

Would you ignore 60% of your contacts?

Images vs Text? One clear winner.



Dear Helen,
Perhaps now isn't
however, if you'
If you'd like a fr

In the world of email marketing a good open rate is important, but what really matters is getting the recipient to act. That means respond, call or click. And in B2B marketing, nothing puts a recipient off more than a templated HTML email!

In a recent email test for a client, we pitched a good looking HTML email with nice graphic images against a text only email to see which performed the best.

Apart from the visual presentation, the content of the emails were the same, with the same number of identical links in each.

We split a pool of 'warm' email data 50:50 and sent to each of the lists at exactly the same time.

And the results?

Before you read on, which email do you think performed the strongest?

Many of our clients think an HTML version will win the day. However, as we see here, in all of our key metrics the text only email outperformed the HTML version.

Significantly, the ratio of people who clicked links in the text only email to the HTML one was 136 vs 41.

Now opens were 378 vs 355, the disparity is not so obvious – why? Because the subject line was the same in each, so you'd expect a similar level of opens.

Deliverability was also more successful with the text only email, which generated 14% fewer unsubscribe requests.

Need we say more?

over...



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Remember, an HTML email looks to the recipient like they are about to be sold to. And buyers are not so gullible as to succumb to a sales pitch, however nice we try to make it look. Our carefully written emails are more likely to be read because they are pitched just right – giving the reader the information they need, on their terms.

And just think for a moment – when was the last time exactly that you responded to and bought from an HTML email, especially in a B2B arena? There are no hard and fast rules here. It's all about understanding the psychology of the recipient. And in the B2C arena, it's different again.

Consistent results

We've carried out this test numerous times before for other clients in different industries, and the results are always pretty clear.

So what's the best strategy for email success?

Keep your emails short, pertinent, helpful and to the point, sprinkle them with a few relevant links here and there to encourage engagement, and you'll enjoy greater success rates with your email campaigns.

Oh, and one more thing before we forget, remember it's never about you, it's about what the recipients want!