

What is Email Marketing?

Email Marketing is a method of advertising, promoting, or simply distributing information to a large number of recipients via email. In general, Email Marketing can be created and sent using either computer-based software such as Microsoft Outlook or Web-based email services that use an online interface to simplify the process of sending mass emails. These interfaces provide users with email templates, wizards, and editors that help users create and maintain email campaigns. They also provide a means to gather contact information and will send reports to users that can assist in improving the efficacy of future emails.

Where do we start?

No matter which type of email marketing you want to do, the most critical aspect is collecting email addresses with permission to use those addresses. If your Local Joint Committee already has access and permission to use the email addresses of the employees, you can skip ahead to the next activity. If, on the other hand, you do not have access to a reliable list or have not secured permission to mail to that list, you have some work to do.

Collecting Email Addresses: There are a variety of methods used to collect email addresses. One of the quickest is to simply ask for them. Create a form that can be distributed to all potential class participants. The form should include blanks for their name, email address and a check box giving the LJC permission to use the individual's email address to distribute information. A statement should be included on the form indicating that the LJC will not use the email address for any other use or provide the email information to any third party.

Since the form is short and easy to complete, we suggest that you distribute the forms throughout your plant in a way that you can get the form returned immediately. Once you have a current email list, you need to put into a format that is easy to use. In Microsoft Outlook, you can put all the names into a Distribution List. We recommend hiding individual email addresses by using the BCC (blind carbon copy) entrée.

Using Computer-based email software

Most of us have had some experience using computer-based email software such as Microsoft Outlook or Outlook Express. Create a simple email message that informs the potential participants about classes being offered and the deadline to sign up for the class. Keep the emails short. If your LJC has a web site, add the link to the site in the email so it is easy for the recipient to link to and browse at their leisure. If you do not have a web site but print a class listing, provide the ways prospective attendees can get the class listing.

What to look for in an Email Marketing Service:

Most vendors provide downloadable campaign reports and click-through link tracking. These tools alone are reason enough to purchase an email marketing service. In addition, the top service providers will also provide follow-up campaign creation tools. After reviewing plans with all the service providers, Email Marketing Software Comparison came up with what we consider to be a "market standard" plan. Though pricing may vary, a good Email Marketing service should provide the following features.

- Contact Based Pricing– 500 minimum
- \$15 Monthly Fee
- Free trial– 15 day minimum
- No start up fee
- 100+ Templates
- Image Hosting
- Clickable Data Links
- Customer Service 9am–8pm EST M–F

Number of Contacts vs. Number of Emails:

You must provide your own list of contacts or email addresses. The distinction between email and contact based pricing will be most important for users who plan to send emails to the same list of contacts more than once a month. If you sign up for a plan that bases pricing on the total number of emails sent per month, you will be charged twice for sending two emails to the same contact. Services that base their pricing on Contacts will allow you to send multiple emails per month to the contacts you upload. Generally, most providers have a similarly priced minimum plan, whether those plans are based on contacts or emails.

Why Use an Email Marketing Service?

Sophisticated Tracking and Reporting: A great advantage of using Email Marketing services is that they provide their customers with reports of tracked information (such as bounced messages, click-throughs, etc.). This information helps the sender to remove information that could get the email marked as spam, to see which links are visited and are generating money, etc. The information aids in the tailoring and targeting of future email campaigns. Also, most services allow you to track an exact Return on Investment, or ROI.

Helps Ensure Repeat Business: Most Email Marketing services provide multiple means to opt-in, through the creation of sign-up forms and email confirmation. Some services can automatically set up follow-up campaigns to be sent to email recipients to help establish and maintain customer relationships.

Why is Email Better Than Print?

Lower Cost: The traditional method of marketing to consumers – using printed pamphlets, catalogues, and other paper material – is much more costly than marketing electronically. It's not practical, and sometimes, not possible to take advantage of these savings without utilizing an email marketing service.

More Efficient: Emailing is instantaneous, as opposed to mailed advertisements. Not only can regular mail take days to be delivered, but it also might not be checked every day (which lengthens the amount of time it takes before a person sees the advertisement). An advantage of Email Marketing services is organized mailing lists, which provides the ability to send information to a wide range of specific potential customers. On the whole, marketing through email enables merchants to push information, instead of waiting for consumers to discover the information themselves.