SPICEWORKS
Where IT goes to work.™

Five Tips for Creating Email Campaigns that Don't Suck

The Spiceworks scoop on marketing to IT buyers.

7 New

February, 2014

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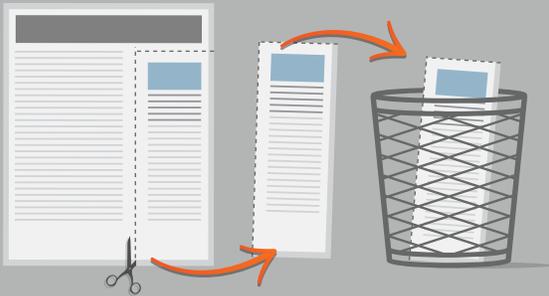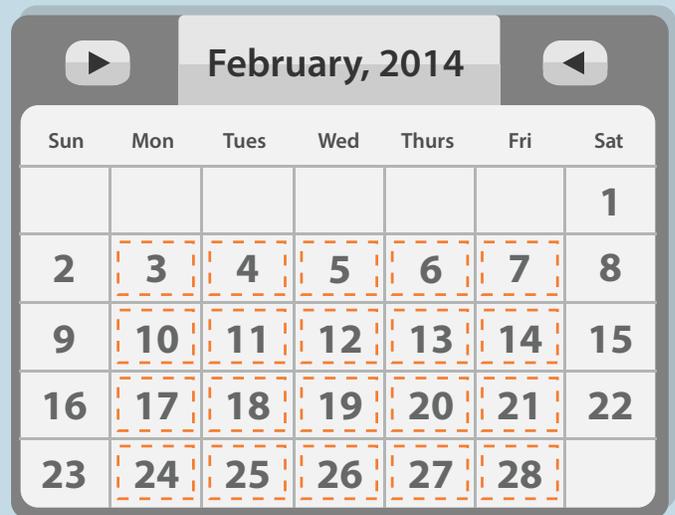
**Let's get to know your target audience...**

- **They rely on ThinkGeek to build out their wardrobe**
- **They have heated debates over the merits of Star Trek vs. Star Wars**
- **At parties, they delve into the evolution of C and its impact on society**

▶ They're IT pros. No BS. No fluff. And they're looking for any reason to trash an email or even unsubscribe. The good news: This no-nonsense crowd also has a great sense of humor and they're open to a conversation. Deliver the right message the right way and it can pay off… big time!

Spiceworks is the world's largest and fastest growing social business network for IT pros and tech marketers. We deliver helpful info in the Spiceworks app and Community through multiple channels including email.

Through emails like newsletters and dedicated 3rd party messages, we connect millions of IT pros with over 2,700 tech vendors who advertise in Spiceworks.

With this experience under our belt, we've learned what it takes to craft an awesome email campaign for this tough-to-reach crowd. And now we're peeling back the spice curtain and sharing 5 tips that'll help turn your emails from junk mail… to inbox gold. Read on – and may the force be with you…
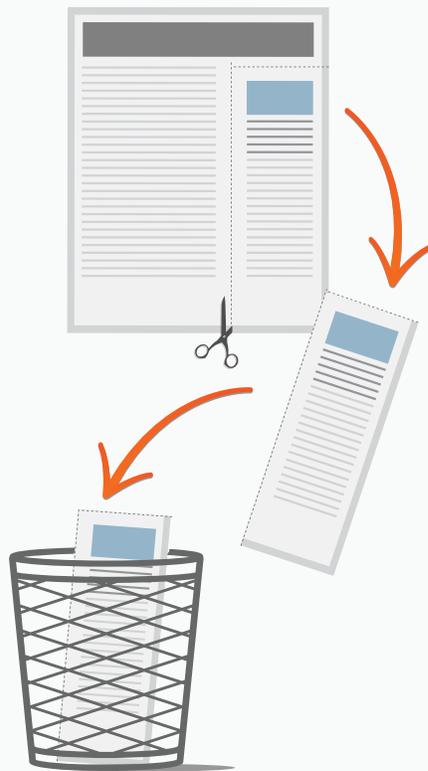
Email layout: Location, location.

TIP 01 We constantly test email layouts for "gotta click through" results for our customers. After hundreds of campaigns, the verdict is in on one key area: Dump the sidebars. Our data has shown that emails without a sidebar typically have a click-through rate up to 4% higher than those with a sidebar.

"The verdict is in on one key area: Dump the sidebars!"

Our research has also shown that if you have to have a sidebar – left ones have a click-through rate 3x higher than right sidebars. But if you're really looking to optimize results: Just nix that sidebar altogether.

Zero-in and retarget.

TIP 02 In its simplest form, email retargeting is sending a follow-up email to recipients who take a particular action. We estimate a mere 3% to 5% of our customers conduct retargeting campaigns when working with Spiceworks. What a huge missed opportunity to re-engage with potential customers who didn't take the first call to action. From our own experience, we know that retargeting can deliver solid results.

Spiceworks sends out a number of emails to generate interest and registrations for our annual SpiceWorld conferences. For last year's conferences we retargeted email recipients who opened or clicked through conference emails but failed to register. We sent these folks a new email with some spiced-up content. This pipin' hot effort increased our email-based registrations by 131%. So in other words, don't give up!

Best day ever for email delivery.

TIP 03 This topic can be a hot one for email marketers. Ready for the answer on the magic day to hit send? Drum roll… for the IT pro, every day is game! No matter what day we send out our campaigns, open rates show a maximum .23% variation in open rate.

While this may be interesting, if you really want to optimize results, focus on retargeting instead of what day to send your email.

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Know thy email technology.

TIP
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Are you ready for the next big evolution in email technology? Make sure you're on top of IT (it pays off)! For example, 22% of IT pros using Spiceworks also use Gmail, making Google's recent addition of the promotion tab a performance challenge.

Not to worry – our crack marketing team was on top of it. We sent a helpful message to our users teaching them how to ensure that emails from Spiceworks were delivered to their inbox instead of the dreaded promotions tab black hole.

"22% of IT pros using Spiceworks also use Gmail, making Google's recent addition of the promotion tab a performance challenge."

The "holy cow, that really worked" results? No change in our Gmail open or click-through rate. BOOM!
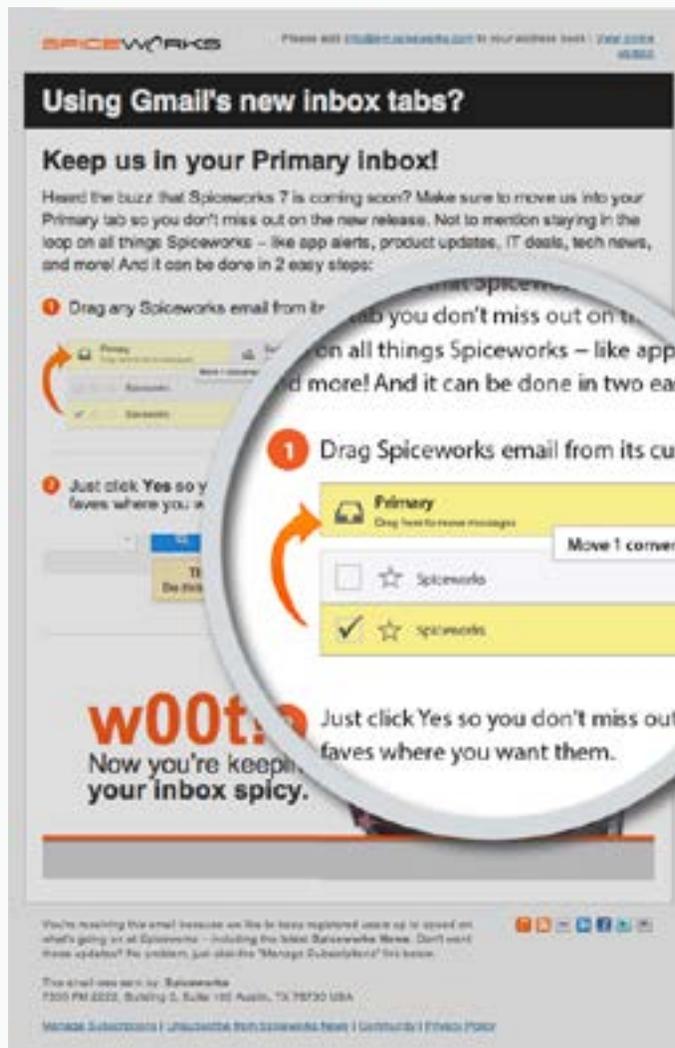
If you love them, set them free.

TIP 05   We've noticed a trend: Marketers who attempt to make the unsubscribe process more challenging than attempting a Rubik's Cube… blindfolded. While this may reduce unsubscribe rates, it also damages overall email performance – and, most importantly, your brand equity with customers (a.k.a. it really pisses people off). Don't be that brand!

If you love your customer, you've got to be willing to let them go. Make your unsubscribe link obvious and make unsubscribing easy. While there may be an initial wave of unsubscribes, the number should quickly decrease. At this point, you'll have a community that's genuinely interested in you and your products. If the unsub rate doesn't quickly taper off, well… it may be worth taking a harder look at your content. Deliver real value, and they're sure to stick around.

Got some email tips of your own? Share them in the Spiceworks Marketing Community.

Go forth and email.

Now you know your buyers. Although marketing can often end up being more art than science, we hope these quick tips will help you in creating your next email masterpiece.

Better yet, share them with the Twitterverse with the hashtag #spicyemailmarketing, so we can learn from your genius and perhaps share your thoughts next time. Until then – keep IT spicy!

Learn more about:
Spiceworks Targeted Email Solutions

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About Spiceworks

Spiceworks, is the vertical network for IT that more than 4 million IT professionals use to connect with one another and over 2,700 technology brands. The company simplifies how IT professionals discover, buy and manage more than $500 billion in technology products and services each year. Headquartered in Austin, Texas, Spiceworks is backed by Adams Street Partners, Tenaya Capital, Institutional Venture Partners (IVP), Shasta Ventures and Austin Ventures. For more information visit www.spiceworks.com.

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