

# Whitepaper

## Your Guide to Email Marketing



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## Executive Summary

Swiftpage Conenct prides itself on its passion for changing the way people communicate through email marketing. Email marketing is proven to be one of the most cost effective ways to reach out to your customers and prospects. Through email marketing, businesses are able to target the needs of their contacts. Swiftpage Connect provides you with the tools to create, track and send beautifully crafted email campaigns. It also combines email marketing with robust reporting tools to reveal the results you want to see.

The goal of this whitepaper is to provide you with a guide to email marketing so that you will ultimately increase your return on investment. After reading through this whitepaper, you should be well on your way to creating your first email marketing campaign. We hope this information is helpful to you and your business. Feel free to contact us with any questions at (877) 228-8377 or at [support@swiftpage.com](mailto:support@swiftpage.com).

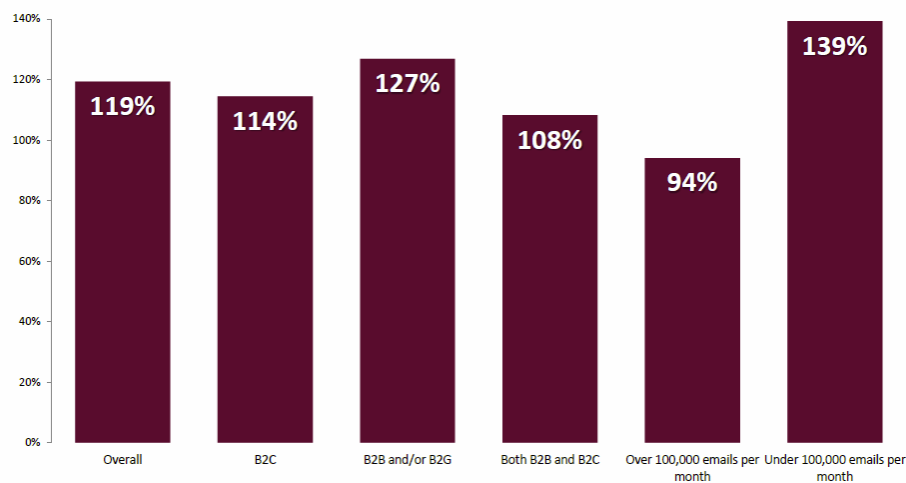
## Part One:

### What is permission-based email marketing?

Permission-based email marketing is defined simply by who you send email to. Permission-based emails are sent only to people that have requested, or opted-in, to receive your emails. Unsolicited emails, also known as spam, can destroy a company's reputation. Permission-based email thus stands out beyond spam as a valuable source of communication that allows businesses to purposely reach thousands of clients.

Email marketing has risen to be one of the most cost-effective forms of marketing, and it creates the highest return on investment (ROI) of any form of direct marketing. According to Marketing Sherpa's 2013 Email Marketing Benchmark Report, surveyed marketers reported their email programs had an average ROI of 119%.

*What is the estimated ROI from email marketing programs for your organization?*



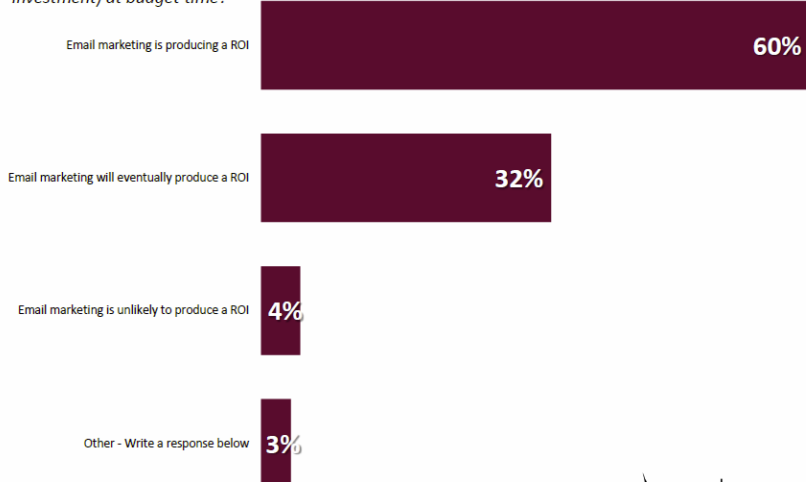
Source: ©2013 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded December 2012, N=42

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Furthermore, when asked about their perception of their email marketing's ROI, 92% stated that email marketing is producing a ROI (60%) or will eventually produce a ROI (32%), with only 4% stating that email marketing is unlikely to produce a ROI.

Which statement best describes your organization's perception of email marketing's ROI (return on investment) at budget time?



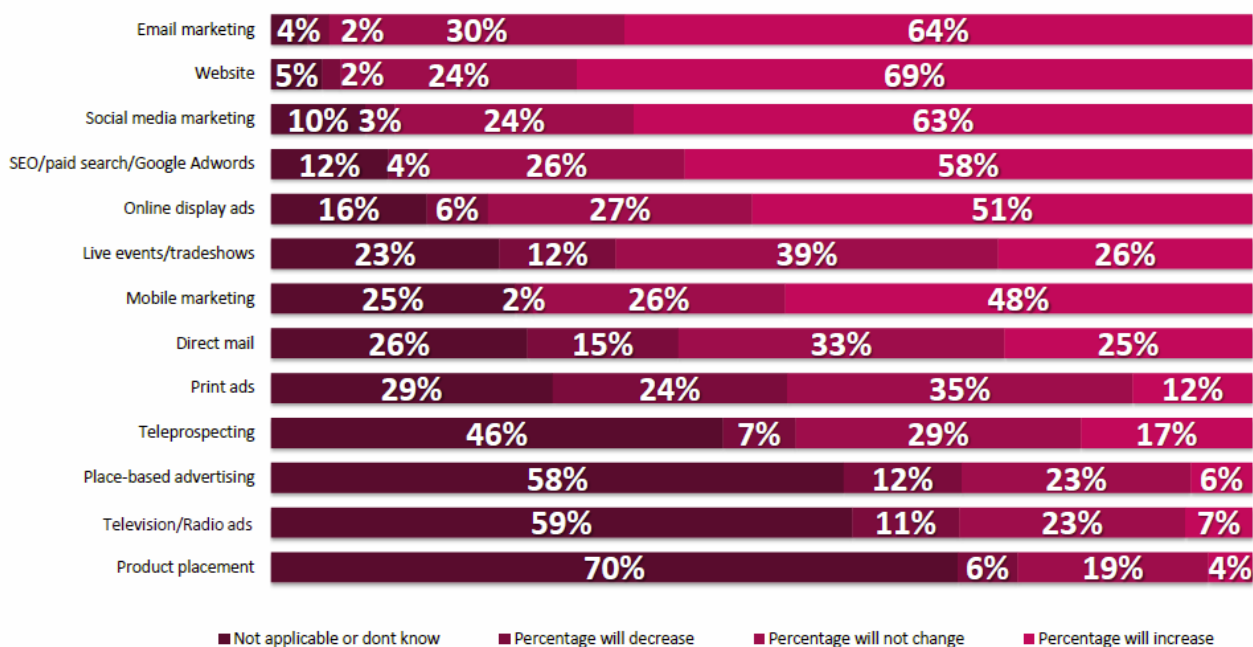
Source: ©2013 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded December 2012, N=957

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Email marketing in 2013 will continue to be an area of emphasis for marketers. In Marketing Sherpa's Benchmark Report, 64% of respondents indicated that they plan to increase their email marketing budget, outdoing other areas such as social media marketing (63%), online display ads (51%), and mobile marketing (48%). Only the marketers website received a higher response rate for increased budget allocation in 2013.

How do you foresee the percentage of your total marketing budget allocated to the following marketing tactics changing over the next year?



Source: ©2013 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded December 2012, N=821

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## Part Two:

### Email Marketing Tips

A successful email marketing campaign has the potential to generate higher open rates, obtain a greater response and ultimately create more revenue. Here are a few tips to help you create an effective email campaign.

#### Subject Line is Key

Everyone has heard the saying “Don’t judge a book by its cover.” Unfortunately, there is a reason for the saying—it’s a natural instinct. First impressions are key in any form of communication and the first thing people see of your email is the subject line. It thus has the potential to either gain or lose a reader’s interest. Subject lines that provide your company’s name and specify your email’s main point will yield higher open rates.

#### **Bad Subject Lines**

“hey I thought you want to see this”  
*This subject line provides nothing about the content or the sender*

“ACT TODAY OR YOU WILL REGRET IT!!!!”  
*Subject lines with all caps and exclamation points will most likely land your email in the junk folder.*

“Learn strategic marketing tips from c-level executives at the Marketing and Leadership Expo”  
*This is a bit lengthy and does not put key information at the beginning.*

#### **Good Subject Lines**

“[Swiftpage] How to attract the right client “  
*This provides a reference to your company and the focus of the email.*

“[Acme Garage] Fifteen percent discount on templates – 3 days only”  
*We now have a better idea of what the discount is and where it is coming from*

“ [Key note speaker] discusses marketing strategy for 2010”  
*Referring to a key note speaker will spark interest immediately.*

#### Pay Attention to the “From” Address of Your Emails

Think about your own inbox - would you be more likely to open an email sent from advertising@xyzcorp.com or Sara@swiftpage.com? People don’t want to feel as though they have received an automated email. If you don’t take the time to personalize the “from” address, your contacts will be less likely to pay attention to what you have to say. Readers are more likely to open your email, and respond to it, if they can reach “Dear Sara,” instead of “Dear advertising at xyzcorp.”

#### Mail Merge

Using your contacts’ names will make them feel as though the email was written for them personally rather than as recipient #432. Mail merges will automatically populate with information from your database and offer an easy means to personalize your message.

#### Variety

Consistency is essential to any marketing campaign, but variety is just as important. How often do you send out newsletters, event invites or updates? Are you getting an active response from your recipients? If not, try something new. However, be cognizant of the number of emails you send out each week as readers will stop showing interest in your emails if you send too frequently. How are individuals interacting with your emails? Are

you following up accordingly? How are you engaging the people that seem uninterested? You can create variety in many forms of communication including email, call lists, and direct mail. The following pages will go into further detail about how to specifically target your recipients and create variety.

### **Quality over Quantity**

Earn your contacts' trust by emphasizing the quality of communication over quantity. Your contacts are more inclined to read your emails, and forward them to their friends, when you provide them with quality content. It is therefore far more important to send out content-rich emails than it is to send out long or multiple emails.

### **Content Suggestion**

The people who take the time to contact you are most likely the ones paying attention to your email campaigns. Therefore, listen to your readers' comments. Focus on their emails, their questions, their likes and their dislikes. After all, if it were not for your loyal customers and readers, you would not be as successful as you are today. Show your appreciation by utilizing their input when you build your products and they will stay loyal to you.

Social media can be one of the most effective ways to listen to and engage your readers. Pay attention to what they say about your services and the industry at large. You can then use that information to create valuable content for your emails.

### **Test Everything Before Sending**

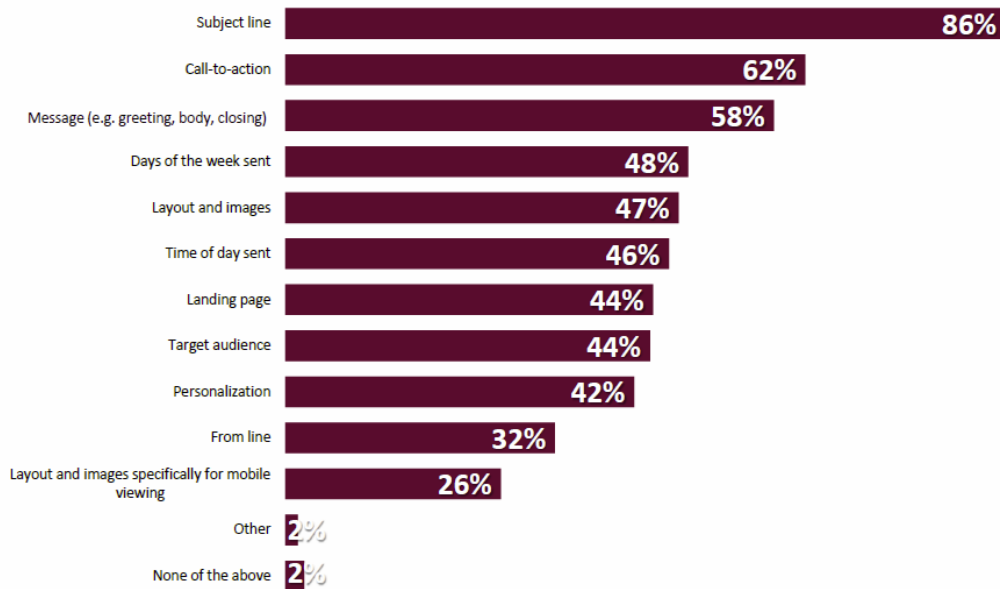
Send test emails to several different email providers and evaluate their appearance. Pictures are a great way to grab someone's attention, but remember that they do not always show up in email messages. Test your email's effectiveness by covering the images and making sure that your message and call-to-action are still clear. Click all of the links in your email to make sure they all work. Finally, test your email with a spam check tool. Spam check services review the content of your email to see what might trigger spam filters. Swiftpage Connect offers a free spam check tool at <http://swiftpageconnect.com/deliverability/spamcheck.htm>. Use this valuable tool next time you are ready to send your email campaign.

### **A/B Testing**

Your email looks great, it has working links, properly placed images, an apparent call to action and has passed the spam check, but it is not getting the open rates you were looking for. How come? There are many potential reasons including the time of day, day of the week, frequency of emails, etc.

Test one variable at a time to narrow down the possibilities. For example, explore which days your recipients are more likely to open your email. Divide your list and send each set the same email on different days. Does the open rate stand out more on one day than another? If so, determine the time of day on this particular day people are more willing to open and interact with the email. Split your list up again and send out the same email at different times. Studies have shown that the best times to send emails are the start of the day and the middle of the afternoon. See if this is true for your recipients.

Which of the following email campaign elements do you routinely test to optimize performance? Please select all that apply.



Source: ©2013 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded December 2012, N=264

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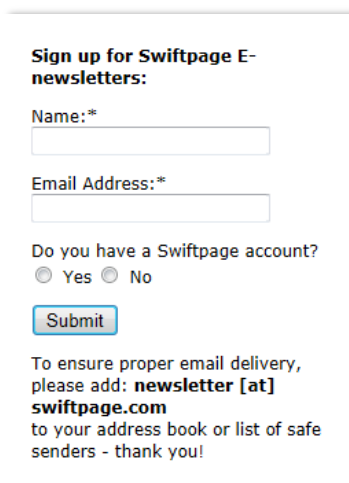


Now that you know when your recipients are the most responsive it's time to dig into the content. What sort of subject line gains the highest response? Consider the placement of your call-to-action, is one position more effective than another? Do your recipients react more to graphics or text? Do they appreciate lengthy, heavily detailed emails or would they rather have them be quick and to the point? Again, test each of these variables individually. Also keep in mind that your recipients' preferences and habits may change. Continue testing and never settle for one formula.



## Part Three:

### Building Your Email List



**Sign up for Swiftpage E-newsletters:**

Name:\*

Email Address:\*

Do you have a Swiftpage account?

☐ Yes ☐ No

To ensure proper email delivery, please add: **newsletter [at] swiftpage.com** to your address book or list of safe senders - thank you!

#### Offer Incentives

Incentives can come in the form of content rich materials, such as whitepapers, or discounted products and services. Place an email opt-in form on your website with an attached incentive. Consider putting an opt-in form on your social media pages, on the side bar of your blog site and attached to white papers and post event resources.

#### The Easier, the Better

Make signing up for your Email List as easy as possible. First of all, make sure it is not difficult for people to find where to sign up. Post a link on every page of your company website for people to subscribe to your email list. Secondly, do not require a lot of unnecessary information. All you really need is an email address and name at this point. People will be more likely to provide you with these two pieces of information than they will be to fill

out a form including their address, telephone number and more.

#### Use Your Current Contacts

Always include the “Forward to a Friend” option at the bottom of your emails, this is selected in the User Profile section of your Swiftpage Connect account. If you produce content-rich information, people will be more likely to forward the information on to their friends and colleagues. Their contacts will be receiving it from someone they know and trust, and will be more likely to look at what you have to offer. By forwarding an email, your contact is saying, “This is great information from a company I trust.”

#### Business Cards

Passing out your business card is a natural, and even expected, action in the professional world. While the basic information—name, title, company, phone, address, email and website—is standard on a business card, have you thought of promoting how someone can opt-in to your emails or newsletters? Consider including a short landing page URL (e.g. <http://xyzcorp.com/newsletter>) on the back of your card where they can opt-in to your email.

#### Use Direct Mail

If you have a direct mailing list, take advantage of it. Provide steps on signing up for your email list on every piece of direct mail you send. This way, you are marketing directly to people you know are already interested in your product. Offer them some form of motivation (a whitepaper, discount, a special online offer or exclusive company specials) to go to a computer and subscribe to your emails. People love gifts and they are a great tool for collecting information.

#### Make it Worthwhile for Your Readers

You should always make it easy for your customers to opt-out of your email newsletters and updates. However, make it worthwhile for them to stay subscribed and they will continue to follow you over the years. They may even become evangelists of your business.

## Part Four:

### What to Consider When Designing an Email Template

Your email represents you, your company, and your product or service. It is very similar to the cover of a book: the cover is a huge selling point and often differentiates the best-sellers from the duds. Here are a few simple ways to create a bestselling book cover for your business.

#### Theme – Goal

A book's cover speaks directly to the target audience by giving them an idea of the theme and content lying within the pages. This relates to your email because the theme, brand and goal of your email should encompass everything you're communicating. Your text, images and links should clearly show why your contacts should read your email and what they should do as a result (call-to-action). Use links to drive your contacts to action.

#### Subject line and Headlines

The subject line and the headlines within your email are as important as the title and chapter titles are to a book. You only have one subject line to get your recipients to open your email and three seconds to grab their attention. Brian Clark, the founder of Copyblogger, defines a headline as a beneficial and relevant promise to the right people. When creating a headline, you need to ask yourself who the right people are.

#### Illustrations – Images

Illustrations on a book cover are very compelling. Your images should not be easily overlooked or overbearing, but should instead communicate your goal and represent your brand. Consider the hierarchy of text and images to create a well balanced flow of information. Remember that some of your recipients will have images blocked on their incoming emails.

#### Content – Text

The content of your message should be authentic and concise. The key to success is to offer concrete, eye-catching material that sparks the reader's interest; you typically have 3 seconds for your recipient to decide if your email is worth reading. If you have more to say, utilize links to continue communicating with your contacts.

Embrace your story. Make sure your content represents your company and your voice. Market your services by highlighting how they stand out among your competitors. Constantly answer the question, "Why would a person choose us over our competitor?"

#### Take Action:

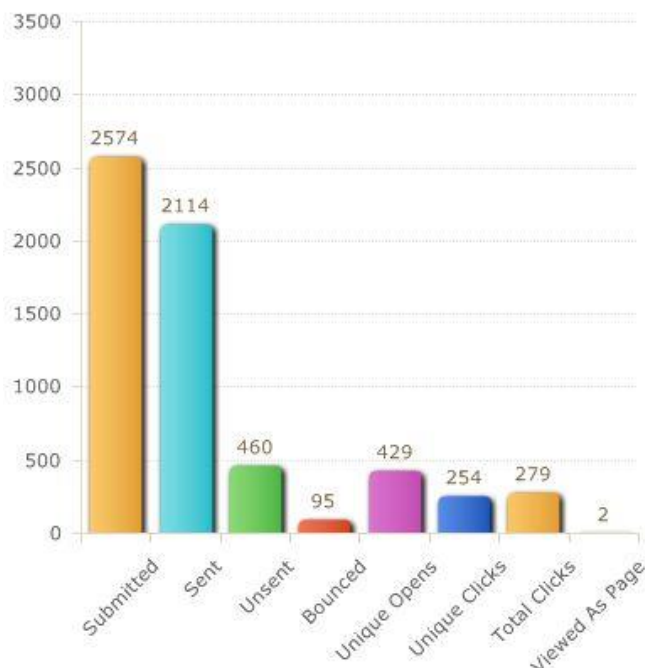
- Link your call-to-action ("Sign up Now!") or provide a phone number where they can talk to a company representative.
- Utilize both image and text links.
- Have both link types appear at the top and bottom of the Email.
- Utilize professional stock images, not clipart.
- Always test your email in various email clients with images turned off. We suggest testing in at least Outlook 2007, Outlook 2003, Outlook 2000, Yahoo!, Gmail and Windows Live. (These are the most common email clients.)

## Part Five:

### Targeting your Results

One of the major benefits of an email service provider is the ability to directly target your customers. For example, if you enter the 500 customers who have shown the most interest in your newest product into an email marketing campaign, you will be able to view exactly how they interact with the email. You can track who opens, clicks, and forwards your email.

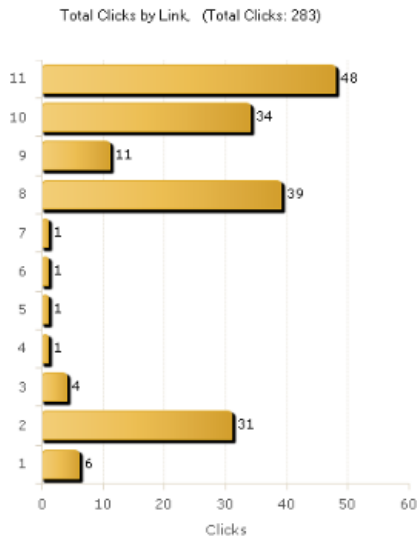
#### Campaign Summary:



Once you gather your open and click results, you will be able to determine the most qualified leads to include in your call list. Someone who opened the email three times and clicked on four links would be more interested than a contact who opened the email once and didn't click on any links. You can then send the call list to your sales team so they have this valuable information before they even pick up the phone.

#	Action	Strength	First Name	Last Name	Phone	Company Name	Email Address	Score	Sent	Opens	Clicks	
1		HOT	Joe	Smith	555-786-9004	XYZ Corp	jsmith@xyzcorp.com	74	1	7	1	<a href="#">Details</a>
2		WARM			555-812-3333	XYZ Corp	bill.jones@xyzcorp.com	74	1	7	1	<a href="#">Details</a>
3		WARM	Sam	White	555-383-9090	Swiftpage	swhite@swiftpage.com	34	1	7	0	<a href="#">Details</a>
4		MILD	Linda	Farley	555-888-9000	Swiftpage	farley.linda@swiftpage.com	10	1	1	0	<a href="#">Details</a>
5		MILD	George	Anderson	555-323-7896		george@noname.com	10	1	1	0	<a href="#">Details</a>
6		MILD	Kate	Smith		XYZ Corp	ksmith@xyzcorp.com	10	1	1	0	<a href="#">Details</a>

You can also target recipients based on the specific links they click. For instance, if a group opened and clicked a link, thank them for their interest and offer them more information on the specific link they followed.



Links Legend (Links listed by position in template)	
1	<a href="http://swiftpageconnect.com/">http://swiftpageconnect.com/</a>
2	<a href="http://www.swiftpageconnect.com/Articles/4StrategiestoWintheEmailDeliveryGold.htm">http://www.swiftpageconnect.com/Articles/4StrategiestoWintheEmailDeliveryGold.htm</a>
3	<a href="http://swiftpageconnect.com/articles/2012SchedulingEmails.pdf">http://swiftpageconnect.com/articles/2012SchedulingEmails.pdf</a>
4	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/pages/Swiftpage/188743681173817">https://www.facebook.com/pages/Swiftpage/188743681173817</a>
5	<a href="http://twitter.com/swiftpage">http://twitter.com/swiftpage</a>
6	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/company/swiftpage">http://www.linkedin.com/company/swiftpage</a>
7	<a href="http://blog.swiftpage.com/">http://blog.swiftpage.com/</a>
8	<a href="http://www.swiftpageconnect.com/Articles/4StrategiestoWintheEmailDeliveryGold.htm">http://www.swiftpageconnect.com/Articles/4StrategiestoWintheEmailDeliveryGold.htm</a>
9	<a href="http://www.pcworld.com/article/259573/spam_halved_with_grum_takedown.html">http://www.pcworld.com/article/259573/spam_halved_with_grum_takedown.html</a>
10	<a href="http://swiftpageconnect.com/deliverability/spamcheck.htm">http://swiftpageconnect.com/deliverability/spamcheck.htm</a>
11	<a href="http://www.swiftpageconnect.com/Articles/4StrategiestoWintheEmailDeliveryGold.htm">http://www.swiftpageconnect.com/Articles/4StrategiestoWintheEmailDeliveryGold.htm</a>

*This report shows how many times specific links were clicked.*

For unresponsive customers, try using a different subject line and content for the second email. You might also employ a new form of communication, such as direct mail or a phone call.

There are various marketing strategies. However, email marketing allows you to know your audience before you contact them and thus increases the possibility of turning your leads into loyal customers.

## Part Six:

### Practical Use

#### Scenario 1: A small business owner who has never used email marketing before

Imagine a bakery whose main focus is dedicated to employees and current customers. The bakery could send out news about special offers and upcoming events in a monthly newsletter to their loyal customers who choose to stay up to date with what the bakery has to offer.

#### Scenario 2: A business launching a new product.

Company X wants to spread the word about its newest offer but doesn't know how. They could begin by sending an email to all of their customers and monitoring the results. By generating a Call List, they would be able to specifically identify their "Hot" leads. They might then consider sending a second email to all of their unopens or perhaps reaching them through another method, like a postcard.

#### Scenario 3: Driving people to an upcoming event.

Do you want to get a numerical estimate of attendees before an event takes place? Send out an email allowing guests to RSVP online. Once a guest RSVPs, enter them into an event reminder campaign. If they never RSVP, enter them into a "sorry we missed you" campaign. All of this can be automated with Swiftpage Connect Drip Marketing. Simply set the up the campaigns and watch as your attendance increases for your events.

#### Scenario 4: New to Social Media?

Social media is perhaps the most effective contemporary marketing tool. In order to gain followers, send an email to your customer base announcing that you are now taking your presence in the social media world seriously. By doing this, you will gain loyal followers who actually respond when you ask a question.



## Glossary of Terms

### *Above-the-fold*

Above-the-fold items show up on the screen when an email is opened—a recipient does not need to scroll down to view them. It is beneficial to put your most important information (links, product or event details, etc.) above-the-fold because it is more likely to be viewed. If you can catch your readers' attention here, they will be more likely to scroll down, read on and take action.



#### **A Snapshot of Above-the-fold:**

Notice that all of the main article headings are showing even if the article is not sparking the interest to scroll down. Notice the placement of the links. Are they action-driven?

### *Blacklist*

A blacklist acts as a filter to block email from a particular server. If a recipient of one of your email campaigns reports the message as spam, the recipient company's Internet Service Provider (ISP) may block any future correspondence from your entire domain. This can be very costly as it impacts not only marketing, but also sales, accounting and customer service—every department of your business attempting to contact your customers. If the email recipient was an existing customer, his or her company may not receive important information about meetings, billing and so on.

### *Call List*

The Call List is a valuable tool that converts your email campaign reporting into essential information for your sales team. The Call List ranks contacts in order from "Hot" to "Mild" based on their interaction with your email. Someone who opens your email and clicks on links is labeled as "Hot" because they are considered one of your most interested and valuable contacts. Someone who opens your email but does not actually click on a link is grouped among your "Warm" or "Mild" leads. A person who does not open your email or click on a link within it is not included in your leads as they are considered to be less interested.

### *Click Rate*

Click rates signify the amount of people who click on at least one link in your email. A "unique click" represents the first time someone clicks on a link, whereas "total clicks" represents the total number of times a person clicked on a link in your email. On a Swiftpage Connect Call List, recipients who click on at least one link will most likely be rated as "Hot" leads.

## ***CRM***

The general purpose of a CRM software (Customer Relationship Management) is to provide businesses with a resource to ensure that customers have a great experience. Swiftpage Connect is fully integrated with the CRMs Sage ACT! by Sage, Sage SalesLogix, and SageCRM.

## ***Email Service Provider***

An Email Service Provider (ESP) is an organization that provides a web-based email tool. Swiftpage Connect is an example of an ESP.

## ***Hard Bounce***

A hard bounce is an email that is rejected instantaneously at the recipient's server level. It essentially occurs because the recipient's server does not accept the email. An email will hard bounce if the inbox is invalid, for example. When the email bounces, Swiftpage Connect collects it and reports it to the sender as a bounce.

## ***HTML Email***

An HTML format provides more freedom in an email's design than a plain text email. HTML allows the sender to include images, headers, links and more. Swiftpage Connect offers an online template editor where you can create your email templates in HTML. We also provide a template library where you can find outlines and ideas for your next template. You can also import your own HTML templates designed in HTML editors like Dreamweaver, Frontpage, or True HTML.

## ***Marketing Automation***

Marketing Automation is the use of software to automate your marketing processes. Swiftpage Connect Drip Marketing is a marketing automation solution. It allows you to focus on other details during your business day because it removes the tasks you would have had to perform manually. You can construct an entire marketing campaign that includes email marketing campaigns, call lists, direct mail, and more. Also, if someone signs up for a certain offer in one email campaign, you can establish filters so they are transferred to a second campaign to better target your audience. With every sign up, contacts are automatically entered into the second campaign.

## ***Open Rate***

The open rate signifies the percentage of recipients you sent to that have opened your email. It is a great way to track your contacts' interest and to compare and contrast what marketing methods bring the best results. Swiftpage Connect tracks opens through embedded image tracking. When the recipient opens the message, the image is accessed and an open is counted. Open rates also help group your contacts into Call List categories to ensure that you are contacting the most interested recipients.

## ***Opt-out***

An option for the recipient to opt out—in other words, to be removed from your email list—must be included in all email campaigns as required by the federal [2003 CAN-SPAM Act](#). Swiftpage Connect automatically adds an opt-out option in the footer of your emails, and greatly simplifies the opt-out process. The Swiftpage Connect footer also includes your company's address and information on contacting Swiftpage Connect as the third-party provider.



### ***Soft Bounce***

A soft bounce occurs when an email message that gets to the recipient's mail server but is sent back before it ever reaches the recipient. The main causes of a soft bounce are a full inbox on the recipient's end or an inbox no longer existing

### ***Spam***

Spam is a slang name for Unsolicited Commercial Email (UCE). Spam is almost always email that is sent without the recipient's permission. If someone perceives you as spam, they can blacklist you.

### ***Whitelist***

The whitelist is a list of email addresses or domain names from which a spam filter will allow messages to be received. When your customers establish your email address (or domain) as a trusted sender, you will be added to their whitelist. It is always a good idea to ask your customers to add you to their whitelist (or Safe Senders list) when they first sign up for your email list. You should also encourage them to add your company's email address to their address book.



## About Swiftpage Connect

Swiftpage Connect is a subsidiary of Summit 5, a software development company, whose founders have a passion for changing the way people communicate. Swiftpage Connect was designed to make email marketing one of the most cost-effective tools in a company's arsenal, simple and accessible to individuals and organizations of all types and sizes. Since its inception, Swiftpage Connect has helped thousands of for-profit and non-profit organizations create, send and track the performance of email campaigns. In addition to its stand alone on-line email service Swiftpage Connect is the first server-based email management system to be fully integrated into ACT!, the leading contact management system in the world.

Swiftpage Connect takes performance, security and reliability very seriously so that our customers will have the highest possible up time. Our servers are hosted by Viawest, a co-location company in Denver, Colorado. Internet connectivity is provided by separate backbones from separate carriers assuring that your Swiftpage Connect system is always online.

In addition to the state-of-the-art technology infrastructure, Swiftpage Connect prides itself on the highest level of customer support.