Annual Email Marketing Strategy Review Checklist

With an ever-changing email marketing landscape, it is important to regularly review and update your email marketing strategy. Perhaps there are new technologies you can embrace or design concepts you would like to try out in your email messages. The email marketing checklist below will guide you through five important areas - content, metrics, technology, advertising and opportunities - to help you create a fresh game plan for this upcoming year.

Content

Do our messages look current or outdated? Evaluate:

- ☐ Brand well represented by the overall message look
- ☐ Fresh, engaging graphics and images
- ☐ Color scheme consistent with brand
- ☐ Sidebar presents useful information
- ☐ Professional layout with easy navigation
- ☐ Contact information visible and easy to locate
- ☐ Utilizing optimum width based on internal analytics that show average monitor resolution
- ☐ Relevant and well-positioned survey or poll questions included within newsletter
- ☐ Up-to-date sections and departments

Is the context of our emails conducive to optimizing subscriber satisfaction and response?

- ☐ Appropriate sending frequency and message length (not too much, not too little)
- ☐ Landing pages naturally flow from stories or offers in emails
- ☐ Each email story has a call to action so we can gauge response

Are we testing variations on Subject Lines to maximize open rates?

- ☐ Offers tie in with current news or seasons as to increase receptiveness
- ☐ Good use of keywords, phrases and themes our recipients respond to the most
- ☐ Ommitted words that are triggering spam filters
- ☐ Using subject lines that cannot be confused with recent waves of spam before sending

Are we up-to-date on legal issues?

- ☐ Up-to-date privacy policy
- ☐ Compliant with all new or updated federal and state legislation
- ☐ Easy opt-in and opt-out options

Metrics

How does our performance this year compare to our performance last year? How have we been performing relative to our industry benchmarks? Compare:

- ☐ Open rates (verified how our software/ESP measures this since multiple ways exist)
- ☐ Click rates
- ☐ Bounce rates
- ☐ Unsubscribe rates
- ☐ Other email marketing metrics?

Technology

Are we leveraging new technology while also working around obstacles? Examples:

- ☐ Ajax vs. Straight HTML on landing pages
- ☐ Made appropriate accomodations to address Outlook 2007 not supporting style sheets the way Outlook 2003 did
- ☐ Ensure messages can be read without enabling images (since there is image blocking)
- ☐ Servers can adequately handle the load of web visits resulting from mailings
- ☐ Mail servers (or our ESP) can adequately handle our sending volume

Are there unexplained changes to deliverability?

- ☐ Monitoring any new IP addresses that needs reputation monitoring
- ☐ Ensured all our IP addresses whitelisted
- ☐ Updated contact information for ISPs in case of deliverability issues
- ☐ Addressed issues if we had to contact ISPs (or our ESP) regarding deliverability

Advertising

If advertising is included:

- ☐ Considered any new, more effective Interactive Advertising Bureau ad sizes, if there are any
- ☐ Initiate layout redesign required to accommodate any such new ad sizes
- ☐ Adequate ROI measurement processes in place
- ☐ Addressed other revenue generating ideas or trends

Opportunities

What other opportunities are there to build our list?

- ☐ Checkbox added to be subscribed to list upon product purchase
- ☐ Easily visible opt-in button or link on web site
- ☐ Sign up forms distributed at events, cash registers, or other physical locations
- ☐ Use search engines and other online ad spots
- ☐ Considered print ads
- ☐ Engage in co-registration (be sure to verify opt-in nature of co-registration addresses)