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## How to accurately measure the success of your emails

Published: 09 July 2007 00:00



In the second of a series of three guides to email marketing, Volker Wiewer, CEO of digital direct marketing agency eCircle, discusses the various ways of measuring and evaluating an email campaign.

In offline direct marketing, the only true insight is gleaned through response to a call to action – once the mailer has hit the doormat, the marketers only know if it provokes a response or not. And that's it. The consumer experience of the correspondence cannot be logged beyond the basic 'yes, I'm interested' or 'no, I'm not'. Did the consumer read the mailer and decide they weren't interested? Did they even open the envelope? Or did the DM make a swift journey from doormat to dustbin? The advantage for email marketers is that they are privy to this information and can use it to inform and guide future activity. Not six months later once the campaign has been evaluated and analysed, but in real-time - as the campaign runs.



There are a number of ways of measuring the effectiveness of an email marketing campaign, and marketers would be best advised to use as many as possible. After all, campaigns can be made to work far harder and executed with a much tighter focus once we can establish who is interested and to what degree. A considered, cost-effective and result-garnering email campaign will incorporate as many of the suggested criterion as possible.

### Opening rate

This is the ratio between opened and sent emails. Are your emails really achieving cut-through? Cutting-edge creative and a too-good-to-be-true promotional offer are wasted on an email that isn't even getting opened because the subject line is as engaging as another junk mail for buying dodgy pharmaceuticals. You can measure the opening rates of your emails and monitor their development. If these are compared on a weekly/monthly basis, this is a good indicator for the progress of interest in your emails, and should be used to inform any changes to your campaign plan.

### Click through rate

This is calculated from the number of clicked links in an email in proportion to the number of sent emails. Last year the average click through rate fell slightly and is now mainly below 5 per cent. If you want to increase this you have to keep two things in mind: segment your database in appropriate target groups and send them correspondence with relevant content. By targeting the right audience and sending them the right information, you will have a far greater chance of engaging people beyond simply opening the email.

### Bounce rate

This is obtained by dividing the number of blocked emails by the total number of sent messages. In the B2B sector approximately one fifth of all messages are blocked. Professional sender software can enable you to handle bounces automatically and directly deactivate email addresses which are invalid. This helps you to reduce your bounce rate and keep your lists clean.

### Conversion rate

This is the number of addressees that reacted in a certain way, e.g. purchase, download, registration, etc in proportion to the number of sent emails. Last year the average conversion rate for most campaigns was lower than 2 per cent. To increase this rate, brands using email marketing should place maximum focus on ensuring they are targeting the right consumers at the right time with the right message. Splatter-gun campaigns going for maximum output, using inaccurate data and ill-targeted execution could see rather worrying returns on their investment.

### Click through rate to opening rate ratio

If you divide the click through rate by the opening rate, you'll gain insight into the success of your campaign from the addressees who opened the email. Essentially, this measurement allows you to see what recipients make of your email once they have actually opened it – have you engaged them sufficiently to ensure they want to know more? The feedback from this measurement can be invaluable, and revolutionise a campaign.

The criterion outlined above are just a few of the ways of examining email marketing activity and focus largely on individual email response and email broadcasting technology will allow you to see your results at a glance. Business-defined measurements such as average turnover per email or leads generated in proportion to emails sent, can also be extremely important in terms of holding marketing spend to account. As with any marketing activity, the most effective approach will incorporate an element of evaluation that is as thorough as the process of development that goes before it.

[Go here to read the first part of Volker Wiewer's articles on email marketing](#)

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