Email Trends: What's in Style for 2017

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Director of Operations
HighRoad Solution

Today's Agenda

- Email state of the union
- What *was* in style
- What *is* in style now
- How to transition old workflow practices to align with current trends
- Key takeaways

Demand Metric Study

- Email is #1 for usage, but only scores a C for effectiveness
- Email still in top 3 categories of spend
- How do we improve the ROI on email?

Marketing Effectiveness

Figure 6: *Email reclaims the top spot as the most effective tactic for association marketing.*

Marketing Tactic Usage

Figure 7: *Email reclaims the top spot as the most effective tactic for association marketing.*

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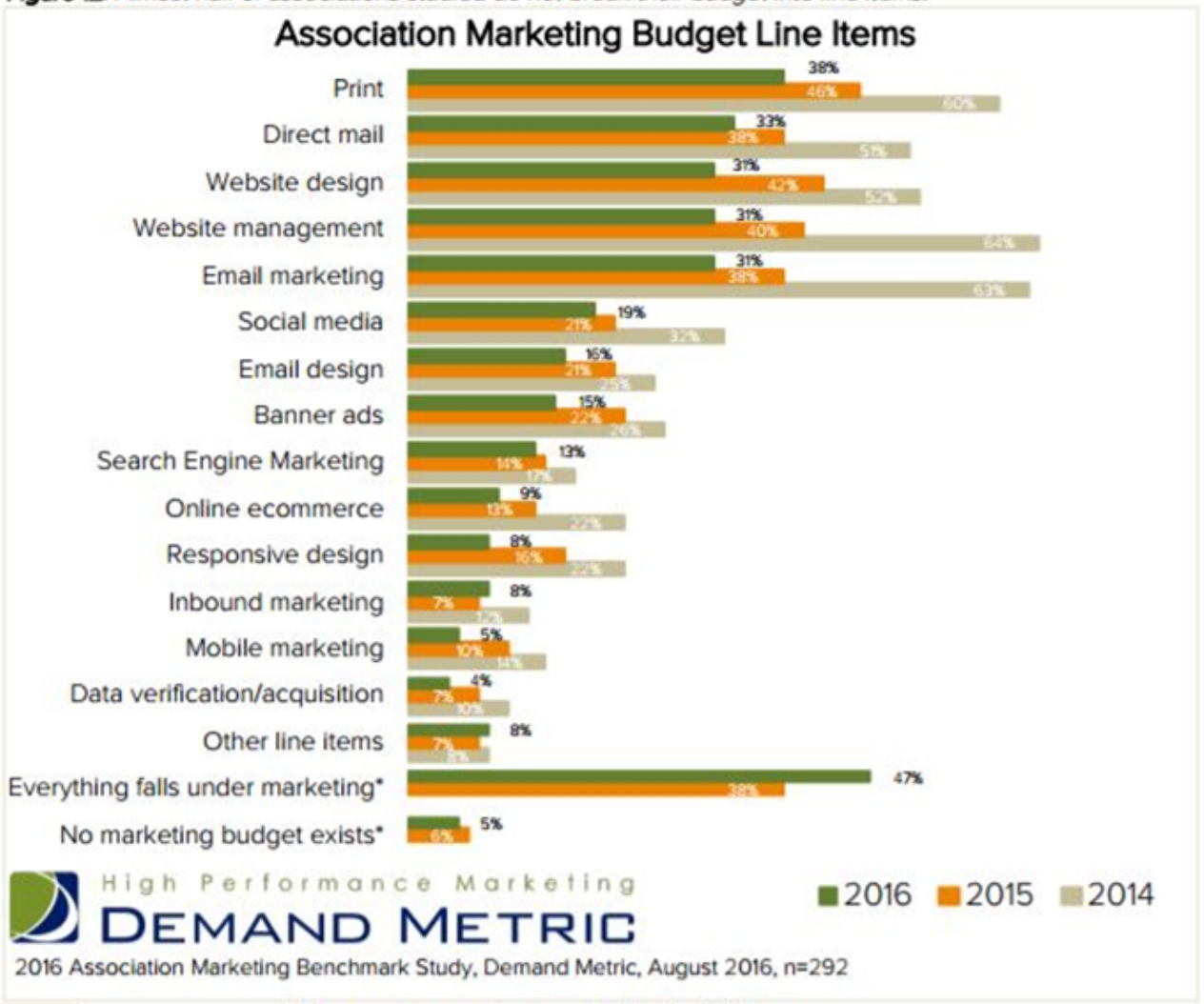
Budget Line Items

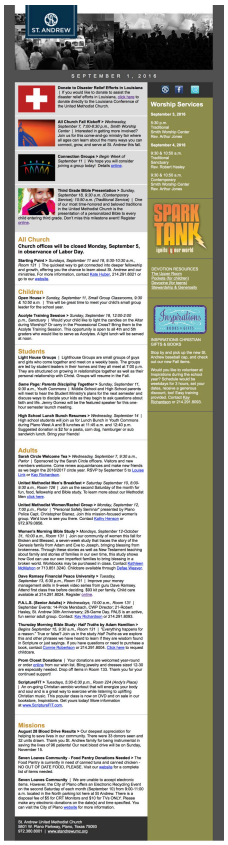
***Figure 12**: Almost half of associations studied do not break their budget into line items.*



SDMA 2017

- 4th Year of the Study is Underway
- Participate! $5 in coffee
- Results released at 2017 MMCC HighRoadU.com>Research

Trends of the Past



- Long email newsletters
- Over messaging your membership/no defined frequency of communications
- Casting the widest net when sending

Conundrum

As an attempt to reduce the number of emails, the solution was to create fewer emails that contain more content.

- The issue is relevancy of content
- The issue is resource time to craft the email
- The issue is relevancy to constituent
- The issue is “the eye roll.”

Features of the Past

- Text versions of email
- Forward to a Friend
- Refer a Friend
- Creating a special mobile version
- Email social share

Reality Check

- Are your MarComm resources spending too much time using features of the past?
- Have you measured the performance when using older features to know if they are successful?
- Have you tracked the average open rates during low and high email volumes?
- Are you actively checking unsubscribe/opt out rates when sending more emails?
- Have you asked your membership how many emails they want from you per week? Per Month? And have you asked them what their interests are or do you assume?
- Are you actually doing anything with the behavioral data your ESP aggregates?

What's the point?

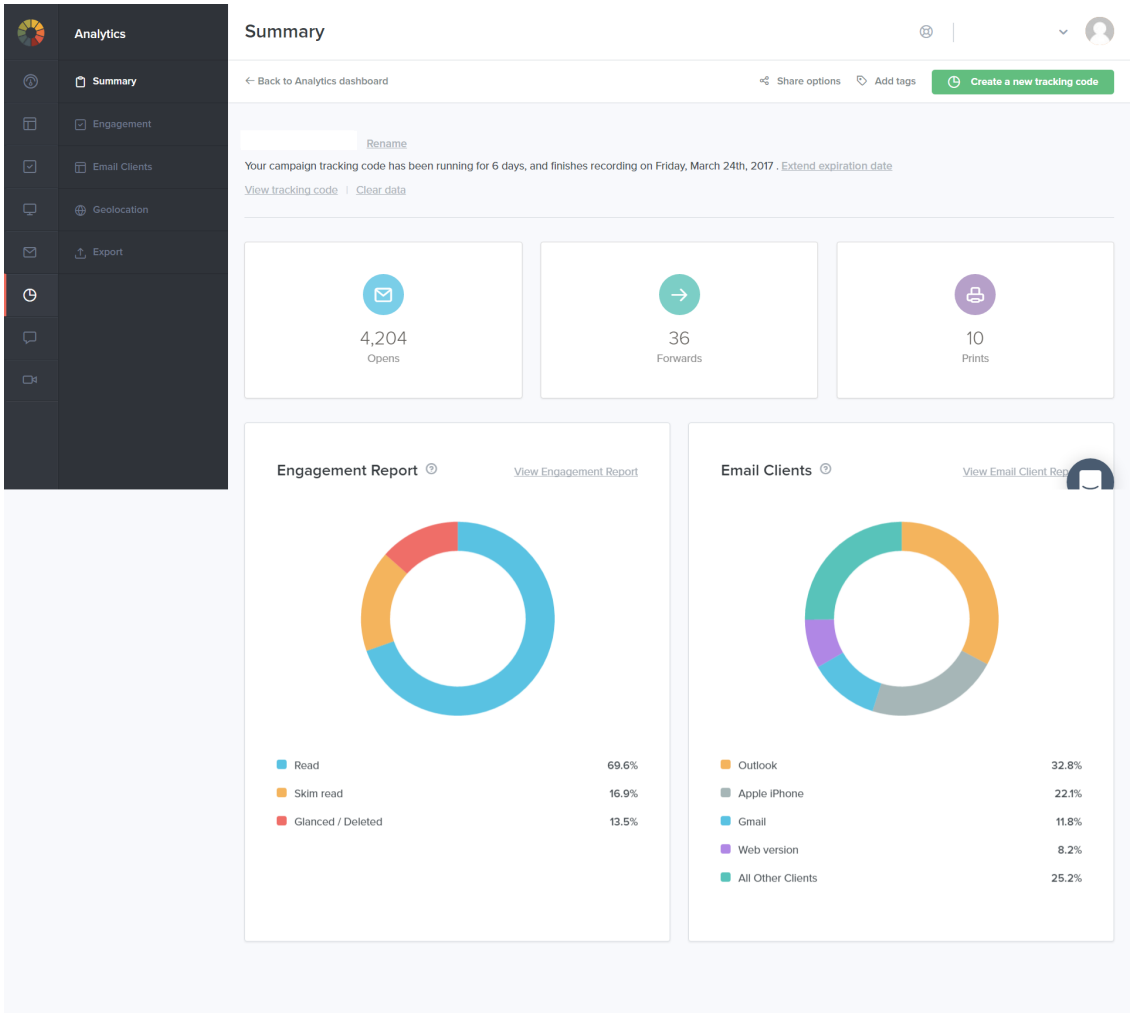
- The purpose of any form of messaging is to get in front of a constituent, *motivate* them to go somewhere to do something.
- Deploy messaging that takes into a account behavioral data to build out an interest profile.

Where do we go from here?

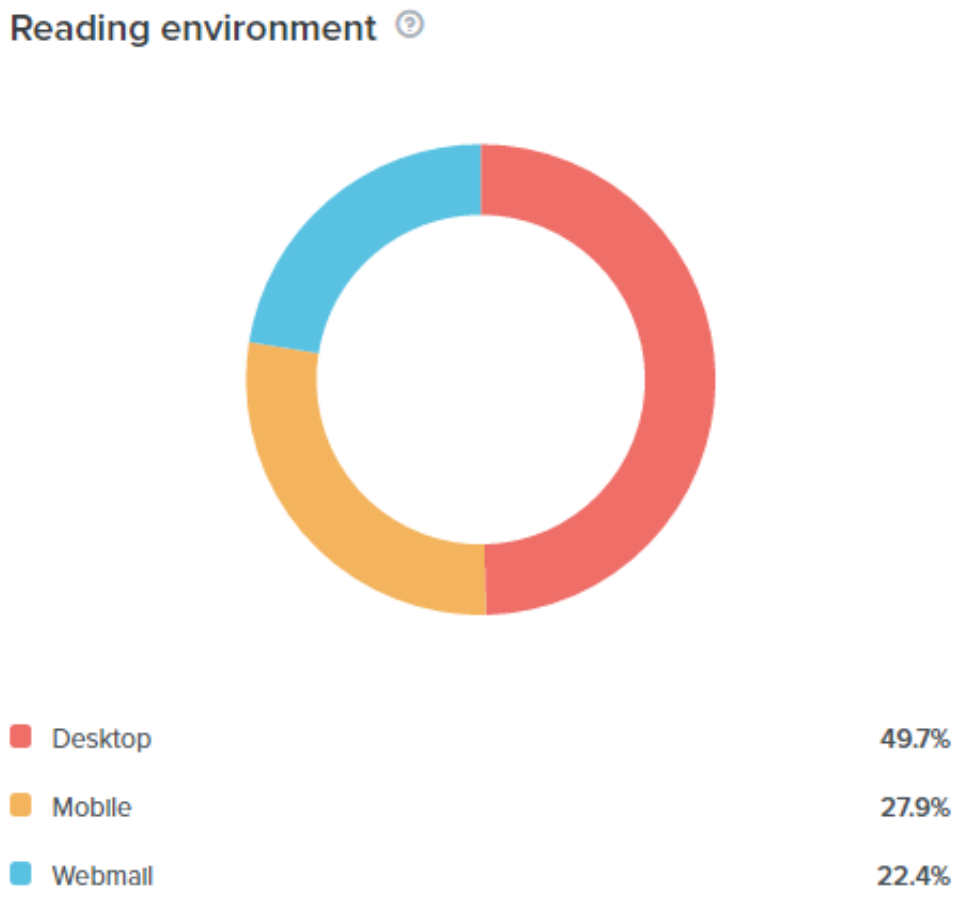
Understand your baseline

- Average number of emails sent per week to members/non-members/prospects
- Average key metrics between each of those groups (Open, Clicks, Read, Skim Read, Glanced, Forwards, Prints)
- Break these out quarterly to see your trends

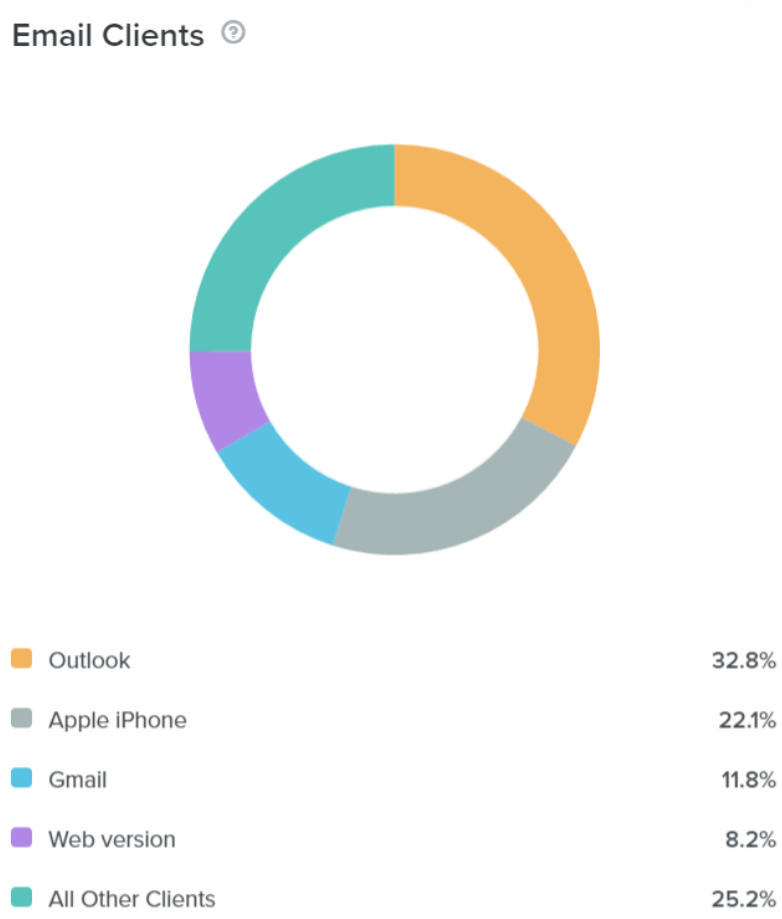
Where should I begin?



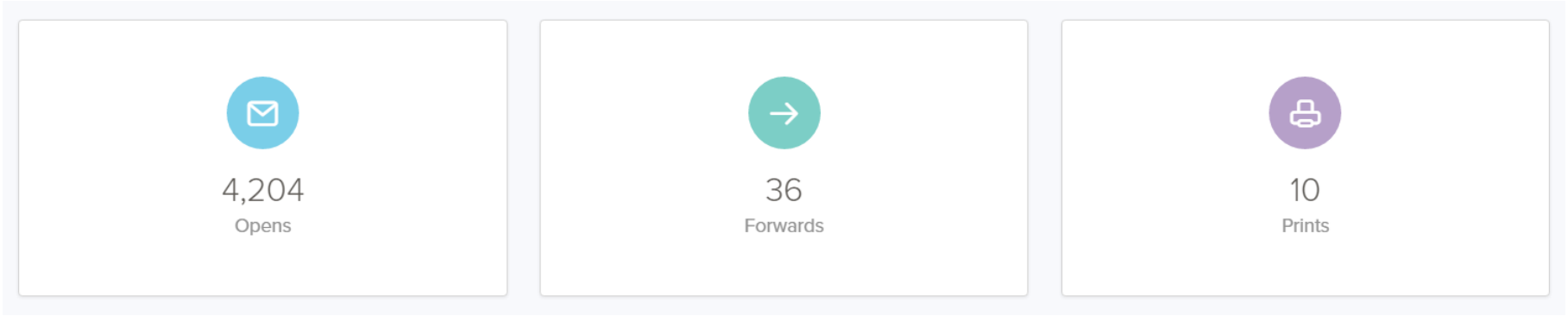
Reading Environments



Email Clients

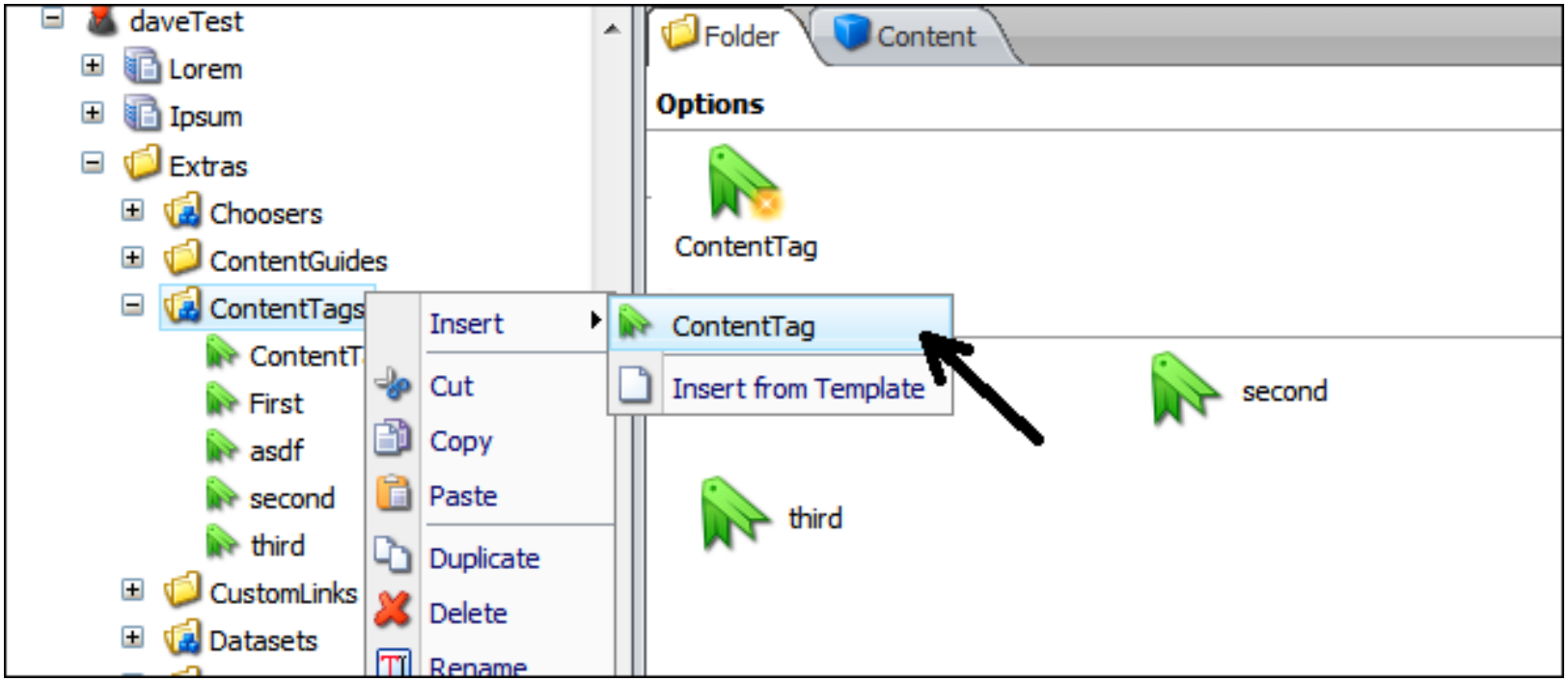


Behaviors



Address the CMS

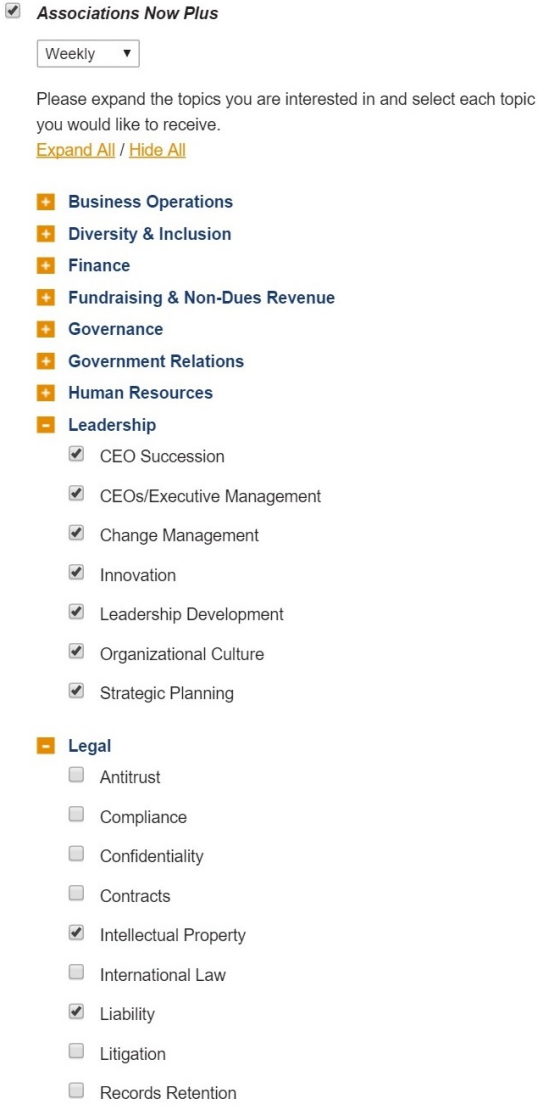
Web Content Tagging



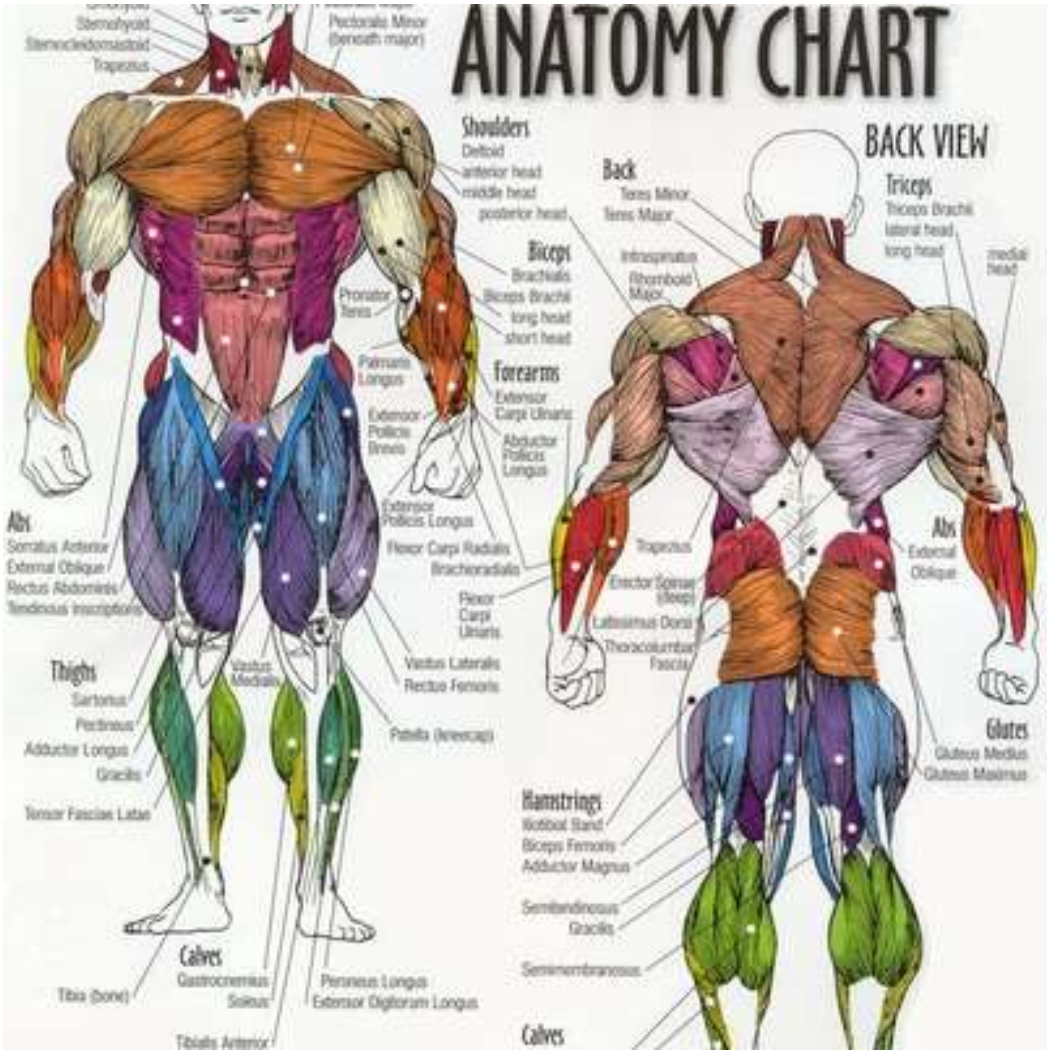
Address the AMS

- [ ] Advocacy
- [x] Legislative
- [ ] Grass Roots
- [x] Continuing Education

Building Interest Profiles



Anatomy of Solid Design



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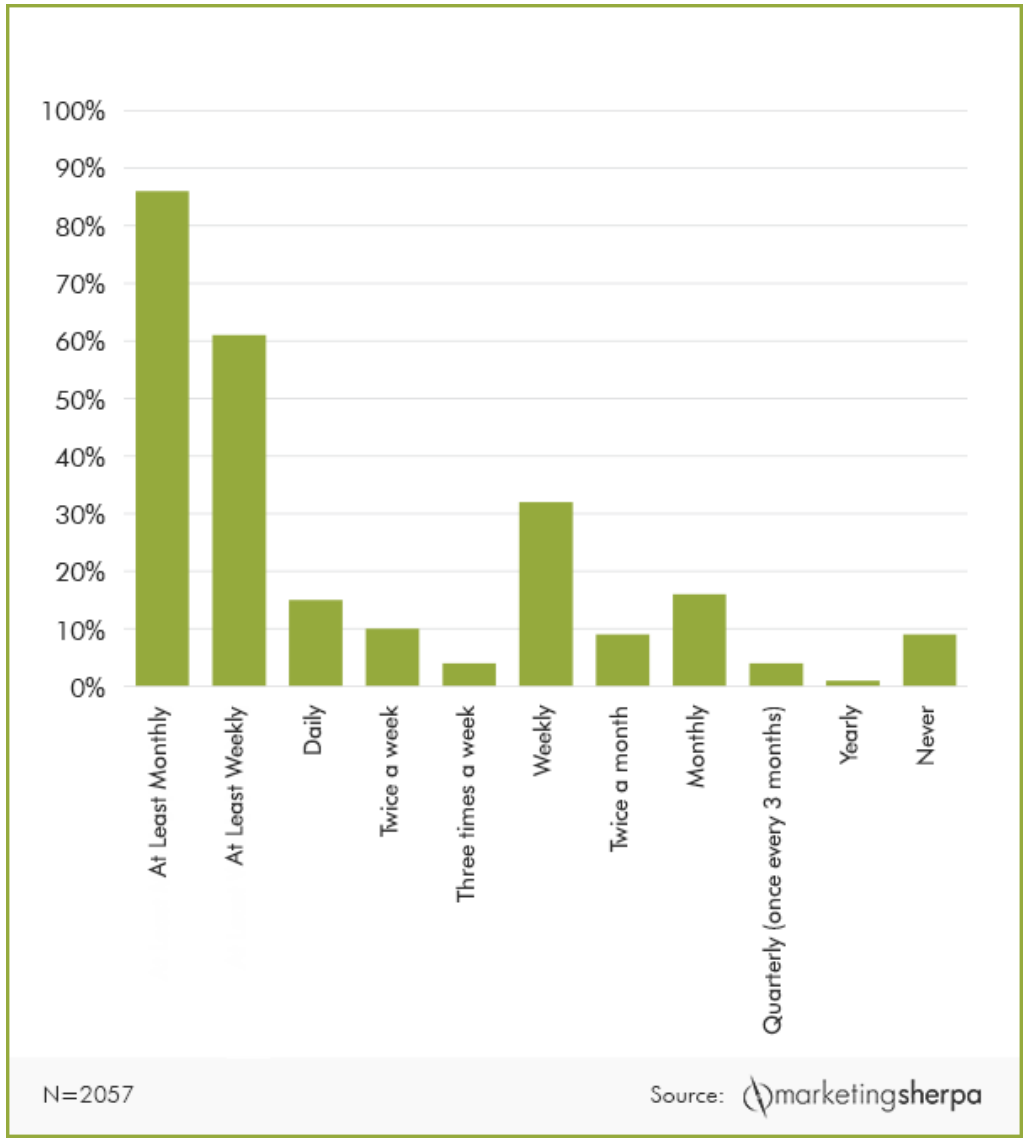
- Responsive with Text/CSS/Media Queries
- Preview Text
- Preheader Text
- Single column fluid layout
- Limited teaser text with read more links
- Make sure images are readable when they scale up to 320px or scale down

What is in Style (for a reason)

- Website CMS allowing you to tag your content
- Website CMS with RSS feeds
- Analytics that allow you to create UTM codes for all touchpoint mediums
- Taxonomy of interests in AMS factoring in constituent preference AND constituent behaviors

- Responsive, single column fluid layout
- Consistent branding across all messaging template assets (not just your logo)
- Delivering content the constituent is interested in
- Litmus Analytics & Rendering Checklists
- Segmenting your audience

Recency – Frequency - Cadence



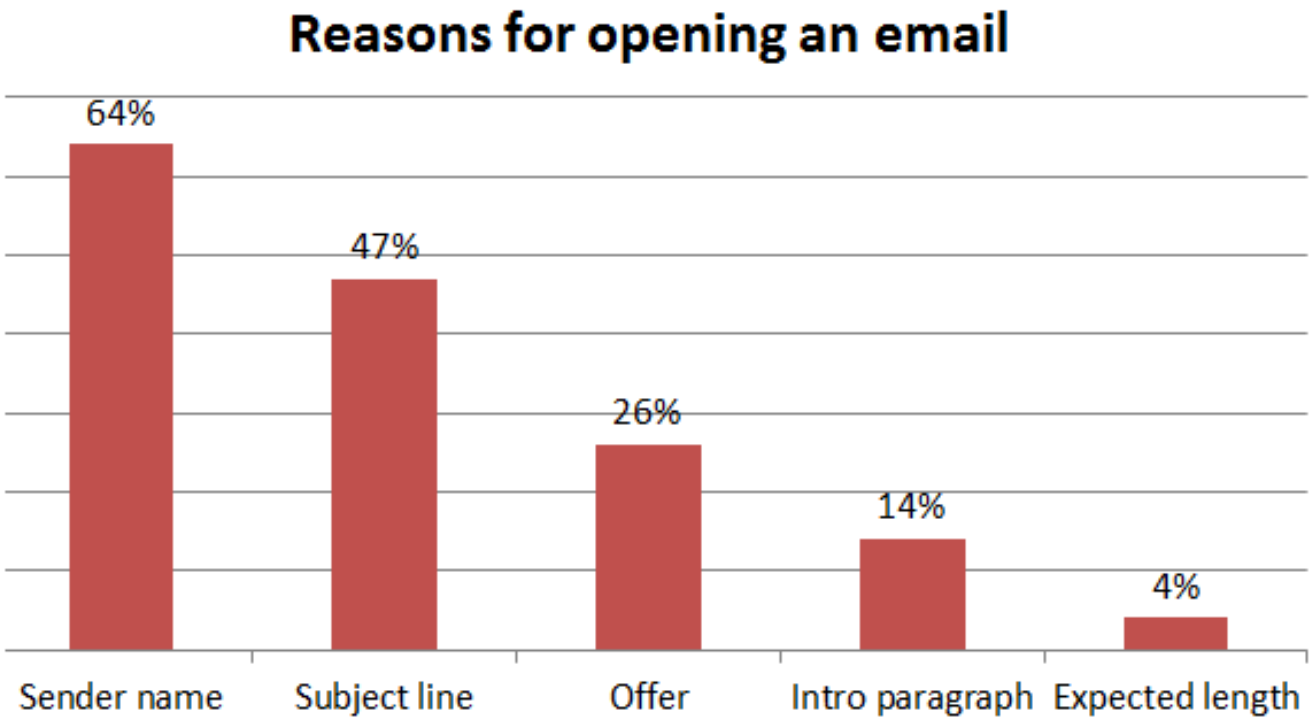
While 86% would like to receive promo emails at least monthly, 15% would like to receive promotional emails every day.

To me, this points to the importance of segmentation. If you're sending daily emails to people who only want monthly emails, they are likely to unsubscribe or mark your email as spam.

Likewise, if you're sending monthly emails to the 15% who want daily emails, they will feel underserved, and there will be a void that might be filled by your competition.

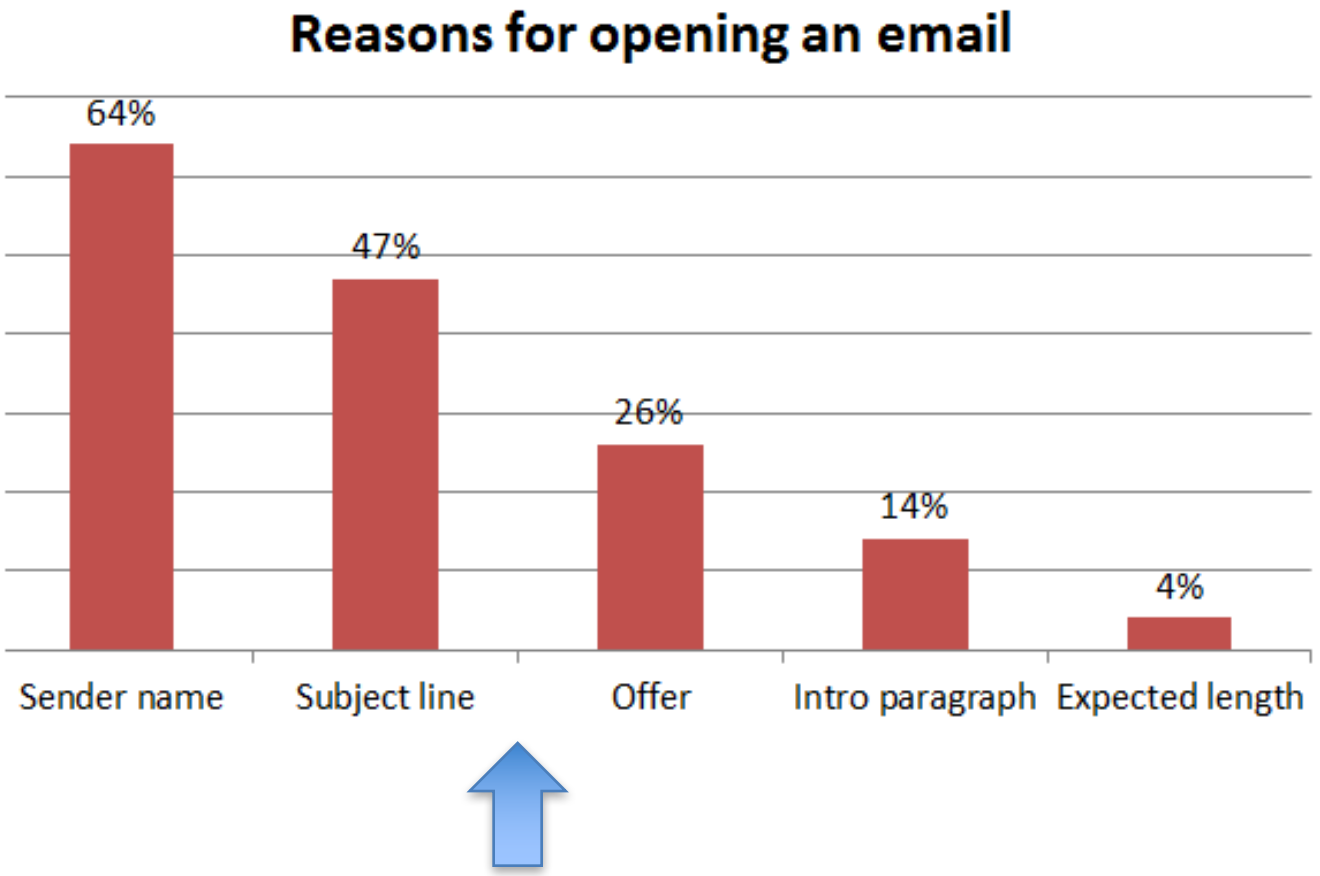
Things to Think About

Open Motivation



REALLY?? REALLY??

Open Motivation

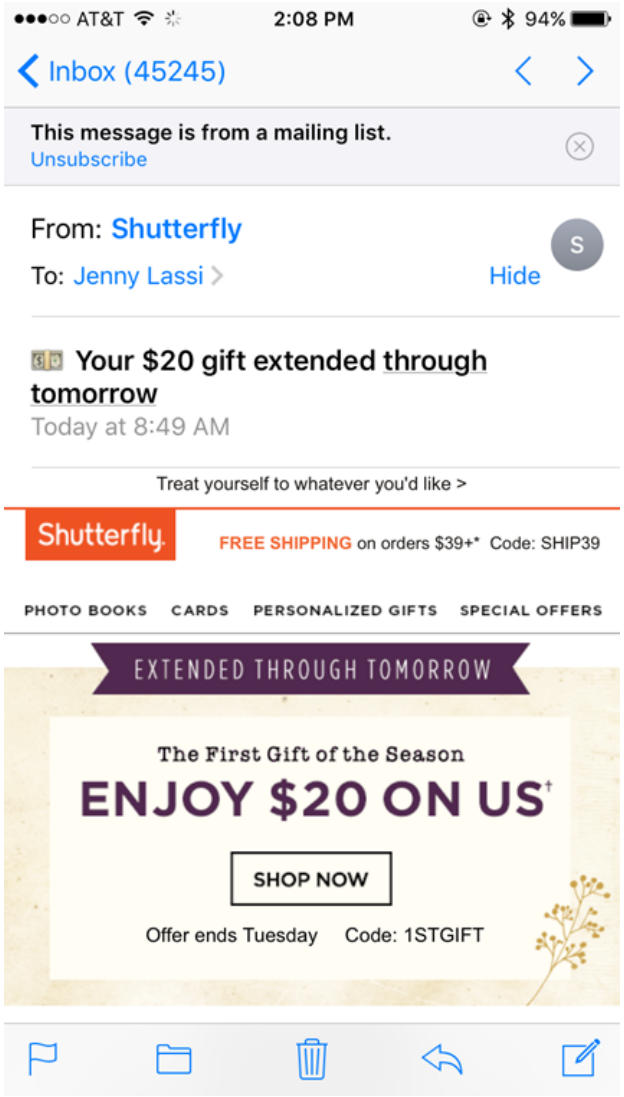


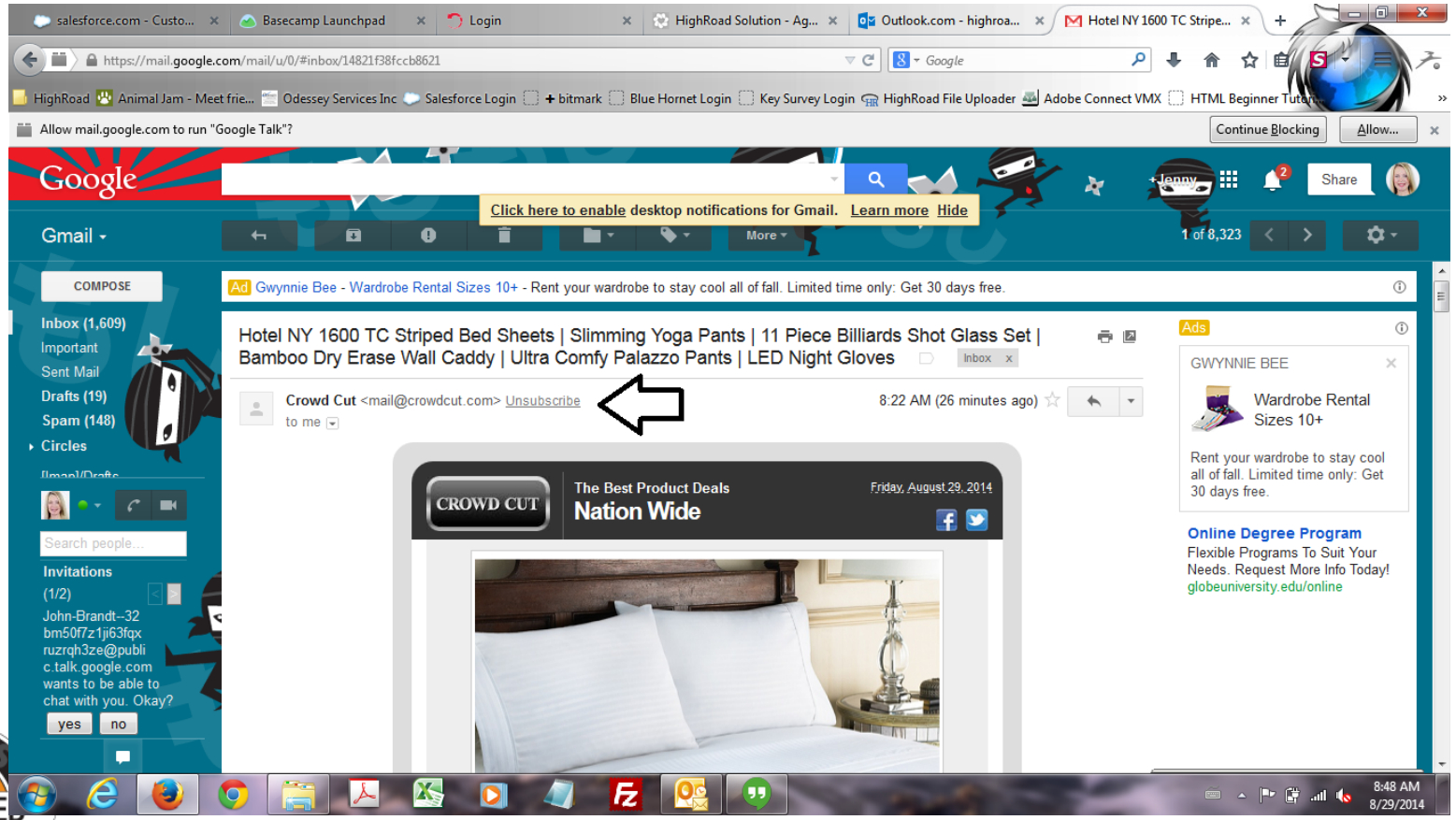
Preview Text, Preheader Text & Subject Line

Designing for Unsub Options

- As of September 2016, IOS devices join Gmail, Yahoo and Microsoft for adding their own List Unsubscribe to the top of emails which is the first thing your subscriber sees, bypassing yours in your footer so add your Manage Preferences/Unsubscribe links to your email's pre-header to minimize subscribers using theirs and not yours.
- Know who you are designing for (demographic, member status, age).
- Know what email clients they are using.
- Always use Responsive HTML.
- Know what performs best with your audience.

Constituent Choices




Hotel NY 1600 TC Striped Bed Sheets | Slimming Yoga Pants | 11 Piece Billiards Shot Glass Set | Bamboo Dry Erase Wall Caddy | Ultra Comfy Palazzo Pants | LED Night Gloves
Crowd Cut <mail@crowdcut.com> Unsubscribe
to me
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CROWD CUT
The Best Product Deals
Nation Wide
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Rent your wardrobe to stay cool all of fall. Limited time only: Get 30 days free.
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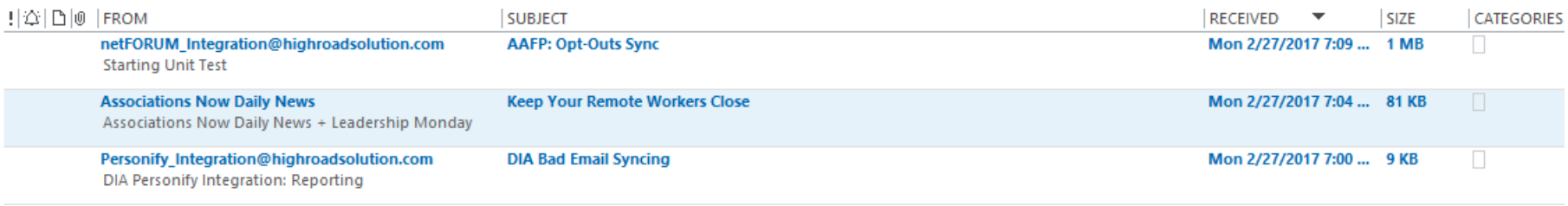
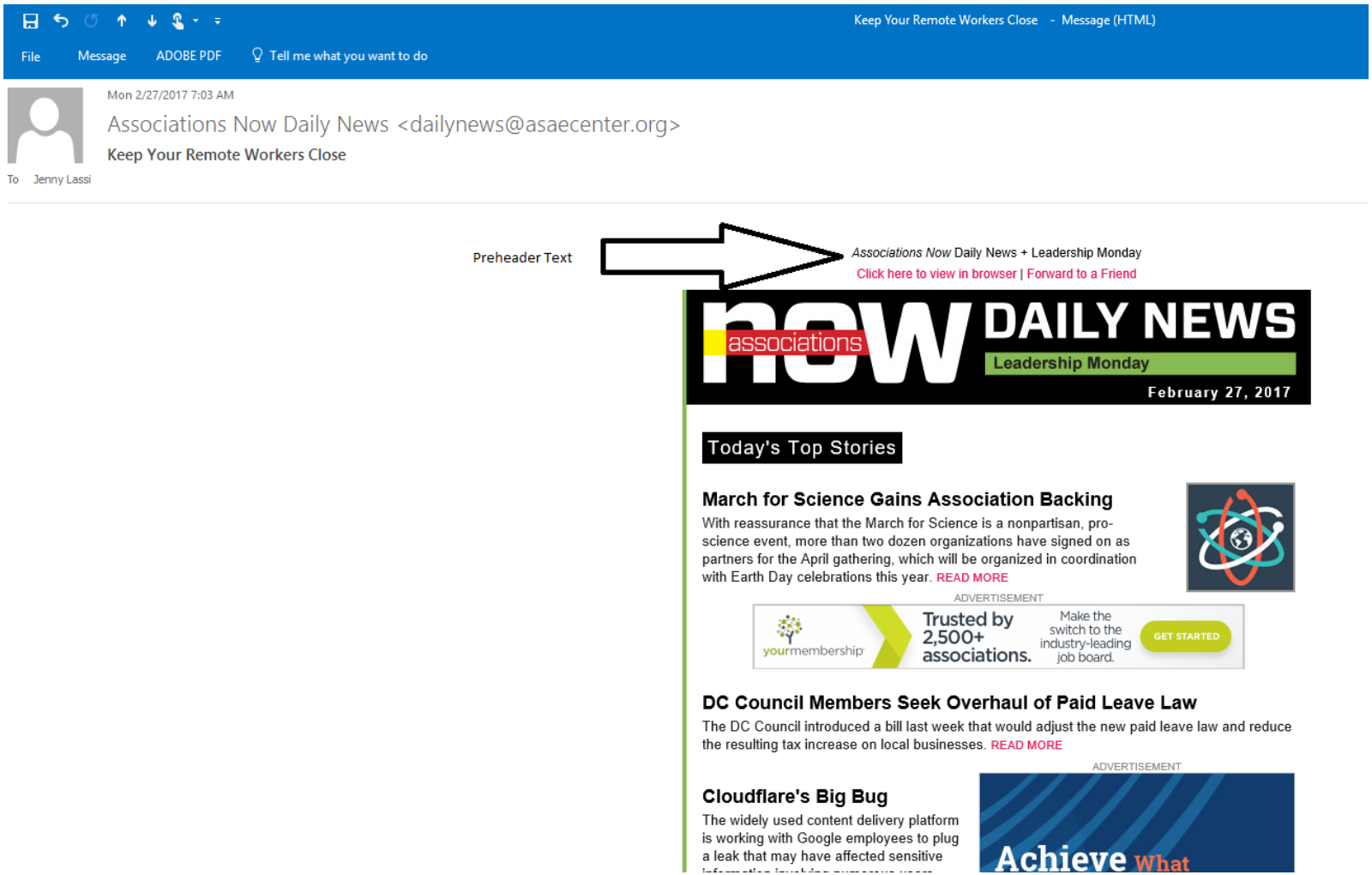
Preheader Text

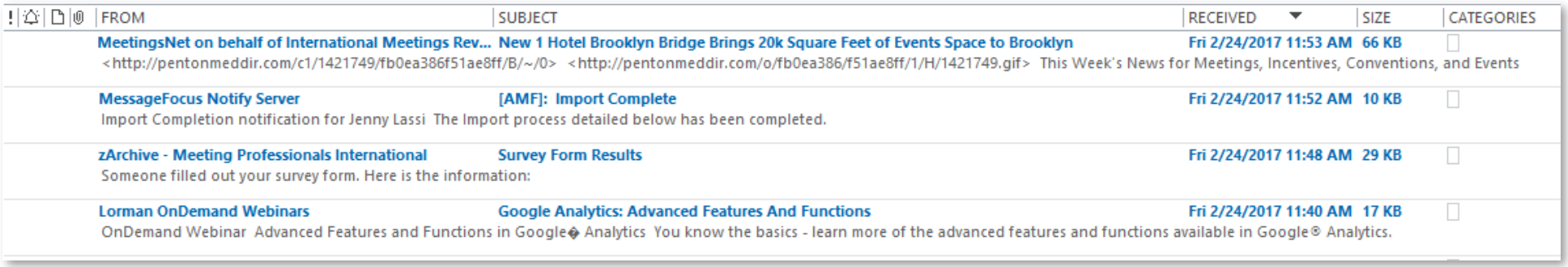


FROM	SUBJECT	RECEIVED	SIZE	CATEGORIES
netFORUM_Integration@highroadsolution.com Starting Unit Test	AAFP: Opt-Outs Sync	Mon 2/27/2017 7:09 ...	1 MB	
Associations Now Daily News Associations Now Daily News + Leadership Monday	Keep Your Remote Workers Close	Mon 2/27/2017 7:04 ...	81 KB	
Personify_Integration@highroadsolution.com DIA Personify Integration: Reporting	DIA Bad Email Syncing	Mon 2/27/2017 7:00 ...	9 KB	

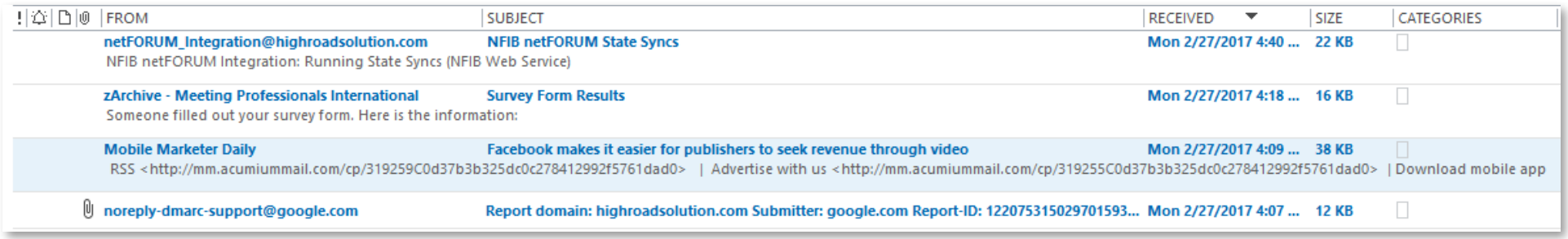
Preheader Text



Preheader Text Fails

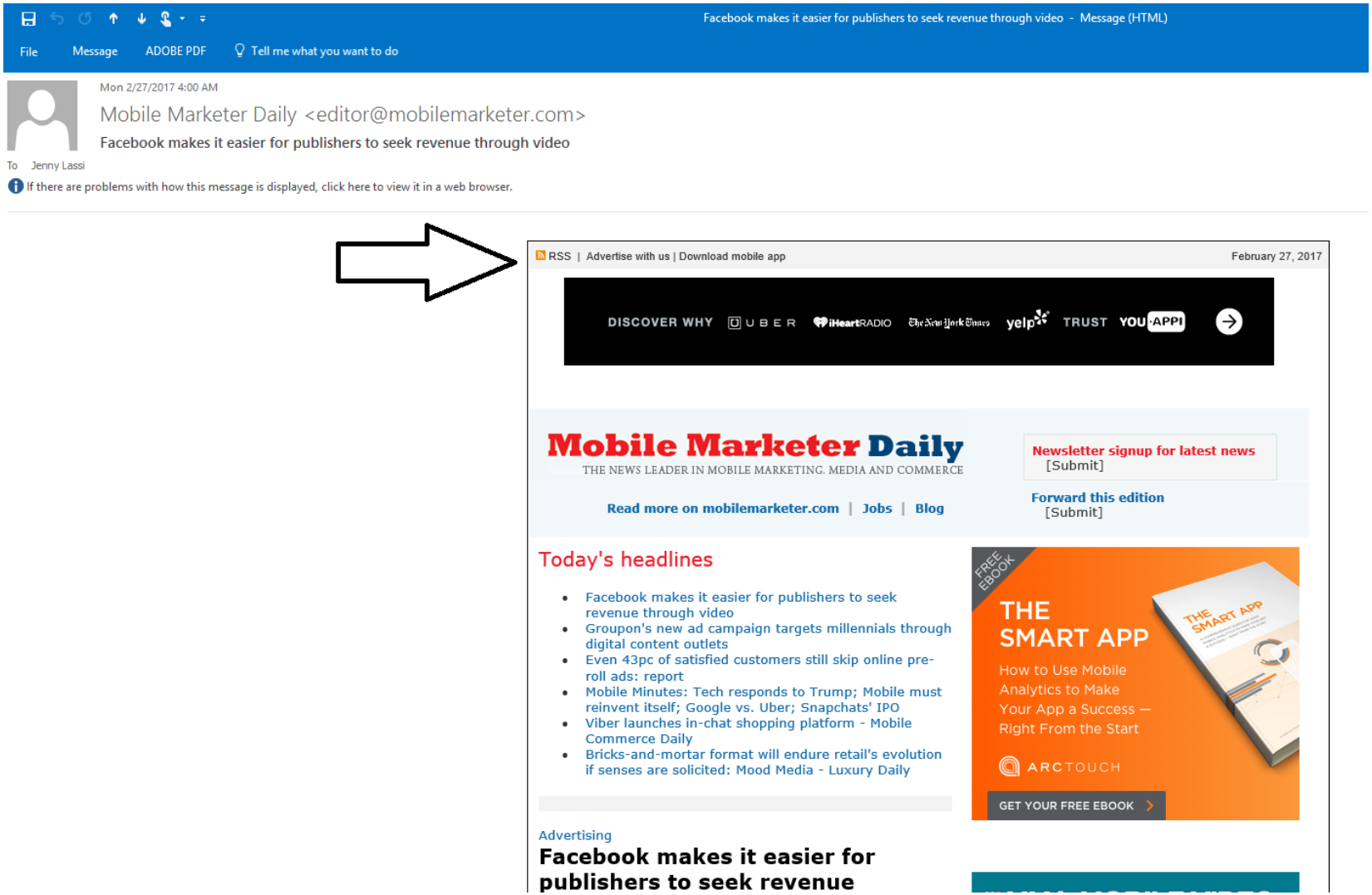


FROM	SUBJECT	RECEIVED	SIZE	CATEGORIES
MeetingsNet on behalf of International Meetings Rev...	New 1 Hotel Brooklyn Bridge Brings 20k Square Feet of Events Space to Brooklyn	Fri 2/24/2017 11:53 AM	66 KB	
<http://pentonmeddir.com/c1/1421749/fb0ea386f51ae8ff/B/~/0> <http://pentonmeddir.com/o/fb0ea386/f51ae8ff/1/H/1421749.gif> This Week's News for Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Events				
MessageFocus Notify Server	[AMF]: Import Complete	Fri 2/24/2017 11:52 AM	10 KB	
Import Completion notification for Jenny Lassi The Import process detailed below has been completed.				
zArchive - Meeting Professionals International	Survey Form Results	Fri 2/24/2017 11:48 AM	29 KB	
Someone filled out your survey form. Here is the information:				
Lorman OnDemand Webinars	Google Analytics: Advanced Features And Functions	Fri 2/24/2017 11:40 AM	17 KB	
OnDemand Webinar Advanced Features and Functions in Google Analytics You know the basics - learn more of the advanced features and functions available in Google® Analytics.				

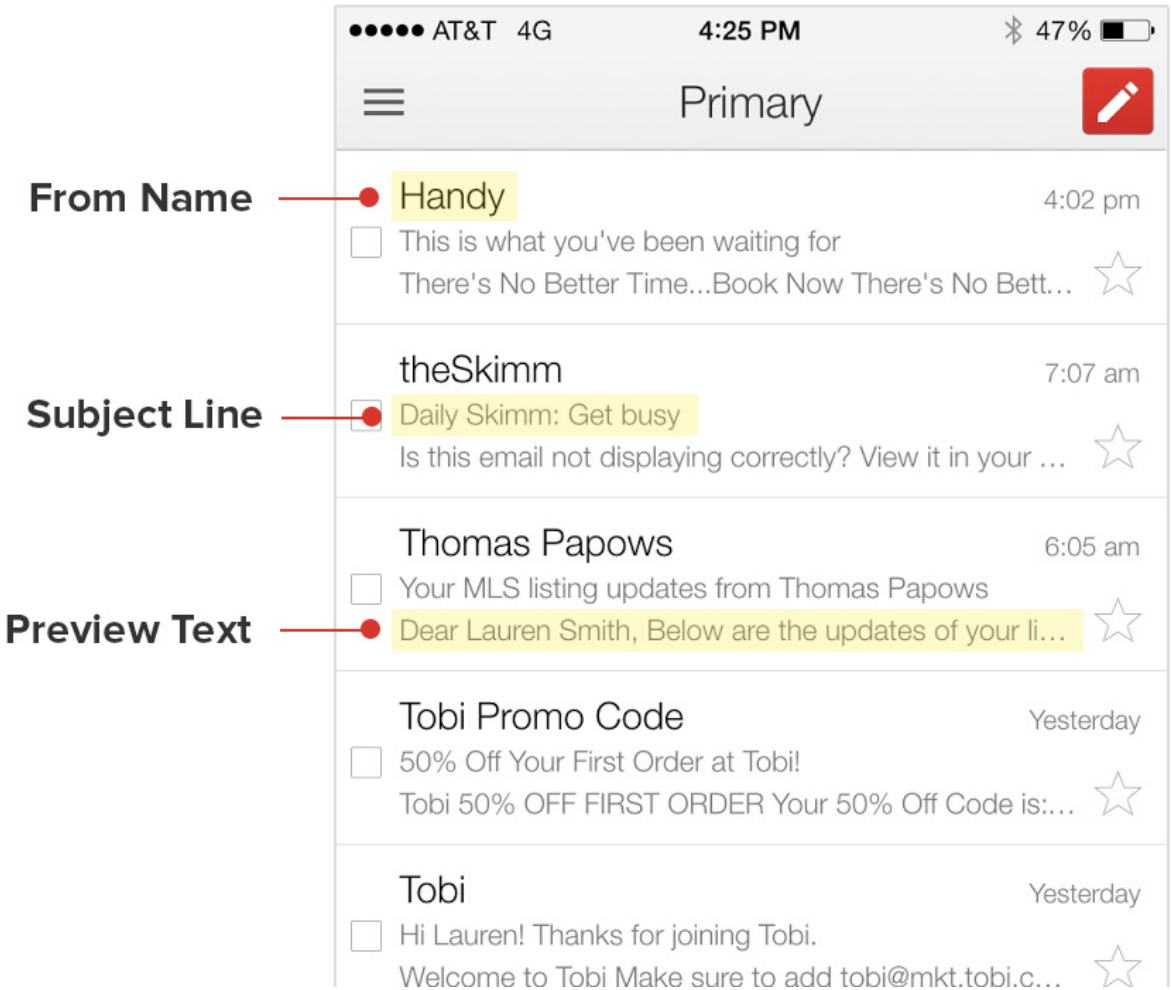


FROM	SUBJECT	RECEIVED	SIZE	CATEGORIES
netFORUM_Integration@highroadsolution.com	NFIB netFORUM State Syncs	Mon 2/27/2017 4:40 ...	22 KB	
NFIB netFORUM Integration: Running State Syncs (NFIB Web Service)				
zArchive - Meeting Professionals International	Survey Form Results	Mon 2/27/2017 4:18 ...	16 KB	
Someone filled out your survey form. Here is the information:				
Mobile Marketer Daily	Facebook makes it easier for publishers to seek revenue through video	Mon 2/27/2017 4:09 ...	38 KB	
RSS <http://mm.acumiummail.com/cp/319259C0d37b3b325dc0c278412992f5761dad0> | Advertise with us <http://mm.acumiummail.com/cp/319255C0d37b3b325dc0c278412992f5761dad0> | Download mobile app				
noreply-dmarc-support@google.com	Report domain: highroadsolution.com Submitter: google.com Report-ID: 122075315029701593...	Mon 2/27/2017 4:07 ...	12 KB	

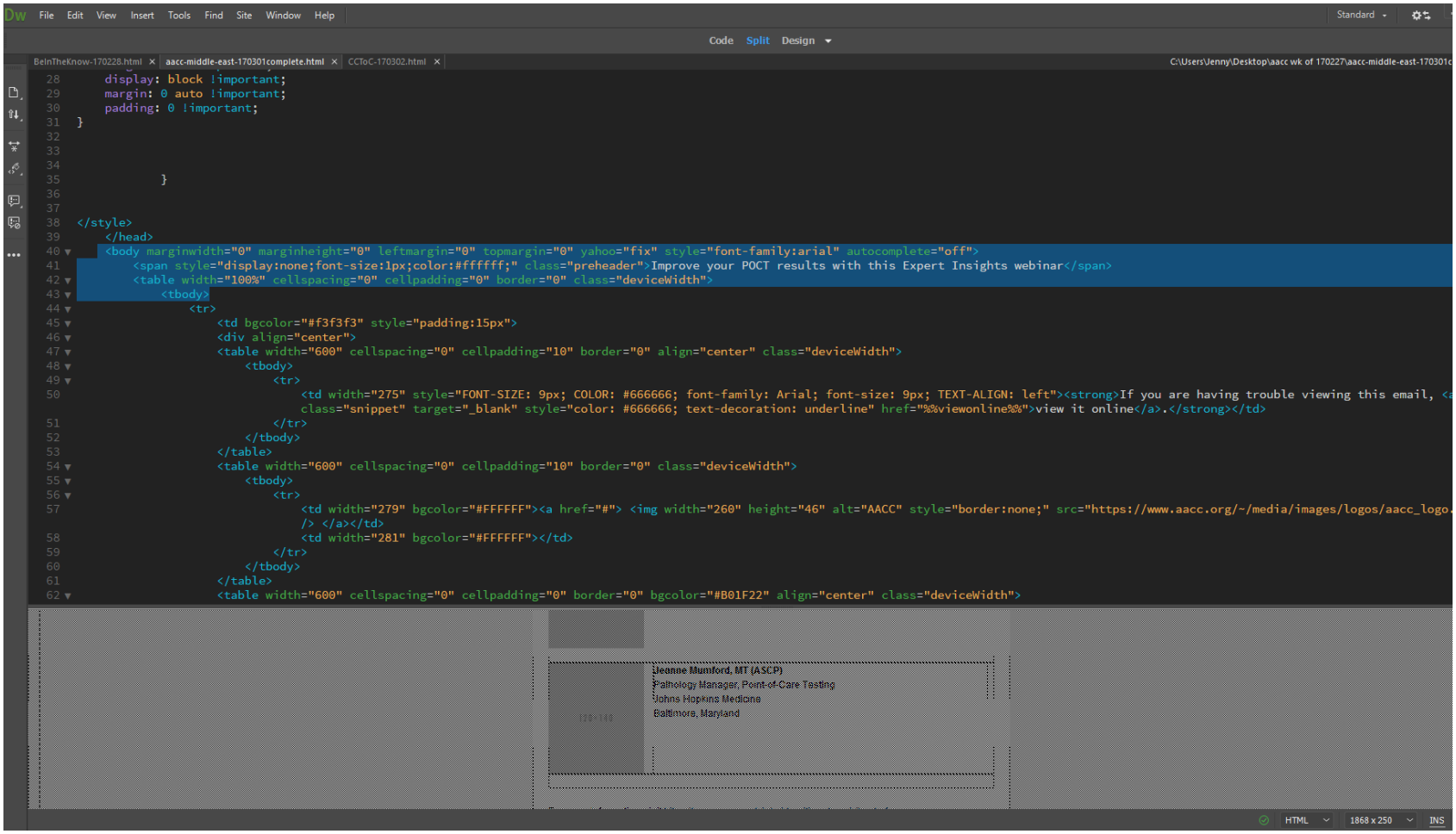
Preheader Text Fails



Preview Text Opportunities



Preview Text Opportunities



Subject Line Safe Bets

- Question about [goal]
- [Mutual connection] recommended I get in touch
- Our next steps
- Do not open this email
- X options to get started
- Hi [name], [question]?
- Know this about [topic of interest]?
- A [benefit] for [prospect's company]
- X tips/ideas for [pain point]
- You are not alone.
- Idea for [topic the prospect cares about]

Design Tricks to Try

Accordion Menus in Email
-With native mobile app support, now more verbose emails can have an accordion menu for mobile so they don't get arthritis in their finger scrolling through all content to find what they want.

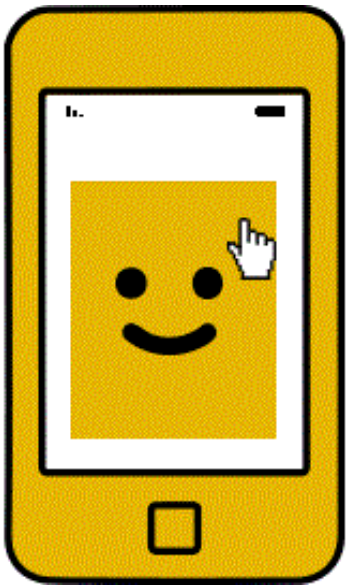
Scratch & Flip
-Provides a cool way to allow email recipients to consume the email on their mobile device and using a scratch effect, they can scratch off offers/promotions.

Graphs
-Interactive graphs increase engagement and this is a very cool option for lists that are primarily mobile as this doesn't work well for Outlook and Lotus users.

Rotating Banners
-Don't be limited to 1 header graphic when there are so many ways you can visually grab the attention of email recipients. Again, native mobile apps work, Outlook probably doesn't.

Animated Gifs
-The tried and true method of using gifs to imitate video in email. Outlook shows only 1 frame of gif but this is pretty universally supported at this point.

Design Tricks to Try



Content Curation

- The role of email is to direct the recipient somewhere to do something.
- **Use teaser text and read more links. Don’t giveaway the kitchen sink in emails or the html file size may reach a threshold that nets you more bounces.**

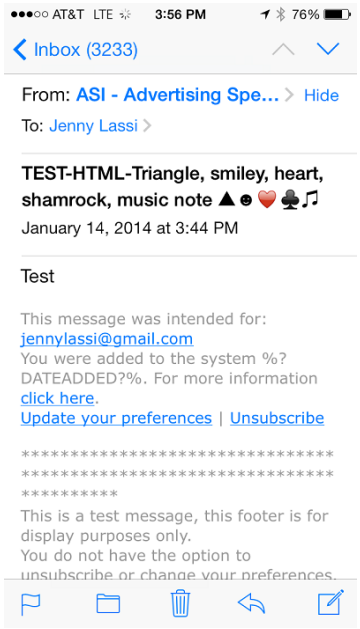
Subject Line Creativity

The only way to ensure that special characters render properly/consistently in a subject line is to encode in UTF-8.

1. Copy the desired character from a program like Start>Accessories>Character Map
2. Then go to a string conversion tool that will encode a string to Base64/UTF-8 like:
3. http://coderstoolbox.net/string/#!encoding=base64&action=encode&charset=utf_8
4. Then create your subject line using your character from step 1 in the "input" text box.
5. Copy the string of characters the tool gives you in the "Output" box
6. Paste the UTF-8 string into the following where indicated by brackets but paste over the brackets:

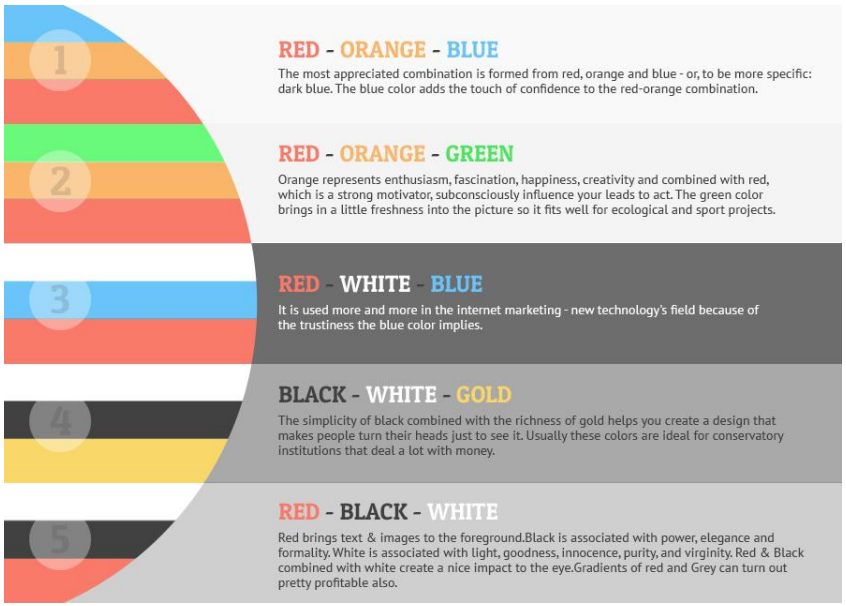
   =?utf-8?b?[string]?=

   Example: =?utf-8?b?VGhpcyBwcm9kdWN0IMKuIGIzIGF3ZXNvbWU=?=



Put the entire string into the subject line when launching an email through the UI. On the receiving end, you will see your desired subject line. See screenshot examples of the use of the (r) mark as well as one with many different types of characters.

Template Design Pitfalls



Pitfalls to Avoid:

- Harsh Colors: Stay away from colors that are overly bright or fluorescent. Tone them down so they don't compete with your words.
- Too many colors: Choose just one or two colors for your emails. The fewer colors you use, the cleaner your design so the reader won't be distracted from your message. Pick colors that your brand uses elsewhere.
- Light text on a dark ground: The most readable combination is dark text on a light ground, so stick to that whenever possible.
- Cultural Association: Colors are not universal to all humans in all cultures. In the United States, black is associated with death; but in other cultures, colors like white, purple, and gold are used during the mourning period.
- The urge to be dynamic frequently: Once you've got the design looking good, resist the urge to keep changing it. Choose a look and stick to it for a while so people recognize your mail in a quick glance.
- Color Blindness: Almost 5% of the entire population is color blind - the most common type being Protanopia (red-green color blindness). Such people do not see a complete lack of color instead; they have a harder time distinguishing the two colors from each other as the red color will look like green.

Ramping Up for Automation

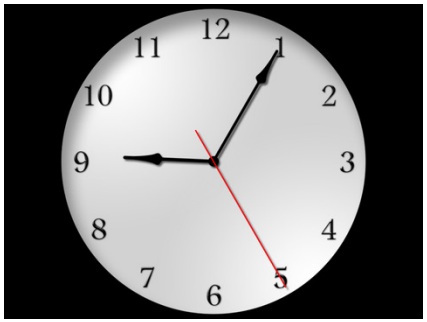
The End of Email Marketing

As we know it…

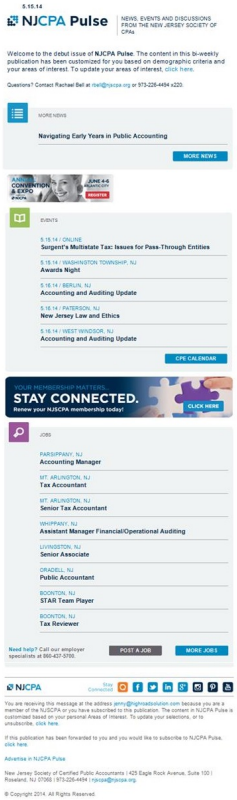
- Deliver communications with the frequency and content tagged for the specific interests of the constituent
- Using technology to solve workflow and resource time management
- Taking the human out of human error

Wasting Resources

- The average newsletter takes 2-4 hours to flow in content and test using an existing template
- The average template takes 5-8 hours to design & code and 2-3 hours of end user UAT to fine tune requirements.



Future Technology Trends


5.15.14

NJCPA Pulse

NEWS, EVENTS AND DISCUSSIONS FROM THE NEW JERSEY SOCIETY OF CPAs

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MORE NEWS

Navigating Early Years in Public Accounting

MORE NEWS

EVENTS

5.15.14 / ONLINE
Surgent's Multistate Tax: Issues for Pass-Through Entities

5.15.14 / WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP, NJ
Awards Night

5.16.14 / BERLIN, NJ
Accounting and Auditing Update

5.16.14 / PATERSON, NJ
New Jersey Law and Ethics

5.16.14 / WEST WINDSOR, NJ
Accounting and Auditing Update

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MT. ARLINGTON, NJ
Senior Tax Accountant

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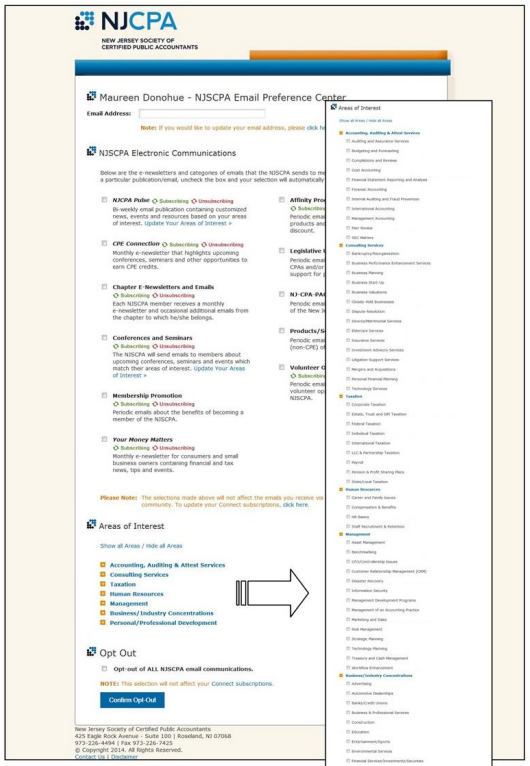
- Hyperpersonalized Emails
- Serving content based on areas of interest factoring in behavioral data
- Can be a bit of editorial created content static to all but don't lead with it



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Email Automation

- Hyperpersonalized Emails
- Automated workflows/drip campaigns
- Recurring messages that key off of a date field on the constituent record

Event Marketing Automation

- When there is consistency with how your association markets events in terms of the number of touch-points and the timing of deployments based on event date = PERFECT TIME TO AUTOMATE

Blog Digest Automation

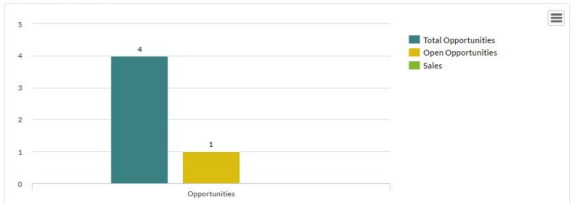
- Blogs are the easiest to automate depending on the ESP/MA platform
- Constituents can choose the frequency in which they wish to receive and the platform automates aggregating the blog posts in a time frame and deliver a formatted blog digest email
- The frequency options are normally per post, daily, weekly, monthly

Marketing Automation

- Bundles together the management and reporting of web content, email, and social in one platform so that you can measure

Campaign Breakdown

Sales Breakdown



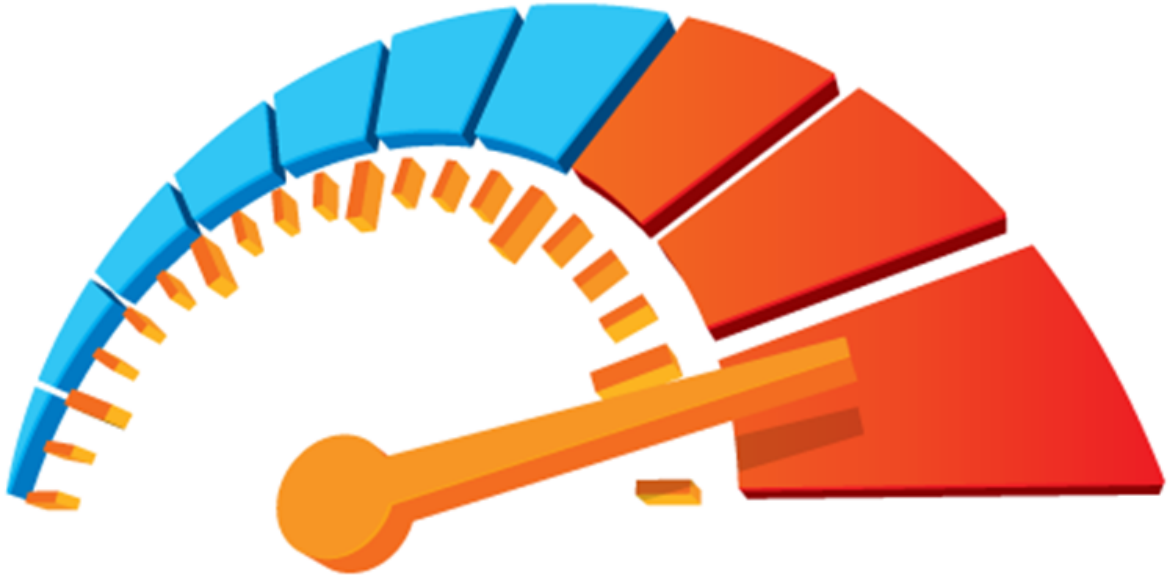
Cohort Report - Leads and Contacts between Nov 28, 2016 to Feb 28, 2017

Performance | Leads | Opportunities | View All

Campaigns	Total Costs	Leads	Cost/Lead	Sales	Lost	Revenue	Working Opps	Total Value	Expected Value	Revenue + EV	Projected Rev/Lead
Direct Traffic	$0	4	$0.00	0	0	$0	1	$1,000	$300	$300	$75
Convert Benefit Attendees to Donors	$0	2	$0.00	0	0	$0	0	$0	$0	$0	$0

- 90% resource time on creating compelling content on website CMS tagged appropriately
- 8% resource time evaluating performance and success metrics
- 2% resource time using data driven analytics to tweak programs to…

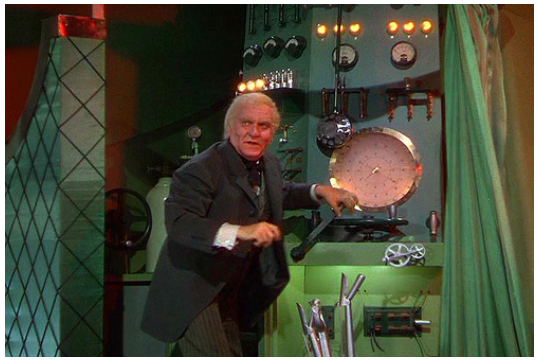
Move the Needle!



Lasting Trends - Key Takeaways

- Know your starting point and build on that

  (Branding>Design>Content CMS>Interests>Automation)
- Plan now for marketing automation
- Be content focused
- Be data Driven
- Automate Everything



Resources

- https://www.marketingsherpa.com/article/chart/how-customers-want-promo-emails
- https://litmus.com/blog/9-things-you-need-to-know-about-email-in-ios-10
- http://blog.highroadsolution.com/blog/subject-lines-with-special-characters
- http://blog.hubspot.com/sales/sales-email-subject-lines-that-get-prospects-to-open-read-and-respond#sm.00181haph1bm0e1jz051aea38cfz3
- https://www.salesforce.com/blog/2016/07/pop-color-make-email-design-stand-out.html
- http://site.highroadsolution.com/sdma

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