

An Arial Software White Paper

Assembling a Quality Email Marketing Team

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Introduction

Email marketing should be considered a key component of a company's overall marketing strategy. In the past many companies treated email marketing as an afterthought, failing to devote the talent and resources needed to affect an appreciable return on investment. To get the most out of an ongoing email marketing campaign, a quality team of knowledgeable professionals must be assembled.

There are several roles that fall under email marketing that require good team members. All of these roles can be performed by one person if necessary, but some roles are highly specialized and we recommend they be delegated whenever possible.

Email Marketing Manager

The email marketing manager is a specialized project manager who oversees the various job roles to create an effective email marketing plan that incorporates each of the different marketing messages sent from the company.

Consider the various email touch points a company typically has with customers. There are newsletters, confirmation emails, sales receipts, invoices, quotes, requests for information, promotions, coupons, and other special offers that are emailed to customers each day. Keeping track of all these contact points and making the most of each email requires a skilled project manager.

The email marketing manager is also responsible for assembling and managing a specialized team to execute the email campaign. There are three broad sections associated with a comprehensive email marketing campaign:

- Message Creative
- Corporate Database
- Information Technology



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The Message Creative

This is the total email message, which typically has three parts, each of which could be assigned to someone specializing in a particular area.

- Written message
- HTML design
- Graphic design

Writer

To manage the copy, it is best to hire a writer. Depending on the type of email messages sent, an article writer or copywriter will perform best. Writing articles and writing marketing copy are different functions, and having a specialist on hand that can do each would not hurt overall email marketing performance.

A consistent writer reflects the company's voice in every message, even the most mundane confirmation emails. It is important that this voice engage customers in every correspondence to promote brand recognition.

HTML Editor

The debate continues on which type of message is more effective, plain text or graphics-based HTML. Depending on what kind of email campaigns you are executing, both HTML and plain text can be effective, so a company would be wise to include an HTML editor on the message creative team.

With email, there are many considerations an HTML editor must make when creating a good message layout. Knowledge of how messages appear in various email inbox preview panes is one skill of the HTML editor that helps create a viewable message that gets a response.

The proper use of images and image placement within an email is also extremely important. The HTML editor role closely corresponds to the graphic designer role, and these roles are often combined.

Graphic Designer

The graphic designer creating the images for the company's web pages should be the email marketing team member that develops the templates for the email messages as well. It is possible to recycle some design elements from the web page, but often it is necessary to create a unique layout for the email message.

The graphic designer works closely with the HTML editor to create messages that look good in any number of recipient email clients. Graphics are often used to enhance tables, links, and other interactive sections of the email message.



Once the look and feel of a message is created, it can be used as a template for subsequent emails. The graphics designer will want to pay particular attention to the brand that's the source of the email campaign to ensure that all the various types of email messages coming from that brand have a similar look.

Information Technician

Dealing with an email campaign's integration and network configuration can quickly fall outside the skill sets of a marketing writer or designer, whom are typically the professionals assigned to this role.

It is important that all the software and hardware involved in the campaign is configured to operate smoothly, by obtaining someone who specializes in information technology (IT). There are four main components of IT management in an email campaign.

Email Marketing Program – Most permission based email marketing programs are rather complex and many of them are scalable. It is best to have a skilled technician managing the administrative functions and connection parameters of the program.

Mail Servers – The most important piece in email delivery is the outbound mail server. Proper configuration of the mail server is imperative and should not be managed by unskilled personnel. Server management also involves managing bounce and email-based unsubscribe processing, POP3 or IMAP 4 mail server configuration, and account set up. In today's protectionist climate, ensuring mail servers are properly configured is imperative.

Domain Name System (DNS) configuration – Remote email servers conduct extensive checks on the mail servers and their configuration on the DNS servers. Mail exchange records, Sender Policy Framework, and Domain Keys must all be configured correctly in order to ensure uninterrupted email delivery to customers.

Network security – In a multi-user environment, it is important to manage users who are accessing the email marketing program. Separate database connections and mail server connections must be configured properly to ensure protection of sensitive data.

Again, a writer or traditional marketer assigned to manage these components may be outside his or her purview, and may be unable to manage the serious issues associated with email message deliverability.

Database Administrator

The Database Administrator or DBA is responsible for managing the email subscriber list, including keeping it clean of unsubscribe requests and duplicate data. The DBA also creates views and reports that can be used by other members of the team.

The DBA ensures that the email marketing program maintains user privileges that allow it to read and write to one or more tables in the database. This ensures that actions taken with an email



message can be updated automatically in the database, like noting the types of products that are being clicked on, as well as the opened email rate, which tells the team how many messages were opened and read.

Email delivery processing and unsubscribe request management are also tracked in the database by the DBA using specific fields in either the source table, or by using a separate write-back table as needed.

Removing failed email addresses from the source list is imperative for keeping the database clean and preventing delivery problems caused by re-sending to a high percentage of failed email addresses. These important tasks need an experienced DBA.

Summary

Putting together a quality team of email marketing professionals will allow you to get more out of your email marketing campaigns. And as email marketing technologies get more complex, companies will see a greater return on their investment when using specialized personnel for key aspects of their email campaigns.

Arial Software offers professional email marketing programs designed for multi-user environments such as the one described here. Call today to find a solution that meets the needs of your email marketing campaigns.

About Arial Software

Founded in 1993, Arial Software, LLC is widely considered the industry leader in email marketing software designed exclusively for relationship building through personalized email messaging.

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