

8 ways to integrate email more successfully

Source: [Technology Weekly](#) | Published: 03 August 2009 00:00



Full integration is becoming increasingly important to a successful marketing strategy. But it can seem like a daunting task to try to add email into a complex CRM or eCRM system. Volker Wiewer, CEO of one of Europe's largest digital direct marketing companies, eCircle, simplifies how a cost effective eCRM strategy can drive revenue for your brand.

The starting point – changing the existing campaign

Changing an established campaign or system can be difficult. Obviously time and resources need to be allocated to making the transition as smooth as possible. It's important to identify core revenue drivers and communicate this to the business, so all stakeholders can see the value of investing in CRM and understand what the program will bring to the business.

To do this you need to have a frank and honest discussion with your provider about what you expect from this channel and how much revenue you can realistically predict to come from it compared to others.

Getting started with your email program

Keep things simple. This should be your mantra throughout the whole process. Start with the basics such as a monthly newsletter then you can build in additional elements as you go on.

Making the most of your data

Many businesses fail to make the most of their valuable data. If you have customer lists, email to it regularly, keeping data fresh and manageable and customers thinking about your brand.

To increase relevancy, begin to identify basic data segments and tailor your emails to those segments. Based on email responses you can also start to profile [your data](#). There are numerous segmentation strategies you can try; these are some of the basic strategies we use with new clients:

- 1) **New customer:** Consider a nursery program. This is a series of triggered events, which your ESP should easily be able to set up and will reassure customers that they've registered properly or that an order has gone through.
- 2) **Registered but not purchased:** Often e-commerce sites will find customers may have gone to the trouble of registering but not yet made a purchase. Offer specific incentives to encourage buying behaviour.

2) Registered but not purchased: Often e-commerce sites will find customers may have gone to the trouble of registering but not yet made a purchase. Offer specific incentives to encourage buying behaviour.

3) Demographic segmentation: You may have some sort of demographic data in your database already, basic details such as age, location and gender. Use this to define simple segments e.g. what products are our male customers most interested in or which specific promotions do customers over 50 most value.

4) Lapsed customers: Incentives aren't just for new customers or a way of targeting specific people. Lapsed customers can also benefit from offers created as part of a reactivation campaign. This tactic also helps you to keep your data fresh; if you focus on going for data quality over quantity, you'll see your results improve dramatically.

5) Content: To borrow from someone who put it very eloquently, when deciding on content for emails, remember "Right proposition... right time... right message... right tone... right frequency" (Dave Chaffey, Marketing Insights) are all key. It's worth setting out basic guidelines aligned with your brand for your email strategy. Use offline material - existing press ads, door drops, TV ads etc to create these guides, which will ensure you speak with the same voice and keep consistent across channels. Remember seasonal events are your friends as they help to keep your message/offers as relevant as possible.

6) Data: Become a gatekeeper of data and protect the email channel within the business. Set rules and guidelines around send volumes and data collection. You should definitely appoint a data protection officer to monitor this. Your ESP should also be able to give you advice on deliverability, data health and data protection.

7) Testing and reporting: Build up a testing knowledge base internally with rules of thumb that can be applied to all tests. Things you might want to test could include the best day of the week to send, best time of the day (split tests), AB subject line testing, button types and call to actions ('Buy now' vs. 'Shop online') etc or different levels of personalisation. Never assume you know best – you should be testing something on every email you send!

8) Results: Analysing your results is critical to optimising your email marketing. A good place to start is by comparing your campaigns against your ESP benchmarks. Consider automating reports as this can often be a complex and time consuming process if you don't. Reporting by segments can also help you to make sense of the data.

In summary, creating a comprehensive CRM program, will always involve a certain amount of planning and preparation at the outset. However, the benefits of having a clear roadmap in mind will far outweigh the initial resource and cost.