EMAIL MARKETING WITH MAXMAIL

What's Inside

Hello. Think social media killed email? Think again. Active email users way outnumber users on any social network. With around 1.9 billion people worldwide using email, predicted to reach 2.4 billion in 2014, email is thriving in this social media age.

According to the guys at The Economist Intelligence Unit, consumers rank email as the most important channel for purchase influence. In this comprehensive guide we take you through the fundamental rules, best practices and techniques that help you create, manage, send and measure the performance of your email campaigns.

Need help? Contact our support team or Live Chat with one of us now. Or if you prefer, our Support Docs can take you through step-by-step.

Now, let's get started.

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Why Email?

Affordable

In comparison to other media email is dirt cheap to send. With TV you have ad agencies, studios, cable channels. Print ads and direct mail cost thousands of dollars. With email costs are low in comparison.

Engaged audience

With TV you don't know who is watching your ads, ditto with print. With direct mail, you don't know if it is being delivered or to who. With email you are sending your messages to people who have opted in to receive them. You know when and where your messages are delivered, who opens them or clicks on links. You get a response.

Measurability and high ROI

Experian research found that for every $1 spent on email marketing, $44.25 is the average return on investment. Email generates nearly twice the return compared to other channels.

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Your customers want to be emailed

Email is the preferred means of communication, with 77% of consumers reporting they prefer receiving email above other marketed messages.

Quick and simple

Using Maxmail you will be able to create professional stunning emails with a few clicks of a mouse. Personalizing content is easy with custom fields, filters and list segmenting features.

Increases brand awareness

With each email sent, your customers are exposed to your brand. With strategic planning, great design and targeted, well written content, you are building your brand. This way, when it consumers need to make a purchase decision, your brand is top of mind. Your amazing email content will bring new customers and keep the ones you have already.

Your subscribers sell for you

You know how it works, word of mouth is the biggest influence of purchase decisions. Create emails that are amazing. The kind of content worth sharing, think exclusive offers and information. Make use of video and images and increase forwards, subscribers and sales.

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Email Marketing Steps

You are just a few steps away from email marketing success. This guide is going to show you how to:

1. Plan your campaign
2. Create a list of subscribers
3. Organize your lists
4. Create compelling content
5. Schedule delivery
6. Measure subscribers response
7. Track online success
8. Assess your campaign and refine your segmented lists

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Preparation is Key

Before getting into the good stuff, lay the groundwork. Carefully plan your email campaign and get ready to reap the rewards. Choose the right email provider for you. Pre-made templates and **Drag & Drop Editors** are a quick and easy way to start your first campaign.

Great expectations

Yes email marketing works. While emails drive sales online and 60% of shoppers have gone in store because of a promotional email it is important to keep the following in mind:

- Average email open rate is 24%
- Average email delivery rate is 84%
- Average click through rate is 13%
- Average soft bounce rate is 5%
- Average hard bounce rate is 4%

Permission and spam

Sending email is a privilege not a right. Respect your customers. If you are sending commercial emails, firstly familiarize yourself with the anti-spam legislation in your country and understand the rules before sending out your emails.

Spam filters can be triggered for various reasons, causing your emails to get delivered to the junk folder. The easiest way to avoid spam filters is to carefully choose the words you use in your **subject line**. Here are some key points:

- Never use spammy phrases like "click here" or "money back guarantee".
- Always ask for consent from the person you are sending the email to.
- Always provide an unsubscribe link.
- Honor opt out requests promptly.
- Include an accurate physical mailing address.

Suppression list management

Comply with electronic messaging laws and respect your subscribers by using suppression data. Subscribers are automatically added to your suppression list when they unsubscribe from your emails. View and add unsubscribers under the Manage Subscribers tab. To manually add unsubscribers:

1. Under **Manage Subscribers** select **Suppression List** from the left side menu.

2. Manually type the email address in the field, the date they unsubscribed and the reason.

3. Click **Add Unsubscriber**.

Campaign Types

Introductory email

You know what they say about first impressions. An introduction via email is no different. Introduce your brand and let your new subscribers know what to expect from you, how often and why they should open your emails.

You may want to reward new subscribers for signing up. In particular if you are sending a double opt in campaign the offer will increase the confirmation rate of subscriptions. Communicate the reward clearly, it is best to do this on the subscription sign up form.

Promotional email

Keep your subscribers interested with exclusive offers. Sending emails with promotion codes to use online or present in store is a great way to measure transaction rates from your email campaigns too.

Combining great design with information and a strong call to action will make your promotional email campaign a success. Use list segmentation to send relevant rewards to subscribers.

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Place rewards or promotion codes at the top of the email (for people who don't scroll) and again at the bottom as a reminder. Subject lines for promotional emails should avoid caps and exclamation marks.

Newsletter

Give your subscribers a reason to open your email newsletters. You need to deliver real value on a regular basis. Deliver to subscribers interesting, relevant content they would not receive otherwise. Plus your emails should look great while they do it. Keep newsletters short. On average readers scan emails for 51 seconds for relevant content.

Segmented promotions

Monitor your active subscribers, who opens your emails, shops with you or interacts with your brand in some way. Create list segments based on these brand interactions. Use welcome back emails with an offer to re-engage subscribers by encouraging them to take action.

Special event invite

Email invites whether to an online or offline event invite users to share an experience with your brand. Whether the event is a concert, sale or webinar, make it an invitation they can't refuse. Stick to one purpose, one event and one call to action.
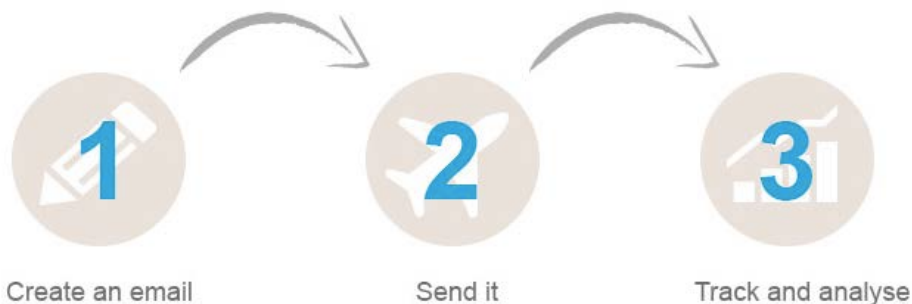
Create

Creating your email campaign

Creating an email campaign doesn't have to be complicated. Let's get started.

Create an email   Send it   Track and analyse

On the homepage, click **Create a Campaign**. Fill in the fields. Name your campaign and the email **subject line**.

Creating the Subject Line

Enter the email subject line for this campaign
Make your subject line compelling, attractive and engaging. Where suitable try to personalize the subject line by using the smart tags such as First Name, Company Name etc.

Personalise your subject line

100 characters remaining

Did you know that 64% of people open an email based on the subject line? Get it right. The best subject lines are short, descriptive and describe the content of the email and why it should be opened.

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You can increase your open rates by nailing the art of writing great subject lines. Here are some tips:

- Keep the subject line under 50 characters.
- Avoid the word 'free' as it triggers spam filters.
- Other words that negatively affect open rates are; help, percent off and reminder.
- Localizing emails improves open rates.
- Using recipient's names in the subject line does not improve open rates significantly. People have become immune to this tactic.
- Subject lines framed as questions positively affect open rates.

Selecting the design

Now you are ready to start creating your email content, select a template type to begin designing your email.

Easy Drag & Drop Designer

Use our new and improved drag and drop designer to select predefined content block layout. Just add your images, text and links to create great looking emails.

Select

HTML Editor

Use this editor to code or paste in your own code. Also great if you want to send out plain emails that look like they have been sent from a personal email client.

Select

My Templates

Use a template to add content to one of your pre-designed email templates.

Select

Import My Own Design

Import an HTML email design from your computer or the web.

Select

The easiest way to design an email campaign is to use the **Drag & Drop Edito**r. Add text and images to your content blocks and drag and drop them where you want.

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If you are providing your own code, select the **HTML Editor**. Our fetch from URL allows you to select any webpage you like. We then automatically draw the HTML content, including the images and links onto our HTML editor. From here, you can edit if required and it is ready to send.

Load From URL
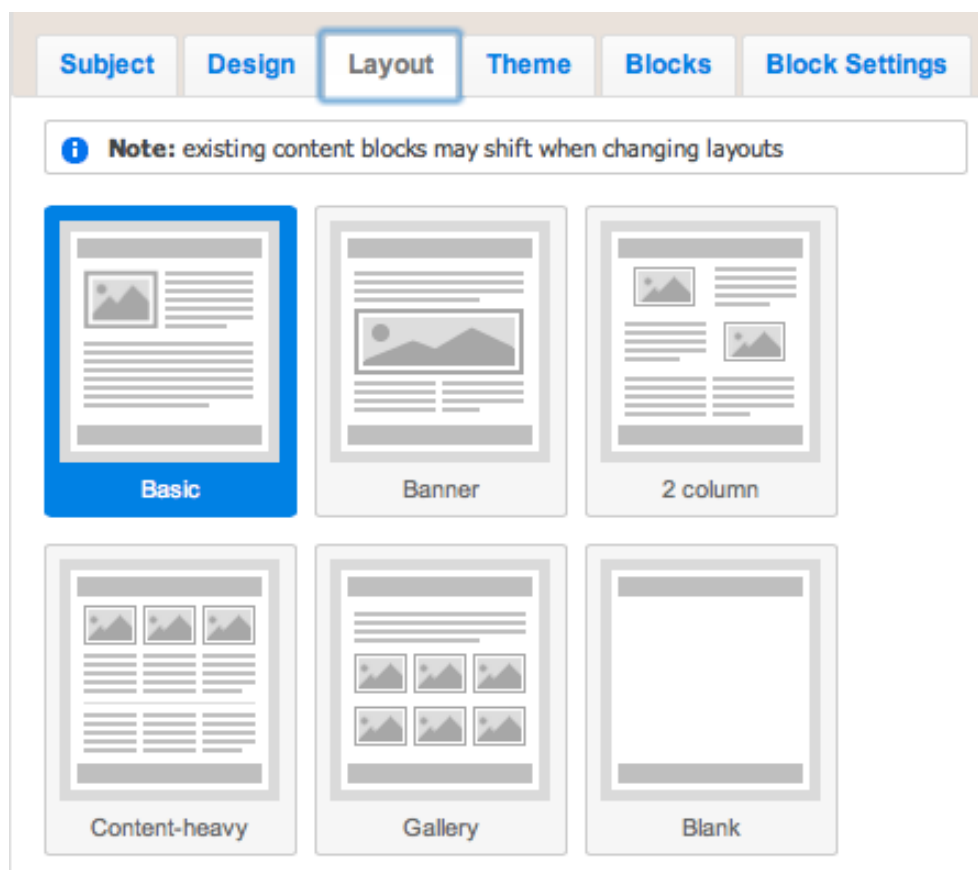
[   ] **Load HTML Content**

If you have your own design, select **Import My Own Design**. Have your own design? Simply import your email files as a zip folder and we set the campaign up for you.
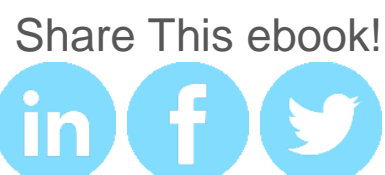
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Drag & Drop Editor

In the **Drag & Drop Editor** you can choose one of the available template layouts or select a previously created campaign to get started.
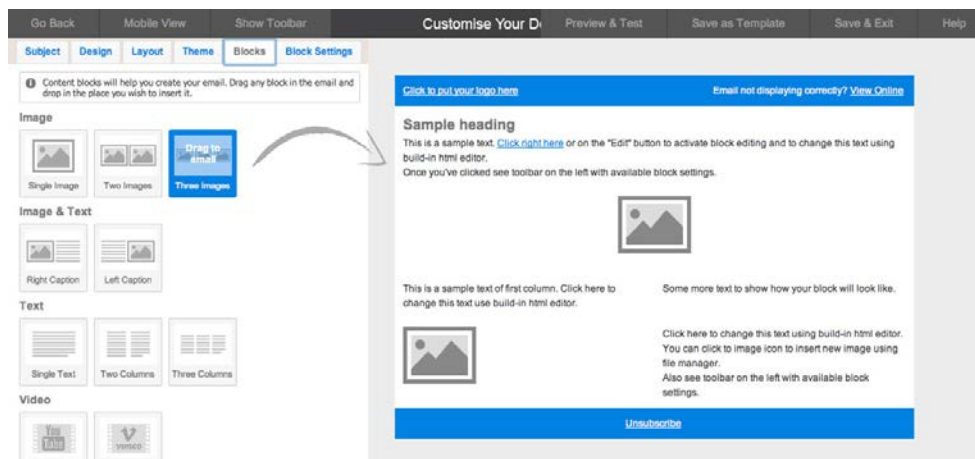

Drag and drop images, video and content blocks to create amazing emails easily.

You can drag and drop content blocks into your layout to customize your email campaign. The types of content blocks you can work with are:

- Image
- Image and text
- Text
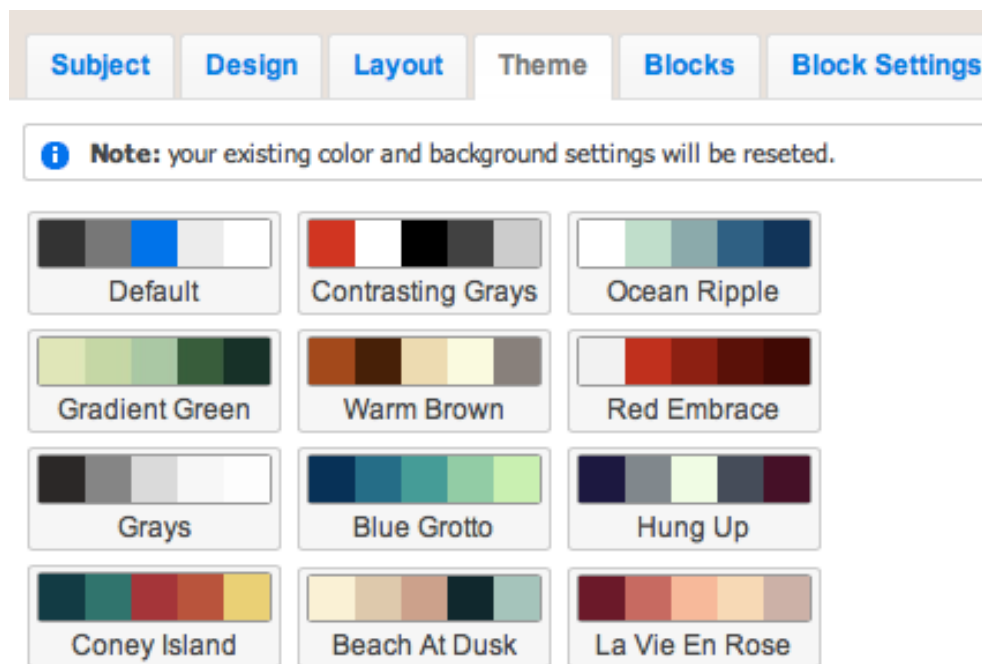- Video
- Social follow
- Divider

Select a color theme

You can choose from one of the many color themes available under the **Theme** tab in the campaign builder. To choose a color them just click on the desired color palette.

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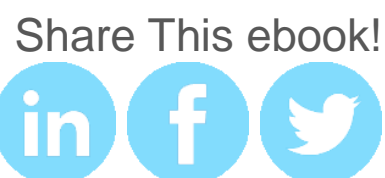
Customize your design

You can customize colors, text, borders, headings, background colors and links in the **Design** tab.

Uploading images

In the design stage drag and drop an image content block into your template. Click on the image icon. You can drag and drop an image into the window or choose from file or fetch from link. Click **Insert**.

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Adding links to your email campaign

Highlight the text you want to add a link to. Click on the link icon on the top menu tool bar. Click **Insert Link** and select either insert URL, Email or Anchor then click **Insert**.

Add video to your email campaign

In one click have your video content inserted into your emails. Just enter in the video ID and we insert the image of the video and the link to the video.

Video identifier

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=[   ] **Ok**

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Content

Give your subscribers a reason to read your emails. Relevant and engaging content is crucial if you want to avoid hemorrhaging subscribers. Let's look at ways you can pimp your content to get more opens and subscribers:

- Be original
- Tailor your layout to the content
- Use headings and color for visual appeal
- Keep your emails interesting by changing the design and layout but follow your branding guidelines

Video

It isn't about big budgets. Focus on audio, lighting, the message and other important elements to create a great video. Be smart and take advantage of the technology in your smartphone. Use Wistia to create professional grade videos with your smartphone or Animoto to take your photos to the next level.

Images

No images of your own? That's okay. Use stock photography websites to gain access to millions of royalty free images for not a lot of money. Online image editing websites like Pixlr, Splashup and Resizer have a range of features to help you create great images for your emails.

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Manage

Creating and importing a list

You can create multiple lists but we suggest you manage one list and use the segmentation feature instead to create targeted email campaigns.

1. In the navigation menu click on the **Manage Subscribers** tab. Then click **Create New List.**
2. Fill in the list name and the email where notifications are sent to. Continue to next step.
3. Define **custom fields** in your list. Custom fields can either be in the form of plain text, drop-down list of pre-defined options, date, check box or a paragraph.

Create a new custom field

Type of field

✓ Text Field
Text Area
Dropdown Option Field
CheckBox
Date

Default Value:

Create Custom Field

Field Name	Active	Required	Actions
First Name	Yes	Yes	
Last Name	Yes	Yes	
Email Address	Yes	Yes	
Mobile Number	Yes	Yes	
Company	✓	No	
Age Group	✓	No	

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How to create and use list segments

A segment is a subset of your subscriber list. To increase the relevance of your content and performance of your email campaigns you should segment your subscriber list. Segments can be based on default fields and any **custom fields** you create.

1. In the navigation menu click on the **Manage Subscribers** tab.

2. Click **Create New List** and enter the details for your new subscribers list. Continue to next step.

3. Setup your custom fields. To do this click **Add Field**.

4. Fill in the details for your custom field. Custom fields can either be in the form of plain text, drop-down list of pre-defined options, date, check box or a paragraph.

5. Your custom field should now be added to the bottom of the existing fields we have created.

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How to add subscribers to a list

Now you have created a new list you can add subscribers to your list. Select the newly created list and select from the left side menu **Add Subscribers**.

You can add subscribers by:

1. Manually, one by one into Maxmail
2. Uploading a CSV file
3. Import from Outlook or email account

Select your option and follow the steps.

Add Manually	**CSV File**	**Microsoft Access Database**
This is the simplest way to add subscribers. While adding subscribers manually is time consuming, its a good way to test things.	CSV or Comma Separated Value files can be generated from most database systems including MS Excel, MySQL and SQL Server. Best way to import big lists.	Using this method you can import your contacts straight from an MS Access database .MDB file in a few clicks, just as it is.
Select	Select	Select

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Creating a double opt in campaign

To create a focused list of people who want your emails, create a **double opt in campaign**.

1. Create a second email to re-confirm subscribers.
2. Set up email address to send the reconfirmation emails.
3. View those who opted in. These are your double opt ins.

Approximately 20% of subscribers will not click the link to confirm their subscription. It is okay to send a reminder opt in email of a monthly frequency two or three times.

List cleaning

If your emails aren't being opened, your content is wasted. There are multiple factors affecting open rates. **List cleaning** will increase open rates and ROI. Consider the following:

- 30% of people change their email address annually
- Manage bounce rates to increase your open rates
- Remove inactive subscribers
- Email fatigue can reduce your open rates

We remove spam traps and invalid email addresses automatically to keep your lists clean so your email campaigns perform better.

Send

Testing your email design

Preview your email before you send it off. Check that every word is spelt correctly and that your email looks good in the many email applications out there. Preview what your email will look like on mobile. Use **Mobile View** to do this.

Get a second opinion. Send test emails to a friend to find out whether there are broken images, links, errors and other bugs.
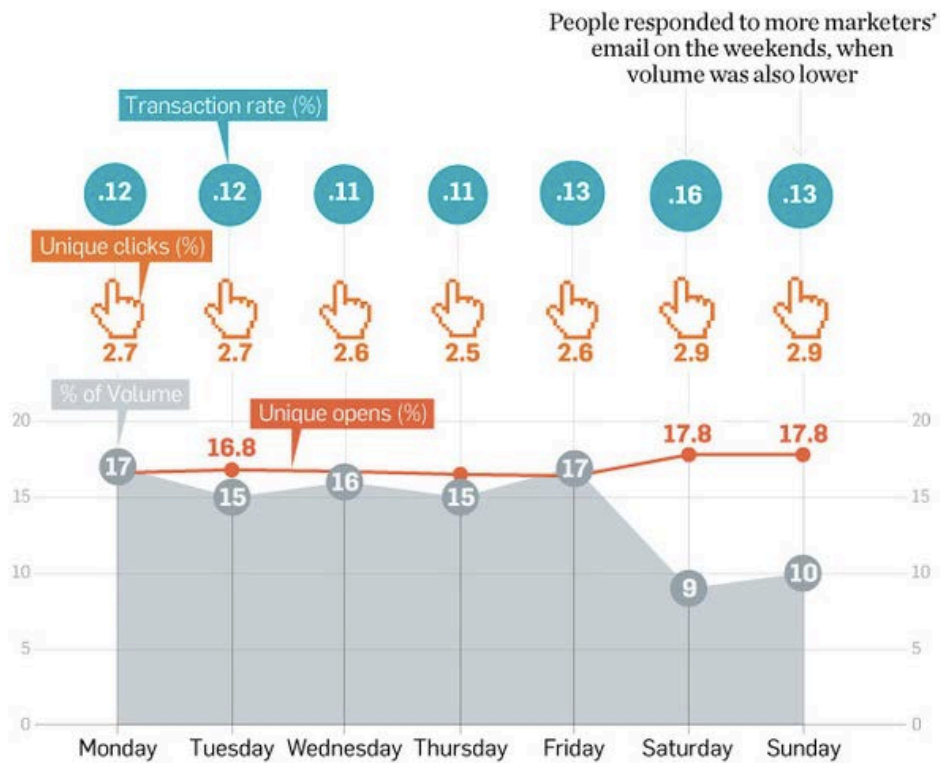
Scheduling email campaigns

Maxmail makes scheduling emails easy. To optimize your open rates, it is a good idea to schedule your campaign for a specific date and time. When you are ready to send your campaign, select a date and time and click **Schedule Campaign**.

When to send your emails

Use the infographic below to determine the best time to send your email campaigns.

People responded to more marketers' email on the weekends, when volume was also lower

Transaction rate (%)

| .12 | .12 | .11 | .11 | .13 | .16 | .13 |

Unique clicks (%)

| 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 2.9 | 2.9 |

% of Volume

Unique opens (%)

16.8 · 16 · 17 · 17.8 · 17.8

17 · 15 · 16 · 15 · 17 · 9 · 10

Monday   Tuesday   Wednesday   Thursday   Friday   Saturday   Sunday

Measure

Our reports help you understand what you're doing right and what you could be doing better. Check your website traffic logs after each email campaign to monitor the effectiveness of your campaigns. Did traffic increase? Did sales increase? If you sent a promotional email campaign, what was the redemption rate of your promotion codes? If you're still only looking at open rates, you're missing out on a wealth of knowledge.

How to view your reports

From the **Reports** tab click on **Sent Campaigns.** Select the campaign you want to view the statistics. From here you can view opens, clicks and bounces.

Tracking open rates

The open rate measures how many people on your list of subscribers opened or viewed your campaign.

The open rate is a good way of measuring trends in your campaigns. A low open rate suggests that your content or subject line is not engaging enough for your subscribers to take action. Experiment with your subject lines and make sure important content is right at the top of your campaign.

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Tracking click through rates

Click through rates measure how many people clicked links in your email, what links were clicked and the links clicked on the most. This information can then be correlated to the revenue generated from the clicks.

Tracking bounces

A **soft bounce** is an email message that makes it to the recipient's server but is undelivered and bounced back before making it to the recipient's inbox. Soft bounces may occur because the recipient's mailbox is full, the server is down or bust or the message is too large.

A **hard bounce** is an email message that has been returned to the sender and is permanently undeliverable. This may happen because the domain does not exist, typos (more common than you think), changed email address or the recipient's mail server has blocked your server.

In addition to using the bounce handling feature, here are some tips for managing bounces.

1. In your campaign **reports** look at the bounced emails. Remove these email addresses.

2. Clean your list.

3. Use a **double opt in** campaign before removing hard bounces.

4. Monitor major domain delivery rates. If there is a significant difference in delivery rate to a given domain, your email may be getting caught in a spam filter.

Tracking un-subscribers

Check your unsubscribe rate after each campaign. If there is an unusual spike in un-subscribers, check whether if it is to do with bugs and errors in your email or if it is possibly to do with your content or the frequency of your emails.

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Tracking email campaigns with Google Analytics

Tracking links for Google Analytics are automatically attached to every link in your email campaign. Click on **Settings** and turn Google Analytics on. Click **Save Changes**. To track your email campaigns using Google Analytics:

1. Create a Google Analytics account.
2. Fill out the URL builder form.

Once you have added your Google Analytics tracking codes and sent your email campaign, you are able to view your campaign stats in your Google Analytics account.

Subscriber Activity Reports

For information on individual subscriber activity, click on **Reports** and then from the right hand menu, select opened, clicked or bounced to view the subscribers associated with each. Use this information to improve your future email campaigns.
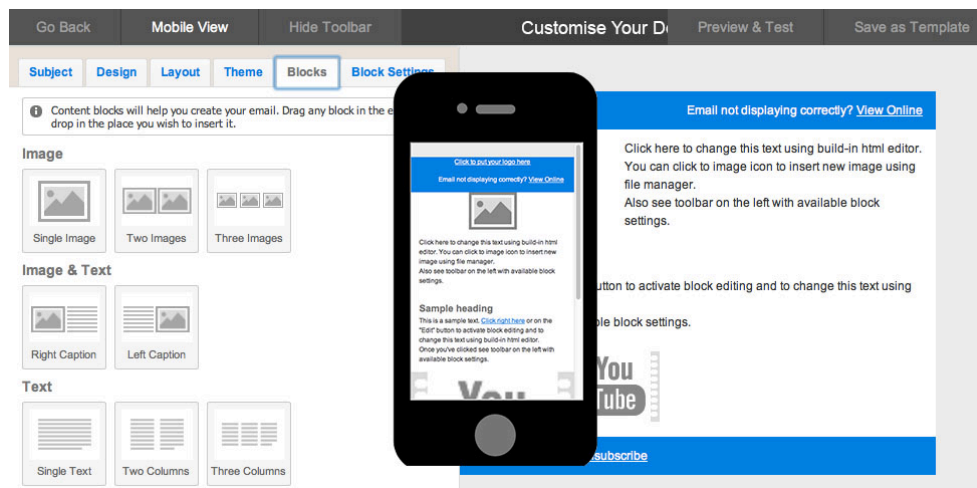
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Mobilize

There's a bit of disconnect between how consumers are reading emails and how marketers are conducting their email campaigns. With 41% of emails opened on mobile devices and 75% of mobile users highly likely to delete emails they can't read on their mobile device it is critical your emails are optimized for mobile.

With Maxmail your campaign is automatically optimized for mobile. You can preview your campaign easily by clicking the **Mobile View** in the email designer.

Socialize

Social sharing boosts email results

Average email click through revenue (CTR) is 2.4%, add social sharing and CTR increases to 6.2%.

How to add social sharing icons to your emails

In the **Customize Your Design** screen select blocks and then drag and drop the social media block into your email template. To link your social accounts to the social icons or change icon size or alignment, select the social media block and then click **block settings**.

Facebook and website subscription forms

Email loves social media. Build your email database the easy way with our social subscription forms. With Maxmail you can produce HTML and FBML subscription forms to use on any website or Facebook page app respectively.

How to build an HTML sign up form

Select **Manage Subscribers** from the top navigation menu and select a list. Select 'Add Subscribers' and then select step 4 from the progress bar. Now you have the option to build an HTML form. Click **Build an HTML form now** and follow the instructions.

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