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Measuring Email Marketing Effectiveness [1]

July 11, 2024 by lauren.galena [2]

Effective email marketing is data-driven and should not be viewed as set it and forget it. As an email marketer, looking at reliable metrics when analyzing your email marketing performance is essential. Using your own data as a benchmark is the best practice for determining if you are meeting your goals or need to optimize to improve performance.

Email Marketing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Due to recent privacy enhancements, open and click-to-open rates are no longer considered reliable metrics for measuring email engagement. Not to fear, there are more reliable KPIs that should be used to analyze your email marketing effectiveness, including click-through rate, clicks by link, and unsubscribe rate.

Click-Through Rate
The click-through rate is the percentage of recipients who clicked on at least one link in the email and is calculated by dividing the unique clicks by the number of delivered emails and multiplying by 100. This metric can be used to determine the strength of the email content and call-to-action (CTA).

Clicks by Link
The clicks by link measures the unique clicks on each link within an email. This metric helps to identify what recipients are clicking on. Your email might have a high click-through rate. Still, knowing what people click on within the email is essential to determine if your email content and CTA effectively drive engagement toward your intended goal.

Email Bot Clicks

It's important to note that inflated click metrics could be bot clicks. This article from Braze [3] covers what you need to know about bot clicks and how to spot them.

Unsubscribe Rate

The unsubscribe rate is the percentage of unsubscribes per email. It’s normal to have unsubscribes for every email that you send. However, it’s important to know the unsubscribe benchmark for emails you send to identify unsubscribe rates outside your normal range. Higher than expected unsubscribe rates may indicate issues with the audience you're targetting, frequency of messages, and email content.

Salesforce Resources

- Top KPIs for Email Marketers [4]

Unreliable KPIs

Open Rate

Increasing open rates has historically been a standard KPI in email marketing. However, with increases in user privacy, tracking open rates is even less reliable than it used to be. Apple’s 2021 Mail Privacy Protection (MPP), which went into effect in September 2021, automatically opens messages in a proxy server for Apple Mail users who have the MPP feature turned on, resulting in inflated open rate metrics.

It’s important to note that it is difficult to identify the contacts that might be MPP users because the Apple Mail app can be used to open emails from any email client (i.e., Yahoo, Outlook, Gmail, iCloud, etc.).

Click-to-Open Rate

Similar to open rates, click-to-open rates are also impacted by Apple’s MPP because the rate is determined by dividing the number of unique clicks by the number of unique opens and multiplying by 100.

eComm Resources

- Apple Mail and Artificial Open Rates [5]

What’s a Good Benchmark for My KPIs?

As an email marketer, you might wonder if your metrics are on par with the industry average. What is the industry average? While we’re on the topic, is the industry average even a good benchmark for your communications?

Because every email audience is unique, industry averages of KPIs aren’t very helpful in analyzing your email performance. Even among similar audiences, the average click-through rate for emails to CU Boulder alumni will likely be different than that for UCCS alumni. **For this reason, analyzing the historical data for communications you’ve sent to a specific audience is the most accurate data for determining benchmarks and**

developing strategies to improve them.

Analytics & Tracking Tools

There are a few different ways to get tracking and analytics for your communications, all of which can be leveraged to engage your audience better in the future.

Einstein for Marketing Cloud
Einstein for Marketing Cloud [6] uses artificial intelligence (AI) to help you analyze, automate, and optimize your marketing activities and content. With Einstein, you can use valuable insights and data on audiences, send time, engagement, and copy to improve your marketing communication efforts.

How can Marketing Cloud Einstein help?

- Discovers insights that bring new clarity about your constituents.
- Predicts outcomes to make decisions with confidence.
- Recommends the best actions to make the most out of every engagement.
- Automates routine tasks so you can focus on constituent success.

Salesforce Dashboards
Dashboards [7] are available on the Salesforce homepage to provide a perspective on email sends from a Campus or Business Unit.

The data Salesforce dashboards present can help address questions like:

- How are my Business Unit's emails performing?
- When are my Business Unit's emails performing?

Marketing Cloud Intelligence Reports
Intelligence Reports (formerly Datorama) for Marketing Cloud [8] enables users to generate, view, and share a detailed analysis of email data.

Intelligence Reports includes dashboards, pivot tables, and reports to:

- Analyze data with built-in dashboards that visualize aggregated email data
- View comparisons, trends, and patterns
- Filter, sort, and summarize data
- Share findings on a schedule

Related Content

- Einstein Overview [6]
- Intelligence Reports Overview [8]
- Salesforce Dashboards [7]
- Apple Mail and Artificial Open Rates [9]
- Bot or Not: Understanding Email Bot Clicks [3]

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