META TItle: Email Marketing Isn’t Dead — You’re Just Doing It Wrong

Description: Email marketing still delivers results. Learn the top 5 mistakes businesses make - and how to fix them to create campaigns that convert.

Is email marketing dead in 2025? Only if you’re doing it wrong

Email marketing is NOT dead! Organizations have many digital channels and ways to communicate, and sometimes, it seems like writing and posting a quick, punchy social media post is more effective than sending a longer email to your list.

In truth, email marketing has many benefits over social media marketing if you do it the right way. While social media is effective at blasting your messaging and content to everyone, email marketing allows you to target your audience and messaging to better cater to your subscribers' needs, potentially increasing your ROI.

Keep reading to learn how to create an email marketing strategy that “delivers” (sorry for the pun). We’ll discuss common email marketing mistakes (and fixes) and actionable strategies you can start implementing today.

Why email is a preferred marketing channel for organizations in 2025

Email marketing is a great channel to create personalised content for your audience. You can send targeted messaging to customers based on many characteristics or demographics, such as:

- City or region
- Buying or engagement history
- Opt-in preferences
- Marketing funnel stage
- Activity on your website

- Industry and role

To segment your email subscriber audience, your email marketing program will have a feature called “tags,” “lists,” or something similar. You can customise these tags depending on the segmentation that matters most to you.

Bonus tip: Email marketing is about quality over quantity. Starting an email marketing campaign doesn’t mean creating endless emails. In fact, when you use automation tools, you can automatically send emails to subscribers when they perform specific actions (like making a purchase or signing up for your list).

Read more about using email marketing as a small business.

5 ways you’re doing email marketing wrong (and how to fix them)

Some organisations tell us that email marketing hasn’t been effective for them in the past. In many cases, email marketing isn’t working because their strategy wasn’t optimised for their target customers.

Here are the five reasons email marketing strategies fail organizations and how you can fix each one:

1. Everyone gets the same content

If everyone wanted to read generic, impersonal content, they’d go to your social media feeds. Email is meant to cater to the specific needs of individual users (or at least by their preferences or demographics as closely as possible). Sending emails to segmented lists can drive as much as 30% more opens and 50% more clickthroughs.

To fix: Add tags or create groups in your email list to cater to unique demographics such as recent purchasers, new customers, VIP customers, and where they live. Then, send unique content and messaging that relates to that segment (for example, sending “here’s a 10% discount code to come back” or emailing those who haven’t made a recent purchase to entice them back)./

2. Your subject lines are spammy or not engaging enough

Your audience may confuse your email with spam. Make sure your email subject lines don’t contain spammy language and are written in your brand voice. Use the recommended 30-50 characters (or first 4-7 words) to create intrigue so people want to open your email and engage with its contents.

To fix: Test your email subject lines for effectiveness using this email subject line tester tool from CoSchedule.

3. Your emails are hard to read or navigate on mobile

How often do you read emails on your mobile device? 41% of your email views are viewed on mobile devices, and 20% are on tablets. If your subscribers can't read your emails, or the design is distracting or not optimized for small screens, they can't read or click on links in your emails.

To fix: Keep your email designs simple to avoid display problems and to make optimising for mobile layouts simpler.

4. You're sending too many (or too few) emails.

Did you know that receiving too many emails is a top reason people unsubscribe from email lists? For many organizations, sending daily emails may be too much. For example, if you're a promotional products company and know your customers only purchase once or twice a year, you can stay top of mind (and not annoy them) with monthly emails rather than daily or weekly ones.

To fix: Try sending emails less frequently or replacing frequent, general emails with fewer but more targeted emails to segmented lists. Always make sure your content is relevant and worth opening.

5. You're not tracking your success and improving results

You can't effectively understand the success of your email marketing without looking at your KPIs. To know if your content is effective, your sending frequency is just right, and your campaigns are converting or meeting your goals, you need to track and look at your email analytics.

Standard metrics to track include clickthrough rate, open rate, leads or conversions, traffic from email campaigns, and click rate.

To fix: Easy! Start tracking KPIs relevant to your goals and use that information to change future emails and campaigns to improve your results next time.

How email can outperform social media

In digital marketing, social media can seem like the easiest way to focus your marketing efforts. However, you're not fully controlling who (and how many) people see your content. That critical factor is left to the algorithms, and while you can play its game to increase your chances of visibility, it's not a guarantee.

With email marketing, everyone opts in to receive messages from you. When you send an email, it will land in everyone's inbox. No more hoping the algorithm places your content on your follower's screens.

How are you collecting emails and opt-ins?

Of course, an email marketing strategy won't be helpful if you don't have subscribers. In many regions, Canada included, it's a legal requirement that subscribers opt-in to receive communications from you. You can't purchase email lists or add customers without their permission.

How can you grow your email list and get new subscribers?

- Add a "subscribe" link on your website, email footer, and business cards
- Offer a free gift (freebie) in exchange for their email and consent.
- Collect email addresses and consent during online checkout (or in-store point-of-purchase)
- Collect email addresses on a sign-up sheet at tradeshow booths or speaking events (where you're a speaker).

No matter how you receive email addresses for your list, be transparent and ensure they understand that they're opting in to receive email communications from your brand.

Email isn't dead—if you do it right

Email marketing can be an effective digital strategy to complement your other online activities. You can repurpose (share again) content you've posted to your social media, your blog, and other channels for your email list to nurture leads and customers.

A social media post can be easily missed (especially with social media's changing algorithm that controls what posts you see). Email marketing goes directly to your prospective and current customers who have subscribed to your list.

We challenge you to look at your email marketing strategy this month. Make sure you're not making any of the mistakes we mentioned above, and that your email marketing strategy fits within your marketing funnel and content strategy.

Sometimes, you may need an outsider's perspective because you're too deeply entrenched in your current email marketing activities to see what's not working. That's why meeting with a digital marketing agency like Out-Smarts Marketing can provide valuable insights.

Our team of senior digital markers can help you look at your email marketing strategy and how it fits into your marketing plan and meets (or doesn't meet) your organization's goals. We can help you reach the right people with the right message - at the right time through email.

From setting up your account and building your list to crafting engaging content and tracking results, we handle the details so you can focus on what matters. We can also create lead funnels that use your email marketing strategy to its fullest potential.

How can we help you harness the power of email marketing and make it relevant and effective for your organisation? Start by booking a discovery call with our team today.