



5 Real-Time Email Messaging Best Practices

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Email marketers have made great advances in the sophistication and targeting of their campaigns. But as programs become increasingly personalised, new challenges arise. Customers, for example, receive more messages from more parts of a marketer's organisation, and oftentimes those targeted messages are sent in bulk or when customers may not be paying close attention. As a result, brands get diluted, messages get filtered or go unread, and the full benefits of message targeting go unrealised.

To break through the clutter, sophisticated marketers are using real-time messaging to disseminate offers and engage customers. Real-time messaging automatically triggers email messages to customers when they complete specific actions or transactions. These may include registration, order and service confirmation, shipment notifications, billing and payment notices, cancellations, returns, refunds, rebates and bonuses, profile update notifications, alert messages, customer service messages, and information request responses. All of these are vital — and often underused — opportunities to interact with customers. Real-time messaging, which is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, connects with customers when they're already engaged.

To make the most of real-time messaging campaigns, here are five best practices:

- 1. Combine email platforms and real-time messaging.** By combining the two, offers and transactional messages can originate from the same place.
- 2. Track performance.** Tracking messages that have been sent — including delivery, bounceback, open, clickthrough, pass along and conversion rates — and analysing them enables marketers to see how campaigns perform to determine the best recency, frequency and message formats for future messages.
- 3. Target.** Real-time messaging can be even more effective when targeting based on demographics, geography, behaviour, roster/list match and life stage.
- 4. Personalise.** By incorporating personalised and dynamic content to customise messages, real-time messages reach your customers at opportune times and provide relevant content tailored to their interests.
- 5. Think outside the (in)box.** Real-time messaging is an effective way to

increase open and other response rates. Creative campaigns and partnerships can deliver increased visibility. ■