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## **Commercial vs Transactional | What's the difference?** <sup>[1]</sup>

May 26, 2024 by [Melanie Jones](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

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# 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](http://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.

### Examples of commercial emails

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

## 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

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.

# Event Emails

Commercial or Transactional?

Marketing Cloud or Cvent?

<i>Email &amp; Audience Description</i>	<i>Commercial or Transactional</i>	<i>Marketing Cloud or Cvent</i>
Invitation to Invitees	Commercial	Marketing Cloud
Reminder Invitation to Invitees	Commercial	Marketing Cloud
Registration Confirmation to Registrants	Transactional	Cvent
'Know before you go' message to Registrants	Transactional	Cvent
Post-event survey to Attendees	Transactional	Cvent
Invitation to previous year Attendees	Commercial	Marketing Cloud

Questions? Visit [cu.edu/ecommerce/help](https://cu.edu/ecommerce/help)

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## Commercial & Transactional Emails In One

Sometimes, communications have content that is both transactional and commercial creating a gray space. But the truth is it's still black and white.

### Transactional Messages

- For a message to be considered transactional, the required content must be reflected in

the subject line and be the first, primary content of the email body.

- In other words, a message should **not** be sent transactionally if:
  - a tidbit of required information is buried in the email OR
  - the subject line promotes a product or service (commercial).
- A common example includes newsletters, which rarely contain critical information. 'Important' information is not the same as 'required' information.

Learn more about complying with the CAN SPAM Act <sup>[5]</sup>, directly from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

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[5]

## Related Content

- What is CAN-SPAM? <sup>[6]</sup>

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### Send email when Published:

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[5] <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/audio-video/video/complying-can-spam-act>

[6] <https://www.cu.edu/blog/ecommerce-wiki/new-user-training-intro>