

Commercial vs Transactional

What's the difference?

Understanding the difference between commercial and transactional emails helps your message get delivered and read. Plus, it's the law.
Learn more at: cu.edu/ecommerce/can-spam

COMMERCIAL

Most emails at CU are commercial in nature because they promote a product or service. These emails must adhere to federal CAN-SPAM law.

TRANSACTIONAL

If the email is directly related to an employment or transactional relationship or is non-commercial in nature, CAN-SPAM does not apply.

Examples of commercial emails

- ✉ Email to prospective students
- ✉ Invite employees to an event
- ✉ Promoting athletics tickets

Examples of transactional emails

- ✉ Event registration confirmation
- ✉ 'Know before you go' messages
- ✉ Post-event surveys

Provide a clear opportunity to **opt-out of receiving future commercial emails**. The request must be processed within ten days.



Transactional emails are **NOT covered by CAN-SPAM**, and do not require an 'opt-out' link.

Subject lines should indicate the email is commercial in nature. **Do not be fictitious or misleading** - including in your from information.



Being transparent in your **subject line and from information** can help increase your deliverability and open rates.

Include the valid **physical postal address** of your department, school or unit in the footer. Post office boxes are not acceptable.



Including an address isn't required, but it is a **best practice** so recipients know who to contact.