

5 Email Testing Best Practices

This 5 Step Email Testing Guide will teach you what elements of your emails you can test. Testing your emails is vital to increasing your click-through rate and decreasing your unsubscribe rate. Use the A/B testing method to test your emails. It's the easiest method to use to understand what created better results.

A/B testing is when you change one element of an email and you send 10% of your email list the thing you changed and another 10% the original email. Once you have determined which email performed better, you send the remaining 80% of your list the better performing email.

Goal: Determine what elements of an email need to change to generate better results.

1. "From" Name and From Address

You can test who and where the emails are coming from. We recommend keeping the from name and address consistent across all your emails, so send a small portion of emails from a name and address to see if it impacts your metrics.

2. Subject line

Your email subject line is a very important part of your email. You can use an A/B test to test your email subject lines. Elements of the subject line you can test include:

- Adding personalization to the subject line
- The subject line length
- The call to action
- Word used in the subject line

3. Email Design

We recommend you have one primary email template and possibly have a slightly different version of the template for your email newsletter. However, you can definitely test certain elements of the design to see if it impacts your click through rate, unsubscribe rate or goal of the email. Design elements you can test include:

- Bolding
- Capitalization
- Font size
- Font colors
- Images
- HTML versus plain text emails

4. Email Content

The content of your email is a great place to test a variety of things. The best way to test the content in your emails is to do an A/B test.

- **Headlines:** This is the first thing someone sees when they open the email. This should always be consistent with the subject line, but is a great thing to test. One experiment would be to make the headline a link.
- **Placement of content:** Experiment with moving the content to different parts of the email. You should always have your most important content in the beginning of the email.
- **Call to action:** You should experiment with your call to action in your email to determine if it has an effect on the conversion or click through rate. The call to action should align very closely with the email subject line.
- **Type of content:** Each email you send must have a goal so you can measure what worked and didn't work. You can test what content will help you achieve your goals by sending different content to your email lists.
- **Placement of social media links:** Try placing your social media icons at the top and bottom of your emails and measure which place gets more clicks.
- **Number of images (if any):** Experiment with the number of images you include in each email. You might find that fewer images increases your click through rate and decreases your unsubscribe rate.
- **Number of links:** If you're emails are getting a good click through rate then try increasing the number of links in your emails. Always include a link in the first one or two sentences of the emails.
- **Length of email:** Test different email lengths to see how much content or information you should be including in your emails. If you notice your recipients only clicking on the first link then you should shorten the emails.

5. Timing

Testing the timing of your emails is the easiest thing you can test. You don't need to change anything about the email, rather decide on times that you think will be most effective to send your emails. One way you can determine timing is to survey your recipients on when they would like to receive emails from your business.

The two primary things you can test are the **day you send the email** and the **time during the day you send the email**. The other element you can test is the amount of emails you send to people during a given week or month. Studies have found that increasing or decreasing the amount of email you send can have a significant impact on click-through rates and unsubscribe rates.