

# Guide to B2B Email Marketing

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## Introduction

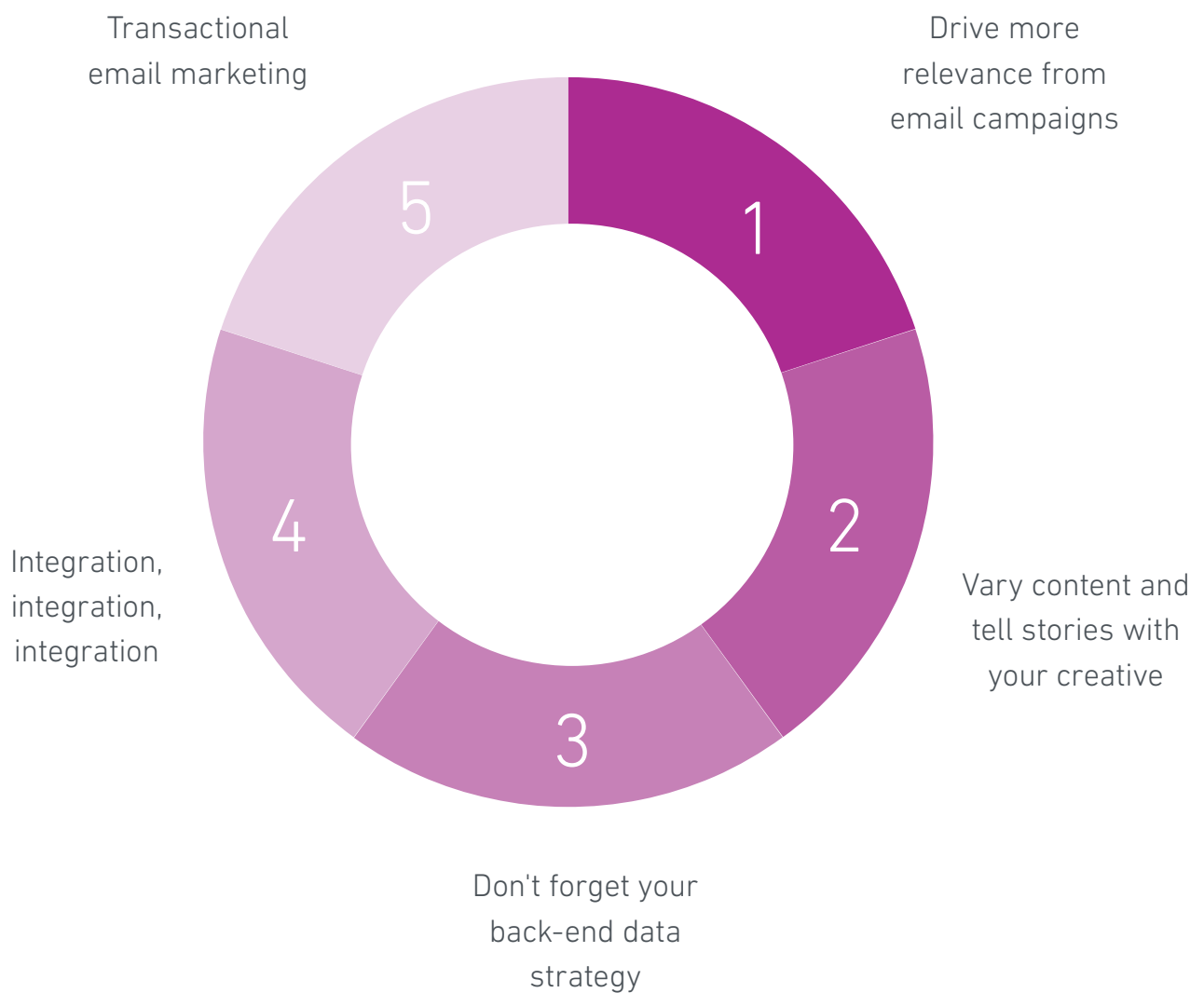
Email, done well, is an unbeatable online marketing tool. With Return On Investment (ROI) of \$38 for every \$1 spent, it gives you around 3x the return that social media marketing does.<sup>1</sup> Email marketing is also measurable and highly personalised – something that is absolutely key during a time when data is everywhere and convenience is king.

The thing is, email isn't always done well. Because it's so cost effective, it can be used indiscriminately. A marketer's temptation is to follow the rule that 'if 5000 emails get 25 responses, we'll send out 50,000. While this sounds good in theory, it isn't always that simple and can be a dangerous path to follow. The key to successful email marketing is the quality of your leads and indiscriminate use of poor quality data can actually have a damaging effect on your email marketing and your sales to boot.

In this guide, we'll show you how to navigate the choppy waters of email marketing so that your campaigns can achieve the ROIs that have made email marketing the number one online marketing tool out there.

## Part one: What should marketers be doing with their email campaigns?

As B2B marketers, you need to focus on five key areas in order for email to be a successful part of your direct marketing strategy.



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## Make your email campaigns relevant

Consumers expect you to treat them as individuals. We are in the midst of a data revolution and as a business, this provides both opportunity and risk. Data can be used as a powerful tool to create specific, targeted email campaigns that are based on your customers' behaviour, demographics and preferences. By not taking this opportunity to segment your campaigns, you will significantly weaken their impact.

As a B2B marketer, it's also worth considering the type of email address you target. Which will be more effective, using a specific contact or a generic email address such as admin@ or info@? It could be argued that the specific contact is more relevant but there is also a risk that this type of data will decay much faster as people leave the business or change roles. For certain sectors and offers, such as corporate hospitality and ticket offers, contact emails supported by generic emails can be very effective.

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## Be creative

Once you have targeted the right people who you know are going to be interested in what you have to say, you need to keep them interested! Make sure your content strategy is creative and that as much effort is put into what goes IN to your emails as to who you send them to. Consider how you can keep people engaged with use of stories and interesting or innovative creative.

Show attention to detail when it comes to your personalisation. Make sure your data is up to date – especially when you are targeting the C-suite in large corporations such as the CEO, CFO or CMO. Nothing can be less engaging than personalisation gone wrong...

Stay up to date with email trends – for example, in 2017, it's expected that we'll start to see automated emails triggered by web chat sessions. Depending on your target audience, you can expect anywhere between 15-70 percent of your emails to be opened by mobile phone which means that email length is expected to reduce. Video continues to explode across all marketing channels and email is no exception, with HTML5 Video expected to take off this year.<sup>2</sup>

1. <http://www.emailmonday.com/dma-national-client-email-report-2015>

2. <http://www.emailmonday.com/email-marketing-future>

3. <https://litmus.com/blog/email-preferred-more-clicks-conversions-roi>

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### A robust data strategy

As we mentioned at the start of this guide. The quality of your leads is absolutely key when it comes to a successful email campaign. Poor quality data will result in high bounce rates and damage to your email reputation score. This means fewer people see your emails and you make fewer sales. At its worst, poor data can lead to breaches of the Data Protection Act which in turn, can lead to fines and reputational damage for your business as a whole.

Take your data cleansing seriously and maximise your email marketing results.

Firstly, you need to consider how you capture your leads. This can have a direct impact on their quality and subsequent bounce rates. For instance, email data constructed using a ping process to gather data from an IP address by establishing the domain names and topology typically demonstrates very low bounce-back rates. Data captured via telephone can also be extremely accurate but to get this information, highly skilled operatives are needed. Online activity is a frequently used capture device, but you can only be 100 per cent sure of those addresses you've captured yourself, in terms of both quality and opt in.

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### Integration, integration, integration

Email marketing in both B2C and B2B worlds is at its most effective when it is part of a multi-channel marketing strategy. When creating your email campaigns, consider how they will integrate with your other marketing activities so that you have one, aligned approach across all of your marketing disciplines.

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### Transactional email marketing

66 percent of consumers have made a purchase as a result of an email they've received.<sup>3</sup> It's no wonder then, that actually selling your products directly via email is a method that is well established in the B2C world. As yet, it has seen little use in B2B, perhaps because the purchasing process can take longer and be more complex. That being said, transactional email marketing is a trend that shouldn't be overlooked and may hold opportunity for B2B businesses too. In fact, tracking transactional email sales is a powerful indicator of an email campaign's performance and relevance. The more targeted the audience, and the more relevant and engaging the content, the more sales your transactional emails will achieve.



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