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Emails: Unable to Send, Failed Send. Data Extension: Error or Equal to 0 [1]

August 19, 2026 by Melanie Jones [2]

When faced with a failed send, a send to 0, or failed Data Extension, review the items below. Often, the root cause is something over which you have control rather than a systemic failure in Salesforce or Marketing Cloud. If there is an outage or broad issue, users will be notified as soon as possible.

Quick Troubleshooting

There are two quick tips to identify the two most common areas where issues arise. If both tests below do not raise any red flags, follow the entire list of potential issues outlined below.

1. **Send the user the Report and ask them to send a screenshot.** If it shows 0 records or 'Insufficient Permissions' the eComm specialist didn't share/save properly.
    - See *Salesforce: Confirm User Access* below.
2. **Send a test in 'Preview & Test'** [3]**.** If you are unable to send and instead get a large error message, this confirms the issue is due to the email content.
    - See *Marketing Cloud: Email Content* below.

Salesforce: User Access & Report Format

1. **Review the location of the Report**
    - *TIP! Send the user a link to the Report. If they get an 'Insufficient Privileges' they do not have access to the Report.*
        - **Is the report saved in the correct Salesforce folder?**
            - Reports saved in a **Private Folder** cannot be used for sending.
        - **Is the folder shared with the Public Group/User?**
            - If shared with a **Public Group**, check the user's license record to confirm they are part of that group. If not, @Melanie Jones on the License to request this change.
            - For immediate troubleshooting, share the Folder with the individual user.
2. ***IF, the Report is based on a Campaign,* review the Sharing of the Campaign**
    - *TIP! Send the user a link to the Report. If they see 0 contacts, they do not have access to the Campaign. OR Send the user a link to the Campaign. If they see 'Insufficient Privileges,' they do not have access to the Campaign.*

        - **Is the Report based on a Campaign?**
            - If so, confirm the **Campaign** has been shared with the **user/public group**.
3. **Review the Format of the Report**
    - Does the Salesforce report contain the **Contact ID as a column**? If not, the send will fail.
    - Reports with a **Unique Count** on any column (usually applied to the Contact ID Column) will insert 0 records when the Data Extension is 'Start'ed.
    - Reports with **Grouping and/or a Chart** will insert 0 records when the Data Extension is 'Start'ed.

Marketing Cloud: Email Content

1. **Confirm that the Data Extension Settings are Correct**
    - Go to **Subscribers** >> **Salesforce Data Extensions** >> Select Data Extension Name
    - Verify that **Contact ID = Key**
    - Verify that **any email address = Email Address**
2. **Confirm that the Data Extension is Populating Records**
    - Go to **Subscribers** >> **Salesforce Data Extensions** >> Select Data Extension Name >> Select the second **Records** tab
3. **Send a Test Email**
    - **Can you send a successful test to yourself [3]by navigating to the Email in Content Builder >> Preview & Test?**
        - If there is a problem with your email, such as with incorrect data tags (see below) or spam triggers, you will receive an error message informing you of what needs to be corrected.
        - If you are using Dynamic Content and there is a problem, an error will display. Learn more in the Troubleshooting section of the Dynamic Content wiki [4].
4. **Review your Data Tags or Dynamic Content [4]**
    - *Tip! Quickly check by looking in the test and preview*
        - Incorrect formatting of data tags will result in failed sends. To avoid this problem, we recommend that all eComm users and eComm Specialists select data tags from the options available in Content Builder [3] rather than typing them into the email copy. If you find an error with the formatting of data tags, correct it in both the HTML and Plain Text versions of your email.
            - Correct Format Example: *%%First Name%%*
            - Incorrect Format Examples: *%% FirstName %%*, *%% First Name %%*, *%%First_Name%%*, *%% First_Name %%*
5. **Review Sharing Settings**
    - See the Salesforce section above.

Marketing Cloud: Data Extension

1. **Can the user Start a Data Extension import successfully (even if 0 records are inserted)?**

    - If not, review the *Salesforce: User Access & Report Format* section above, specifically item 1.
2. **Are 0 records inserted?**
    1. Review the *Salesforce: User Access & Report Format* section above, specifically items 2 & 3.
3. **Does the user have access to select Audiences?**
    - Can your user select Reports, Campaigns, and Data Extensions while in Guided Send or Salesforce Send Email? If not, their Marketing Cloud account needs to be Integrated with their Salesforce account. @Melanie Jones on their license record or submit a help ticket.

NOTE

- If your user is sending to a Data Extension and the above steps do not solve the problem, **try recreating the Data Extension**. This has solved the problem in rare cases where there is seemingly no way to identify the issue.
- For the sake of getting the email out the door, **an eComm specialist can try to send the email or run the Data Extension.** If the message then sends or Data Extension runs, this indicates a Salesforce access issue and can be resolved without submitting a ticket (see Salesforce section above).

If you have reviewed all of the items above and your user's sends are still failing, have an eComm Specialist try to send to get it out the door and submit a ticket [5] to troubleshoot before the user's next send. Please provide Business Unit MID, Failed Send ID, Username of Sender, and other relevant details.

DENY SEND If a user can't find the 'Send' button in Marketing Cloud, they probably do not have access to send emails [6]. Users are granted access to send emails once they have completed a short verification quiz during onboarding, to be completed within 60 days of getting access.

Related Wikis

- Marketing Cloud Permissions [6]
- Someone Not Receiving Marketing Cloud Messages [7]

Display Title:
Unable to Send Email or Start Data Extension
Send email when Published:
No

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