

# The TOP GUIDE TO INSPIRED EMAIL MARKETING

10 creative ideas for email marketing  
campaigns that **resonate**  
with your subscribers.

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MARK ANASTASI, INSPIRED GROUP LTD

**TRY IT FREE**





# How often do your clients say “Wow”?

Would you like to know what the worst enemy of the marketing professional is? It is the **routine** — the ordinary, the everyday, the predictable.

Re-using old marketing content — repeating the same old ideas that don’t surprise your customers — leads to **predictable** email marketing campaigns. Consequently, **performance plummets**.

Surprisingly, there’s one email marketing element that receives little attention: the **incentive** that drives action. By incentive, I don’t mean sophisticated copywriting or visually stunning email templates. The thing your newsletter campaigns need most is:

## A Great Offer

An offer that is compelling. One that speaks to the audience and demonstrates value. An offer that shows your audience that they can expect much more.

In this handbook are 10 creative ideas you can use for your promotional email marketing campaigns.

If you want to create the “**Wow effect**” and increase your open rates by 10% above the global average (19.9% according MarketingProfs Research 2012) you’ve just taken a step in the right direction.

In this guide you’ll learn:

- ✓ What **newsjacking** is
- ✓ What **LeBron James** has to do with your newsletters
- ✓ How the **wheel of fortune** fits into your email marketing program
- ✓ Why we **grow accustomed** to certain things, and how to profit from it
- ✓ How to **grow sales** while increasing prices
- ✓ How to bring **inactive subscribers** back to life

I make one promise: the time you are about to spend reading this handbook will be a good investment for your business.



# 1. Add headline makers to your campaigns

During the 2013 NBA final, LeBron James and the Miami Heat made headlines with their victory against the San Antonio Spurs.

What if your local appliance store's promotional campaign was on everyone's lips, just like that? Or what if your new line of T-shirts received the same media coverage and popularity as Baumgartner's supersonic freefall?

I've got great news for you – you can freely **capitalize on topics that are currently hot** by creating promotional newsletter campaigns around them.

## Strike while the iron is hot

**Newsjacking** is nothing more than using the social buzz around current hot topics for your own promotional and sales campaigns. Author David Meerman Scott wrote about this particular concept in his book "Newsjacking: How to Inject Your Ideas into a Breaking News Story and Generate Tons of Media Coverage".

The most important element of newsjacking is **prompt action**. Each media story has a relatively short lifespan, and your job is to send out the message just before the story reaches its peak of popularity.

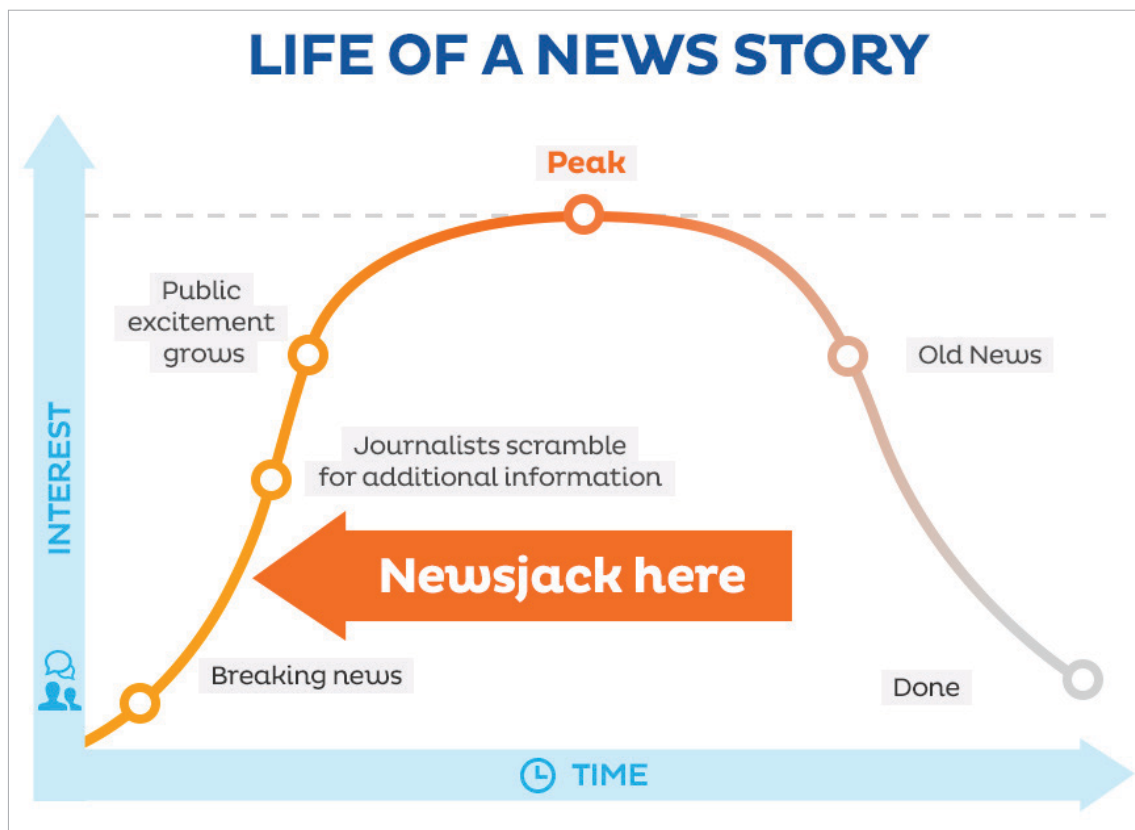
If you're late, even a day or two, your promotional campaign won't have the "Wow effect", but rather the "How many times do I have to hear about this?" effect.

## How do you find a hot topic?

There are so many new, interesting things happening all over the world every single day. You don't have to wait for the next presidential election or soccer championship in Brazil. Your promotional campaign can focus on everyday events and news in the media.

- ✔ **Sports events:** NBA or NFL playoffs, Superbowl, UFC, U.S. winning 104 medals in London 2012 Olympics, Brazil World Cup

**Example:** LeBron James scores 37 points and grabs 12 rebounds, leading the Miami Heat to victory over the San Antonio Spurs and their second consecutive NBA title. The very next day a sports shop sends out a newsletter focused on Basketball gear ("Want to play like LeBron James? Start training today!")



Picture 1 - A graph by David Meerman Scott - the best time to newsjack a story.

- 🕒 **Political events:** presidential elections, presidential and prime ministerial debate, changes to legislation

**Example:** Barack Obama announces steps to rein in greenhouse gases, causing energy prices to increase. A company producing renewable energy systems sends out a promotional offer on solar panels to homeowners. ("Worried about ever increasing energy prices? Be green and save money!")

- 🕒 **Entertainment and show business:** gossip, scandals, marriages and divorces of celebrities

**Example:** The wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton. A women's clothing store sends out a newsletter with a promotional offer. ("Bracelets straight from Buckingham Palace. Royal fashions starting from just \$10!")

A big part of the information we are targeted with each day comes from entertainment and reality shows, cultural events, and even the weather.

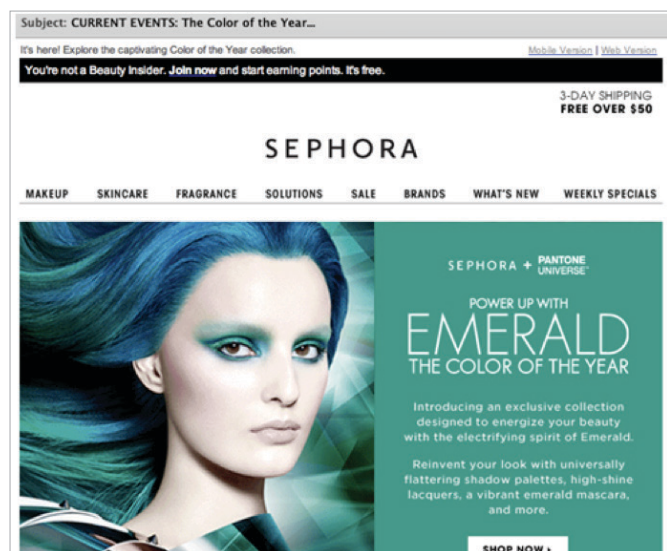




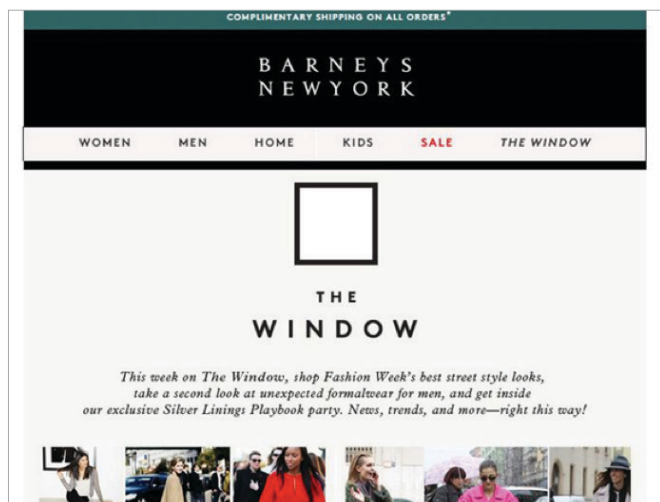
It's actually pretty simple: choose a **hot topic**, include it in your company's promotional campaign, and prepare a newsletter with an offer — **in less than 24 hours**.

## Big brands have done this for ages

You can find great examples where newsjacking has been used in email marketing campaigns. The examples below may give you the inspiration you need in order to roll out your next promotional campaign.



Picture 2 – Sephora, cosmetics and beauty products chain: Every 12 months, Pantone announces the color of the year. In 2013 the color was emerald. Sephora grabbed this news and presented their new line of products, connecting it with the chosen Pantone color — clever and relevant.



Picture 3 - Barneys New York, a chain of luxury department stores: News from the fashion world provides a great opportunity to promote your product line and focus your email marketing campaign around them. In the example shown above, Barneys newsjacks New York Fashion Week.



Picture 4 – Sears department store: This ad shows us how to capitalize on current weather forecasts. This email went out in June 2012, preceding a period known for frequent heavy storms and hurricanes. The newsletter reminded subscribers about the upcoming difficult period and the need for preparation, which includes purchasing things like chainsaws



## 2. Wheel of fortune discounts

A discount coupon in a newsletter is nothing new. Subject lines with “15% off kids clothing” or “Buy a bottle of perfume and get a second one at 10% off” are a marketing reality that not only works but also generates conversions. You probably see emails like this [daily](#).

A refreshing alternative is a newsletter that promised a discount without stating its value. Introducing mystery deal emails.

### Play for a discount

Put yourself in your customer’s shoes. Let’s assume that you sell beauty products online. In a summer promotional campaign, you reward loyal clients with a 15% discount on perfume. But upon receiving the newsletter, your subscribers calculate the discounted price of the product and then . . . [go to a competitor’s site](#) to get it cheaper.

Now let’s turn it around. You send out a newsletter with the following subject line:

“For 24 hours only: Your favorite perfume up to 50% off!” The subscriber sees a discount code indicating that if they use it now, they can get a price discount of:

- ✔ 5%
- ✔ 10%
- ✔ 15%
- ✔ 25%
- ✔ 50%

A favorite perfume at almost half the price — sounds interesting, doesn’t it? The subscriber has to decide whether to play your game, hoping to receive the highest discount. Your invitation gives you a double reward:

- ✔ Subscriber engagement: higher click-through rate
- ✔ More conversions: greater motivation to finalize the purchase

**Fact:** The main reasons people sign up for newsletters are: new product launches, special offers, price discounts, and connection with the brand. (Chadwick Martin Bailey “10 Facts about How and Why Consumers Like and Subscribe” 2012)



## Principles of mystery deal emails

Mystery deal emails are based on a few simple rules:

- ✓ The maximum discount has to be **high enough to tempt subscribers** to play the game — typically not less than 50%.
- ✓ The ratio between the number of low and high discount codes has to be **calculated strategically**, so the campaign delivers the expected ROI.
- ✓ High discount codes (50%) are the **bait** — a treat for clients lucky enough to win them — while 5%-10% discounts create **economy of scale** needed for ROI.
- ✓ The discount clients receive must be a **secret** until checkout time, when they complete the transaction and enter the promotional code.
- ✓ The template design should be inviting to **encourage them to play the game**. Position the wheel of fortune as an opportunity to win a huge discount.

## Creative effectiveness

In mystery deal emails, the key to success is in the HTML — a design and call-to-action that sets your promotional offer apart from simple price discount emails.

Below are several interesting and inspiring ideas for how to design such campaigns.



Picture 5 – 1-800 Flowers.com online florist: A promotion based on the wheel of fortune idea features price discounts for subscribers. Spin to see how much you can save!

## 3. Capitalize on the fear of loss

In a 2012 Harvard University study, Robert Fryer found that people are likely to pay twice as much for the novelty coffee mug they used, just so they can keep it. The same people had declined the opportunity to pay regular price before using the mug.

This mechanism is called fear of loss and clearly demonstrates the difference between the concepts of gain (“pay less now”) and loss (lose the discount code if not used).

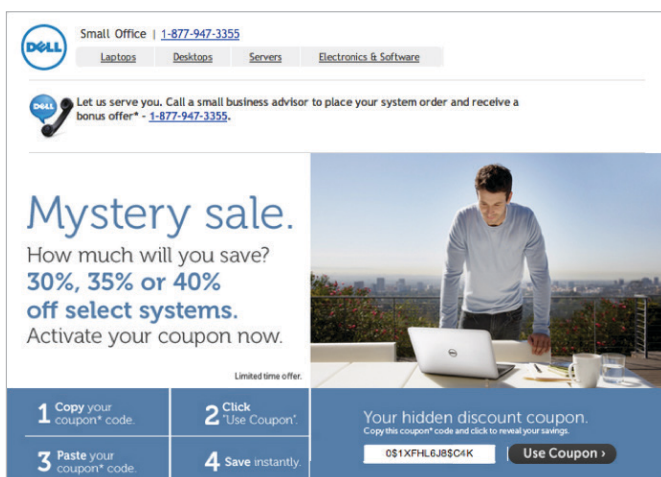
The study also shows that additional incentives meant as calls-to-action (money, vouchers, price discounts, gifts) work best if two conditions are met:

- ✓ The consumer has to receive the incentive prior to the action, not after.
- ✓ The incentive can be taken away if the expected action is not taken.

Fear of loss (common among consumers) is a powerful sales tool in the hands of marketing professionals. So don’t waste this opportunity. Plan your next email marketing campaign around this concept.



Picture 6 – LOFT store: Very creative approach to mystery deal emails — click to find out just how much you can save.



Picture 7 – Dell computer: An example from the IT industry with a mystery deal on accessories. Notice how they personalized the discount codes.





### Seize this opportunity or...

In email marketing, there are many different ways to create the fear that the incentive they have just received can be taken away. Equally important is to create an impression that the subscriber already has the incentive. Your task is to convince the client that what they have received is a tangible value - a value not to be missed out on.

Here are several practical examples:

#### ✓ **Voucher for \$10-\$20-off next purchase**

**Fear-inducer:** Use this voucher within the next 48 hours or it will be no longer valid.

#### ✓ **Free 30-day trial of your platform.** If a client receives the newsletter, is redirected to your webpage, and starts their free trial, there's a greater chance he'll get hooked on your product and upgrade to a premium account.

**Fear-inducer:** Upgrade your free trial account to a premium account within 30 days, or it will be deactivated. In this case, you should continue to manage the purchasing decision through a series of emails throughout the free trial period, focusing on the fear of losing access to the platform.

#### ✓ **Free gift to pick up in-store.** Most often these are jewelry and accessories (clothing industry) or valuable gadgets such as coffee mugs, pen-drives, etc.

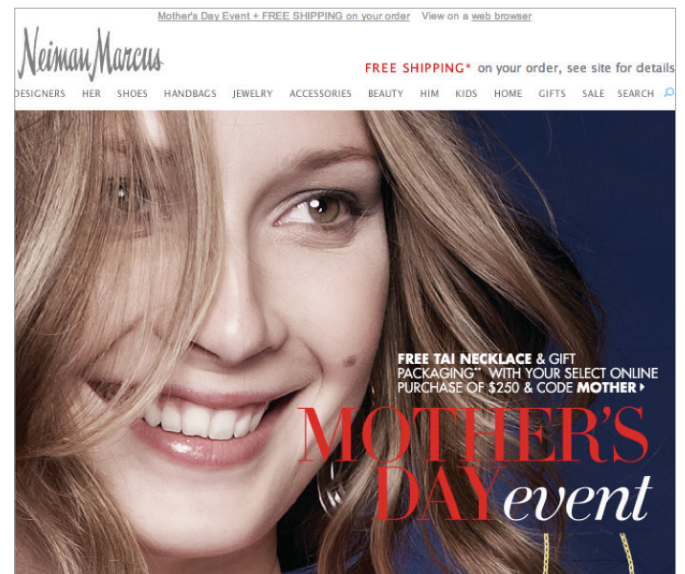
**Fear-inducer:** Collect your free gift in-store within the next 7 days. Otherwise, the offer and free gift will no longer be available.

## From tote bags to Muppets

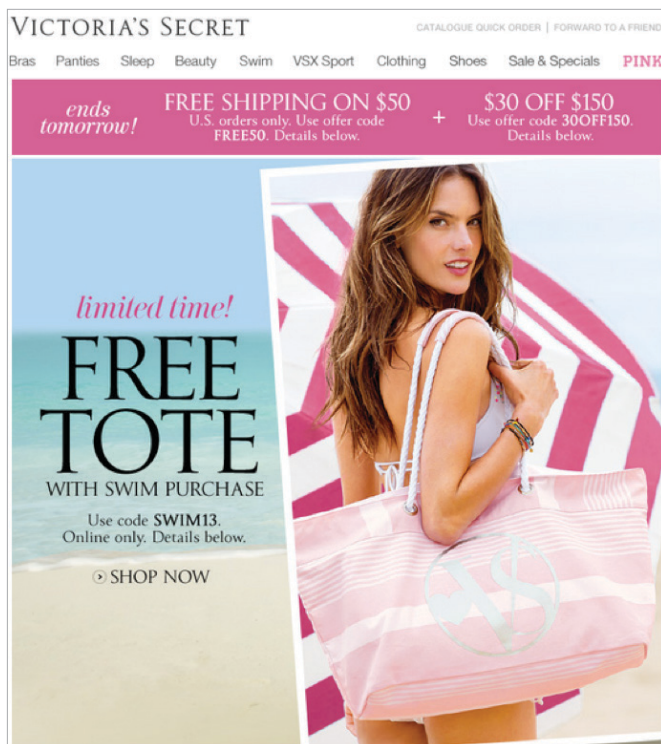
As you can see, creativity in creating fear of loss has virtually no limits. Companies give out free gifts such as tote bags, necklaces or caps to encourage their subscribers to shop.

Contrary to popular belief, purchasing such products in bulk, and giving them out free is often more profitable than rewarding clients with 15%-20% price discounts.

Take a look and see how your company can reward your subscribers while creating fear of loss.



Picture 9 – Neiman Marcus: free necklace for International Mother's Day. Condition: Purchase products for minimum of \$250.



Picture 8 – Victoria's Secret seasonal offer: free designer tote bag with the VS logo for each customer who purchases a swimsuit.



Picture 10 – Tommy Hilfiger: What child wouldn't want a free limited-edition Muppets cap? The ad plays on parents' emotions and drives online sales.



## 4. Cheaper? It's already cheap!

A price reduction is always a great reason to contact clients by newsletter. **Percent discounts** (“15% off specific assortment”), **BOGO** (“Buy one get one free”) or simple price discounts on particular products are all very common in our inboxes.

But when was the last time you received an email saying that the online store would **raise prices** next week?

Contrary to common belief, turning around this strategy — from informing your clients about current price discounts to warning them about an upcoming price increase — makes a great email marketing campaign for any e-business. It's a way of running an effective campaign without actually giving out price discounts that don't grow sales.

### Deadline, segmentation, and call to action

A strategy based on informing customers about upcoming price increases can be effective.

Before you send out this type of newsletter, go through these points:

1. **Plan out your promotional campaign internally** with financial and logistics departments, so you only advertise products that will soon become more expensive. Never increase the prices of your products temporarily, just for the sake of a promotional campaign.

2. **Target customers who have previously shown interest** in the products that are about to become more expensive (examples: they have “suspended” the products in the shopping basket, added them to their wish list, or clicked on them in previous newsletters). **Segmentation** is the key to this particular promotional campaign, and by no means should this newsletter be sent to the whole mailing list.

3. **Clearly communicate the deadline** for your current pricing and the date the new prices become effective. **Copywriting** is also very important in this particular promotional campaign. By using phrases such as “price increase” or “save money by ordering before [[date]]”, you ensure they understand that the products you are promoting will still be available after specified deadline, but your current prices will be gone for good.

4. If you are worried about how customers will react to upcoming increase in prices, try running a **split-test** on a small sample first. Analyze the conversion rate, opt-out rate and number of spam complaints. Then you can be confident about how



your subscribers react to communication about upcoming price increases.

## Fundamentals of design

It's of key importance to present the benefits your customers receive in both textual and visual formats.

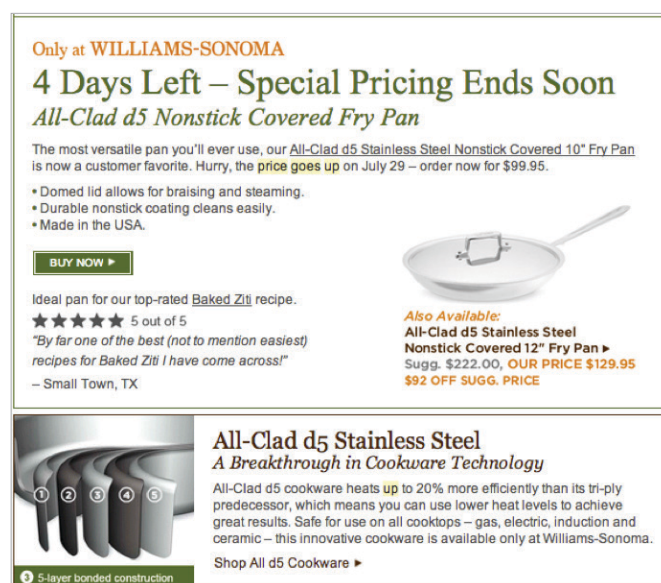
Clearly state the deadline for purchasing products at current prices, and exactly how much they will lose if they don't shop before the specified deadline. In the following examples, see how each element is included in text and graphics.



Picture 11 – Williams-Sonoma: “5 days left to save \$75”. “The price goes up January 1”. “Save up to 50%. Shop now and save”. Such phrases announce the upcoming price increase of their kitchen knives. The benefit of purchasing the products now is evident, leaving no doubts about the savings for ordering immediately.



Picture 12 - Walmart: They announce the approaching price increase and encourage subscribers to order. The message is clear – big savings, only until April 26.



Picture 13 - Williams-Sonoma: Another great example, with no doubt about the savings and the date of the approaching price increase.



## 5. Good things don't last forever

During big emergencies or weather anomalies, store shelves may suddenly become empty, with needed products no longer available. In such cases, the availability of products is unfortunately no longer a marketing tactic but a reality.

In today's marketing world, online announcements about running out of stock have a large and growing sales potential. Many brands, in fact, design their promotional campaigns around the concept of **limited availability** and scarcity, and communicate it through newsletters.

"Buy now, tomorrow might be too late" is a simple structure for implementing this concept in your email marketing.

### Shopping under time pressure

Giving subscribers an incentive to act is among the most important elements of successful email marketing. Approaching the end of your promotional offer, running out of stock, or simple change of product lines — these are just a few examples of reasons why we click newsletter links and navigate to online stores.

If you plan to sell more and **surpass** your performance indicators using communication focused on limited availability of a particular product, don't forget about the basics:

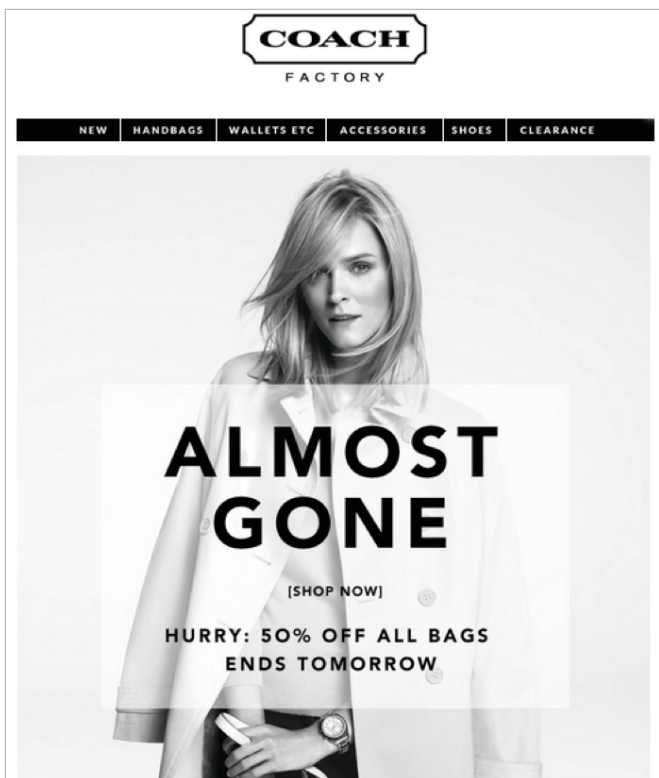
- ✔ Provide **clear, visual emphasis** that the product is running out (show a decreasing [[stock]] counter, or a barometer scale showing limited product availability).
- ✔ Send it only to subscribers who have **not yet made a purchase** or who have purchased only once. Loyal customers don't usually need such an incentive to go shopping.
- ✔ Include a **great subject line**. In this particular promotional campaign, it has to include phrases such as "out of stock", "limited availability", "end of the product line".
- ✔ Buttons containing strong **call-to-action phrases** such as "Hurry up", "Buy now!", "Don't hesitate", are useful and should emphasize the feeling of running out of time — and that they need to take prompt action.

An addition to such a campaign would be a newsletter with the "back in stock" theme, informing them about the returning availability of the product.



## “While supplies last” in practice

If limited availability and running out of stock are the main incentive to purchase, subscribers need to realize that there is absolutely no point in opening the same email again later. Below are a few inspiring examples:



Picture 14 – Coach handbags and accessories: “Almost gone” is the call-to-action. The message is clear and unambiguous – act now to benefit from the offer.



Picture 15 – Pottery Barn: An online version of a “warehouse clearance event”. Clear statement of the campaign starting date (“Today”), finishing date (“while supplies last”), benefit (“up to 60% off”), and the limited availability of the line.



Picture 16 – Typical “back in stock” newsletter: Notice the clear message about the returning availability of a particular product, personalized content (“Name”), and call-to-action button.

## 6. Sweet-talking: thank you for being with us.

The foundation of successful email marketing that leads to conversion is the attempt to **create a dialogue** with your audience — not courtesy emails between the customer and the shop owner but real, **personal** communication aimed at building a lasting relationship.

If you want to stop the sales monologue, think about the last time you actually **thanked** your customer for receiving and reading your newsletters?

“**Thank you emails**” — email marketing campaigns expressing gratitude to the subscribers — are the backbone of many email marketing programs of online stores operating in the U.S. According to a study conducted by Hubspot, such emails achieve average open rates of **42%** and click rates of **14%**.

**That’s a 250% higher results than those reported for mass newsletter broadcasts containing regular offers.**

Take a look at how you can use such emails in your campaigns — all you really need is an idea and a good offer.

## Choose rewards appropriately

Let’s be honest. We in the marketing profession know that thank you emails are more than just a name, and the thank-you phrase. The point of such emails is to **lead the customers to your store** and encourage them to make the purchase.

The key is to choose the right target audience for the thank-you emails. You can do so in two different ways:



- ✓ Run **periodic campaigns**, manually choosing the target audience based on selected criteria.
- ✓ Run campaigns using **automatically triggered emails**, based on a set of rules and conditions you specify in advance (See how this works in practice).

Before you send out your first thank-you email, think of exactly whom to target:

- ✓ Send thank you emails to your most **loyal and engaged subscribers**.
- ✓ Reward them based on their **purchasing history** (example: at least 1 transaction within the last 90 days).
- ✓ Be generous to those who **usually open your newsletters** (example: at least 3 out of last 10 emails opened).

If you send out too many thank-you campaigns, they lose their uniqueness and impact (they will be treated the same way as all of your other emails).

## How to say thank you

For your thank-you email to work effectively, (motivate your customer to make a purchase), it needs a clear call-to-action:

- ✓ Visit your online store and use the **promotional code** as a reward.

- ✓ Visit your brick-and-mortar store and use the **barcode** in your newsletter.
- ✓ Collect a **free gadget**, only available to the most loyal customers.
- ✓ Visit your brick-and-mortar store or office for a **special gift voucher** for e.g. \$20.

The icing on the cake would be to provide the ability to share the “thank-you email” on social networks (Facebook, Pinterest) so satisfied customers can brag about how your brand treats their valued customers.

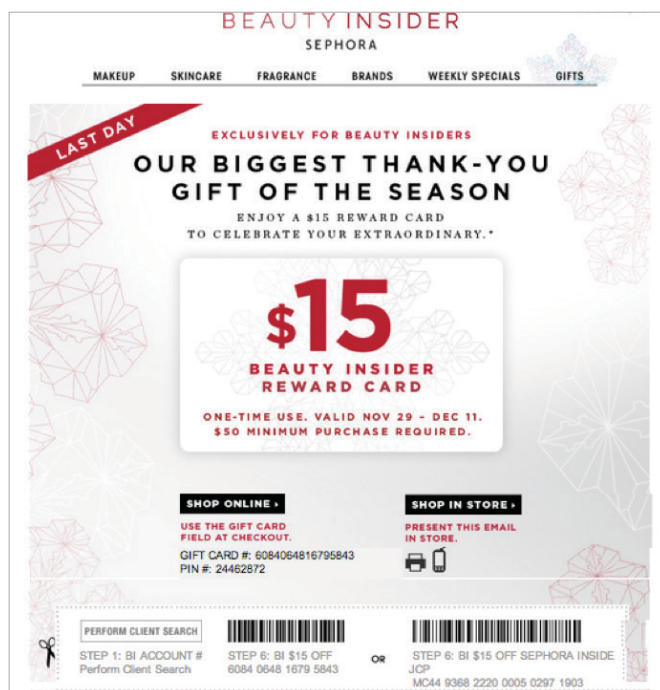


## Gratitude is inspiring

Still wondering how to plan your very first thank-you email? Take a look at the examples below. For months now, these campaigns have generated conversions and enjoyed off-the-chart open and click rates.



Picture 17 – IHOP restaurants: Here’s how they say thank you: “We heard it was your anniversary. Come on in and let us help you celebrate”.



Picture 18 – Sephora: Their thank-you gift is a voucher worth \$15, to be used online (code used in the order form) or in the physical store (bar code to be printed out).

## 7. Reviving “lost soul” subscribers

The ever-increasing number of emails we receive daily (and the lack of originality of most offers) discourage us from opening newsletters, even from our favorite brands.

“18 months ago, when my database consisted only of 10-20 thousand subscribers, my average reported open rates were about 23%. Now, when I have roughly 50 thousand clients in our database, less than 11% of them actually open our sales newsletters.

Why?”





Plummeting performance indicators are a key challenge for rapidly developing e-commerce stores with fast-growing databases (several thousand email addresses per month). Mailing lists are filled with **“lost souls”** — customers who stopped reading the newsletters but are too **lazy** (or unaware) to unsubscribe.

Such customers require a special approach. Don't worry — there are email marketing campaigns specifically designed for “lost souls”.

## How to locate “lost souls”

Your very first task is to locate the subscribers for whom you have little hope for future engagement. Here are a few criteria:

- ✓ **No activity** (opening emails, clicks on links) within the last 6 months
- ✓ **No transactions** within the last 6 months
- ✓ **No login attempts** or store visits reported

If you have access to that type of data, you can at least verify their email activity. Now you know how many subscribers have attributed little or no value to your newsletters.

Keep your chin up! Even if you calculate that three-quarters of your subscriber list is in the “lost souls” category, don't worry. As Econsultancy suggests,

**marketers may be surprised to find that 40-70% of those in their email address book may in fact be dormant.**

Now let's think about how to effectively approach the lost souls in your database and prevent this from happening again.

## Your reactivation campaign

First, realize that a program to re-engage subscribers doesn't mean just sending out a single newsletter on a Tuesday afternoon. A reactivation email marketing campaign requires several elements:

Create **multiple newsletters** to send.

Write **original, unique subject lines**, unlike your usual ones: (“Mac, we miss you!”, “Hello, anybody there?”, “Is this email address valid?”)

Prepare an offer they can't refuse: a 30% price discount on the next purchase or a valuable gift voucher. The idea isn't sales margin enhancement but database reengagement, the building of which required a past investment.

Your reactivating emails should **incite your subscribers to action**: confirm their email address, jump into your online store, or opt out. So your reactivation campaign should be planned out:





**Email #1: Initial message** clearly indicating that the subscriber is being warned, and that action is required. You can suggest that lack of engagement will cause them to be removed from the database and, in consequence, lose access to latest news and promotional offers.

**Email #2: Sent 48 hours later** to subscribers that did not act on the first email. Warn them that this email may be the last one they receive. Include a strong call-to-action encouraging them to shop or to confirm their email address.

**Email #3: Final email.** You can threaten your subscriber that, should they fail to click the activation link within 24 hours, they will lose their access to regular promotional offers. A good idea would also be to add an “opt-out survey” requesting feedback about their lack of interest in your newsletters.

Now the eternal dilemma of every marketer arises: **should you permanently remove subscribers** who did not react to the reactivation campaign?

My answer is: **no**, but refrain from sending regular newsletters to them and don't contact them more frequently than once a month.

Otherwise, your subscribers may hit the “mark as spam” button and complain about too-frequent communication, costing you your online reputation.

## How do you reactivate inactive subscribers?

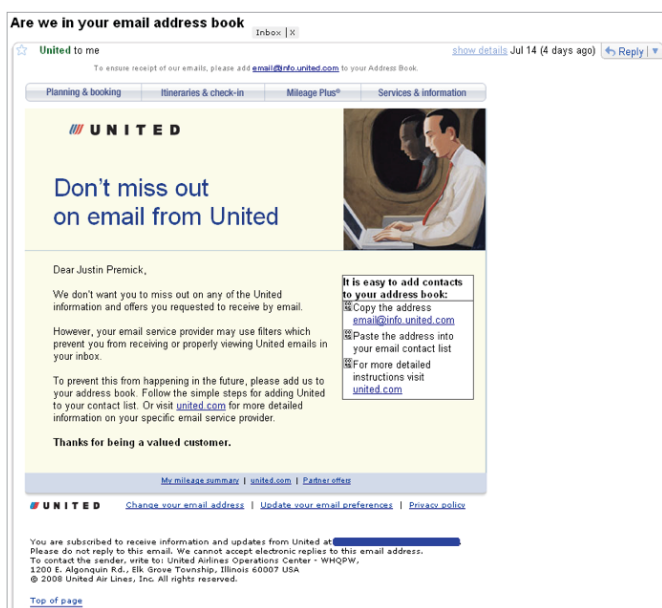
Price discounts, vouchers, promotional codes, free gifts, personal phone calls — there are plenty of email marketing ideas for incentives to get your subscribers engaged again. Below are several examples of reactivation campaigns.



Picture 19 – Ocado: It feels like something's missing... A very creative design from the British Internet retailer, with a strong argument on why to re-engage with the communication, along with a voucher worth up to 20% off the next purchase.



Picture 20 – Crocs: It's been a while! The shoe manufacturer also offers a code for 20% off the next purchase but has a more radical approach, requiring the subscriber to click the activation link to stay on the mailing list.



Picture 21 – United Airlines: Don't miss out on email from... This company chose a different approach, asking whether the email has been delivered to your inbox. The purpose is to verify whether lack of engagement is related to deliverability issues.

## 8. Find a partner

If you send your newsletters only to your own database, chances are that **increasing your reach** is a key challenge you face.

- ☑ Where can you find **new subscribers**?
- ☑ How can you communicate your mailing offer to **a wider target audience**?
- ☑ Can you speed up the **list building** process?

Growing your list organically through a sign-up form in your online store is effective but it has a limit – the amount of traffic to your site.

The cure for this limitation (and a creative idea for a new promotional campaign) would be a **partnership** or mailing list **barter** with another company.

## Don't share with just anybody

Any partnership you enter should be mutually beneficial.

First, try to find a company offering **products or services that complement yours**. The list could be endless:

- ☑ Wine shop + cigar store
- ☑ Children's clothing store + toy shop



- ✓ Foreign-language e-learning platform + online bookstore selling dictionaries
- ✓ Online service for young moms + shop selling baby food
- ✓ Clothing store + jewelry shop.

Second, make sure the partner's email list is **similar in quality** to yours. Verify:

- ✓ Mailing list **size**
- ✓ **Removal** of inactive and invalid email addresses
- ✓ Other **sharing arrangements** for the same database
- ✓ **Performance** indicators (opens, click, conversion)
- ✓ **Duplicate** email addresses

Remember, **never pass on your mailing list to other parties!** A barter or partnership means sending your partner company's offer to your mailing list, and vice versa. Never trust a company that offers to send you their database file.

## What about the law?

The last and most important factor is the law. To send your partner's offer to your database, you need permission to send **third-party offers**. Such permission means you are operating in line with the CAN-SPAM Act and can carry out such campaigns.

It's critical for your **partner** to obtain permission also.

**Note:** Consult a licensed attorney if you need legal advice on these areas.

A joint promotional campaign can generate **additional sales** (or subscribers) in a relatively short period of time. Partnerships, although not as popular, can bring measureable results with relatively little input!

## Remailing – easier than you think.

The word **Segmentation** makes some marketers imagine complex analysis, research teams, and extensive processes only big companies can afford.

**Couldn't be more wrong.**

If your current email marketing platform supports **behavioral targeting**, (tracking subscriber activities), then you can start the segmentation process from the simplest scenarios.

Popular in the U.S., **remailing** is a strategy that squeezes an extra 10% (or more) out of each promotional campaign.



Its purpose is to maximize your results and the return-on-investment related to creating the email template, designing the offer, and sending out the newsletters.

In practice, remailing is nothing more than **segmenting** your database to find subscribers who didn't open your first email, so you can send them another.

## 9. The money is in the follow-up

The key to success is to **repeat your sales emails** until your subscriber decides to buy.

Remailing allows you to **automate** this process and sell more without any additional investment for new promotional campaigns. Here's how it works:

**Monday:** You plan a 20% price cut on swimsuits in your online store. So you prepare an HTML creative and text content, then send your great offer to all your subscribers.

**Wednesday:** After 48 hours, you analyze the results to find out how many subscribers opened the newsletter. As it turns out, the newsletter has a unique-open-rate of 18% — a pretty good result. But what about the other 82%? Since the offer is still available, you decide to change the subject line

and re-send the newsletter to the other 82% of your target audience — those who did not open your first email. List segmentation tools are essential for this process, of course.

**Congratulations – you've just sent your very first remailing newsletter!**

**Friday:** After another two days you analyze performance again. Statistics show that an additional 12% of your clients opened your second newsletter. So the total reach of your campaign is 30% of your mailing list — a good result. However... (☺) you update the subject line yet again and send one more email regarding the swimsuit offer.

**Reminder!** Always track opt-out rates and spam complaints carefully. Remailing is an effective but aggressive approach to email marketing. So, carefully and thoroughly, analyze how your subscribers react.

**Fact:** Excessive email frequency is the most common reason why U.S. email users opt-out from newsletter subscriptions (Chadwick Martin Bailey "10 Facts about How and Why Consumers Like and Subscribe" 2012)



# 10. Welcome package

The fact that a welcome email helps build lasting relationships with subscribers is not news to anybody working in the email marketing profession. But that's not all. Well-designed automated emails, such as the welcome messages, can also **give you conversion rates as high as 50%**.

(study by eMarketer "Email Marketing Benchmarks: Key Data, Trends and Metrics" (2013))

If a particular strategy is effective, why not go one step further? Here's how to build a **welcome pack** (a whole series of welcome emails) and design successful welcoming programs.

## Automated communication

According to **MarketingSherpa 2012 Email Marketing Benchmark Report**, welcome emails are the most frequently used automated messages, commonly known as **autoresponders** (See [how this works](#)). Welcome emails are used by 63% of all marketers responsible for newsletter planning.

The most effective welcome packs consist of not only a series of 3-5 different emails that are sent **automatically** to the whole target audience but also newsletters that are tailored and personalized based on a **set of conditions** (for example, if a

subscriber clicks a specific link in the first email, then he receives targeted content in a follow-up email).

**WeddingWire** created a welcome series that received a golden award from MarketingSherpa in 2012. Take a look at how you can plan out your welcome communication series based on conditions and behaviors of **your clients**.

## Case Study: WeddingWire

Weddingwire.com is a service that helps young couples with the process of making their wedding plans, i.e. choosing the location, the music, and all the other aspects related to the exciting process of getting married.

Their email marketing program is the fundamental tool they use to distribute the information and build returning traffic.

**Challenge:** not all couples are the same, and their different preferences (especially budget) required that the welcome email series be tailored to the individual needs and profiles of each couple.





WeddingWire's welcome email series consists of **5 newsletters sent during the first 8 days** from the sign-up date. The first email is universal, and includes these sections:

- ✓ Get Organized
- ✓ Get Inspiration
- ✓ Build Your Vendor Team

The second email the subscriber receives depends on which section they click. It is content that **matches** their behavior and the path they selected at the beginning of the series.

**Example:** If the subscriber, upon receiving their first email of the welcome series, clicks the "Get Organized" call-to-action, then the following newsletters will discuss organizers, calendars, mobile applications, and other useful wedding planning tools that make it easier to plan the ceremony.

Information on getting inspiration and building one's own vendor team is at the end of the welcome series, so only relevant and interesting content is delivered at this most important moment of building a lasting relationship with the subscriber.

Users that don't click any sections in their first welcome-series email receive all of the information in random order.

**Summing up:** The more tailored the content, the easier it is to generate engagement and build subscriber interest.

So plan your email marketing welcome series to meet the expectations and needs of each subscriber, rather than throwing useless content into the beginning of the cycle.

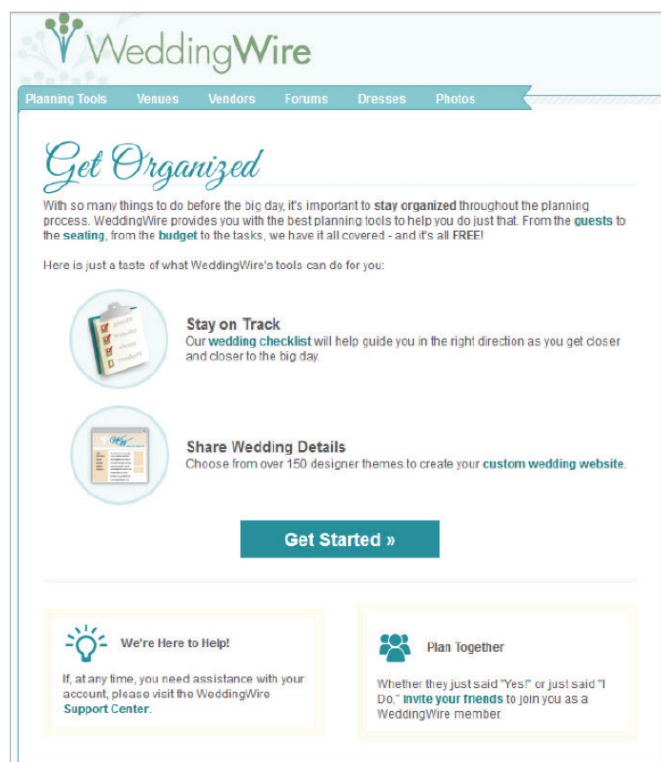


## Inspiration

Finally, I would like to show you several emails from the WeddingWire welcome series. Thanks to these examples, it will be easier to implement best practices in your own email marketing program and replicate this campaign's success.



Picture 22 Email #1: make a choice. In this email we track the clicks on each topic section and, based on the recorded actions, we tailor the content of future emails.



Picture 23 Email #2, sent two days after sign-up date: The subscriber receives this email if they click "Get Organized" in the first email.



Picture 24 – Email #5: Get Inspiration. You weren't interested in this topic previously, so you receive this newsletter at the very end of the series.

## Differentiate or Die!

The title of Jack Trout's book (above) applies more and more to email marketing. As a result of a growing flood of **mediocre** email marketing campaigns, subscribers have started to **raise the bar** for the brands that communicate with them.

In spite of the fact that email marketing is still the most effective communication channel on the Internet, (**ROI** reaching \$28.5 return on every dollar spend according to a study conducted by DMA in 2012), companies that do not differentiate themselves in subscriber inboxes will be pushed

away into the **newsletter abyss**.

So don't give in to the **routine**. Surprise your clients with campaigns that show you care about your relationship with them. Unparalleled offer, mystery deals, thank-you emails, and reactivation messages – these will make your competition jealous of your newsletter campaigns!

In closing, here's our wish for you: may your next email marketing campaign create a **WOW effect** that resonates with your subscribers. 😊



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