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# The Four Golden Rules of E-Mail Marketing

**E-mail marketing Email Marketing Software - Free Demo is one of the most cost-effective ways to get your name in front of prospective or existing customers, to generate sales or stay top of mind.**

The e-mail messaging that clogs in-boxes around the world is known as spam, and with good reason: It is unwanted. Its solicitations are rarely acted upon. These annoying distractions offer little value.

Now that we know what's wrong with this method of marketing, what could possibly be right with it?

## Easier Than You Think

E-mail marketing (please don't call it spam for just a moment until you consider the argument) offers one of the most cost-effective ways to market to consumers. Startup costs are so small that any company can integrate a smartly designed campaign into its marketing program in short time.



By Michael Ferranti

**Customers who bought widgets in the past are the perfect customers to buy widgets when they go on sale.**

With a few well-established rules of engagement, chances are it will make a reasonable return on investment very quickly. In some cases, the results, like the Internet itself, are immediate.

What's more, e-mail isn't just a way to get your brand in front of people. It's an opportunity to establish engagement and dialog with customers. Here are

a few rules of thumb that are sure to show success for even the newest e-marketers.

### Rule No. 1: The e-mail must be anticipated.

Why waste time and effort sending e-mails to recipients who don't need what you sell, don't want your products and know nothing about you? We recommend sticking with "opt-in" e-mail lists to optimize results. Don't have an address list of hot prospects primed to buy? Not to worry. This can be accomplished in a

number of different ways.

You can entice individuals to visit your Web site with special offers to those who opt-in. Banner ads can also drive people who have an interest in your offers. Of course, marketing materials of any kind should include your Web site. Once there, make it easy for people to act, driving your sales.

### Rule No. 2: The e-mail must be relevant.

We recommend that our clients use information they gain about their customers selectively to keep them informed. If you are a jeweler, for example, and one of your customers purchased an anniversary ring for his wife in 2005, your messaging can remind this customer of the approaching date and also provide selective information about new jewelry designs and styles that would be perfect for the up-and-coming anniversary.

This puts the sender in the position of providing information that is needed and wanted. It's time-sensitive and it provides new product information based upon past behavior.

### Rule No. 3: The e-mail must offer value.

Research shows that consumers act on offers of value more than anything else. Having a sale on widgets? Customers who bought

widgets in the past are the perfect customers to buy widgets when they go on sale. The most successful e-mail marketing programs track this data and use it intelligently. I often ask company owners to think like their customers and answer the question: "Is my e-mail address worth parting with?" In this day and age, it's the equivalent of asking for a phone number that's privately listed.

### Rule No. 4: The e-mail must be integrated.

For maximum benefit, your e-mail messaging must be integrated with both content and commerce feedback loops in the form of product up-sells that leverage database data to meet needs (e.g., the next most likely product model) and surveys that allow that allow the customer to provide data points that are used to better service and connect with the consumer.

It's also important to know that any company, regardless of size, can afford an e-mail marketing program. In this day and age, with the ease of measuring your real-time ROI, who can afford not to? Moreover, small businesses can get in the game for a relatively small investment. Using this marketing strategy won't break the bank and, better still, will help you make a trip to one.

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