



**OBVIOUS**

*(and not so obvious)*

**EMAIL MARKETING**

••• **MISTAKES** •••

TO

*Avoid*



Target. Deliver. Measure.

You have a great opt-in list and you're ready to take advantage of one of the most popular online marketing channels — email marketing. With only one chance to make a positive first impression, you want to ensure you are sending a spot-on campaign that properly views across all browsers and devices.

You're in luck! We've created an informative guide that highlights the things you should avoid when sending out your email campaigns, and also lends some essential information to avoid getting blacklisted.

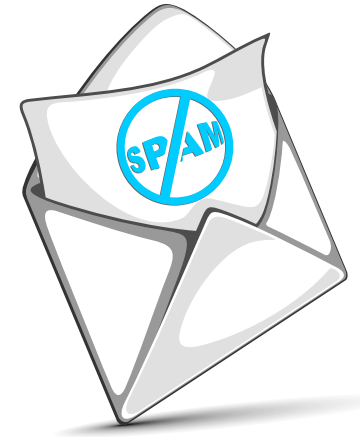
## SO, LET'S GET STARTED...



# MISTAKE #1

## SENDING UNWANTED CAMPAIGNS WITHOUT PERMISSION – A.K.A. SPAM

We started with this mistake first because it's a BIG one and you do not want to be considered a "spammer." SPAM has been an annoying email phenomenon since the first SPAM message was sent by DEC in 1978. People don't like getting emails in their inbox that isn't of interest or relevant to them. Plus, you could be breaking the law if you are not adhering to the specifications outlined by the **CAN-SPAM Act of 2003**.



*Learn if your email  
campaigns are adhering  
to the CAN-SPAM  
Act of 2003*  
**> CLICK HERE**

You should also be concerned about **how spamming impacts your brand**. Checkout Pinpointe's **Infographic on Email SPAM Issues**, which further explains how people react to spam. Most importantly — pay close attention to how sending unwanted emails can harshly impact your company brand. For people who think it's okay to buy an email list from random email list vendors and send emails — you'll think twice after seeing this.

**CRAZY**  
**BUT** True

The reaction to SPAM has become so strong that more nearly 29% of people who use email think spammers should be sentenced to jail time - or even harsher punishment!



# MISTAKE #2

## PURCHASING OR RENTING LIST

It's never okay to send to email campaigns to purchased lists. Actually, the vast majority of credible email marketing service providers only permit the use of permission-based email lists. If you want your customers to report your emails as SPAM and risk getting blacklisted, go ahead and use purchased lists. Please note, Pinpointe advises strongly against this!

With a fore warning properly in place, we also want to remind you that your sending reputation can greatly suffer from using a purchased or rented list. Whether you inadvertently send a campaign to email addresses that don't exist or have a large percentage of campaign recipients report your email as spam, the effect is all the same, and you could have some serious explaining to do to your Internet Service Provider (ISP). In fact, depending on the conditions, you could lose access to your domain or even your ISP. So, stick to lists that were generated using proper permission-based sign-up.



**Even if you make an effort to adhere to CAN SPAM guidelines, such as providing a place where subscribers can opt-out, it does not necessarily make your sends to a purchased list acceptable.**

# MISTAKE #3

## ASSUMING PEOPLE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Permission goes stale after as soon as six months, so if you're not regularly emailing your contacts, then assume that those old contacts have forgotten they opted into your list. It's best you send them a quick note from your personal email account — not as a blast through your email marketing provider — and ask them if they remember signing up for your emails. Also be sure to request permission to keep them on your marketing list.

**REQUEST  
PERMISSION  
AGAIN**

## MISTAKE #4

### RUSHING THROUGH AN EMAIL CAMPAIGN SEND

This may seem like a no-brainer, but it happens all the time. I'm sure you can picture the scenario...a campaign was supposed to be sent out yesterday, so you rush through it today and hit send without a second (or third or fourth) review. Come to find out, you sent your campaign to the wrong list or accidentally inserted the wrong field into your email. Now John Doe is getting an email that greets him with "Hi Doe," rather than "Hi John." Put a few typos on top of that and your email marketing credibility just shot down. A sloppy email with lots of mistakes can be damaging to your company's reputation, and it can also yield a high number of unsubscribes. So take your time and make sure you get a couple sets of eyes on your email before you hit that send button.



➤ [Click here](#) to learn more.

## MISTAKE #5

### SENDING TOO MUCH OR TOO INFREQUENTLY

Even if the emails are what subscribers requested, sending too many emails can result in spam complaints. On the flip side, sending too infrequently may cause your subscribers to forget why they're getting your emails in the first place. To avoid this, be sure you set subscriber expectations that explain how often your subscribers should expect to get emails. Then, stay consistent with your send times.



➤ [Click here](#) to learn more about email deliverability issues.



# MISTAKE #6

## HIDING YOUR UNSUBSCRIBE LINK

[Click here to safely unsubscribe](#)

Bad idea! If your trying to get a lower unsubscribe rate, this is the wrong way to go about it. Fewer people might unsubscribe directly, but a whole lot more are likely to hit 'This is SPAM' link in their email client. And guess what? Email service providers are required to remove those people from all of your lists. What's worse is that those SPAM complaints impact your email reputation. Get more than around 1 complaint per 1,000 emails sent (this varies from ISP to ISP), and your well-crafted email campaigns start going into the spam folder, sinking your email response rates faster than the Titanic.



*Make your unsubscribe link **BOLD AND VISIBLE**. Add a second unsubscribe link and/or 'Update preferences' link to the email. Our internal tests have shown that this can reduce spam complaints by as much as 50% — which means better email delivery rates.*

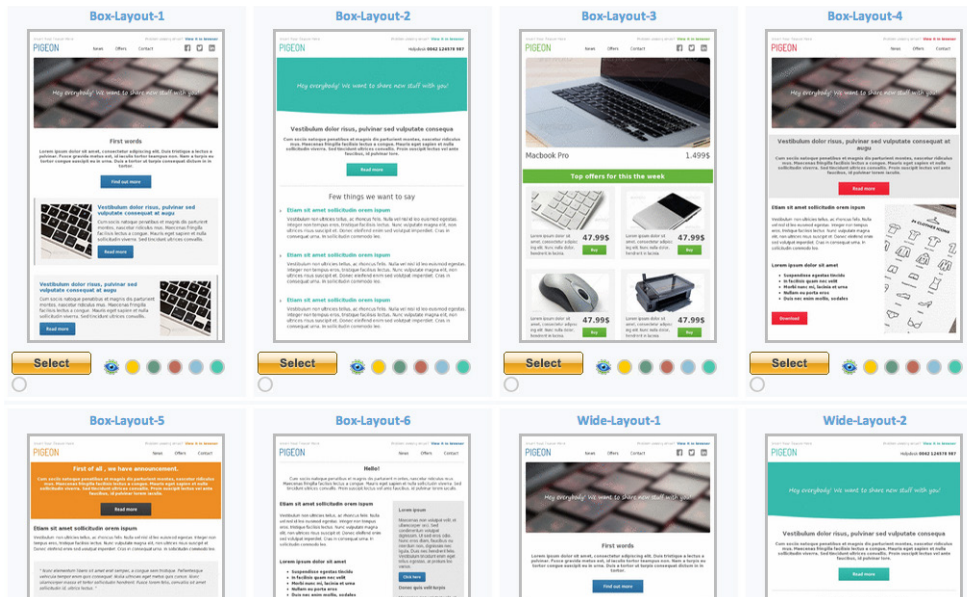
[Click here](#) to learn more.

# MISTAKE #7

## NOT THINKING MOBILE

Did you know that more than 50% of people now open their email on a mobile device? With this in mind, it's not only important that your email renders correctly on mobile devices — it's absolutely essential! Pinpointe's interactive, email campaign previewer renders all your previews with 100% accuracy in less than a minute for 50+ email clients — including the top mobile email clients.

[Click here](#) to learn more.



# MISTAKE #8

## USING ONE BIG IMAGE

Avoid creating an HTML email that's nothing but one big image, with little or no text. This creates a couple of major issues. Many email servers block images, so if your email is one big image, and that image happens to be blocked — the person on the receiving end will not see anything except an X, a question mark or an empty box...that is if your email even makes it to the recipient's inbox. Most email spam filters can't read images, so content filters assume you're a spammer that's trying to trick them.

Want more tips on optimizing HTML email results? View Pinpointe's on-demand webinar "Tips to Maximize HTML Email Results"  
**> CLICK HERE**

Having trouble reading this email? [View in email browser.](#)

Discover what your Screen Skills can do...

### Super-Size The Impact of Programs You Rely On Everyday

Excel, Salesforce, HubSpot...you decide. Instantly access, view, manipulate, and share important information with your team about clients, prospects, sales strategies, pipeline and more. You and OneScreen make a big impact with programs you utilize everyday.

Super-size apps and programs

Having trouble reading this email? [View in email browser.](#)

## OneScreen™

### DISCOVER WHAT YOUR SCREEN SKILLS CAN DO...



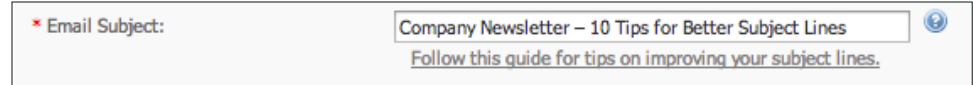
### Super-Size The Impact of Programs You Rely On Everyday

Excel, Salesforce, HubSpot...you decide. Instantly access, view, manipulate, and share important information with your team about clients, prospects, sales strategies, pipeline and more. You and OneScreen make a big impact with programs you utilize everyday.



# MISTAKE #9

## RUSHING THROUGH YOUR SUBJECT LINE



A simple sentence may seem easy to write, but the subject line is the first thing your subscribers see in their inbox. Pinpointe’s webinar **Writing Tips to Improve Email Responses** explains why nearly 7 in 10 email recipients decide to mark a message as spam based entirely on the subject! Because the email subject determines your first impression, you should spend half or your time creating the subject line for your email campaign.

*It’s a good idea to avoid using the recipient’s name or email address in subject lines, as consumers tend to perceive these messages as spam.*

Generally, we’ve found that shorter subject lines outperform longer subject lines so keep the subject as concise as possible. If you like fancy language, save it for the conference room. Be direct and avoid using full sentences. For example, avoid lengthy openers like, “[Recipient’s First Name], check out our free Newsletter, featuring [really-long-detailed-topic-description].”

MarketingProfs states there are “**seven dirty words**” that should be avoided in subject lines, including “act now,” any words that relate to sex/pornography, references to cures/medication, “amazing,” CAPITALIZATION, “as seen” (and any variations), “apply now” and, interestingly enough “avoid.” Other words and phrases to steer clear of include confirm, raffle, requested, 10 percent, savings and coupon.

Instead, rely on tried-and-true terms like survey, weekly, newsletter, tips, video, updates, bulletin, join, edition, and latest.





# MISTAKE #10

## USING A MISLEADING SUBJECT LINE

It's good to have a **catchy email subject line**, but don't be misleading. This means don't put "Re:" in front of the subject to trick subscribers, don't reference anything irrelevant, and don't talk about enclosed account information if there's really no account involved.

There are plenty of ways to present the topic of an email in an interesting way:

- Offer to teach something
- Ask a question
- Announce something new
- Offer a solution to a problem



**RE: YOUR ACCOUNT**

# MISTAKE #11

## PROMISING SOMETHING WORTHWHILE AND NOT DELIVERING IT

If you're going to promise valuable information, don't lie or lead recipients on. After you've collected information about what your clients need or desire, draft ideas for potential emails. Generally, diversify the types of messages they receive and make sure messages are short, to-the-point and relevant to their industry.



# MISTAKE #12

## NOT SENDING FROM A RECOGNIZABLE ADDRESS



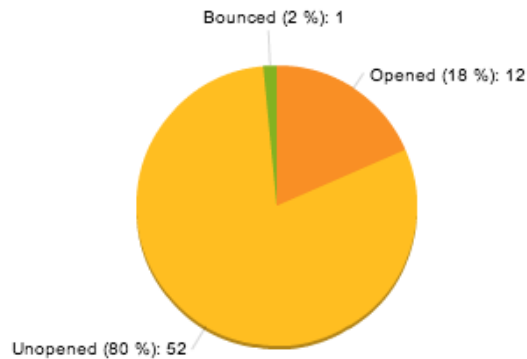
*Never send from addresses that are illegitimate or are "Do not reply" addresses. You'll be doing yourself a big favor.*

Next to creating a killer subject line, the second most important factor recipients use to decide whether to open your email is the send-from address, so make sure your send-from address is one the recipient will recognize. For big brands, that might be your company name; for business-to-business email communications, the best send-from might be the regional sales person or account manager.

In Pinpointe's webinar "**Use Split Testing to Improve Email Responses**," we ran several split tests using various send-from addresses to see how recipients in our subscriber list responded. For us, the personal name as a send-from address outperformed a generic 'info@pinpointe.com,' reinforcing that our recipients are more likely to open messages from a familiar address. Test your audience to see what works best.

# MISTAKE #13

## IGNORING CAMPAIGN REPORTS



Campaign reports should be viewed regularly and analyzed. For each email marketing campaign you send, you should know exactly how many people opened your email, how many unsubscribed, which links they clicked, forwarding statistics, and more. Campaign reports not only provide a summary of how successful (or unsuccessful) each campaign was, but can also provide lead contact information and valuable insight into how to move forward with a successful email marketing strategy.

Pinpointe's **reporting capabilities** make it easy to view and mine data to help refine your email campaign strategies.

# MISTAKE #14

## FORGETTING TO INCLUDE A CALL-TO-ACTION

***WHERE'S YOUR  
CALL TO ACTION?***

This is like receiving a beautifully wrapped present with nothing in it. Seriously...your email marketing efforts will be for nothing if you don't include a call to action. Every email campaign should also include an invitation to learn more about your company offerings. And don't forget those 'social share' buttons or links in any email campaign, as you want to make it as easy as possible for recipients to get and share your great content. Be sure to engage respondents too. You'll find that respondents will re-share your content and ask questions through social channels. Hootsuite and Pinpointe's social marketing features help you monitor responses and reply to them directly.

 [Click here](#) to learn more.

# MISTAKE #15

## SENDING TO INACTIVE SUBSCRIBERS



Sending emails to subscribers who have been inactive on your list for a long time is risky and not very cost effective. If the subscriber hasn't opened an email in a year, they're probably not interested anymore and may be more likely to complain. There are a couple solutions for this. Delete subscribers from your list that haven't opened an email in a couple months (or whatever length of time you feel is appropriate). If you don't want to delete any subscribers right off the bat, try sending a re-engagement series to get their attention.

 [Click here](#) to learn how to improve email responses and make clients beg for your emails.



*Every 6-12 months, consider removing all contacts that have never opened a campaign.*

# MISTAKE #17

## NOT UNDERSTANDING HOW SPAM FILTERS WORK



As a legitimate email marketer you can expect 20% or more of your emails to get lost in cyberspace, mostly due to overzealous SPAM filters. SPAM filters/firewalls use multiple techniques to determine whether your legitimate business email is SPAM. Today's filters are based on the SpamAssassin engine and rely 75% on your domain and server reputation and 25% on your email's content. Content-based filters review your content and assign points each time they see something that looks like a spammy phrase — certain criteria gets more points than others. If your campaign's total "spam score" exceeds a certain threshold, your email is sent to the junk folder. Therefore, avoid using words that trigger SPAM filters. An email doesn't have to be about Viagra or Free Gifts to be considered spammy. Some of the phrases that trigger a filter can include innocuous words and/or phrases like cash, cost, money, 'Dear Friend', success, wife, sample, Click, Subscribe, and more.

**CRAZY**  
**BUT** True

Using "Dear " in your introduction isn't so Dear - it will add as much as 2.5 points to your spam score. Use 'Hi [firstname]' or just the recipient's name instead.

A few more samples include:

- Money back guarantee
- Why pay more?
- Copy that looks like a mortgage pitch
- Contains "urgent matter"

 [Click here](#) to see "The Ultimate List of Email SPAM Trigger Words"



# MISTAKE #18

## USING SLOPPY HTML CODING

This mistake goes hand-in-hand with mistake #17. Real spammers don't code well, so avoid poor HTML.

Some top offenders include:

- Forgetting `</BODY>` tags, open-ended / unbalanced `</TABLE>` definitions and including content in the `<HEAD>` section (email clients strip all content between the `<HEAD>` `</HEAD>` tags.)
- Cutting and pasting from Microsoft Word. Word is not designed as an HTML editor, so if you're creating your campaign with Word then cutting and pasting into your HTML editor / email editor, chances are you're going to end up with ugly email code. Word inserts tons of redundant and often incorrect (or useless) html code that email clients don't like.

```
<!DOCTYPE htm
<html xmlns=""
<head>
<meta htt
```

» [Click here](#) for the entire list of SpamAssassin content tests.

**Check Your Email for Spam**

**Summary**  
Your email campaign's content has been analyzed with a SPAMASSASSIN spam filter.  
Your subject + html total spam score is **2.8**  
Your subject + text total spam score is **2.8**

✔ The **subject** of your email does not break any spam rules.

💡 The **HTML** version of your email breaks the following spam rules:

Rule Broken	Score
Contains the word 'downers'	0.8
Contains the word 'club'	0.6
Contains the word 'bowl'	0.6
Contains the word 'guest'	0.4
Contains the word 'room'	0.4

Your email campaign's HTML version content has been analyzed with a SPAMASSASSIN spam filter. Your HTML version content rated a spam score of **2.8**. There is a high chance your email will **not** be blocked based on the content, but any score above **0.0** may cause some sensitive filters to block your email. A score above **3.0** will begin to impact your email campaign delivery.

💡 The **text** version of your email breaks the following spam rules:

Pinpointe comes with an online spam checker that you can use to thoroughly scan your email campaign for spammy keywords and really bad HTML code. It can save you a ton of time and money by just running one test before you send your campaign.

» [Click here](#) to learn more



# MISTAKE #19

## SENDING WITH A DEPARTMENT NAME OR ADDRESS

There has been some debate about this, but this is what we discovered...

Based on testing results demonstrated in a Pinpointe webinar, we found that people are less likely to open emails from a department name or an address like "info@company.com." Sending emails from a real person also strengthens the relationship between your business and your clients. Reach out to recipients as a human, not a robot or department.

This is where the debate starts...according to a post from MarketingProfs, it is suggested that sending webinars from a "seminar@" address or returns from "returns@" shows professionalism and organization, yet our split testing of sender addresses shows that people are more likely to open emails from people, especially from women with common names.

Do some testing, and see what works best for you.



Pinpointe's **send-on-behalf-of' feature** allows you to schedule email campaigns and set the send-from address on a per-email basis. We developed this feature so that marketing teams can schedule campaigns in such a way that each recipient's email is coming from their respective sales representative.

CRAZY  
BUT True

People are more likely to open emails from women with common names.

# MISTAKE #20

## ASSUMING YOU KNOW HOW TO WRITE EFFECTIVE CONTENT FOR EMAIL

Email marketing is a special form of writing that a lot of people have difficulty planning and executing, especially if writing marketing content is not their specialty. There are many similarities with other forms of writing, but there are also some unique opportunities and pitfalls as well.

First of all, you need to open with a compelling first line or there is a good chance your email won't get read. You also need to be sure you are writing for your audience. An email targeted at architects will use much different language than one targeted to retail consumers. With this said, try to establish a connection by offering something that will benefit your reader...free tips, a special offer, a white paper download, etc.

When writing, be sure to avoid sounding like a used car salesman. Just let your copy flow and never forget to ask your reader to take action. You also want to keep it short. When clients check email on computers, tablets and mobile devices, they usually see the subject line and the first two or three lines of the message. Forget the fluff. Recipients should know exactly what your message is about from the start. Consider the 3+30 approach: Tell your story in three seconds in the opening line of your email. Then use your second paragraph to tell a second version in 30 seconds.

When drafting the body of your message, put the offer or main topic first, explain why it's beneficial, and then provide the call to action or tell the reader what to do next (respond, visit a website, etc...). Always include a call-to-action in the first paragraph. Paraphrase, use short, clear sentences and break up emails with bullet points or numbered lists. Be strategic about where you place links — don't place them too close to each other, or else they'll be difficult to click for smartphone and tablet users.

 [Click here](#) to see more tips on writing effective emails.



Well, there you have it — 20 mistakes you want to avoid when sending out your email campaigns. Keep this information handy and revisit it from time to time to give yourself a reminder of what you should and shouldn't be doing when sending out your email campaigns.

Good luck with your email strategy and feel free to reach out to us with any questions.







Target. Deliver. Measure.

## ABOUT PINPOINTE

Pinpointe is a leading provider of on-demand email marketing automation software based in the heart of Silicon Valley, California. As former High Tech B2B marketers, we've been in your shoes. Our team has a passion for helping B2B marketing professionals communicate with existing customers, and target new prospects through behavioral targeting, improved segmentation and message personalization. Pinpointe offers top-notch resources like **informative webinars** and a **marketing tips blog** that helps you to get the most out of your email marketing efforts and become a successful marketer.

**TRY PINPOINTE FREE**

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Send 1,000 Emails for Free

No Risk, No Credit Card Required

## CONTACTING PINPOINTE

Pinpointe sales and support are available from 8 AM to 8 PM PST, M-F.

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**Sales:** [sales@pinpointe.com](mailto:sales@pinpointe.com)

**Twitter (Daily Tips):** @Pinpointe

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/Pinpointe](http://www.facebook.com/Pinpointe)

**LinkedIn:** [www.Linkedin.com/company/Pinpointe](http://www.Linkedin.com/company/Pinpointe)

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