The 6 Stages of an Email That Works

SEND

STAGE 1
DEFINE YOUR AUDIENCE

As a long-lasting and highly-effective method of communicating directly with your audience, email is critical to your organization's digital communications strategy. And understanding the life cycle of an email can help maximize its power, leading you to greater outreach and increased audience engagement.

Follow us through the journey of these three successful emails from Federal, State and European public sector organizations:

Goal:
1 Use email to encourage snowmobile license renewals in Wisconsin

Goal:
2 Use email to drive health insurance awareness around updates and available options and nationwide

Goal:
3 Use email to educate driving instructors on important changing standards in the United Kingdom.

START

For many public sector organizations, the goal is to speak to as many people as possible - especially in high profile and important situations. But you also need the ability to target specific sections of your audience with messages that are relevant to them. Segment your audience to drive specific actions, and begin by focusing on the interests or needs of who you are trying to reach.
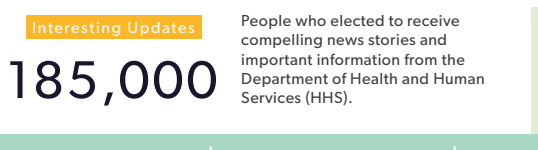
Demographics
17,000
Regional Wisconsin snowmobile license-purchasers from the previous year with content targeted to drive repeat purchases.

Interesting Updates
185,000
People who elected to receive compelling news stories and important information from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Interest-Based Preferences
30,000
Driving instructors throughout the UK who rely on email to learn about driving test updates and safety.

STAGE 2
LEVERAGE COMPELLING CONTENT

The average person's attention span is only 7-8 seconds long – so you have to really make it count. Get the basics down – limit excessive ALL CAPS, odd punctuation, and avoid clichéd phrases. You can also automatically send the valuable content your organization is already creating for your website, to add benefit to your community.
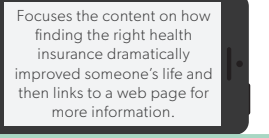
Less content drives comprehension
Quick and easy, the email targets a very select group to highlight how renewing online can save time. It encourages engagement with a clear call-to-action.
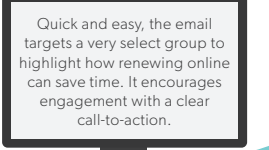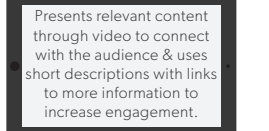
Share a Story
Focuses the content on how finding the right health insurance dramatically improved someone's life and then links to a web page for more information.

Leverage Video and or Images
Presents relevant content through video to connect with the audience & uses short descriptions with links to more information to increase engagement.
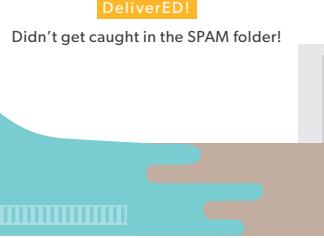
STAGE 3
REACH YOUR EMAIL RECIPIENTS

Organizations that use a private sector commercial email sending tool see their emails sent along with those of local businesses (like coffee shops), which can negatively impact the likelihood that their emails make it to the inbox. With historical deliverability rates of 99%, public sector-focused digital outreach tools only send on behalf of government, meaning your email will be seen by more people.
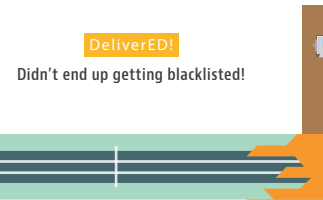
DeliverED!
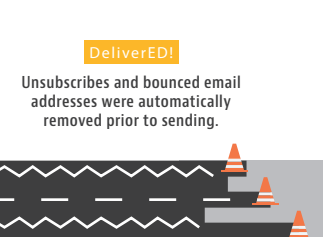Didn't get caught in the SPAM folder!

DeliverED!
Didn't end up getting blacklisted!

DeliverED!
Unsubscribes and bounced email addresses were automatically removed prior to sending.

STAGE 4
DRIVE HUMAN ACTION

Once they get your message, people can engage with your content and take action in a way that matches your organization's mission.

Opens | **Clicks**
18,000 / 2,000
Leading to increased early snowmobile license renewals.

Opens | **Clicks**
18,000 / 1,000
Potentially driving more people to seek health insurance.

Opens | **Clicks**
35,000 / 10,000
Ensuring driving instructors had the right information to deliver critical testing and safety tips to new drivers.

STAGE 5
LEARN FROM ANALYTICS

It's not enough to just press send anymore; you need to measure the success of your message. Learning from what works and what doesn't is invaluable data, and it can help drive notable increases in engagement with your message content. It's also important to look at how your communications are impacting other analytics, like website traffic, customer service metrics, and more. Here are some metrics your organization should be tracking and how to interpret them.

TOTAL EMAIL OPENS:
The total number of times an email was opened, including multiple opens and opens that occur when an email is forwarded. Measuring changes in opens over time provides insight into the effectiveness of subject lines, sending times and the best days to send.

UNIQUE METRICS:
Total numbers give organizations insight into the true reach and engagement of a message. If your organization wants to look at individual openers or clickers, reference your unique openers or unique clickers.

ENGAGEMENT RATE:
Because the public sector sends more frequently (especially with urgent or critical content), it's valuable to look at opens or clicks across all messages during a specific time period. Tracking engagement rate creates a 360-degree view of communication successes and helps your organization develop its own communication best practices.

TOTAL LINK CLICKS:
The total number of times a link was clicked. This indicates the popularity of your content or placement of content. Trying different calls to action, such as a button or an image, instead of hyperlinked text, to see if you can drive more clicks.

UNSUBSCRIBES:
Growing your audience is important, but so is retaining them. An increase in unsubscribes can indicate that your organization is sending too many emails, irrelevant content and other factors. Look at how many people unsubscribe for each email or holistically over time to drive improvements in your digital outreach strategy.

OTHER RATES:
Take any metrics above and divide by the total number of people who received your email to get a percentage of open or click activity. This works for Unique to Total numbers.

STAGE 6
IMPROVE THE PROCESS

Take your results and analysis and define your organization's best practices. Replicate high-performing emails and improve upon messages that turn out to be less engaging. This helps make your emails more compelling, meaningful, and more valuable to your audience.

WANT MORE?

Contact Granicus at info@granicus.com to find out how other public sector organizations are using digital outreach to convert web browsers into an engaged digital audience, increase engagement with that audience, and leverage data to drive ongoing improvements to their digital outreach strategy.

GRANICUS

govloop