

New Data: Insights into the Evolution of Email Marketing



by Sallie Burnett

Pulse on Email Marketing Landscape: Benchmarks 2015 Assessments, 2016 Predictions

Campaigner® announced the results of its marketing trends survey, detailing key industry insights and identifying specific areas of focus for 2016. Findings signal a shifting and dynamic ecosystem for marketers, as their tools, strategies and responsibilities continue to evolve with technology. Advances in social media and data analysis, as well as a heightened emphasis on the customer experience, will likely be the leading influences shaping the email marketing industry in the coming year.

From Social Basics to Social Buy Buttons

Marketers have been catching on to the benefits of social integration for a few years now, but new data indicates a shift in the use of social tools, specifically centered on direct buy buttons. In fact, 36 percent of marketers report seeing an increase in sales from direct buy button integration.

Looking to the year ahead, the results indicate an even higher emphasis on this tool in 2016, with close to 60 percent more marketers projected to utilize buy buttons this year. In 2015, only 22 percent of marketers implemented buy buttons, yet the data suggests closer to 35 percent plan on using them in 2016.

Furthermore, it seems this investment in buy buttons and other social integrations is paying off. More than two-thirds of marketers reported seeing higher referral traffic from social media in 2015, with almost half of them attributing it to a higher social spend.

Analytics Evolution: Big Support for Little Data

Additionally, the survey data reveals that marketers are turning away from the recent hype of big data, and, instead, seeking out “little data.” According to the survey, two-thirds of marketers believe smaller, segmented data provides better insight for marketing strategy and execution than big data.

Specifically, marketers are looking for segmented data on their target audiences (34 percent), industry verticals (19 percent) and existing customers (13 percent).

“This idea around ‘little data’ will be crucial to marketing success in 2016,” said EJ McGowan, general manager, Campaigner. “Every marketing strategy should not only be based on data, but based on analysis of the right data, directly relevant to your audience. The industry is moving from a macro-data outlook to a more segmented and targeted approach to metrics, and I believe this will provide significant benefits across the board.”

Supplementary to little data, predictive analytics will become a bigger emphasis for marketers in 2016. The survey reveals an almost 50 percent increase in the use of predictive analytics from 2015 to 2016: 20 percent of marketers reported using it in 2015, while 30 percent say they plan to implement it this year.

Marketers hope to leverage these strategies to gain deeper insights into customers and establish more effective relationships in order to accomplish what they rank as their top two goals for 2016, attracting new customers (74 percent) and retaining current customers (40 percent)

Professional Progression Among Email Marketers

Further supporting the increased emphasis on customer relationships is the evolving role of marketers. Job descriptions of email marketers in 2016 may be vastly different from those of years past, thanks to new emerging technologies and goals.

The data shows that 70 percent of marketers see their role evolving this year by focusing on optimizing their website for individualized, personalized user experiences. Forty-six percent see an increase of ownership of the customer experience, and almost a third (31 percent) foresee their role evolving into more of a marketing technologist.

“Just as marketing strategies and technologies are evolving, so are marketers’ roles and responsibilities,” McGowan said. “Adapting to new innovations is key to maintaining, and increasing, business success. Seeing that marketers are preparing for a role shift in 2016 is not surprising, but, rather, promising for the future of the industry.”

Additional Insights

- Email marketers think earning new subscribers will be their biggest challenge in 2016, though increasing open rates proved most challenging in 2015.
- Newsletters net the highest use among email marketers in their content marketing strategies.
- Email takes the top spot among priority marketing methods for 2016.

Sallie Burnett is the president of Customer Insight Group, Inc., a strategic marketing company that builds profitable customer relationships between our clients’ brands and their customers. Customer Insight Group is your source for strategic, measurable retention, customer loyalty, rewards programs, and social media campaigns. Sallie is an out of the box thinker — she searches out opportunities to innovate and improve the customer’s experience. If you need a speaker, strategic consultant or more information, she can be reached directly at 1-303-422-9758 or you can email her at sallie@customerinsightgroup.com.