

# How to successfully manage international email campaigns

Source: [Technology Weekly](#) | Published: 02 June 2008 00:00



This week's article on email marketing by Volker Wiewer, chief executive of email marketing company eCircle looks at the techniques and strategies required to successfully manage email campaigns across international borders.

As globalisation plays an increasingly bigger role in our everyday lives, communicating to your customers on an international scale requires increasingly more thought and attention. There are a number of challenges you may face to ensure your messages resonate across borders. We take a look at the key factors to bear in mind that will help you increase your chances of international email success.

## Think Local Act Global

Most non UK European marketers continue to use a single team and strategy to implement a particular campaign or message. Whereas the idea is correct in principal, it's not taken far enough and most marketers segment their lists by country only. This is a flawed strategy. Would you target a London based young professional with the same message as a Yorkshire farmer? Hopefully not! And our European and international counterparts are no different. Geographical, social and cultural divides will crisscross every single country and it's your job to consider the dialect, currency and language preferences your customers and prospects may have and ensure your communications are tailored accordingly. Bear in mind that some recipients may also prefer to receive their emails in English so ensure this is included as an option.

## ESP Advantages

Utilising an ESP (email services provider) can offer you the ability to localise your communications even more effectively. Take advantage of some of the sophisticated but user friendly email broadcasting tools there are available on the market such as eCmessenger. They allow you to incorporate dynamic content which is matched to user/ country preferences and carry out highly targeted segmentation. In addition, some ESP's come with readymade agreements and relationships with ISP's not only in the UK but internationally therefore aiding the deliverability of your emails and giving you a greater chance at success.

## Personalisation

Here in the UK, the focus on email communications over the past few years has been personalisation. "The more personalised the greater the success", that's what we've been taught? Maybe not, in our international marketplace, we need to take a slightly different approach to personalisation. In some countries or societies, recipients may feel the personalised message is too artificial or to informal for them. Others may be wary over privacy concerns so you may need to limit the amount of personal information displayed.

## Email Formats

There may be a set format that you've developed and currently use for your email communications but you may need to review this if you're planning on broadcasting internationally. The level of content you display may need to change according to country. For example in the US its usual for articles to be accessed via links whereas in other countries people expect to see the article in full.

## Test, retest, and then test again!

I've said this many times before here so apologies for going on like a broken record but...you cannot underestimate how important testing various designs, content, subject lines, images etc is. The success of your campaigns depends on your ability to tailor your emails most appropriately to your recipients and you can only do this by testing what delivers you the greatest response.

In an international context, this is even more amplified as the triggers to action vary according to social, culturally and professional preferences. Remember what works well in the UK is not guaranteed to work overseas.

## Going Live in three...two...one...

Whereas I hope by now we've all cottoned onto the fact that the time our emails hit inboxes can have a dramatic effect on our response rates, we need to pay even closer attention to this when we're broadcasting to multiple countries. Be aware of the different working hours people keep, key holiday seasons, national holidays and times zones and plan your broadcasts accordingly. The key is keeping your messages timely and relevant to whatever is affecting your customers and prospects.

## Foreign Laws

When you email out from one country into another ensure you're aware of the various legal nuances, rules and regulations that apply to the recipient country as you are legally responsible to abide to these as well as your own. It's particularly important to ensure you're familiar with the regulations governing data protection, privacy and use of personal data.

In summary whereas the principals we've developed to give us greater success with our national campaigns still apply, we need to re-look at the features and decisions we've made, to ensure they still apply. This means a small trip back to the drawing board to ensure we re-assess segmentation, personalisation and testing amongst other factors to ensure we continue to deliver what echo's with our customers and prospects, regardless of where they live.