. Instead, use the same template for the same type of email so they know what to expect, can become familiar with it, and even look forward to it.

3. Clickbait

Clickbait is content written with the express purpose of attracting attention and encouraging readers to click on a link—and sometimes it can be malicious. You certainly don't want to be misleading in your newsletter, but you can use language in the

vein of clickbait by emphasizing your audience "must read" something in the subject line and the body copy. Another tactic involves using short headlines that leave the reader wanting to know more ... and thus with no choice left but to click.

4. Images

While two-thirds of subscribers prefer emails that are mostly images, some people disable images for inbound emails and some email clients don't display background images. To avoid the image conundrum, every sender must ensure his or her email looks good and works without images. Use alt-text to describe the images you use so even if the images are not visible to your reader, the newsletter will still make sense.

5. Calls-to-Action

Every digital marketing campaign should provide intended recipients with multiple clear calls to action, and email marketing is no exception. Each call to action, or CTA, provides another chance for a reader to interact with your law firm directly within the email. Some successful calls to action include: "download our whitepaper on the topic," "read more about this topic," and "follow us on social media." Keep in mind not all CTAs are designed to turn a reader into a client, because not all readers will become clients. Instead the CTAs may encourage social media engagement, increase your brand visibility, or help establish your law firm as a thought leader. Varying your CTAs also allows you to have varied metrics to track, including video view time, link clicks, number of opens, social media shares, and more.

6. Concise

When it comes to website visitors, your goal is generally to keep them on the site and engaged with your content. With an email newsletter, it's the opposite. Your ultimate goal is to drive them outside of the email to one of your digital assets. That's why you should keep the text within your emails short, which is often very hard for lawyers to do. Your mission—should you choose to accept it—is to make your email newsletter scannable for the reader. This can be accomplished by only providing text in the format of summaries, lists, or recaps.

7. Segmentation

There are seemingly endless ways to segment one's audience to better tailor your

marketing communications. You can segment contacts by interest or behavior. You can also wait until at least one email has been sent to the group and then segment by how recipients interact with it (highly engaged versus non-openers). This allows the firm to create separate emails for each group to ensure every person gets information they actually want and/or need.

8. Sharing

Make sure to provide social share buttons within the email so users can click and instantly share it on their own social accounts. Also share the e-newsletter on your own social media channels as one of your posts for the week using the share link (most email marketing services automatically generate a share link when you create the campaign). You can also add an email campaign archive to your website so users can read previous issues. To get more subscribers, place a link to your email subscription page on the thank you page that appears after someone submits a contact form.

9. Consistency

When people subscribe to your newsletter, they expect to hear from you on a regular basis, so make sure you deliver the newsletter to your subscribers as promised. A law firm should only send an email newsletter once a month *if there is something to say*. If there is not something new, noteworthy, or exciting to say every single month (which is likely), aim for a send of once per quarter. In addition to general frequency concerns, try for a consistent time of day, day of the week, and/or date of the month so readers know when to expect your words and can look forward to them.

10. Metrics

Whatever email marketing software you use will have analytics tools built directly into the platform. After every send, take a look at your open rate and click rates to see which articles perform best to inspire more ideas like them. **TBJ**

This article, which was originally published on the Stacey E. Burke, PC., blog, has been edited and reprinted with permission.



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