



## **Creating a Proactive E-mail Marketing Program**

The computer seems to have changed the face of the communication industry completely. Snail mails have already lost out to emails, while the voice over internet protocol (voip) is also winning against the traditional phone system. Indeed, businesses that ignore this trend will find themselves far behind in the commercial industry. Today right from the advertising to the final sale of a product, almost everything enjoys a parallel status both in the real and virtual world. In fact there are providers who only conduct online business with absolutely no advertising strategy and sales begin conducted in real time.

Today newsletters, product information, company performance reports and simple advertisements that employ a sales pitch, are all developed keeping in mind the exchange that is to happen with the prospect on the internet too. So, it is not enough to simply try and target prospects via printed literature but instead proactive email marketing programs are also essential if the business is to surge ahead in its field.

The benefits of e mail marketing are tremendous and this is the reason why it is so crucial for any e commercial venture to adopt an advanced e mail marketing program. Below are a few advantages of e mail marketing programs, which will throw light on why these programs have grown to form the backbone of the advertising sector.

- **Cost effective** - To begin with e mail marketing programs are highly cost effective when compared to snail mail marketing programs. Unlike direct marketing campaigns where heavy investments need to be made in organizing the printed material, e mail marketing programs allow users to send out thousands of e mails at almost no cost at all. While large businesses can afford to invest in paper, printing, envelopes, deliveries and other such costs, the small business owners are absolutely at a loss here. The cost advantage that e mail marketing programs offer their users have allowed businesses of all sizes to benefit. Be it a multinational or a local store, both setups can inform the prospect of their services and therefore stand in competition with each other, irrespective of the size of the venture.
- **Time** – In the commercial world, time is money and direct marketing programs employ too much time in reaching the target audience. By employing an e mail marketing program one can reach the prospect in a matter of seconds. Making offers that last for the next 48 hours or similar periods of time can be added to an e mail program to entice the prospect further still. Calling upon the target audience for immediate action is a much stronger sales technique rather than letting the prospect sit over the deal for unlimited time and e mails allow the seller to adopt this technique.
- **Target specific** – E mail marketing is highly target specific in nature. Snail mailing the information to a house does not guarantee if the main target will read the contents of the page. However, when you e mail information to a target in his/her mail box, you are guaranteed attention from the specific targeted person.



Indeed this intensifies the chances of a hit and therefore by default chances of higher sales too.

- Simple –E mail marketing programs are extremely simple to adopt. There are no complicated procedures to be dealt with before a business can start an e mail marketing program. All one needs to do is have access to the target audience’s e mails and from then on one can periodically create interesting marketing material and e mail it to these targets.
- Pro active – One of the most crucial advantages of e mail marketing programs is its pro active nature. Rather than passively wait for prospects to visit a website, site owners go out there and communicate with their targets and invite them with special offers to visit the site. Information about new products , deals, offers and performance can all be brought to the targets attention rather than hope that the prospect will find it him/her self someday.

It is the proactive nature of an e mail marketing program that is extremely beneficial to a business. Therefore the strongest idea behind an e mail marketing program is to ensure that its proactive nature is enhanced. In order to be able to create a pro active e mail marketing program, there are certain tips that must be worked with to achieve success.

- 1) Database – The root of a good proactive e mail program is the database of e mail ids where the e mails are to be sent out. Collecting these addresses is essential since unless you know where to send the mail, it is unlikely that you will send the mail. There are several methods by which an address data base can be developed. Some of these strategies are:
  - Including a “join my e mail list” tab on every page of your website
  - Asking for the web visitors e mail id on contact
  - Offer specials attractions for those who do provide their e mail ids
  - Enter into a partnership with another concern that may not be selling the same product but shares a client database with you, as in the case of a dental surgeon and a toothpaste manufacturer.
  - At no time should you select a generic e-mail list since it means that your competition is using it too and therefore you are not likely to receive much notice.
- 2) Establish communication- Once you have the database of e-mails organized the next step is to establish communication with the prospects. Do not launch into a heavy sales pitch immediately. Instead try a soft launch approach. The basic idea of a successful proactive e mail marketing strategy is to establish a relationship with the prospects. If the prospects treat your e mails as spam then your e mail strategy is headed for disaster. So always begin by offering prospects a deal that will get their attention and then work on keeping it.



- 3) Remove dead connections – E mail marketing programs that are not successful often find that their problem lies in pursuing dead connections. Therefore, it is imperative that the e mail address database be cleared and cleaned periodically, so that inactive subscribers can be deleted from the database. Often businesses find that they have been sending out e mails to subscribers who simply delete them. Deleting these subscribers from the address database ensures that the exact figures of active connections are available and an e-mail marketing strategy can be developed in accordance with that.
- 4) Consistency- Maintaining a consistent schedule of sending out regular e mails to your clients will help you immensely in creating a proactive e mail marketing strategy. Not only does it help in organizing your written material in time, but it also encourages the prospect to expect information from your end. This expectation helps immensely in grabbing the targets attention. This consistency should also be maintained in the e mail id that you use to send the material. Changing the e-mail id frequently will confuse the reader and also require a change in the spam section of the target’s e-mail, which may repel the prospect.
- 5) Attention grabbing subjects – Each e mail that you send out should have a short 3 to 4 word attention grabbing subject line that persuades the target to open the e mail and read the rest of the material. However, it is very important that your subject line should not contain words that are classified as spam by the various filtering systems. Once directed towards the spam box, it is unlikely that your e-mail marketing strategy will make any conversions.
- 6) Authentic content- A proactive e-mail program is a lengthy and sometimes even expensive procedure, so do not hastily post content that will have a negative effect on your reputation. The content that you send out to your prospects must be authentic and not simply trick deals that they find out about at a much later stage.
- 7) Follow through- Once an e mail has been sent out to the target audience it must be backed up by the main website. If an offer is made via the e mail, then the main website must contain a follow through. There is no point guiding the prospects towards the site, when the site has nothing to offer them. So before sending out a marketing e mail to the targets, do ensure that the website has been updated to include the offers and information that the marketing e mail carries.

A proactive e mail marketing program can do wonders for the sales data of a commercial venture. But like any other business strategy it involves planning and dedication to ensure that the goals of the program are successfully met. Though the tips above help in creating a proactive e mail marketing program, they are not set in stone. There are several marketing agencies out there that may be hired to keep the e mail marketing plan of an e commerce venture alive, or one may decide to do the needful independently. In either



case, creativity and ingenuity are important qualities to lend to your e mail marketing program when looking to make it successful.