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Articles

Email Marketing: DIY vs Online Systems

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DIY: Sending from your own PC

Costs Savings

It is undoubtedly cheaper to send emails en masse from your PC than to use an online system. In fact, the financial cost of sending emails from your PC is nil, so it could not be any cheaper!

Hiding People's Email Addresses

As long as you include all recipients' addresses in the BCC: field (not the To: field!), you will ensure that each recipient receives a blind carbon copy and that you do not reveal everyone's details.

Make an Impact with Rich Text Emails

Most people can receive emails in HTML format, which means that you are not limited to sending plain, text-only emails as part of your marketing. Outlook and other email clients enable you to create emails that contain formatted text, images and tables.

Falling Foul of your ISP

Your Internet Service Provider (ISP) provides you with broadband access, not an email marketing service. If you send emails from your PC to many recipients at once, your ISP may deem that you are abusing their mail server. Expect a warning from your ISP or, worse still, that your email address gets blacklisted, meaning that you are unable to send emails at all.

Timing is Everything

If you send many marketing emails from your PC, each batch must be sent by hand, requiring you to be at your PC at the time the emails leave. Online e-marketing systems allow you to schedule email delivery, irrespective of whether you are logged on at that time. This is useful if your email must arrive on a set date (e.g. Valentine's Day). When a recipient follows a call-to-action in a previous email, online systems can also send "triggered" emails which would be a labour-intensive job if you were sending follow-up emails from your PC.

Using an Email Marketing System

Time Savings: Handling Unsubscribes

When sending marketing emails, it's inevitable that some people will want to unsubscribe. If you send emails directly from your PC, unsubscribe requests will clog up your Inbox and you will have to update your mailing list manually. An online email marketing system will manage unsubscribe requests and "bounce backs" for you, leaving your time free for more important

things.

Personalise Emails for better Response Rates

Sending one generic email from your PC to many recipients provides you with no means of personalising the message. Response rates are notably better when people receive a targeted, personalised email. An email that addresses the recipient by name and mentions their business in its copy will always achieve better results than a standardised, generic equivalent.

Learn from your Success

Unlike sending emails from Outlook, where you get no feedback about the success of that email, email marketing systems provide key statistics to ensure that your future marketing emails are well-targeted. An online email system enables you to track the number of emails...

- sent
- delivered
- opened
- acted upon

...which provides vital feedback in terms of planning future campaigns.

Campaign Management

E-marketing systems allow you to plan email campaigns rather than regard each e-shot as a one-off. You might send one follow-up email to your "warm prospects" - those recipients who responded to your first email - but send something different to those yet to take any action. Split-testing your emails, where half your mailing list receives email A and the other half gets email B, allows you to assess which works best and to tailor future marketing accordingly.

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