

The Anatomy of an Effective Email

60%

Open Rate*

Industry averages, as measured by some of the largest email vendors, fall mostly between 18-20% for opens (depending on the industry). Click-through rates typically struggle to get out of single digits. But the right formula and elements can vastly improve email effectiveness.

43%

CT Rate*

- In a 2-year long email campaign to C-Suites for a B2B service.

The Heart: Emotion

Making people act takes FACT and EMOTION. It's easy to present facts but to cause action takes more. A short story, personalized dilemma or short situational case study as part of the body will capture attention and invite action. It's called the "me too" mentality. When others see a desired solution or can commiserate with a problem, they are more likely to "want in", or they at least become curious about the outcome in your click through link.

The Skeletal System: Hints for Structure

- Offer a text-only version if using HTML formats. Many email services (Gmail, AOL, etc.) and many company-owned servers send HTML emails directly to spam.
- Keep formatting narrow. Most emails are opened on smart phones. Wide bodies are difficult to read on these devices.
- Use short paragraphs (3-5 sentences) to keep readers moving along with you.
- CTA's get their own line, often as part of a question so you can control the conversation.

The Head: Subject Lines

If the subject line doesn't grab them the message won't be seen. Make it as relevant to your reader as possible by using one of the following grabbers:

- Addressing a pressing problem.
- Asking a question.
- Proposing a solution.
- When all else fails, offer a list (Top Ten, 5 Reasons...etc.)

HINT: Write this last so the headline matches the message and doesn't become misleading.

The Muscle: Your Call to Action

This must be good and meaningful. You'd better deliver the goods if you're asking someone to take the time to click. Your CTA must tease the reader with what they want to know. Exercise this muscle 2-3 times in an email's body; near the top, after the "story" and usually in the P.S.

The Feet: The P.S.

80% of your readers will skip from the headline to the P.S. to see what's in it for them, or to get the gist of the email. Make it a good summary of benefits; include your click-through link.

For Email That Delivers Results

Carl Olson

Chapter One



Copywriting