Fine-tuning Your Email Marketing

Yes, in my last column I suggested to small business CEOs that Email marketing is not going away anytime soon. In fact, what I read is that it is quite the opposite. The Radicati Group, a technology market research firm out of Palo Alto, CA predicts that by 2020, there will be more than 3 billion email users worldwide, which will account for nearly half of the world’s population. This should give small business CEOs some assurance that their time spent on fine-tuning their email marketing strategies will be well spent. I will suggest some key refinements.

List hygiene will play a major role in reputation and filtering. List hygiene is a significant component to a sender’s reputation. As mentioned in my last column, mailbox providers are becoming more strict about the content they allow in the inbox. Having an unclean list—full of spam traps, unknown users, and unengaged subscribers—is viewed as the trait of a spammer and messages from that sender will likely be filtered to spam.

Designing and executing customer experience/journey will be essential to maintaining customers long term. Using historical data, email marketers will be able to identify consumer preferences that they can incorporate into the email experience. Identifying what subject lines, content, send time, frequency, etc., resonate most with customers will allow email marketers to create unique experiences that showcase the value of maintaining an email relationship.

Marketers will continue to shift budget from traditional marketing and into digital marketing. According to recent research by Salesforce Marketing Cloud, marketers are spending more than two-thirds of their marketing budget on digital promotions. This budget percentage is predicted to increase particularly for email marketing with 87 percent of marketers planning on increasing their email marketing budget. Marketers need to begin shifting their focus more towards digital marketing, allocating budget to the channel that will produce the highest ROI.

Markets will invest heavily in tools and tech to optimize operation. Part of the increase in digital budget will go toward acquiring new tools and tech that will help marketers optimize their marketing efforts. The best marketers are already using various tools and tech to support their efforts, but with the creation of new companies and platforms every year that address new needs, marketers will consistently add and alter the tools in their existing configuration to create an optimized email program.
Customer loyalty is valuable. As I have mentioned in previous columns this is probably the newest wave that is sparing a renewed wave in Email marketing. Consider these quick tidbits:

- The Harvard Business Review reported recently that increasing customer retention by 5 percent can lead to a 25 - 95 percent increase in company profits.

- Email on Acid (They provide email tools to build, test and track your way to flawless campaigns.) state that 86.7 percent of companies plan to spend more money on email marketing in 2016. By the way this company provides a unique tool to help you refine your emails. They know that every email client is different, so this tool lets you see exactly how your email looks in the most popular inboxes, so you can fix any problems before you hit send.

- Return Path finds that more than 90 percent of delivered messages come from reputable senders. I referenced this company in my last column and their niche is helping small businesses reach the right inbox, with the right message, at the right time because they know that this means better relationships, greater response rates, and increased revenue.

- Radicati group predicts that the volume of emails sent in a day is expected to reach to 257.7 billion by 2020.

__________________
Dean L. Swanson
Southeast Minnesota SCORE
c/o Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce
220 South Broadway, Suite 100
Rochester, MN 55904
www.seminnesota.score.org/

*Dean is a volunteer SCORE Mentor and Regional Vice President for the North West Region