

# COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES



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## E-pushing Your Message

**In the current economic climate, getting the most out of your marketing budget is crucial. Traditional methods like cold calling, direct mail and directory advertising can be costly, and with consumers' increasing reliance on the Internet, these methods no longer provide optimal return on investment. As a result, many businesses are now turning to the Internet to connect with consumers.**

Email is one of the most effective ways to reach your target audience because it is a direct method of communication, pushing your message to your consumers. Other types of online marketing, such as search engine optimization and banner advertising, rely on the user to search to find you. By

sending a personalized e-newsletter (i.e., "Dear Bob") on a regular basis, you can maintain contact, add value and deepen your relationship with your client base.

E-communications afford many of the same advantages as direct mail. According to a 2009 Forbes survey, 46% of marketing executives feel that it is the most effective online marketing tactic for generating conversions. E-communications are easy to track, as most third-party e-campaign tools provide detailed reporting on each deployment, allowing you to cater future e-campaigns to your client's specific needs and interests. You can even segregate your email lists to customize your message to distinct audiences (i.e., personal vs. commercial clients). Additionally, email marketing is paperless, making it a 'greener' option. As for cost, sending an e-newsletter is typically much more cost effective.

### EFFECTIVE USE OF THE TOOLS

However, it's important to use these tools properly. Email users are cautious of junk mail and spam, and will likely decide whether to devote time to your message after only a quick glance — so use this opportunity wisely. Here are some tips to

help enhance the presentation and effectiveness of your e-news:

Clearly brand your e-news with your company logo and colours so clients can recognize you.

Keep it simple and brief — provide headlines and a brief synopsis, then link to your web site for more information.

Use a catchy and descriptive subject line in your e-news, but avoid terms like "Win" or "Free" that are typically found in spam.

Provide value. If your e-news hasn't informed, amused or provided some real value to your client, don't send it.

Ensure that you have the user's permission to send them emails and include an unsubscribe option with every e-push.

Of course, you can't send an email if you don't have the email address. It's important to make collecting your client's email addresses part of doing business, and having a sign-up facility on your website is a good first step. Building an up-to-date client email database will become increasingly important to your business. However, this is a privilege and not a right, so be sure to use the tool wisely.



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