GET SET FOR SUCCESS

With This Helpful Planning Guide

Now that 2015 is here, BlueHornet would like to share some ideas to help you prepare your email program for success.

First, if you already haven't, take some time to map out your 2015 marketing goals. How much do you want to increase engagement rates, decrease abandonment? Do you want to implement more triggered programs? Improve deliverability? Increase subscriptions?

Take a historical look at program trends and determine how you want your 2015 campaigns to perform. Then consider the journey from customer acquisition to advocacy. Do you have programs in place to keep your subscribers active and engaged? Be sure to consider:

- **Measuring ROI and tracking conversions**: BlueHornet offers ROI tracking pixels that allow you to measure revenue and track conversions by email marketing campaign. Be sure they're implemented!
- **Improving acquisition**: If you aren't already, consider making use of sign up forms on your website and refer-a-friend initiatives in an effort to grow your existing customer base. Contests are another great way to grow your list.
- **Driving retention**: Keep your existing customer base engaged by incorporating social media initiatives into your email marketing campaigns – FTF and including social media commentary in your emails. Preference centers offering opt-down vs. opt-out options are also a great way to retain customers that may still want to hear from you, but on a less frequent basis.
- **Creating a Welcome series**: Including special offers and encouraging new subscribers to set their preferences can go a long way toward ensuring that those fresh faces stay engaged.
- **Re-engagement campaigns**: Look at your open and click rates. Based on email frequency, consider creating campaigns to re-engage those who have lapsed or been inactive for awhile. If you're a retailer, consider an abandon cart program to encourage conversion from what otherwise might have been a lost revenue.
Once you've got your goals documented and know which programs you need to implement to hit them, you're ready to go! Then, throughout the year,

**Keep Your Marketing Calendar Handy**

Keeping your marketing calendar on-hand, reviewing it and updating it regularly will ensure you are prepared for all planned marketing initiatives – and have some time to deal with the unplanned ones. Consider the following:

- Are there new product launches to prepare for? Do as much work in advance as you can. Set up your templates, draft and route messaging ahead of time if possible.
- Do you know when sales and special offers are coming? Having your email strategy already in place to support these events takes the pressure off of the event once it rolls around.
- Is your company considering a website redesign? If so, do your templates and graphics align with the look and feel of the new site?

Getting ahead of planned work can make all the difference when those unexpected initiatives come up. And you know they will!

**Don't Let Your Email Marketing Campaigns Get Stale – Consider Updating Your Email Templates**

How long has your welcome strategy been in place? Remember that like your business, your customers evolve over time. What might have been perfect for your new customer in 2014 may be outdated for 2015. Review the welcome messages your currently have in place to ensure that the information is timely and relevant given the direction you want to go this year. A few other ideas:

- Review your lifecycle and recurring messages – it's easy to "set 'em and forget 'em". Review them to ensure information is up to date and consistent with what you want your customers to be doing. Don't forget to consider the segmentation you have in place – is it still appropriate for the messages you are sending?
- Email has come a long way from the days of AOL discs and CDs, and the technology available to email marketers has also evolved. Consider amping up your messages by including embedded videos, live update streams, dynamic forms to capture key information within your message, or geographic or device targeting capabilities.
- While we've been hearing "this is the year of mobile" for the past few years, mobile consumption continues to grow. Be sure you've got a mobile-first or responsive design in place.

And the above is just the tip of the iceberg! The BlueHornet Client Success team is here to partner with you as you create and navigate your marketing strategies, so reach out to your Account Manager with questions -- or even better, for new ideas to move forward with in 2015. Wishing you success!