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/ecommm/can-spm

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.

Examples of commercial emails
- Email to prospective students
- Invite employees to an event
- Promoting athletics tickets

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

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 transactional emails
- Event registration confirmation
- ‘Know before you go’ messages
- Post-event surveys

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

Mandatory subject line
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.