

TIPS TO IMPROVE EMAIL RESPONSE RATES





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Email Marketing 101: Tips to Improve Email Response Rates

Today's Presenters:

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Before We Start

Event Recording

- Webinar is being recorded
- Email to webinar, slides, Q&A on Tuesday
- Summary Q and A paper

Questions

- Please ask questions in question panel
- Post questions on Twitter to: @Pinpointe

Please share! Tweet this, like us on FB, LinkedIn

For Today's Attendees

- **Pinpointe:**
 - Free - 1 month Service (\$42 ~ \$500 value)
 - <http://www.pinpointe.com/get-started>
 - Coupon code: **PPTWEBNR** (2 weeks)

- **LeadFerret:**
 - 200 free download credits
 - www.leadferret.com
 - Instructions will be emailed to all attendees

About Pinpointe

- **“Business Class” Email Marketing**
- **6,000+ companies using Pinpointe platform**
- **Mostly Mid-Sized businesses – “B2B” and “B2C”**
- **Get better email with Pinpointe!**

*“Pinpointe is Constant Contact on steroids!”
– Pinpointe customer*

About **LeadFerret**



- **First site with 100% FREE B2B data**
- **Complete data for all records, including emails, links to social profiles for some**
- **Over 5 million records**
- **Filter by Company, title, area, role, and more**
- **Download to vcard or spreadsheet**
- **Try it at: www.LeadFerret.com**

Today's Topics

- **Deliverability Overview**
- **Avoiding SPAM Content Filters**
- **Dealing with Images**
- **Writing Tips**
- **HTML Coding Tips**

What Today's Session IS / IS NOT

TOPIC IS:

- “Tactics to improve the readability, response and delivery of HTML emails”
- Or.. “Why did my good Email go Bad?”

TOPIC IS NOT:

- How Can I trick a SPAM filter??

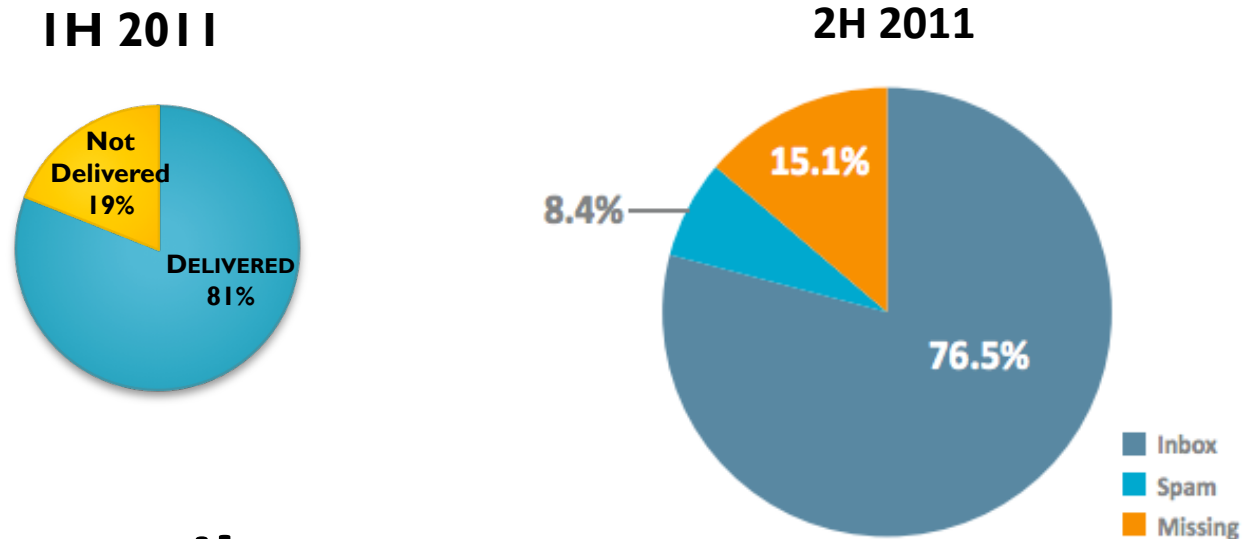
Based on analysis of 100M+ customer emails

First... Deliverability Insights

Or...

“How BIG is the Deliverability Problem?”

Email Delivery Down 24% in 2H 2011



US Email:

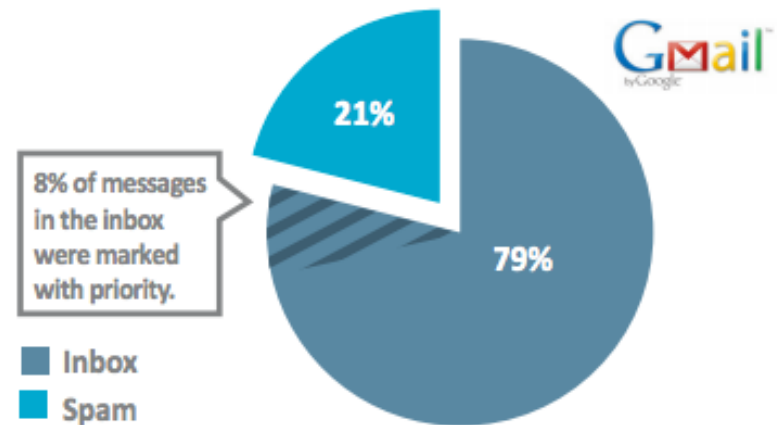
- Only 76.5% of business email get to the inbox.
- Vs. 81% in mid 2011 (-24% change)
- Gmail drop off since 12/2011

* Source: ReturnPath 2H 2011 Global Deliverability Report

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Gmail Inbox Priority Filter

- Gmail classifies messages as 'important'
- 'Subscriber engagement'
- 93% have this enabled



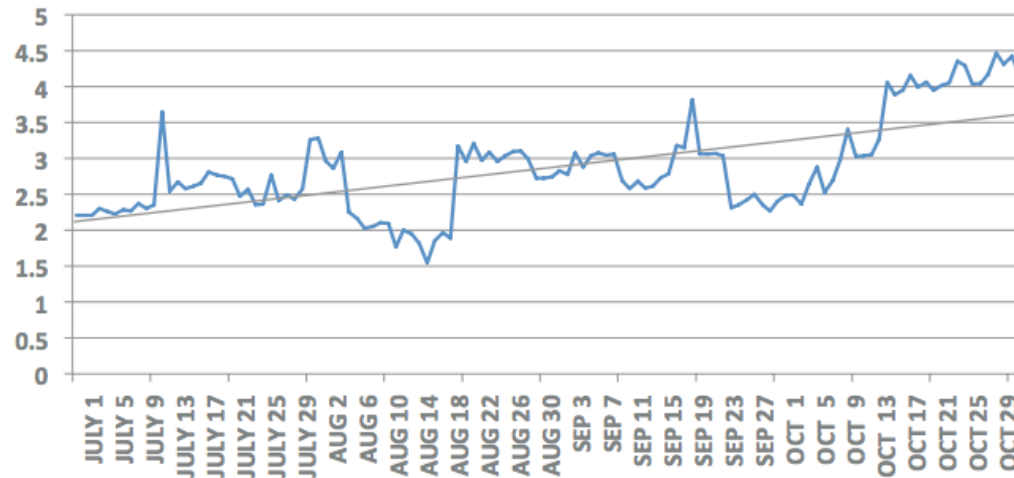
Delivery Impact:

- Inbox rates dropped to 79%
- Of the 79% in the inbox, only 8% marked priority.
- 54% decline vs. 1H 2011 (Holy cow!)

* Source: ReturnPath 2H 2011 Global Deliverability Report



Average Complaint Rates Doubled



- **Complaints directly impact deliverability**
- **In 2H 2011, complaint rates (aol.com) doubled**
- **Your Goal: << 1 per 2,000 emails sent**
- **Levels above that impact delivery**

* Source: ReturnPath 2H 2011 Global Deliverability Report

What Affects Email Response?

- **Get to the Inbox (Email Marketing 201):**
 - Don't hit SPAMTraps / honeypots
 - Make sure people don't complain
 - Maintain Low hard bounces
 - Proper email server setup & more
- **Get 'Em to Read It! (Email Marketing 101):**
 - Know why people subscribe, open delete & leave
 - Avoid spam-like content
 - Effective writing style and content structure
 - Proper HTML
 - Image management



SPAM Content Filters.

SPAM Content Filter

- **Just one step in the filtering process**
- **Based on statistical analysis of phrases, content**
- **Many different content filters:**
 - Cloudshield, hotmail, yahoo, gmail, spamassassin, ...
- **Calculates a SPAM score**
- **If score > threshold value, then:**
 - Deliver email to SPAM folder, or
 - Drop it, report failure to sender, or
 - Throw it away and don't tell anyone

Avoiding SPAM Content Filters

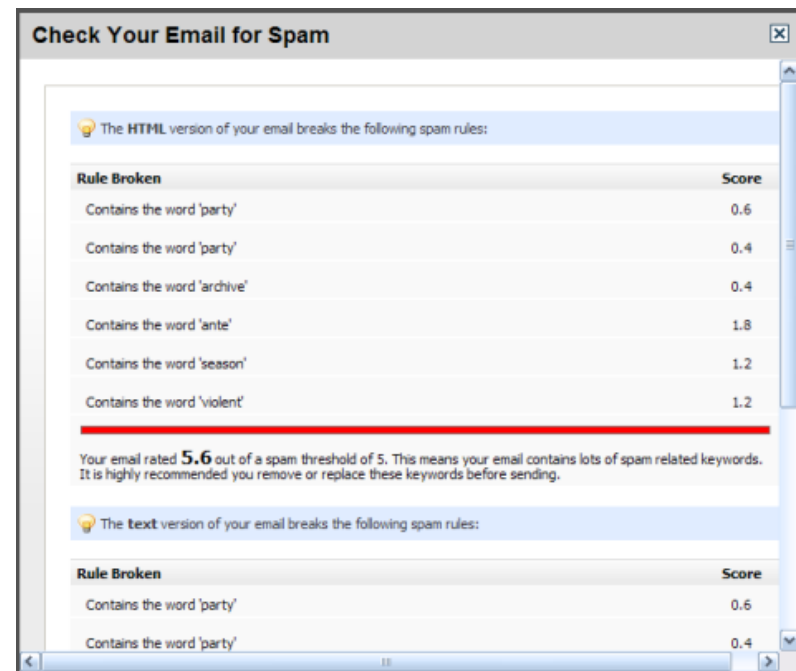
Content Examples	SPAM Score
Incorporates tracking ID (Click tracking)	+1.1 – 2.0
HTML and Text parts are different	+1.5 ~ 2.5
Message has only Text or only HTML part	+1.1 ~ 2.1
“Your Bills”, “Your Family”, “As Seen”, “Buy”, “Millions ..”	+0.9 ~ 3.2
Subject is ALL CAPITAL LETTERS	+0.5 ~ 1.5
Email Address appears in Subject	+0.7 ~ +1.2
“Dear Friend”	+1.8 ~ 2.7
“Dear (something)”	+1.7 ~ +1.9
“Money back guarantee”	+0.6 ~ 2.9
“ACT NOW”	+0.9 ~ 2.4
Topics: Money, finances, security, medication	+1.1 ~ 2.5

The full spamassassin tests are at:

http://spamassassin.apache.org/tests_3_3_x.html

Run the SPAM Checker

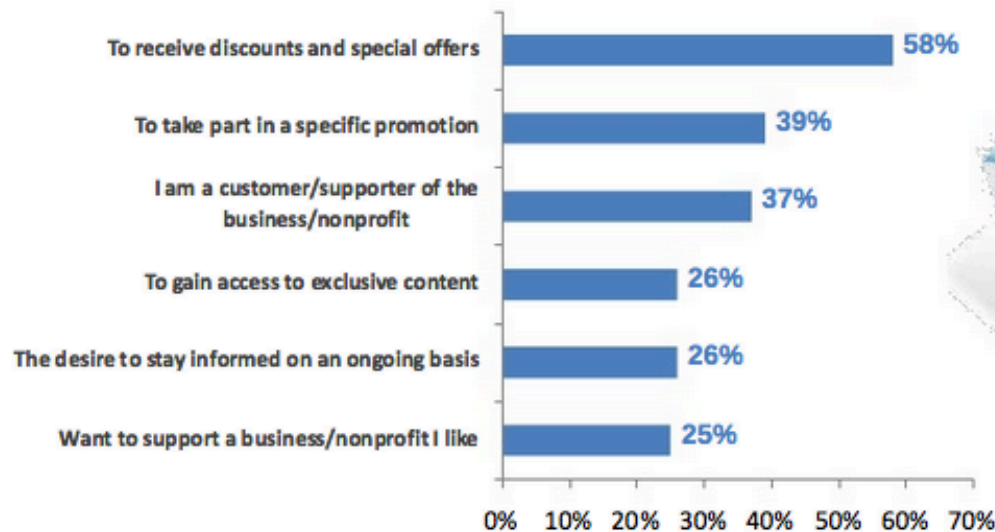
- Most email providers include a spam check tool
- Pinpointe spam previewer: quick and easy
- Goal: SPAM score <2.0
- >2.0 will cause some delivery issues



You got to the inbox... Now What?

Top Reasons for Subscribing

Top reasons for subscribing to emails from businesses or non-profits



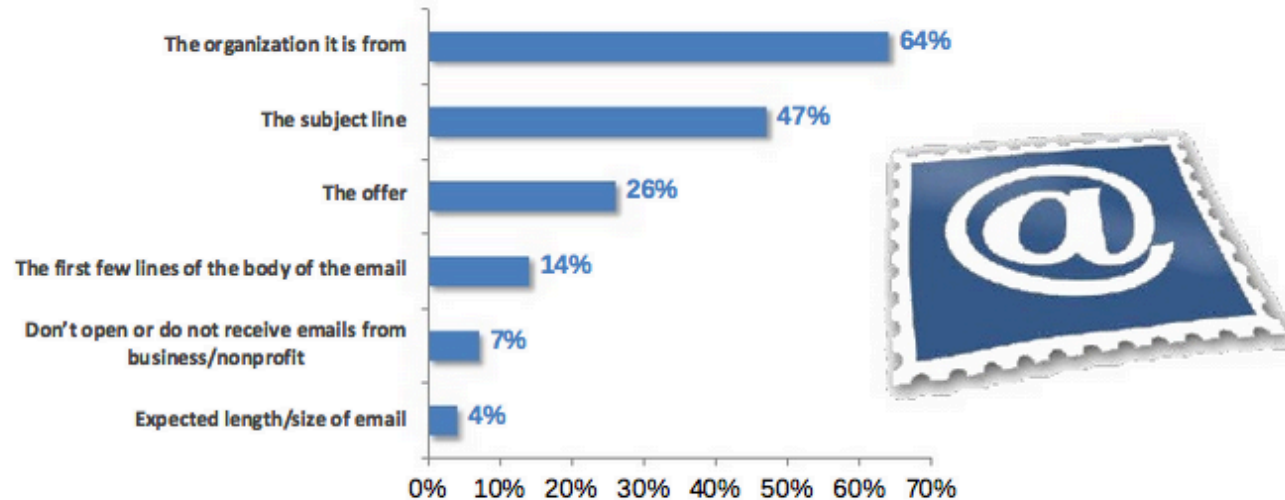
- Understand why your users subscribed in the first place
- Deliver content relevant to their interests

Source: cmbconsumerpulse, 2012 report (socialquickstarter.com)



Top Reasons for Opening

Reasons for opening emails from businesses or non-profits

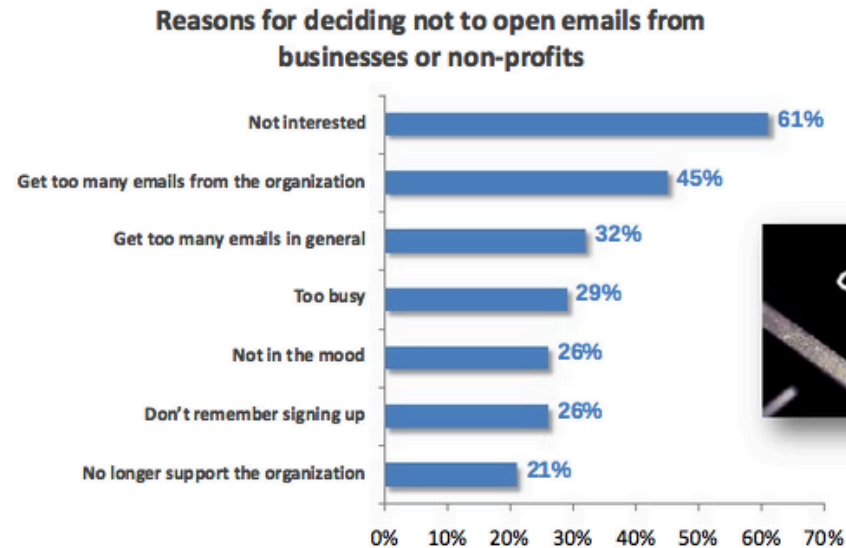


- Understand why users open your emails
- Sender + subject >> the offer (!)
- More details in following slides...

Source: cmbconsumerpulse, 2012 report (socialquickstarter.com)



Top Reasons for NOT Opening



- ... And why users ***don't*** open your email.
- Now, how can we improve responses?

Source: cmbconsumerpulse, 2012 report (socialquickstarter.com)





Writing Tips.

Email Writing Tips: Break it Down

Focus on each part of the email:

- Subject + From
- Salutation
- Intro with 1st Call-To-Action
- Body (additional calls-to-action / Links)
- Signature (Include a 'PS' with link)

- Now – keep it short!

- Join us for our 'Writing Tips' Webinar

The Subject: Importance

- ***“At 60 miles an hour, the only thing you hear in the new Rolls Royce is the ticking of the dashboard clock”***
...David Ogilvy re-wrote this 104 times!
- **>60% of decision to open is based on email subject + ‘send-from’**
- **69% decide whether to report as spam based on the subject** *(source: ESPC)*

Email Subject – Guiding Rules

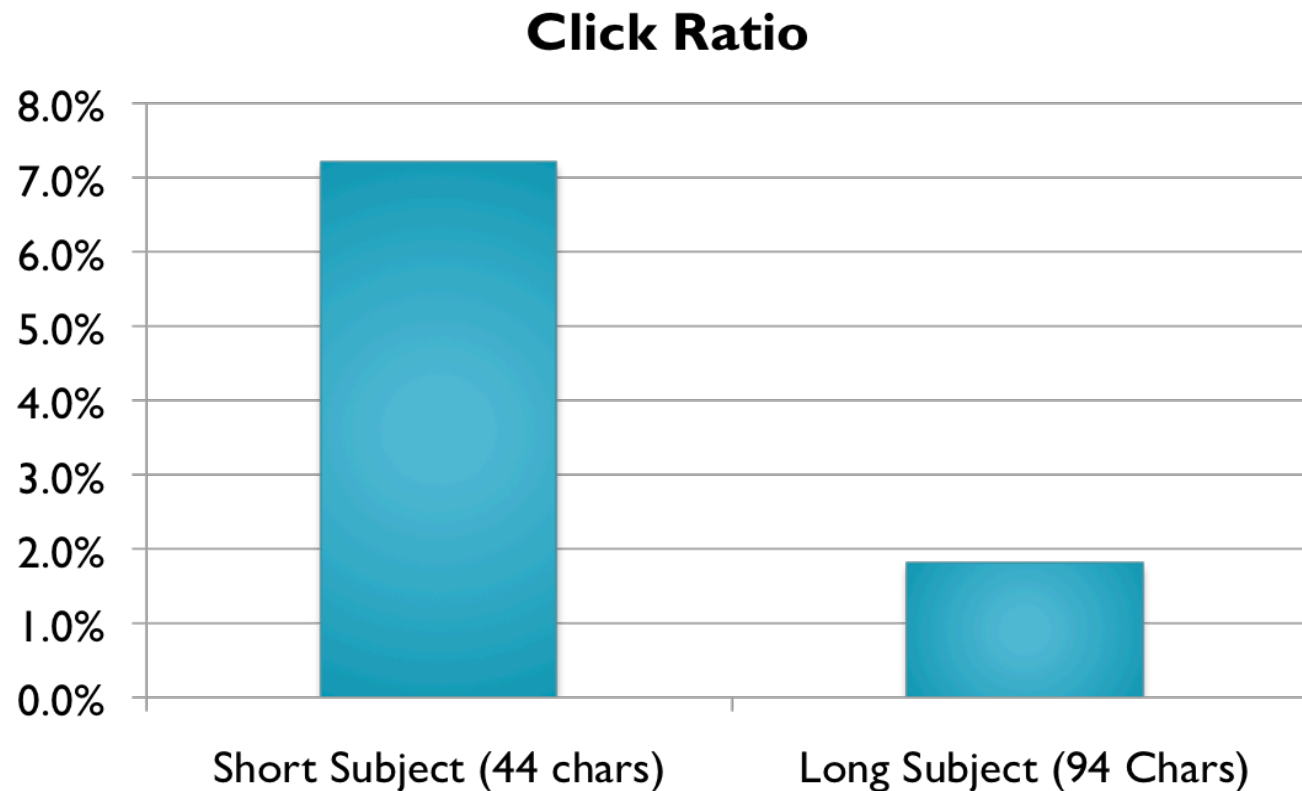
The 50/50 Rule:

- Spend 50% of your time on the subject + Intro
- 50% on everything else (including design)

The 80/20 Rule of Email Subjects

- 8 of 10 people will skim the email subject line
- < 2 in 10 will read the rest / take action

Subject Length vs. Click Rate



TIP: Keep subject line <45 characters total



The Email Send-From Field

- Send from someone they will recognize
- Reinforce “1 to 1 relationship”
- Legitimate / valid email address (!)
- Consider: person as send-from + company in subject

GOOD:

- “Craig Stouffer” cstouffer@pinpointe.com
- “Steven Smith, Pinpointe” ssmith@pinpointe.com

Usually BAD:

- “info@company.com” <info@company.com>
- “Do Not Reply” <Prospect_list@company.com>

The Opening: “Above the Fold”

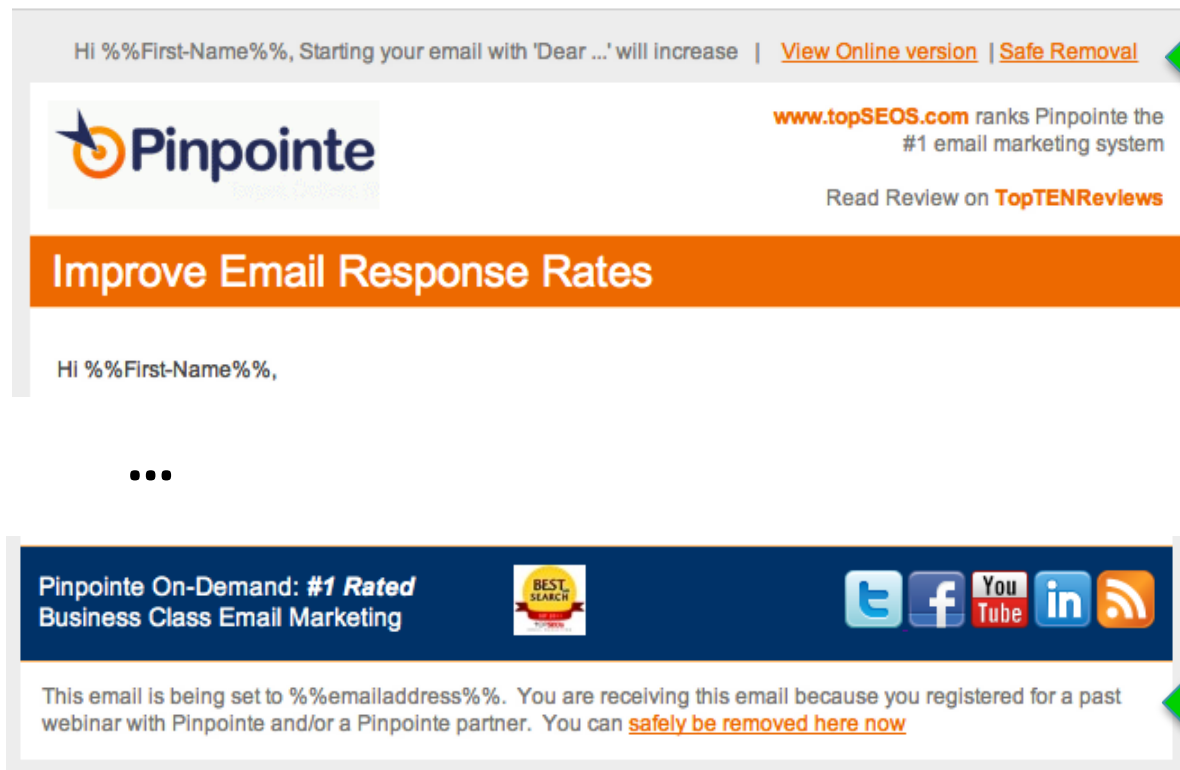
- “FOLD” (aka “Jump”): Viewable in preview pane
- You have email subject + 3 lines to get attention...
- ... Use it wisely!

Consider:


- Can your opening sentence stand on its own?
- Think: “The 3 + 30 approach:”
 - Tell the 3 second version of your story first
 - ... Then tell the 30 second version

Reduce SPAM Complaints

Add 2nd unsubscribe + Reminder:








HI %%First-Name%%, Starting your email with 'Dear ...' will increase | [View Online version](#) | [Safe Removal](#)

 **Pinpointe**
www.topSEOS.com ranks Pinpointe the #1 email marketing system
Read Review on [TopTENReviews](#)

Improve Email Response Rates

HI %%First-Name%%,

...

Pinpointe On-Demand: #1 Rated Business Class Email Marketing      

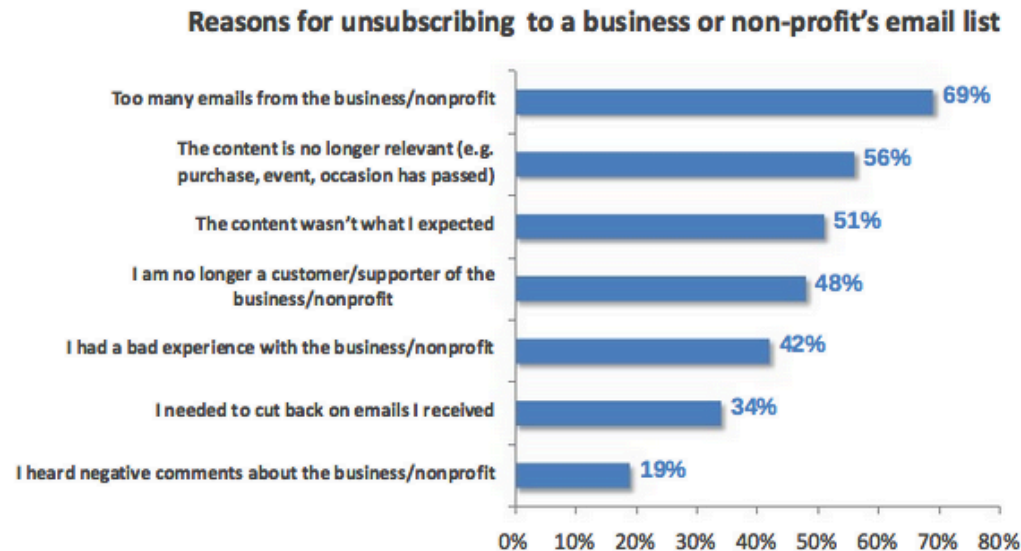
This email is being set to %%emailaddress%%. You are receiving this email because you registered for a past webinar with Pinpointe and/or a Pinpointe partner. You can [safely be removed here now](#)

Two green arrows point to the 'Safe Removal' link in the top header and the 'safely be removed here now' link in the footer.

A Few More Email Writing Tips

- **DO Personalize where possible:**
 - From: bob.smith@abc.com vs. sales@abc.com
- **DO use specific, measurable calls-to-action (links)**
 - Tip: Work in a call-to-action/link in the 1st paragraph
- **Don't add recipient name, email in subject line**
- **Size Matters: Maximum of 600-800 pixels wide**
 - Monitor Image to Text ratio
- **Length Matters: Short is good.**
 - Subject <45 characters improve response by 50% !

Stay Relevant. Don't Over-Send



- **Pummeling recipients = #1 reason for unsubscribing**
- **Poor / irrelevant content will also cost you subscribers**

Source: cmbconsumerpulse, 2012 report (socialquickstarter.com)

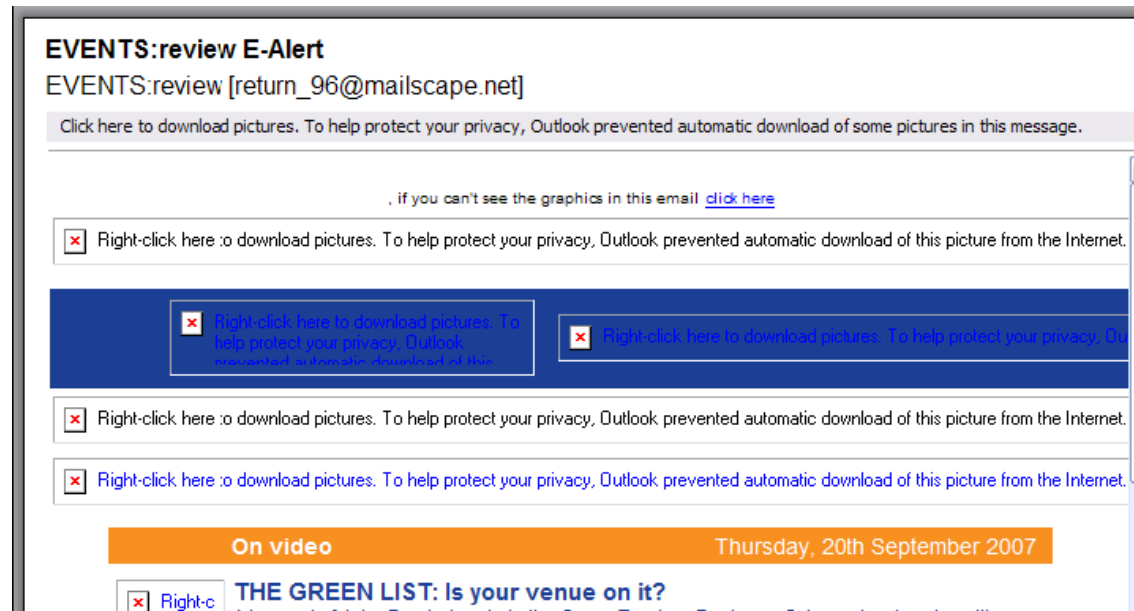
Images. Do's and Don'ts

Tips for Using Images

- Use images sparingly (B2B)
 - ~70% blocked by default
- Add 'ALternate text tags in HTML:
 - ``
- Try previewing with images blocked
- Never use one big image
 - Looks dumb
 - Increases your SPAM score!

HTML Email: Using Images

- Images disabled for ~70% of email clients
- How will your email look without images?
- This email isn't too informative, is it?



Images: Avoid One Big Image!

What I sent:



Click here to [unsubscribe](#)

What they got:

Image.jpg

Click here to [unsubscribe](#)

Poor response.



HTML Coding Tips.

Pass these tips on to your designer

Email: Limited Rendering Abilities

- **70% of B2B email clients use Outlook**
- **Email Rendering Factoids:**
 - Outlook 2007 supports only 42% of HTML code features
 - Gmail / Google Apps supports 53% of HTML
 - Yahoo does best at rendering
- **Outlook '07 Does not support:**
 - Background images
 - Forms
 - Flash, javascript or other plugins, animated GIFs
 - CSS positioning or floats
 - Images as bullet-points
 - Video (see blog entry: www.pinpointe.com/blog)
- **So... Tell your developer... Code like its 1999!**

Managing HTML Styles in Email

Email clients don't support external style sheets

Most don't support inline CSS:

```
<style type="text/css" media="screen">
  body { background-color: #ffffff; margin: 0; }
  td.webview { color: #373737; }
  td.content { padding: 20px; }
</style>
```

- **Use inline styles (it's so 1999...):**

```
<font face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"
size="2">My text</font>
```

- **Email clients strip everything between header tags**
 - **So, embed styles within <BODY> tags**

Miscellaneous HTML Tidbits

- Paragraph breaks:
 - Use `
` `
` tags vs. `<p>` `</p>` tags
- Outlook '07 doesn't do background images. Include a background cell color:
 - `<td background="http://www.mypinpointe.com/images/yourimg.gif" bgcolor="#554433">`
- NO Image maps. Slice your graphics and use `<ALT>` text with separate links.
- NO Javascript, frames, ActiveX, ASP, PHP

Takeaway: Best 'Bang for the Buck'

- Subject lines <45 characters
 - Call-To-Action in first paragraph
 - Keep it short
 - Run the spam checker
 - Use images intelligently
-
- Test test test...

Thank You

Please ...

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