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electronic marketplaces for international business

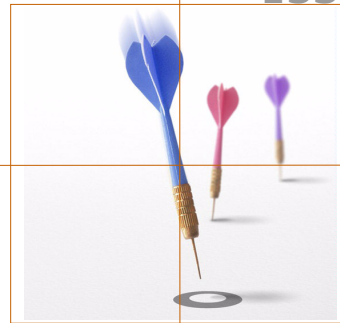
## ENGAGING E-MAIL MARKETING

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E-mails are one of the easiest ways of doing online e-business marketing. Even though e-mails are competing for attention from the incredible number of Spam mails that overflow the internet, the return of investment for e-mail marketing will be 45.65\$ per dollar spent in 2008<sup>1</sup>.

Even with such a high ROI, e-mail marketing is low compared to other online marketing activities. One reason may be the technical, design and engagement issues that go into creating a successful campaign.

With off-line media, the appearance is easily controlled, but online a large number of variables make it difficult to determine if the potential customer sees the message as it was intended. On the traditional webpage the designer must take into account the most used browsers like Internet Explorer and Firefox and the availability of plugins for Flash and Active-X. For the e-mails these variables are complex and are made even more difficult by the number of obstacles like spam-filters that must be overcome<sup>2</sup>.

Some of the factors that must be taken into account to create good e-mail campaigns are:

- The Subject and Content of the e-mail must pass through the automatic spam filters
- The address list must be updated. Too many bounced messages can cause your mail server to be blacklisted as creator of spasm.
- The use of HTML and rich text in the e-mail message must fit the individual users mail reader.
- Use of pictures should not be embedded in the e-mail since some ISPs will filter such messages

Having found a way to grow the subscriber list with correct opt-in/opt-out and following the best practices for the technical creation and distribution of e-mails, the real work is still ahead.

A recent paper from Responsys on how to make e-mail marketing engaging<sup>3</sup> focus on the customer experiences when receiving and interacting with the e-mails. The task of the e-mail is to increase the value by engaging the customer into action and dialogue. This is best done by taking into account the stage the customer is at (New, Active, Loyal or Returning). The e-mail must therefore be an integrated part of other data and channels to create more relevant and engaging interactions.

The e-mail campaigns are too successful to be left unused, but the fact that it is easy to send out thousands of e-mail does not mean that it can be used without a proper strategy.

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- 1 E-Mail ROI High, Response Rates Low, eMarketer  
[http://www.emarketer.com/Article.aspx?id=1005543&src=article1\\_newsltr](http://www.emarketer.com/Article.aspx?id=1005543&src=article1_newsltr)
  - 2 The Complete Guide for Creating HTML Emails, Email Labs  
[http://www.emaillabs.com/reports/emaillabs\\_html\\_email\\_guide.html](http://www.emaillabs.com/reports/emaillabs_html_email_guide.html)
  - 3 Email Marketing's New Rules of Engagement, Responsys  
<http://www.responsys.com/promotions/newrules/engage.php>

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