



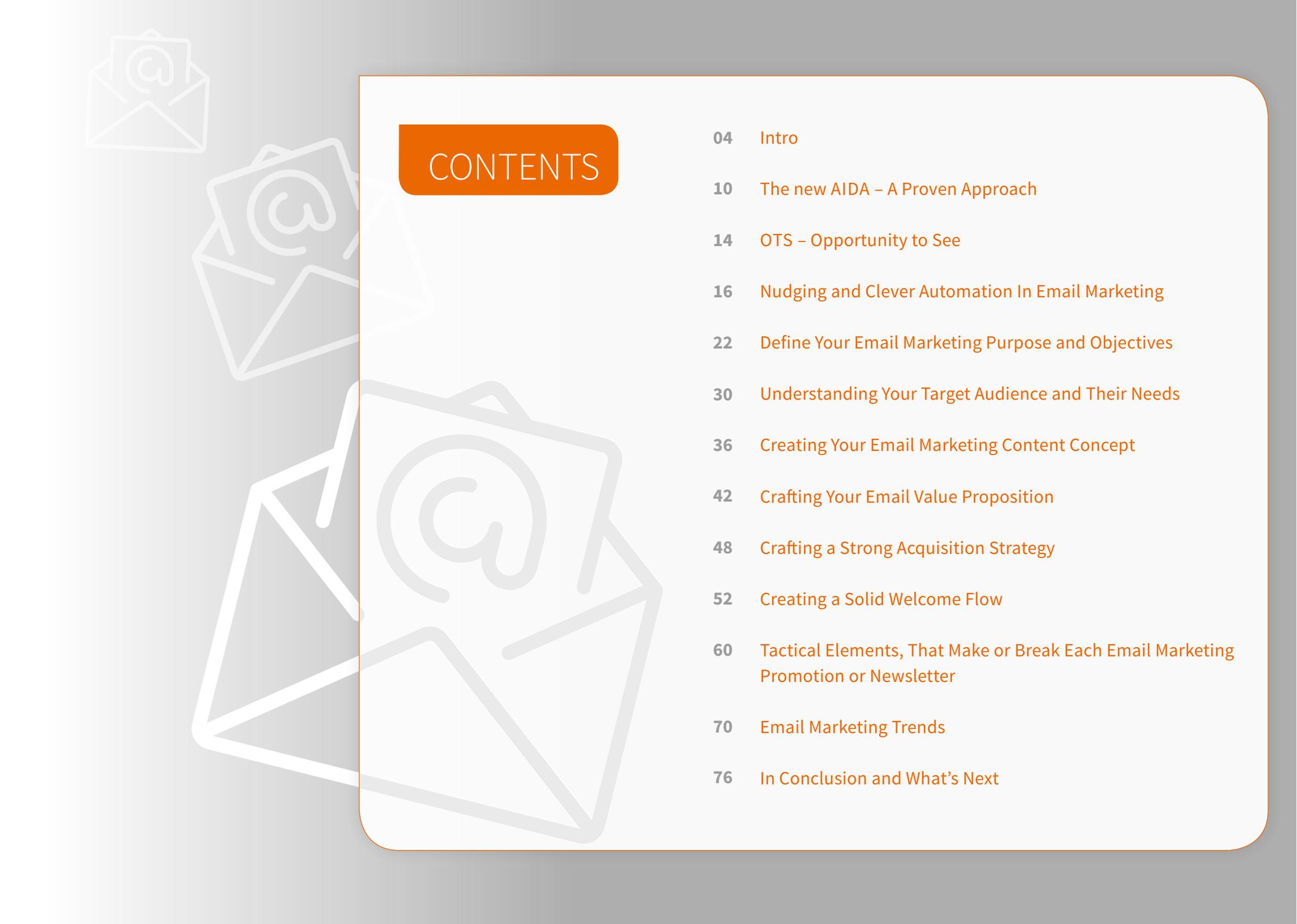
By  
award-winning  
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# INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL EMAIL MARKETING

*A step-by-step, practical fast-track guide to results*



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## THE INTRO



START

Email marketing has consistently been ranked the top-performing marketing channel for years. Several years ago, it was rumored to be dead but – along with email newsletters – it still continues to outperform all other marketing channels.

### Fact

Email marketing delivers the best return on investment averaging \$ 30 for each \$ 1 invested.

Marketers representing organizations of all sizes report a 30:1 return on marketing investment\* when using email marketing. In comparison, social media is reportedly returning only 20:1 on every dollar invested.

Every day, thousands of businesses from every corner of the world prove that email marketing and email newsletters can deliver great results if you do it right.

The aim of success with email marketing is to empower you to do just that. In this e-book, you will get a step-by-step guide to making your email marketing successful, as well as a bit of insight on future email marketing trends.

Email marketing has evolved and keeps evolving. Businesses are now seeing great results with marketing automation, which is a smart extension of email marketing. Before you begin to incorporate more advanced programs, it is important that you get your email marketing basics right. This step-by-step e-book guide helps you get it right.

\* ROI numbers calculated based on global reports from these sources: Markedu State of European Email Marketing Report, DMA US, DMA UK and Litmus.

### Michael Leander – Who am I and what do I know?

My name is Michael Leander. Hailing from Denmark, I spend most of my time speaking, training people, or consulting in different areas of data-driven and online marketing. Email marketing and marketing automation are my passions.



As a young Chief Marketing Officer (CMO), I began using email marketing over 20 years ago. Back then, there were no internet resources, e-books or courses to tell us what or how to do it. By using common-sense marketing and being goal-oriented, our small team made it work.

Our objectives were simple:

1) acquire new customers, 2) sell more to existing customers, and 3) educate certain segments of our audiences.

Since then, I've been involved with all aspects of email marketing as a consultant, speaker

and trainer. Working with hundreds of different businesses on 6 continents, I helped mega brands turn failing email marketing programs into highly successful programs, and solo businesses as well as small entrepreneurs using email marketing to get their ventures off to a great start.

It is my hope that this e-book will lead you to success with your email marketing. In fact, I'm sure it will – if you do your best to implement its guidelines and tips.

What's so great about email marketing is that anyone can become successful. All that it takes is a good plan and a lot of trial-and-error. Nothing beats learning-by-doing.

— Michael Leander

### 7 Critical Components of Success with Email Marketing

To succeed with email marketing, there are initially 7 key components you need to address. Each of these are important: It is the sum of them all that creates outstanding email marketing results.

The 7 components are:

1. Setting your purpose and objectives
2. Understanding your target audience and their needs
3. Creating your content concept
4. Crafting your email value proposition
5. Creating a strong acquisition strategy
6. Creating a solid welcome flow
7. Tactical elements that make or break each email marketing promotion or newsletter



On **pages 23** through 67 you will get an introduction to each component.

If you're just getting started, you will do well to follow the steps described. And for those of you with email marketing experience, read through the text and ask yourself whether you have done all that is described.

### Things to consider

Before you begin reading about the practical aspects of your email marketing program, there are some additional elements you should think about. I guarantee you that all these elements apply to you, too.

For the sake of brevity, I have only included three elements in this e-book. Namely:

1. From AIDA to AIDEA
2. The importance of OTS
3. Automate nurturing

So here we go!



As you may know, AIDA is a stimulus-response model widely used in marketing and advertising. It was developed in the late nineteenth century – even today you will hear people still referring to the model.

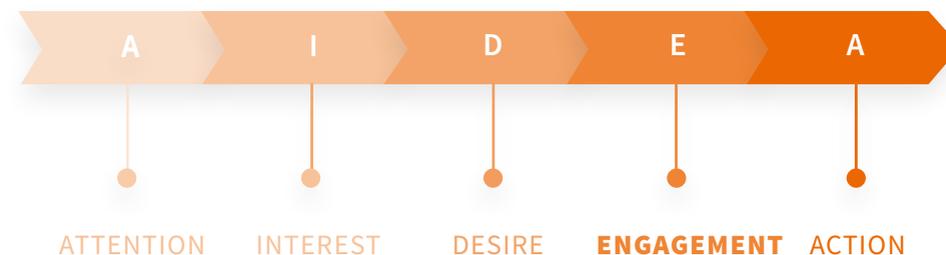
### AIDA stands for Attention – Interest – Desire – Action

You see how AIDA in fact describes a purchase funnel. Marketers first must secure attention, then hold that attention through interest. The interest must lead to desire, which in turn should lead to action.

I feel that AIDA needs an update. So, for our purpose of succeeding in email marketing – or for that matter in any type of marketing – let me introduce to you my modernized and updated version of AIDA.

I have renamed it **AIDEA**

The acronym AIDEA stands for:



**THE NEW AIDA –**  
A PROVEN APPROACH

As you will immediately have spotted, the only difference between the original AIDA and my modernized version is the added step of “engagement”.

The premise for AIDEA is that most buyers don’t go directly from desire to action. In many industries or product categories there’s often a considerable time lag – also known as an increase in incubation time: That is, the amount of time a buyer takes from becoming interested to completing the purchase.

For example, studies from Google and others indicate that consumers tend to engage with 11 pieces of content prior to making a purchase decision.

#### Fact

Consumers engage with 11 pieces of content before making a purchase.

As a concrete example, think about hotel bookings. Anyone with an internet connection can easily find, research, fact-check, book and pay for a hotel room in a matter of minutes.

Yet, studies show that most people take quite a long time to make a decision. People check several booking engines using price, rating (reviews) and location as indicators. And once they’ve narrowed down the best hotel options, they’ll go and check the hotel websites before returning to the booking engine of their choice – unless, of course, the booking is made directly on the hotel website.

In other words, going from desire to action is often not done in a matter of minutes. People take longer to make purchasing decisions. This shift in buying behavior is also the reason why Google and others introduced remarketing years ago.

When relating AIDEA to email marketing, you must understand that just because your email communication captured someone’s attention, got that person interested and aroused a desire is no guarantee that your recipient will act right away. It is likely that this person will need to see your message several times – and probably more relevant information to move closer to a purchase decision.

Which brings me to the three next elements, namely OTS (Opportunity to See), nudging and automation.





## OTS – OPPORTUNITY TO SEE

When doing a good job of sending emails to a list of verified subscribers, it is more than likely you'll experience open-rates ranging from 20–50% and click-through-rates of one-third of that. This also means that some 50–80% of your audience did not open your email. And an even larger percentage of your audience did not click to experience your offer or content.

### Fact

**Open-rate** indicates the percentage of people who opened your email.

**Click-through-rate (CTR)** indicates the percentage of people who clicked on one or more links.

Most email marketers only send each offer or content piece once. That's a mistake. You want to give your audience more opportunities to see your message.

Chances are that someone very interested and most likely to act might miss your message. This isn't an indication of being disinterested but merely the result of a busy inbox.

I encourage you to incorporate an increase of OTS in your email marketing programs. I also recommend employing it with your email newsletters – which subscribers often perceive to be of lesser importance and therefore have no sense of urgency – to engage with them more successfully.

In the context of email marketing, nudging is a reminder, or a process designed to get people to take a certain action. It is also an effective method to keep interested recipients engaged – as well as increase the OTS.

With the right tool in place, you will be able to automate your “nudges”. This is often referred to as marketing automation.

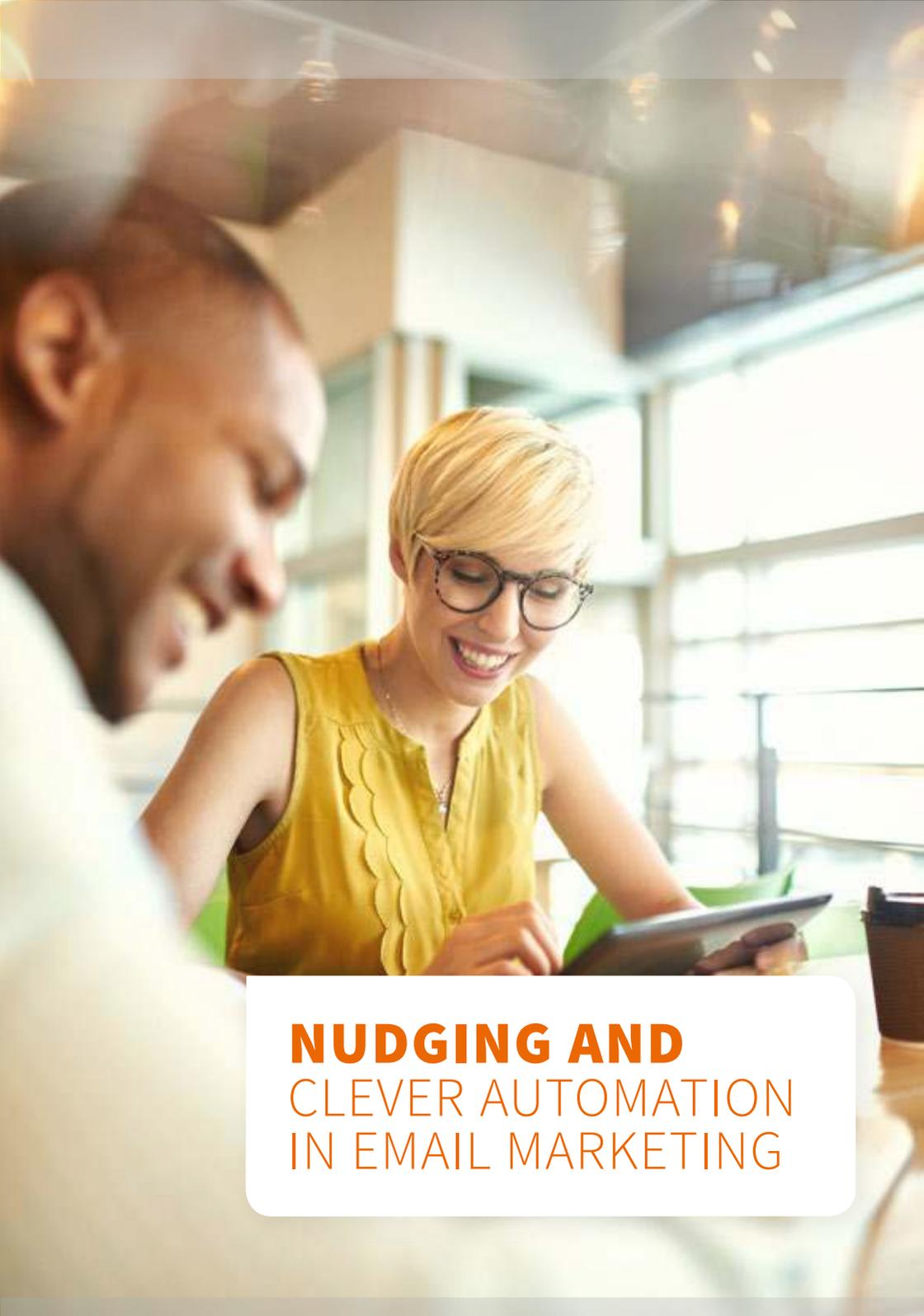
There are many ways to use nudging and email marketing automation. It all depends on your purpose, goals and the complexity of what you are offering your audience.

**Here is an example:**

SimCorp is a global software company selling to businesses in the financial services industry. They use email marketing and marketing automation as a way to inform, educate and convince potential customers.

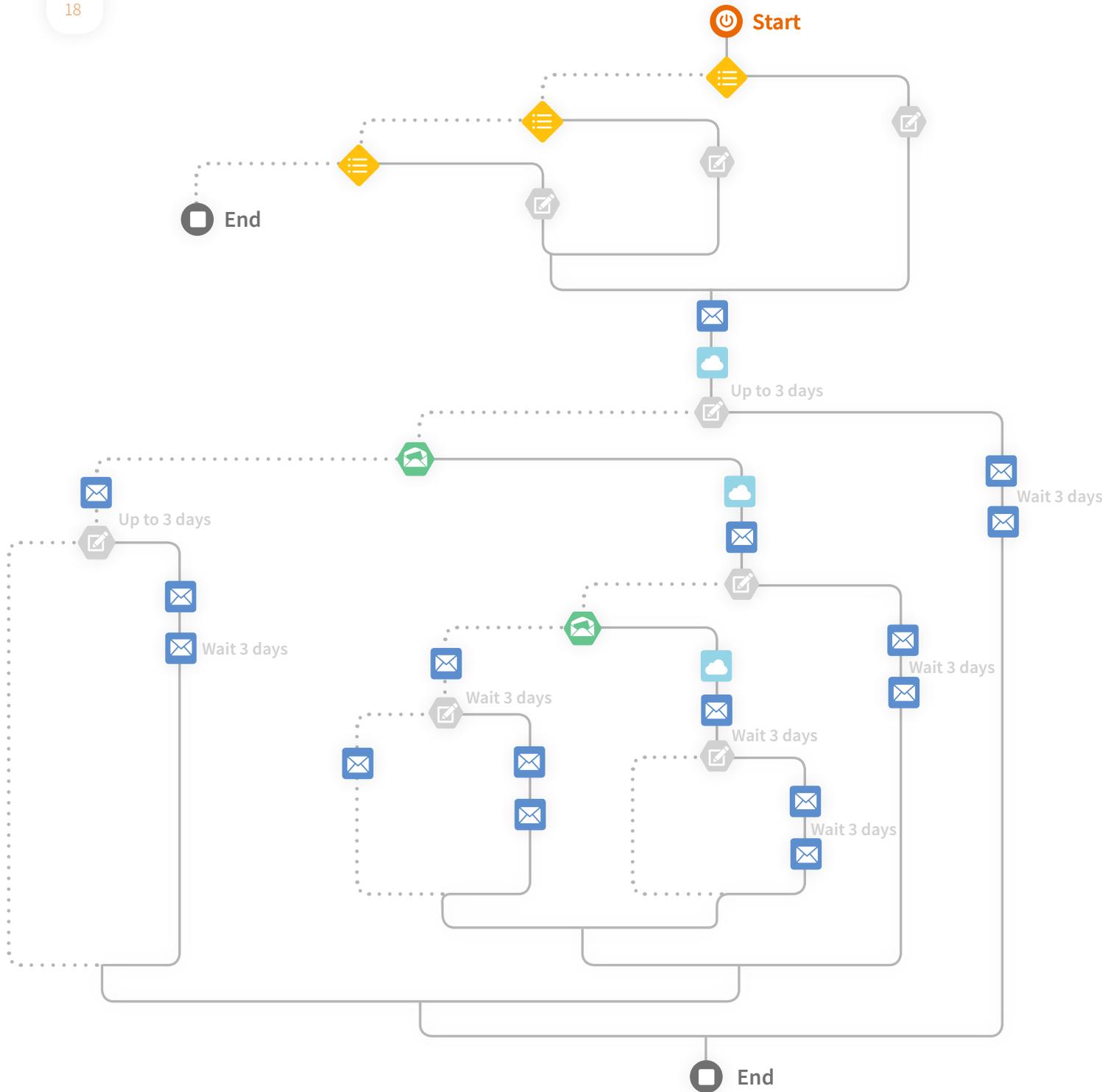
The following illustration flow shows:

- » how recipients are nurtured (or nudged, if you will) depending on their actions
- » how behavioral data and insight is passed on from the email and marketing automation system to the CRM system



## **NUDGING AND CLEVER AUTOMATION IN EMAIL MARKETING**





In this example, they were very successful because they followed the principles behind AIDEA and OTS. At the same time, their content and offers were highly relevant to recipients.

When planning your email campaigns or newsletters, think about how to use email marketing automation to your advantage. However don't use automation for the sake of it – be clever about how you design the flow. Use the insights\* your email marketing and marketing automation collect for you.

-  List
-  Write Email
-  Send Email
-  Add to Salesforce
-  Email opened

\*for example, the insight concerning what people have clicked on in a newsletter

## Here are some super-easy-to-use ways to get started:

1

**Welcome flow** (described later in this e-book – see *page 53*)

2

### People who didn't open your newsletter

2–3 days after sending out your newsletter, send a soft reminder to everyone who did not open or click on it. You can use the exact same newsletter content, but add a few lines of text at the top. The text could go along the lines of *“Many of our newsletter subscribers have told us how much they liked (story). So, I just wanted to give you another chance to read it, too. You will find the (story) below”*

3

### People who didn't engage with any of your communication in the past 3 months

If people haven't engaged at all in the past 3 months, it's a good chance they either are – or are about to become – inactive subscribers. That means you might lose them if you don't act. Consider sending them a series of 3 particularly interesting emails. For this purpose, I've seen subject lines like these work really well:

- » *“Your personal summary of our 3 most popular stories”*
- » *“Last chance to experience XYZ!”*
- » *“Is this useful in (NAME OF CITY)?”*





## DEFINE YOUR EMAIL MARKETING PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

At the core of any successful email marketing program is a well-defined purpose and a specific set of objectives (or goals).

Different businesses have different intentions. But almost all businesses have multiple objectives. Your purpose is an overall, somewhat generic statement – whereas your objectives should be measurable and specific.

To define your purpose, simply ask yourself what you would like to achieve with your email communication.

### Here are some examples to get you started:

- » Create awareness
- » Earn brand preference from stakeholders
- » Educate potential customers
- » Educate existing customers
- » Product or service promotion distribution
- » Supplement existing communications channels

### Here is an example from a successful global B2C company:

*“The purpose of our email newsletters is first and foremost to inform and educate all of our stakeholders including employees, customers, potential customers and external partners”*

### Another example from a small retailer in Denmark:

*“Our purpose is to be able to inform our subscribers about our current offers and information about new collections or in-store brands”*

### A global food company’s purpose is described as such:

*“The overall purpose with our newsletter is to inspire consumers to live a healthy lifestyle and nothing else”*

When you have defined your purpose, you are ready to move on to set your specific objectives – or goals.

## 1A - Setting Objectives (Goals)

Different people use different methodologies. That's the reason I alternate between objectives and goals.

What's more, being objective-driven rather than being deadline-driven is paramount to your success. When your work is objective-driven, you will keep focus on your end goal at any given time.

The difference is that objective-driven email marketers focus on their objectives (or goals) all the time. Deadline-driven email marketers are focused on following a schedule, ensuring that deadlines are met. There is a big difference between the two.

When speaking to deadline-driven email marketers, they often don't know why they do what they do: They merely blindly follow the production plan and that's not an optimal method.

To be an objective-driven email marketer, you will need to set specific goals. And then let your objectives drive everything you do.

Objective-driven email marketers constantly ask themselves *"will this help me meet my objective, or could I do something differently to achieve a better result?"*

Many email marketers merely work out targets (KPI's) for their core email marketing metrics. These are often open-rates and click-through-rates.

Frankly speaking, measuring your success in open-rates is just as bad as measuring your social media success in the number of followers you have.

Opens are like followers. Merely an entry ticket. Opening an email is not an end result, but an indicator of interest.

Therefore, I encourage you to work with two sets of objectives:

1. Business success metrics
2. Indicative email marketing metrics

Open-rate, for example, is an indicative email marketing metric. A high open rate indicates something. And so does a low open-rate. However, a high open-rate does not constitute business success. Neither does a low one.



To outline your options, please have a look at this table:

#### Indicative email marketing metrics

- » open-rate
- » click-through-rate
- » bounce-rate
- » unsubscribe-rate
- » email-forward-rate
- » social-media-sharing-rate
- » percentage of spam complaints
- » number of landing page views
- » average number of clicks per email etc.

#### Business success metrics

- » revenue
- » number of sales transactions
- » number of products sold
- » number of meetings requested/booked
- » number of monetary conversions
- » number of soft conversions (e.g., download an e-book or watch a video)
- » number of email subscribers

For your inspiration, here is an example from an email marketer in the United Kingdom:

BUSINESS METRICS	Current as of January 1st	Goal for next 3 months	Goal for next 6 months	Goal for next 12 months
Number of sales transactions	1.5% of total subscriber base	1.75% of total subscriber base	1.85% of total subscriber base	1.95% of total subscriber base
Average sales transactions	£ 425	£ 450	£ 450	£ 470
Grow subscriber base	17.900	20.000	23.000	27.000

As you can see, they have chosen to focus on only 3 business metrics. And they have set present as well as future goals. This helps the email marketing team to better plan their activities, and budget.

When you set specific goals for what you want to achieve in terms of monetary values, you really are setting yourself up for success.



### Here is an example of indicative email marketing metrics:

INDICATIVE EMAIL MARKETING METRICS	Current average as of January 1st	Goal for next 3 months, average	Goal for next 6 months, average	Goal for next 12 months, average
Open-rate	32%	33%	34%	35%
CTR – Click-through-rate	14%	15%	16%	17%
Unsubscribe-rate	0.55%	0,45%	0,40%	0,35%
Spam complaints	7	1	1	1
Average number of clicks per email	1,2	1,25	1,30	1,35

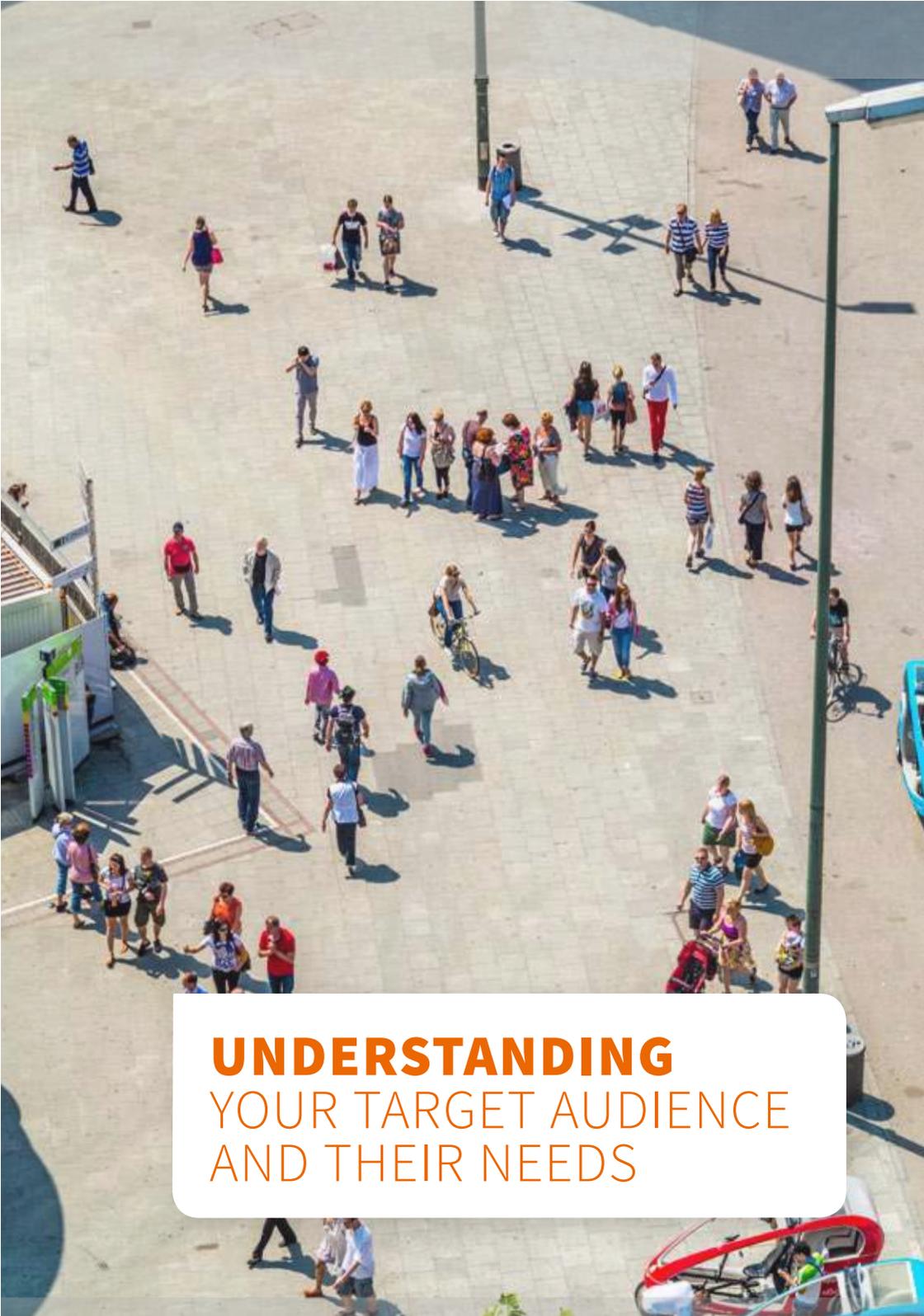
In this example, there will be a correlation between the unsubscribe-rate, spam complaints and the average number of clicks per email. That's because this email marketer works with a rather high send frequency and has had content quality issues in the past.

### A few things to think about

When you are setting your goals, think about these factors:

- » **Be realistic!** Achieving much better results takes time. If you are currently seeing click-through-rate averages of 20%, it will take time and effort to bring that average up to 30%. Work with gradual increases and remember that even a 2% improvement per month is a very impressive yearly improvement.
- » **Understand the dependencies!** If you would like to grow your subscriber base from 5.000 to 10.000 subscribers, you will depend on certain things in order to achieve that. For example, you might need a budget to use for subscriber acquisition, and/or you might need to improve your subscription landing page, etc.
- » **Follow-up and revise frequently!** It is important that you follow-up on your goals frequently. When you do, spend some time understanding why you achieved a good result and how you can use that insight to continuously improve. If you are overachieving, I'd recommend revising your goals. Your goals should be achievable, but difficult to reach.





## UNDERSTANDING YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE AND THEIR NEEDS

Knowing as much as possible about your audience is important. In the context of email marketing, it is best to get as specific as possible – especially about the needs of your audience.

### You will want to list the demographics of your target audience:

#### For B2C marketing:

- » Age
- » Occupation
- » Location
- » Income
- » Sex (gender)
- » Level of education
- » Religious belief and/or ethnicity
- » Formal/informal\*

#### For B2B marketing:

- » Size of company (revenue, number of employees, number of locations)
- » Location
- » Job function (not title)
- » Gender and salutation
- » Place in buying center (decision-maker, influencer, user, etc.)
- » Industry type
- » Formal/informal\*

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\*In many countries and situations, addressing Joe Smith with “Hey Joe” is not appropriate. Instead, you will want to address your audience with the more formal “Hello Mr. Smith”.

Once you've got your demographics pinpointed, you will want to have a hard look at their (presumed) psychographics. These could include:

#### For B2C marketing:

- » What are the interests of your audience?
- » What kind of activities do they take part in?
- » What are their attitudes towards particular topics?
- » Which other brands do they prefer?
- » Cultural values?

#### For B2B marketing:

- » What are the interests of your audience?
- » What are the preferences, for example, related to vendor location?
- » What are the pain points of your audience?
- » Where are they currently sourcing product X from?

For B2B marketing, consider if the psychographic profile differs depending on where a person is in the buying center – also known as Decision-Making Unit (DMU).



The roles in the DMU are characterized as:

- » Users
- » Initiators
- » Influencers
- » Buyers
- » Gatekeepers
- » Decision-makers

It's likely that a buyer will have a slightly different profile than an influencer or a user. And decision-makers are interested in different content than, for instance, a user.

### Understanding the needs and interests of your audience

As mentioned earlier, understanding the needs and interests of your audience is very important. Most email marketers base their decisions on presumptions or guesses: They think their audience is interested in X and have a need for Y. But often they are wrong. As a result, they don't achieve their goals.

To really understand what the needs and interests of your audience are you have to ask them. This can be done through surveys, phone interviews, one-on-one interviews or desk research.

### Example

A global leader in the B2B manufacturing space did just that. They asked their audience of users and initiators the following questions:

*“How interested are you in product area X?”*

offering the following reply options:

*Very interested / moderately interested / slightly interested / not interested at all*

*“How often does your work involve product area X?”*

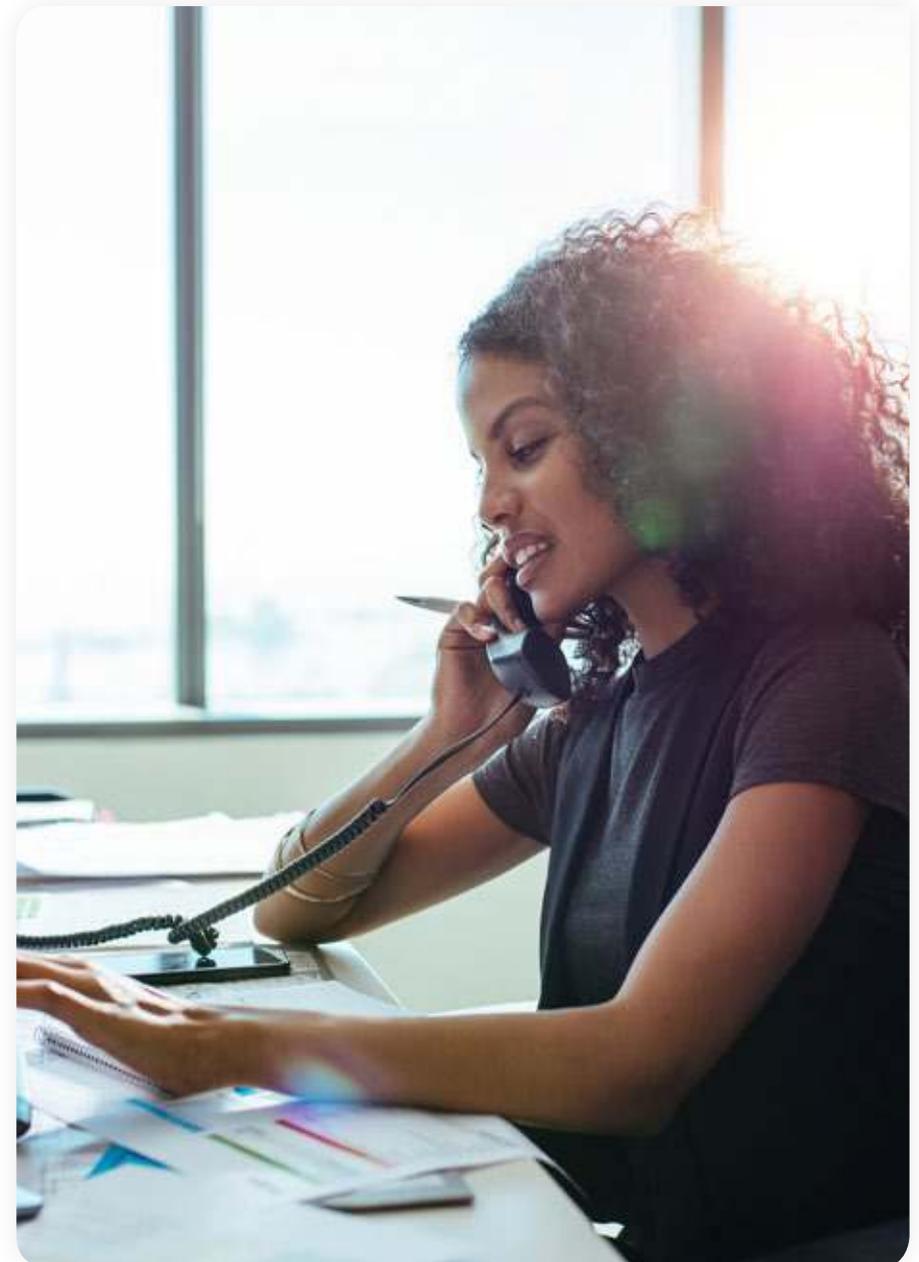
with the following reply options:

*Very often / often / in frequently / never*

After collecting thousands of survey responses, this company was able to create a more relevant email newsletter program. Even better – along with the demographic profile – they were able to pinpoint some of the “Most Wanted, Most Likely To Buy” profiles. These were those who said they were very interested in product area x AND said they were involved in that area very often.

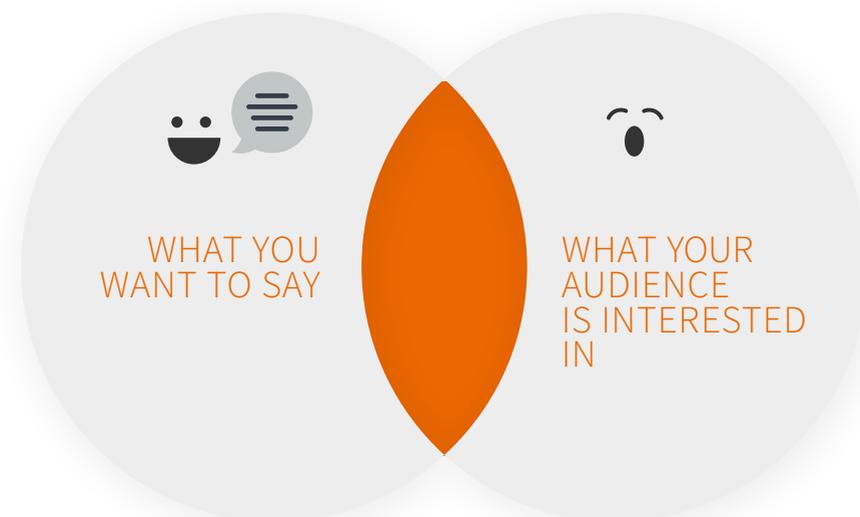
If you only have a few customers, I suggest you call them to ask about their interests and needs. If you have a larger base of existing customers, consider doing an online survey.

It is often very helpful to talk to your sales team. A few good conversations with seasoned salespersons can give you a lot of useful insight about the interests and needs of your audience.



Your content concept describes what type of information and offers you are going to share with your audience. Unsurprisingly, this is often the cornerstone of your email marketing program. A content concept is a guideline, which will give you a clear direction on what and how to produce the content of your email communication.

It is best illustrated like this:



## CREATING YOUR EMAIL MARKETING CONTENT CONCEPT

A great content concept will have the maximum overlap between the two circles. Of course, this means your content is aligned with the interests and needs of your audience. Aligning your content and offers to the interests and needs of your audience is a cornerstone for success in email marketing. But if you have taken the time to research and understand your audience, this shouldn't be too big of a challenge for you.

When you create your content concept, think a little like a publisher. Great publishers define an overall theme for their content and then deliver content relevant to that theme. And they do that again and again with each publication.

For example, for the Italian newspaper Gazzetta della Sport, the content concept is “all about sports”. Not just football, but all kinds of sport. Their audience has an interest in sports in general and a need to be informed about what’s going on in the world of sports.

So the first step for you is to define an overall theme for your content concept. Another example is from the world of marketing. A newsletter’s overall theme is “to inspire marketing practitioners”. From the world of fashion, the content concept is “to help men dress better”.

When you set out to develop your content concept specifics, you should first and foremost answer these questions:

- » Which type of content will serve the needs and interests of our audience?
- » Which type of content will address the pain points of our audience?
- » In which areas do we need to educate our audience?

And if you are ready to be a bit more advanced:

- » Which type of content will address each step of our audience’s buying cycle?
- » Which type of content will address each person’s characteristics (e.g., influencer or buyer)?
- » How can we differentiate content based on audience demographics and/or psychographics?

Developing your content concept is not difficult – providing you always have your audience in mind.

### These are the steps to develop your basic content concept:

1. Decide your overall content concept theme
2. Decide which broad topics you want to include
3. Decide specific topics
4. Decide media formats (text, video, infographics, etc.)
5. Outline synergies with other media channels

Here is an example from an international training institute:

#### Example

#### Content concept theme – To teach marketers what they don’t know

##### Broad topics

- » Data-driven marketing
- » Digital marketing in social media
- » Marketing automation

##### Specific topics

- » How to get started with marketing automation
- » How to get more conversions from your Facebook ads
- » Why the sender name in email marketing is important than the subject line

##### Media formats

- » Hard to explain: use video, podcast and infographics
- » Anything else: use text

##### Synergies with other media channels

- » Blog posts
- » Best of LinkedIn
- » Videos from YouTube

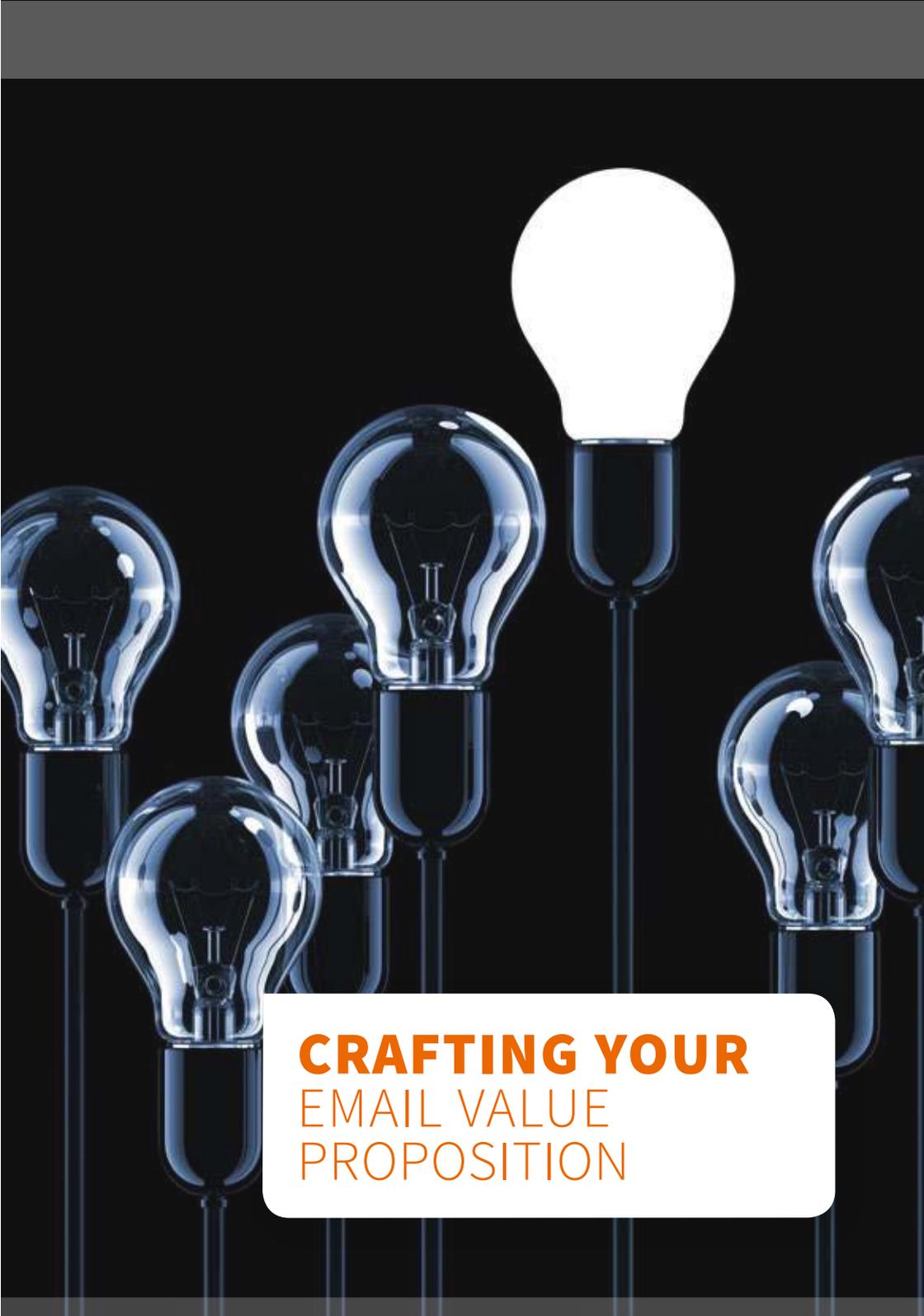
When you have outlined your content concept, it is best to create a content calendar. This is a simple tool that will help your production (or writing) process. Except for seasonal content, (holidays, Valentine's, Father's Day, etc.) don't plan too far ahead, given that it is important you do your checks and balances regularly. In other words, see which content resonates with your audience and which doesn't.

If you find that a given topic area or delivery style doesn't sit well with your audience, then remove it from your content plan.

#### Tip

If you don't have the resources to consistently create new content, think about partnering with others. That's what we call using 'OPC' – Other People's Content. Reach out to a business interested in your audience and offer them to include their content in your communications. And vice-versa.





## **CRAFTING YOUR EMAIL VALUE PROPOSITION**

When you have created your content concept, you are ready to create your email value proposition. Your email value proposition describes why someone should subscribe to your email communications. It is the text and images you use on your website – and many other places – that convince people to do so.

Lots of email marketers fail to sway people to subscribe. These are the types of email marketers who write “subscribe to our newsletter” without giving people a reason why or those that haven’t articulated the benefits of subscribing.

Others make promises they don’t keep. So, while these folks might be more successful in acquiring subscribers, they lose them again in a heartbeat.

What you want to do is to formulate a winning email value proposition aligned with your content concept. This way, you are most likely to deliver on your promises. And that’s important towards keeping your subscribers engaged and happy to read your email communications.



## Example 1

This sample newsletter sign-up form covers all the basics in a good EVP. These are:

**Get tips, insights and case studies on how to get into the Mind-Box of your audience and stay there!**



Published jointly by **Michael Leander** and **GIDMA**, join **The Mind-Box** newsletter to get:

- ✔ **Inspirational marketing tips and new insights:** you will become better at what you do
- ✔ **Thought-provoking thought leader views:** will help you get the right perspective and become a change agent
- ✔ **Facts, figures, and upcoming trends:** stay informed about what's going on in our industry. Digital marketing, social media, data-driven marketing and much more.

**Complete the form below to get free forever inspiration and marketing tips – no more than 3 times each month. You can unsubscribe anytime you want.**

- » There is a bold promise, which resonates with the audience
- » The “what you get” is clearly stated in the three bullets
- » It is clear to subscribers that signing up is free
- » It is clear what people should do to sign up
- » It is stated how often the subscriber will receive emails
- » Finally, it is clearly stated how someone can unsubscribe

## Example 2

In this example, a potential subscriber will not immediately understand the benefit of subscribing. You might think an affinity for the brand is enough. But it seldom is. Even a mega brand needs to articulate the benefits of subscribing.

## COMPANY XX Newsletter

Title

First name

Last name

E-mail\*

By clicking on the **"SUBSCRIBE" button**, I agree to receipt the COMPANY XX Newsletter and also give my consent to the processing of my above-mentioned personal data by COMPANY XX. The newsletter contains information on the products of COMPANY XX, such as new marketing tools by COMPANY XX.

By clicking the **"SUBSCRIBE" button**, you consent to the use of the newsletter and on the COMPANY XX website [www.companyxx.com](http://www.companyxx.com) to compile usage profiles, as well as subscriber segments based thereon for personalizing and tailoring the newsletter, as described the COMPANY XX newsletter privacy information.

Your consent is voluntary. If you refuse or withdraw your consent, you will not suffer any disadvantages. The revocation of consent does not affect the legality of the consent to the revocation treatment of your personal data.

Further information on our newsletter and the revocation option can be found in the COMPANY XX newsletter privacy information. Cancel the unsubscribe link in our newsletter as well as the unsubscribe form on our website. You have the right to withdraw your consent at any time.

**SUSBSCRIBE**

## Writing your own email value proposition

When you write your EVP, include these elements:

### Checklist



- What the overall benefits of becoming a subscriber are
- What some of the specific benefits of subscribing are
- Provide social proof, if you can (for example; “7.940 people already subscribed” or “published continuously since 2009”)
- State exactly the frequency of the email communication and how people can unsubscribe
- Choose images people can relate to and remember that people are interested in other people

Once you’ve got your EVP written down in long form, think about how you will incorporate it in short form. While long form is needed for subscription landing pages or popups, the short form version of your EVP is useful for linking texts, banners, etc..

## Testing your email value proposition

It is always a great idea to do testing. The same goes for your EVP. Test the headline, the copy, images, form color, or even the number of bullets used to describe the specific benefits





## CRAFTING A STRONG ACQUISITION STRATEGY

Acquiring subscribers is obviously important. The short version of how you do that is to ask people to subscribe anywhere and everywhere.

Of course, using online advertising to acquire new subscribers works, and that is a safe way to control the growth of your subscriber base. However before you do that, use manageable options – anywhere in your online presence, including all those that might be available to your team and company.

First, you want to make sure that your email subscription process has a prominent place on your website, e-commerce store, blog and anywhere else in your online channels.

### Here are some of the ways you can leverage your online presence to acquire more subscribers:

1. Give your email subscription sign-up process a prominent place on the homepage of your website or e-commerce store. Some even include a link to the sign-up page in the top menu.
2. Incorporate newsletter sign-up call to actions inside all or most of your webpages and blog posts. Use different call to actions if possible.
3. Publish your past newsletters on your website with links to get people to sign up.
4. Use pop-ups of different kinds (yeah, I know – we all love to hate pop-ups). For example, exit pop-ups (a pop-up that appears just before someone leaves your website), converts really well when done right.
5. Include links or buttons to sign up from the sidebars of your website or anywhere else where it makes sense to incorporate the sign-up process.

In short, use all possible options to get eyeballs on your newsletter. But don't overdo it; there's a fine line between being passively aggressive and aggressively aggressive.

### Here are some of the ways you can use your offline presence to acquire more subscribers:

Use all touchpoints to acquire new subscribers. That means:

1. Customer service and telemarketing staff – inbound and outbound
2. Sales teams – in-house and external
3. Partners of all sorts – resellers, distributors, vendors/suppliers
4. Retail outlets and at point of sales
5. Promoting your newsletter in company brochures, product pamphlets, etc.



If you do a good job of ensuring that your email communication and newsletters are being offered via all of your channels, you will quickly see growth in your subscriber base.

#### Example

A furniture retailer in Denmark developed an additional step in the electronic cash register. This step forced the cashier to ask customers if they were already subscribed to the newsletter. If not, they were invited to subscribe, the cashier added their email address and – voilà – a new customer was subscribed. With over 40 outlets, the company quickly grew their newsletter subscriber base from a few to tens of thousands.\*



\* Please note that in some countries Double Opt-In is required by law. In other countries Single Opt-In is allowed. A Double Opt-In requires the subscriber to confirm an email subscription by clicking on the email sent immediately following sign-up. We encourage you to check your local legislation.



## CREATING A SOLID WELCOME FLOW

Now that you have new subscribers signing up on a daily basis, you want to be sure you have a solid welcome flow in place.

The purpose of the welcome flow is to do three things:

1. Confirm the subscription
2. Reiterate the benefit of being a subscriber
3. Introduce new subscribers to areas of importance

Know this, the highest-performing email you will ever send will be the first email subscribers get from you. A new subscriber is more curious, more open and more interested in engaging – so the first and second emails you send to a new subscriber really are a golden opportunity for you to get your message across.

### Fact

The click-through-rate of a good welcome email easily surpasses 70% CTR.

You have at least two options when creating a welcome flow:

1. You send one great email bidding new subscribers welcome, or
2. You send a series of emails welcoming new subscribers.

Before deciding on which might be best, bear in mind that you want to make sure that new subscribers are properly welcomed before they begin receiving your regular email communication.

Also, don't forget that if your newsletter is published monthly on the 15th, for example, someone who signs up on the 16th won't hear from you for 29 days. Believe it or not, lots of people forget they ever signed up if the gap between the sign-up date and the next communication is too long. And if people don't remember signing up they are more likely to unsubscribe immediately – or, God forbid – label it as spam.

### Here's a suggestion:

#### Tip

Create a welcome flow of 3 emails over the course of 10 days. Each email designed to make new subscribers feel welcome, and to be informed or familiarized about the email content concept. The objective is to get new subscribers to engage, to open emails and click through to your content or offers.

If you do that well, your click-through-rates could look something like this:

- » 1st welcome email: 80% click-through-rate
- » 2nd welcome email: 60% click-through-rate
- » 3rd welcome email: 50% click-through-rate

To do that, use the marketing automation feature of CleverReach® or your current email marketing system.

Before I give you a list of things to consider, here are some good and bad examples of welcome emails:

Our example is from SimCorp and kindly shared by Brian Coles. The first email is short and reiterates why the email communication will add value to the subscriber. In the first email SimCorp smartly shares one of their most popular reports. This has proven a very good strategy in terms of getting new subscribers to act immediately.

In the second email – sent a few days later - SimCorp smartly references the previous email. And, in addition, builds social proof by referring to two of their customer success stories. Finally, SimCorp offers new subscribers to listen to a relevant webinar.

The welcome flow in this case consists of 3 emails in total. The welcome flow has worked really well for SimCorp as a way of introducing new subscribers to the valuable content and inspiration offered by SimCorp.



## First email

## Welcome to SimCorp!

Hi,

Thanks for signing up to get relevant emails from us.

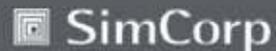
We're looking forward to sharing invitations, news about SimCorp Dimension and insights from the world's top asset managers.

In the meantime, here's something you might enjoy. Earlier this year, we surveyed 100 heads of North American buy-side investment operations to discover their top strategic priorities and biggest headaches.

The [2018 InvestOps report](#) has been our most downloaded this year, and we think you'll see why.

Best regards,  
The SimCorp insights team

P.S. We'll be sending over a few more resources like this in the next few weeks. To ensure you receive our emails, please add [insights@simcorp.com](mailto:insights@simcorp.com) to your address book. And of course, you can [update your email preferences](#) at any time.



This email was sent by SimCorp:

One State Street Plaza - 1 State Street, 29th Floor, New York NY 10004, USA

## Second email

Hi,

Last week we shared the [2018 InvestOps report](#). Hope you got a chance to read it. If not, here's the biggest surprise. Over **80% of North American buy side firms** are looking to IT system consolidation to slash operational costs.

Many of our clients have successfully consolidated IT systems. [Fannie Mae](#), a U.S. mortgage financier with USD 3.35 trillion AUM, reduced their systems 57%, and [Unigestion](#), a Swiss asset manager with USD 19.7 billion AUM, decommissioned more than 10 legacy tools and systems.

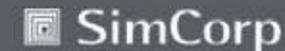
[See more consolidation success stories.](#)

Also, in [this recent webinar](#) you can hear UBS, Gulf International Bank and Accenture discuss their experiences of delivering successful consolidation projects across business lines.

We hope these resources are valuable for you.

Best regards,  
The SimCorp insights team

P.S. To ensure you receive our emails, please add [insights@simcorp.com](mailto:insights@simcorp.com) to your address book. And of course, you can change your email preferences at any time.



This email was sent by SimCorp:

One State Street Plaza - 1 State Street, 29th Floor, New York NY 10004, USA

### List of things to include in the welcome email(s):

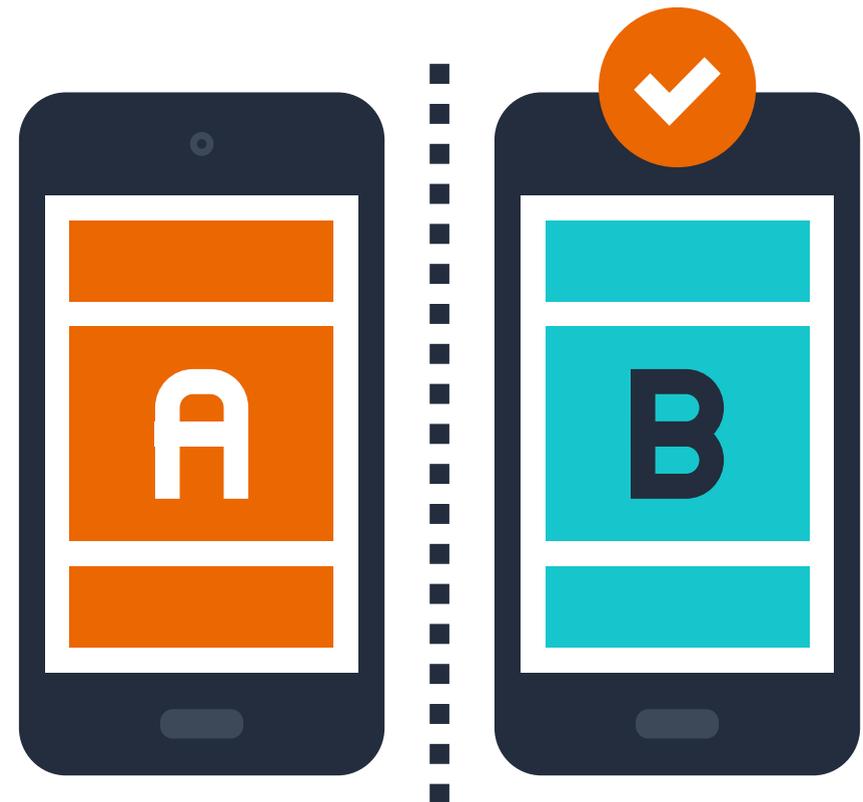


- Confirm the subscription, how and when the subscription took place
- Include a copy of the data the subscriber gave you at sign-up
- Reiterate the benefits of being a subscriber
- Confirm the frequency
- Make unsubscribing easy
- Include a few pieces of (popular) content from past newsletters
- Include a welcome VIDEO where a team member briefly gives thanks to the new subscriber and explains what to expect (once again, reiterate benefits)
- Be personal! Introduce one or several members of your team in one of the welcome emails. Messages like this one usually works really well: *“Hi, I’m Renata. Together with my colleague Anette, I’m responsible for XYZ. If you ever have any comments – good or bad – please reach out to us directly!”*
- Profile new subscribers: if you can handle it, using a welcome flow to get more information about your new subscriber is often very successful. You do that by writing *“We’d like to know more about you so that we can provide you with the most relevant and interesting content. Click here to give us a bit more information.”*

Obviously, this list is not complete. There are many more things you can do. Feel free to experiment.

#### Tip

Using A/B split testing for your welcome flow is a great idea. This will help you to better understand which type of content is most interesting to your new subscribers.



A group of people, including a woman in a denim jacket and a man in a plaid shirt, are gathered around a table, looking at documents. One woman is pointing at a document with a pen. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an office or meeting room environment.

## TACTICAL ELEMENTS THAT MAKE OR BREAK EACH EMAIL MARKETING PROMOTION OR NEWSLETTER

There are many tactical elements which have influence on your final result. For your inspiration let's cover some of the most important ones.

### Frequency

The frequency of your communication is important. Many companies tend to send only one piece of communication each month. In most cases that's not enough. You want to balance frequency with your capacity to create offers or content. Sadly, most email marketers believe that sending too often is a problem.

My good friend, direct marketing legend Drayton Bird, has a great answer for that: *"You can send as often as people care to read your content"*.

I believe that sending frequency today has to be decided based on two things:

1. Your capacity to create offers or content
2. Your tactical approach to inactive recipients

When you think about your capacity to create offers and content, remember that you don't need to create new, original content every time you send out an email. It is perfectly fine to reuse or repurpose content, or outright repeat offers previously communicated. Also remember that you can partner with others (OPC), thereby increasing your access to relevant content.

Your tactical approach to non-responders has to do with following up (nudging). If you consistently nudge non-responding subscribers after each mailing, it will increase your frequency. But it will have very limited negative impact, since inactive subscribers probably never saw the original message in the first place.

*A generic answer to what your frequency should be would be weekly to everyone, with a follow-up to non-responders.*

## Your sender name is more important than the subject line

Studies have shown that the importance of a sender name grows every year. While many email marketers focus almost exclusively on creating great subject lines, they often pay little attention to the sender name.

When an email is received, the first thing a recipient will look at is the sender name. If the recipient recognizes (and trusts) the sender, then the subject line will be read.

So what is a good sender name? That's a really good question. It is highly recommended that you test different variations before deciding to stick with a given sender name or sender name structure.

Based on my experience, the following seems to be true:

- » A sender name including a person's first and/or last name works better than e.g. "Company Newsletter"
- » A sender name including a person's name and the company name works better than a sender name with only a person's first and last name:

Thus, Udo Schwarz, CleverReach® will work better than Udo Schwarz. There really is no way of knowing which sender name structure is going to work best for you unless you test different variations.

## Subject Line – Success through Testing

Your subject line is important. Period. The quality of your subject line – in combination with your sender name – will decide whether people open your email or not.

When you write your subject line, be sure to have the end goal in mind. Remember that – most of the time – your goal is to get someone to click on your content or offer. And think about your readers concerns: what are their needs and interests? Ask yourself how you can reflect these needs in your subject line.

I wish I could tell you exactly how to write a winning subject line. But sadly, I can't. No one can. The best advice I can give you is to test your subject line. Do not rely on hunches, beliefs or chance. Your subject line is far too important for that.

Legendary adman David Ogilvy once said *"Never stop testing, and your advertising will never stop improving."*

If you are using a proper email marketing tool, you will have easy access to A/B testing. The best part is, that it is super easy to setup a subject line test in most tools (and if testing is not easy or possible in your current email marketing solution, find another tool).

## Here is an example from a real A/B subject line test:

**Subject line A:** Others liked these 3 how-to articles

**Subject line B:** You will like these 3 how-to articles



Which of the two do you think got the best open-rate?

The best performing subject line in terms of open-rate was subject line A. It produced an open-rate of 32% whereas “B” produced an open-rate of 27%.

Are you surprised?

I was. I would have thought that “B” would get the best result. Reason being that the word “you” is a very powerful word. But I also understand that people are curious and want to know what others like, too.

But you will want to know how these two subject lines fared in terms of click-through-rates. And that’s where it gets interesting. Because subject line B produced a much better (19%) click-through-rate than subject line A (11%). Interesting, right? And this happens often.

A high open-rate does not necessarily equal a high Click through rate – let alone a satisfactory Conversion rate.

### Here are five tips on writing good subject lines:

#### Tip

1. Be precise.
2. Don’t trick people into opening your email
3. Keep your end goal in mind – which often will be to get people to click, and then to convert to the action you desire on your website, e-commerce store or elsewhere
4. Clarity trumps creativity.
5. Use easy to understand words.

### Let’s also deal with some of the most common misconceptions related to subject lines and open-rates:

- » **Don’t use the word “free”:** Using the word “free” in the subject line is not a problem (there is a common misconception that using the word “free” will get your emails caught in the spam trap).
- » **Subject lines should be no more than 7 words:** While it is true that the visibility of your subject line on different devices differs, there is no real evidence that a 9-word subject line couldn’t produce a great result.
- » **If you increase frequency, open-rate will drop:** Another misconception. As long as you are relevant to your audience, you can maintain – or even increase – your open-rates over time.
- » **Emojis won’t show in the inbox:** Not true. Emojis do show in most inboxes. But the question is if your “nice/cute/beautiful” emojis will help or hurt your open-rates. One should also test whether emojis will be displayed in every inbox – not every provider can do that. Try and find out what works!
- » **Personalizing subject lines is creepy:** No, not true. With a few exceptions, personalizing your subject lines will often increase your open-rate. But it is true that there are some circumstances where personalization might not work very well. For example, if your style of communication is very formal.

## Tips on Personalization

Personalizing your subject line will often increase your open-rates. The most common form of personalization is to use a person's name in the subject line.

Like this:

*"Victoria, here is your fresh news for today"*

But there are many other ways to personalize. While personalizing using people's name is good, I find the following examples to be more clever (the personalized element is underscored):

1. Personalizing based on a past purchase:  
*"The shoes you bought in January have found a match"*
2. Personalizing based on location:  
*"Fashion lovers in Berlin agree with \_\_\_\_\_"*
3. Personalization using company name:  
*"Now CleverReach® customers can save 17% on staff cost"*
4. Personalization based on gender:  
*"Women of all ages are crazy about this \_\_\_\_\_"*
5. Personalization based on age and gender:  
*"Women in their 20's feel good about this \_\_\_\_\_"*

If you have collected good profile data, there are many more ways to personalize your subject line. If all you know about your subscribers is their email address and name, then obviously your personalization options are limited.

## Email Template Design

Designing a good email template is very important. Most people design email templates based on their own perception of what "looks good".

That's not the best way to do it. Keep in mind that an email is a response device, not a brochure. Your templates must be designed to accommodate response (that is, clicks). This is far more important than an impressive design.

You would also do well to design templates for different purposes.



### When you – or someone you work with – design your email template, keep these tips in mind:



- Your template must work across all devices. That is desktop, smartphone and tablet. It must work well regardless of the screen resolution of your recipient.
- Make sure that your email is designed to look good and work well, even if images aren't loaded in the recipient's inbox. This usually involves a design that emphasises headlines and call-to-action links and buttons.
- The top 1/3 of your email is the most important real estate. Make it work. Don't let your company logo and other passive content take up too much space. Instead, use the top 1/3 to communicate your most important messages.
- Pre-header: many email clients (that's inboxes such as Gmail, Outlook etc.) use the pre-header as a sort of preview in the inbox. The recipient will be able to read both the subject line and the pre-header. Make sure you include a pre-header.

- Use call-to-actions (CTA) boxes rather than CTA text links: think about people who engage with your email from mobile devices. Clicking on a button – as opposed to a small text link – is much easier to do on a small screen. As a bonus, you might decrease the number of accidental clicks when you use buttons.
- Think about your color-scheme: You may be crazy about pastel colors. But computer screens aren't. You may also have a thing for grey text "because it just looks better." The truth is that greyish text is much harder to read. If I were you, I'd go with black or very dark colored text.
- Test your templates. Not all email templates are created equal. And it might be that your favorite email template isn't the best performing template. Test different templates to find the one(s) that deliver the best result for you.



## EMAIL MARKETING TRENDS

### Even better results in the future

Email marketing is constantly developing. As technology becomes more advanced and easier to use, the quality of email communication will continue to improve. This will hugely benefit both receivers and senders.

Here are some of the most relevant trends and current developments:

### Mobile first approach

More and more people use smartphones as the primary touchpoint with email senders. For the reason, email marketers must take a mobile first approach. This means prioritizing design and structure of emails for 5,5 inch screens. It is no longer about optimizing for mobile, but rather applying an original design and structure aiming at mobile users, and then adapt to desktop users.

Check [CleverReach®](#) to see email template designs, which were created with a focus on mobile users.

### Automation and Artificial Intelligence

The use of email marketing automation will continue to grow. Using clever nurturing, smarter nudging and well-timed triggers will become an integrated part of any email marketers' tactical approach.

Automation will become even better through the use of AI – artificial intelligence. Email marketing and marketing automation systems will continue to develop smarter ways of handling and interpreting data.

As a simple example: AI will allow you to set a rule to send your email communication at the most optimal time for each subscriber. For example, if Michael Leander most often opens and responds to emails at 3 pm, that's when the system will deliver emails for him, but Suzan Sonnenshine – who usually engages with emails at 8 am – will get her email newsletter at around 8 am.

At the same time, AI will continue to learn about the interests and preferences of subscribers. This learning can then be applied effectively in the communication moving forward.

The opportunities offered by automation and clever use of data will be endless. AI can interpret large amounts of data and metrics in ways that would be near impossible for humans.

#### Video in email

In the near future we will see more videos embedded in emails. These videos will play directly in the inbox of the recipient. Marketers will have an option to use auto-play or play on click.

Using video to get your message across is often much more powerful than text and images. The challenge for marketers will be in creating compelling videos, not in merely serving videos to your audience.

#### More interaction inside emails

Microsites inside emails will take off in the next few years. This allows recipients to do much more inside emails. For example, a recipient of an interactive email will be able to navigate a full website without ever leaving the email. Or share to social media without leaving the email inbox. It will be hugely beneficial for recipients, and ultimately for senders as well.

#### Increased use of clever personalization

Personalizing email communication has been possible for a long time. But in the near future we will see an increased use of clever email personalization. Not just in terms of using the recipients standard data (such as name, company name etc.), but importantly in terms of personalizing all of the content in an email.

Some would refer to that as customization. But the essence is that we will get closer and closer to the vision of true 1-to-1 communication in email marketing.

#### Content in context – delivered at the right time and place

As data integration across channels become more actionable, email marketers will be able to deliver the right content in the right context. Moreover, email marketers will increasingly use third party data to improve the relevance of messaging.

As an example, a fashion retailer will be able to email offers to all subscribers in the United Kingdom. The offers are targeted at women of a certain age with known preferences. Opening the email at 9:30 am, a subscriber in Manchester – where it is raining – will see rain coats on sale, whereas a subscriber in Doncaster, where the sun is shining at 9:30 am, will see all weather coats on sale.



Relating to content in context, we will also see better content targeting based on integration of past behavior on the website – for example – coupled with presumed intent based on things like past purchases.

For email marketers, the challenge will lie in understanding what content to develop for different stages of the buying journey.

### Data protection and permission handling

In the near future it will become even more important to handle data correctly. Acquiring permission to email, text and trigger notifications continues to be important.

How marketers communicate what data is used for will become increasingly important. As will making subscribers and potential subscribers understand why data is collected and what exactly the intention is.

In essence this is about trust. And trust will continue to play a big role in creating winning relationships between senders and subscribers.



Email marketing is a powerful method to attract new customers, offer service, sell more to existing customers and win-back lost customers. But only if you do it right.

It all starts with a good plan. In this e-book I've shared selected tips and advice, but I've also mentioned that anyone can become a masterful email marketer. All that is required is for you to continue trying out different things, and – above all – test rigorously.

I've also mentioned that email marketing is evolving. Some people even believe that emails will become the new websites. This has to do with email inboxes becoming smarter with more features.

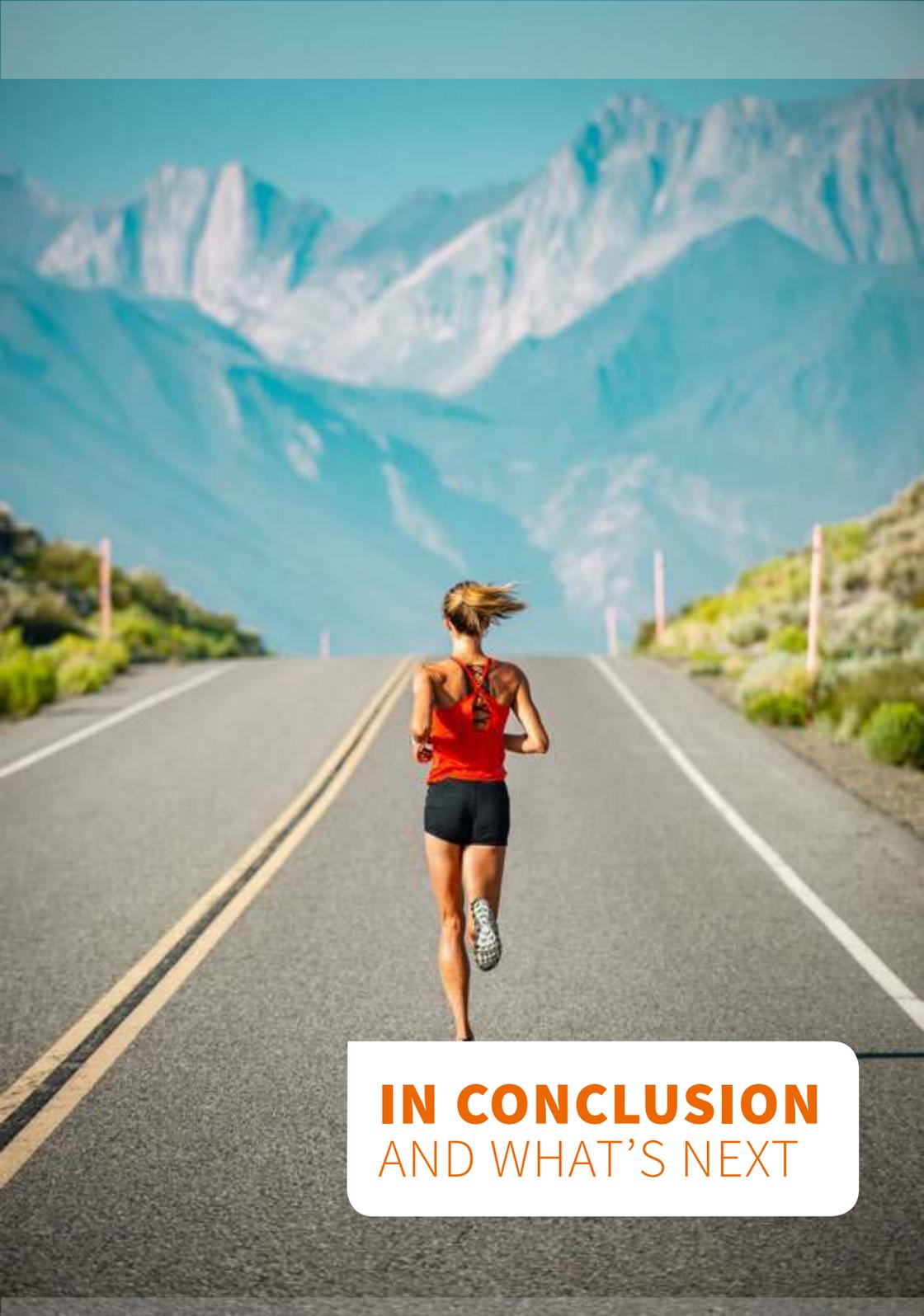
For example, did you know that it is now possible to play a video inside an email in the inbox? We will see much more of this type of “cool” development in the coming years.

Using email marketing automation is a fantastic opportunity for email marketers. With the right email marketing tool in place, you will be able to create some wonderful and effective marketing automation flows, but always keep in mind that even automation needs intervention.

In this eBook I've touched on the importance of creating a solid content concept. We haven't touched upon some of the more advanced ways that you can integrate content from your website, blog or ecommerce shop. If you want to know more about that (interesting and time-saving) aspect, get in touch with CleverReach®.

*“Don't count the people you reach, reach the people that count!”*

As you are preparing yourself for more success, don't fall into the age-old trap of counting the number of people you reach. It is far more important that you reach the right people. If not, your email communication will not be successful.



**IN CONCLUSION**  
AND WHAT'S NEXT

## LIST OF REFERENCE

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Seite 21	© PeopleImages / iStock
Seite 22	© g-stockstudio / iStock
Seite 30	© Meinzahn / iStock
Seite 32/33	© Meinzahn / iStock
Seite 35	© Jacob Lund / iStock
Seite 36	© VasyI / AdobeStock
Seite 41	© Entrieri / iStock
Seite 44	© Michael Leander
Seite 47	© VasyI / Adobe Stock
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## THE AUTHOR



**Michael Leander** is a professional from Denmark who specialises in all things marketing, from digital and content to CRM and trends. Leander is a well-known name in the marketing world, having worked particularly within digital marketing for the past 20 years he is somewhat of an expert in the field proven by his success in consultancy and training. Using his passion for marketing automation, Leander has helped huge brands turn failing email marketing campaigns into highly successful programs and firmly believes the answer starts from the beginning in mastering the basics of email marketing for the rest to simply follow naturally. As an award-winning speaker, Leander has shared his knowledge and ideas in over 40 countries covering 6 continents. He is innovative, versatile and has data-proven results.

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