Email Newsletters

ICN Media Fact Sheet

Market analysis

In the landscape of the modern digital media marketing industry, there are many new methods of generating new revenue streams, increasing customer acquisition and retention, and growing your consumer base. It's also true that some people consider email to be a bit outdated or not as useful as more current communications; it's slower than social media and more liable to be filtered out by spam filters than content marketing. However, that doesn't mean that email needs to be consigned to the past. We just need to review what email is actually for and then proceed according.

At its simplest, email is for communicating a message. Therefore, effective usage of email to connect with your audience requires the identification of a specific message that you wish to share. This needs to be followed by clear communication of that message to your customer base whilst giving people a level of contextualisation with your content. Furthermore, email newsletters can function as a fantastic database building tool, again, as long as it is done in a GDPR-compliant way.

GDPR compliance requires you to take accountability for any personal data you collect about people and be able to justify how and why you are using that data. In short, this means having a policy document that is openly available letting people know what you intend to do with their data once it is collected, and allowing people to decide whether or not they wish to consent to that. In relation to email newsletters, this necessitates staying on top of your opt-out list and making sure that any email addresses have been obtained with the express consent of the data subject for marketing purposes (i.e. the person whose address it is).

Once you have ensured that you are complying with GDPR, email newsletters are a very powerful tool with which to provide a useful content-led service and insight to your customer base that ultimately supports your messages on other platforms and drives people back to your website. It's one of many digital marketing tools available, but it's a substantially important one that shouldn't be overlooked or disregarded as an option.

Why are Email Newsletters important?

At ICN Media, we believe that creating a good experience for your consumers is the best way to establish a positive working relationship. After all, emotion drives many of our behaviours, thoughts, and actions and is also highly present when it comes to customer purchasing decisions. In fact, one Harvard professor has postulated that 95% of purchasing decisions take place in the subconscious mind, which is heavily dictated by emotions. With this in mind, it should come as little surprise that around 70% of consumers who feel a strong emotional attachment to a brand tend to spend up to twice as much money as those consumers without a strong emotional bond. Therefore, email newsletters are important because they are another channel through which you can reinforce your brand's image and evoke positive emotions in your target audience directed towards your business.

Whilst we're talking figures, it also bears noting that around 81% of customers who feel positively about a brand will recommend it to their friends and family. Not only is this bonus inbound marketing but it should also further cement to you the longer-term impact that email newsletters can have in terms of cultivating a positive customer-brand relationship. Emotions have the strongest correlation to loyalty over rational factors and brand values. Specifically, honesty and trust were noted as having the greatest influence on loyalty. Thus, it's important to have an engaging voice in your email newsletters that matches the tone of your brand and connects with your target audience; newsletter content that is presented in a friendly, accessible way will help build up trust with your consumers.

Studies indicate that 82% of consumers with high emotional engagement would always buy the brand they are loyal to when making purchasing decisions (compared to 38% of consumers with low emotional engagement). Further cementing the impact that email newsletters (and digital marketing as a whole) can have is this research from Net Imperative which suggests that businesses who are able to foster customer loyalty through higher emotional engagement have the potential benefit of increasing their annual revenues by 5%!

Successful digital marketing is the gateway to being (or staying) at the top of your industry and email newsletters can be a crucial tool in achieving this.

How could Email Newsletters help my business grow?

In addition to creating an emotional connection with consumers which can drive multiple benefits as we've mentioned above, email newsletters can also help your business grow in other ways.

One of these is as a database building tool.

When we talk about social media, one of the more commonly touted pieces of information is the figures of social media channel users. For example, FaceBook has approximately 1.4 billion daily users and Twitter has 100 million. However, what is less commonly mentioned is how every single one of those users signed up for those sites using an email address... an email address which you can add to your email list, if the user consents. The Radicato Group Inc carried out research which concluded that there are currently 3.8 billion active email accounts. It goes without saying that those are some pretty enticing figures in favour of email and suggests that building an email list of names and addresses from the people who have consented to receive email communication from your business can lead to an extremely lucrative return on investment.

Not only does having a sign-up list on your website encourage new users on your website to join, but if you have a double opt in verification system, you know those subscribers are very interested in your brand's products and accordingly are highly likely to convert into paying customers. If people are consenting to receive email newsletters from you, the implication is that they are interested in what you have to say and are likely to be much more receptive to your message.

Whilst it is true that social media is incredibly popular as a digital marketing tool, a key difference to email newsletters is that once it is curated, you own your email list and do not have to adhere to the decisions of other external platforms. Moreover, there is privacy element to an email inbox since it is removed from a public platform which can engender people to feel confident about any actions that they take in response to an email newsletter. There can be a performative component to interactions carried out on more public channels, but since email is a direct one-to-one system, users can rest assured that any questions they may have in response to an email newsletter can be asked in confidence. This both aids in building trust and connection and increases the likelihood of those peope receiving your email newsletters taking a desirable action (converting).

Hopefully, the above information has convinced you of the importance of email newsletters and the fact that they have merit and a place in the current digital media marketing landscape. However, we also invite you to consider the fact that it's important to maximise the number of methods you use to draw users back to your website. Sure, social media works great but what about those organic traffic users who find your brand via web searches? How do you ensure that they once they click away from your site it's not forever? (You know, in addition to optimising your website copy and overall aesthetic so that they have the maximum impact.)

You guessed it... email newsletters!

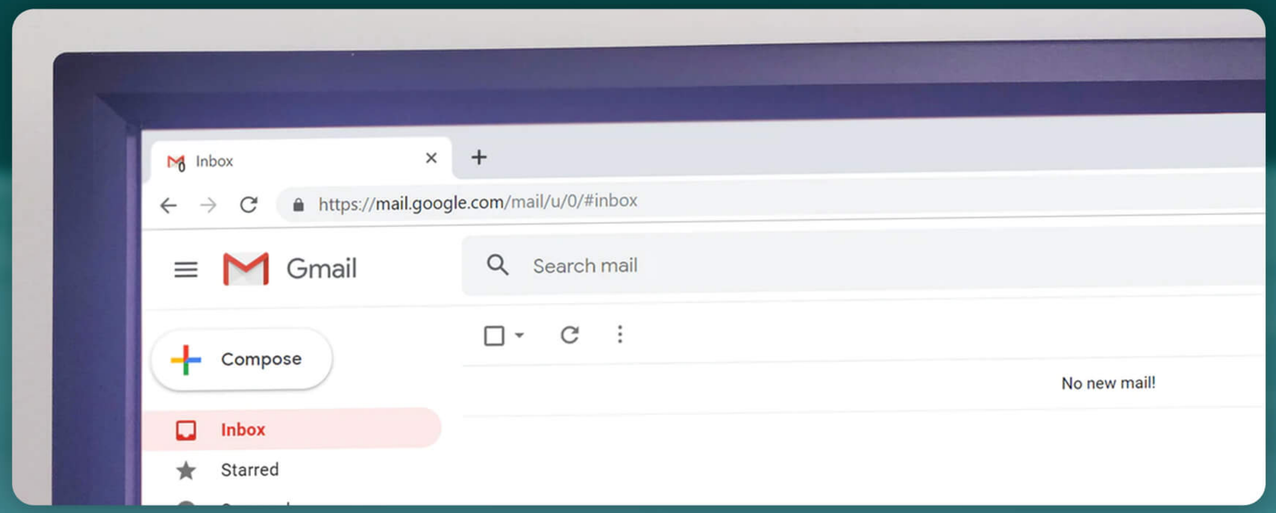
Promoting sign-ups to your email newsletter on your website helps your business grow by securing those new users before they leave and creating an opportunity to draw them back when your newsletter goes out. You can also take advantage of cross-channel marketing to plug your website on social media, your social media accounts in your email newsletter signature, and your newsletter on your website and everything inbetween. The goals is users into longer term followers and subscribers, leading ultimately to becoming (returning) customers.

Does my business need help with Email Newsletters?

It's not uncommon for businesses to access external help in order to efficiently manage the creation, testing, design, distribution, analysis and so on of email newsletters. Even if you use an email marketing platform, such as MailChimp, MailJet, or ConstantContacts, having a team devoted to managing that platform can be exceptionally beneficial. ICN Media can keep up to date with sign-ups / opt-outs, analyse what is working well and what might need to change in your email newsletters, evaluate the health of your email list, ask for and listen to the feedback of your current customers, monitor real-time data insights and troubleshoot any potential problems.

For example, one key area in the field of email newsletters is maintaining a high sender score. That means making sure that your IP addresses and domains are well maintained and safeguarded from being compromised. If your brand sends out unwanted emails or viruses, this quite understandably can lead to users blocking your messaging or marking them as spam. In the modern digital world, maintaining your online reputation is vital and can be aided by close management of your email marketing platform.

Even if you just want to have a high-level conversation about email newsletters and how they might benefit your business, we're happy to help. There isn't a one-size-fits-all answer with content, but with over 20 years of digital marketing experience behind us, ICN Media understands what consumers want and how this can vary from person to person. Customers are more likely to be emotionally connected with a brand when aligns with their motivations, and we want to help you take advantage of this while providing insight and a useful content-led service for your audience.



Below you'll find a few questions that can guide you towards deciding whether or not your business may benefit from help with email newsletters.

1) Have you got a MailChimp account or similar with a database of email addresses?
2) Do you currently only send emails out sporadically or a few times a year?
3) Would you like to provide insight to your audience at certain times of the year?
4) Do you lack the time to plan ahead and manage your content schedule?
5) Is the reason for this that your main focus is core sales?

It may be that your business isn't ready to do email newsletters just yet and that you need to focus on other channels first. However, if you are at that stage where email newsletters can be a viable addition to your business marketing strategy, and if these questions resonated with you, please don't hesitate to get in touch with our team to receive unparalleled service and benefit from our years of experience as digital marketing experts.

How do I keep it cost-effective?

One of the biggest problems that businesses can face is having money going out of the account each month but not doing productive anything about it. Planning ahead with a schedule of content can be a powerful asset to maximise the efficacy of your email newsletters. It also enables you to think ahead and match content to other things going on in the everyday world, be it national holidays, sporting events, or culturally relevant happenings.

As we've already mentioned, cross-channel marketing can increase the impact and reach of every one of your marketing channels and linking your email newsletters in with your social media can also be a cost-efficient step. Marketing tools don't have to function independently of each other, and doing everything in a joined up, cohesive way that drives users back to your website and leads to sales can be only be a positive outcome. Plus, email newsletters generally stay cost-effective by their very nature since they are widely considered to be one of the most cost-effective marking tools out there.

Additionally, if you decide to proceed with ICN Media as your email newsletter partner, you can rest assured in the knowledge that we'll do our utmost to keep it affordable for your business as a matter of principle. At ICN Media, we ascribe to the Pareto Principle of 80:20, applying this to our business model in order to offer our clients an excellent service that comes without an extortionate price tag. We recognise email newsletters as a tool to make the most of in a co-ordinated way and offer this service at a fixed cost with the option to pay in a way that is financially sustainable for you business, by spreading the cost out between a 6 to 12 month period.

How would ICN help?

We pride ourselves on our innovation and creativity and know first-hand how to achieve digital marketing success with email newsletters. Our email newsletter team is highly experienced and capable of managing your chosen email marketing service so that you can optimise work hours to focus on core sales. The way we would help can vary based on your individual business needs but the broad strokes include us creating a monthly newsletter for you, and if desired, an annual content schedule including social media.

If you choose to proceed with ICN Media as your email newsletter provider, then the process will be along the lines of the following steps:

Step 1
We will discuss in advance with you what themes / topics to focus on across the year.

Step 2
We will undertake competitor research and attain a thorough understanding of your business ethos and brand message.

Step 3
Our writing team will draft the copy to fit into that month's chosen theme, whilst keeping it engaging, accessible, and matching the tone of your business elsewhere online.

Step 4
When the copy has been approved, our design team will transform it into a beautiful, sleek newsletter with a colour scheme and responsive layout using the relevant programme. (Typically this is MailChimp, but there are other providers out there.)

Step 5
Our team will then send a test email to ensure that everything displays properly, test any links and formatting, and preview what your consumers will see.

Step 6
If applicable, our team will make any changes that you request. Once approved, the newsletter will go out to your database of clients.

It's as simple as that.

It's important for businesses to recognise that email newsletters are a proven, effective way to improve the relationship between your brand and your consumers. As we've touched on previously in this document, the full impact of email newsletters transcends short-term ROI. Email newsletters allow you to communicate a message to your consumers and build up a positive relationship that cultivates an emotional bond. As a consequence of this, they can also benefit your business and increase your revenue by contributing to a wider strategy to engage your clients and impact their feelings towards your branding a positive way, whatever your business may be.