

EMAIL MARKETING

BACK TO SCHOOL
BASICS



GRAPHIC MAIL 

email & mobile marketing solutions



That time of year again – back to school! Do you remember how exciting that first day was – and how nerve-wrecking? There were so many things to be nervous about: new friends, new teachers, new subjects, homework and tests. Usually the ‘worries’ disappeared after a while. To make sure that your new school year is successful, we’ve put together this email marketing back to school basics advice to help you get over the hurdles.

Making friends

A new school year brings the opportunity to make new friends. For most kids friends are the most important and most fun part of school. Your email marketing efforts should focus on making new friends (or subscribers). To do this you need to carefully consider and manage the subscription process. This means you’ll need to:

Ask people to be your friends

Create a [customized subscription \(opt-in\) form](#) and link to it from various pages on your site. At a minimum it should contain your logo and should fit in with the look and feel of your brand – after all kids can be a discerning bunch.

But remember you don’t need to limit your friends to only the kids in your class. Link your subscription form to your Facebook account, so your reach can extend beyond your website.



Ask your friends about themselves

Ask people their first names, maybe their telephone numbers, where they're from and what they're interested in. You can collect all this information in your subscription form. Just like the more you know about your 'friends' the more you can relate to them – the more you know about your subscribers, the more you can target them with relevant messages.

Be polite and friendly

This means link off to a "thank you" landing page or set up an [autoresponder](#) with a welcome email or a confirmed opt in link. Do the same with a final goodbye autoresponder if they unsubscribe.

Follow these simple rules and you'll be on your way to becoming one of the more popular kids in class.

Doing your homework *1+1=... 2+2=...*

No one likes it, we've all spent an afternoon in class daydreaming or doodling, but some school projects can be fun. Simply take the creativity from your dreams and doodles and apply them to your projects or emails. But like any project there's a difference between A and C grade work. Here's what you need to get an A:

Do your research

Get the message right with [relevant content](#). Make sure your content covers everything the teacher (in this case your subscribers) asked for.

Make it clear and readable

If the teacher can't read your handwriting or your argument doesn't flow it will make a big difference. So consider that depending on the subject of your mailing the layout will need to vary.



- Two column emails allow you to push your message and have promotions or features down the side
- A single column email works for a simple message
- A promotion might be postcard-sized with a large graphic
- An invitation might have a second column where the event, time and place information is separated from the message

As any good teacher will tell you, no one way is the right way.

There's always one A-student with an assignment that stands out from the rest. Make sure that your newsletter stands out in the inbox! Just like teachers appreciate a well thought-through project, so your subscribers will appreciate your informative, relevant content and **visually exciting** email.

Taking your tests

So most of us don't like homework, but we've got to do it or we'll never pass the test. Inevitably the day comes when you have to take the test. Roll up your sleeves, sit down at your desk, take out your number two pencils and open your test booklet. Here are some tips on how to properly test your emails:

Test formatting across multiple email clients

There are dozens of email clients (like Outlook 2003, Outlook 2007, Lotus, Entourage, Applemail, Thunderbird, etc) and webmail services (like AOL, Gmail, Yahoo!mail, Hotmail, etc.) and each renders emails slightly differently.

OU...LOOK ...MAIL ENT...URAGE HO...MAIL LOTU...

Test delivery across multiple email clients

Text in the body of an email and bad [subject lines](#) (words like test, sales, CAPITAL letters and even exclamation marks) can cause mail servers to block emails. So if your email is getting caught in a spam filter make sure you test.

Here's a quick cheat sheet

This is an open book test, so you don't need to write it on your arm or hide it up your shirt sleeve.

1. Are there any spelling mistakes?
2. Do I get to the point, and is my content relevant?
3. What subject line will make subscribers want to open my email?
4. Are my images well placed, and in balance with the text? Did I add alternative text?
5. Run the spam checker!
6. Test your newsletter and spam check it. Fix if necessary.
7. Send your newsletter.

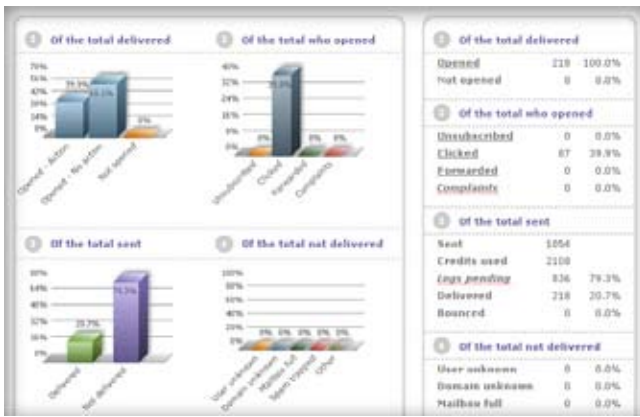
Now when you're ready press the SEND button. And wait for the phones to ring.

Getting your report card **10/10 A+**

We all know that feeling, the queasy stomach when the teacher hands you your report card. How did you do? Did your hard work paid off? Have your results improved? An email campaign is like a test - it's [measurable](#).

Here are some tips to understand your report card:

- How many of your emails were delivered and how many bounced?
- How many people opened your email?



- How many links were clicked on?
- Which links were clicked on?
- How many people forwarded your newsletter or shared it through their social networks, as well as who shared it and which networks they shared it on.

Your report card tells you where you excelled and where you didn't. Your email marketing reports tell you the same thing, so use them to guide your future email campaigns.



Extracurricular activities

School doesn't only happen in the classroom. It also happens on the playground, on the football field and at the glee club. Email marketing is the same - it doesn't happen only in the inbox, but beyond it.

Make sure your email has a link to social networks by inserting [social widgets](#) into your emails, so clients can easily tweet it or post it to their Facebook account.

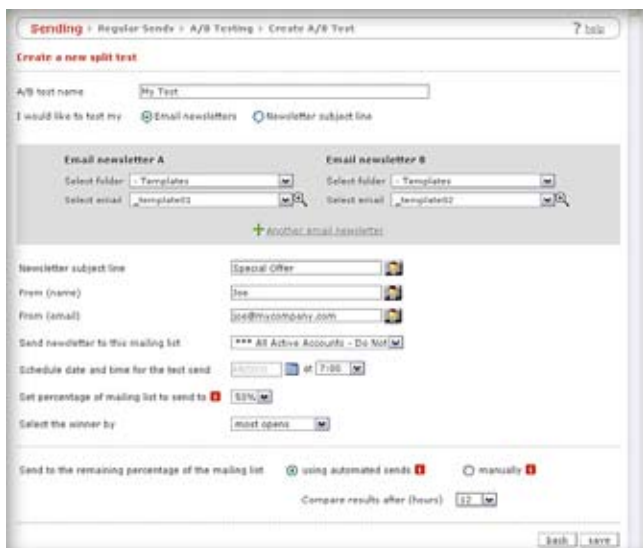
Here at GraphicMail, we've jumped on the social networking bandwagon - now you can spread the word about your business, service or product by publishing your newsletter to Facebook or Twitter. It's simple and easy to [share your newsletters](#) with your friends on social networks.

Just like rumors spread on a playground your news will soon make the rounds across all the major social platforms.

The best part? As part of our reports and statistics you can view your [social share statistics](#), meaning you get to see how many people shared your email socially, who it was that shared and which network they shared it on.

Nowadays, it's de-rigueur for school kids to have a cell phone. And texting is their preferred means of communication, so don't limit your important messages to email. If something is really urgent [send a text](#).

Top of the Class

A screenshot of an email marketing software interface. The page title is "Sending - Regular Sends - A/B Testing - Create A/B Test". Below the title, there's a "Create a new split test" section. It includes a text input for "A/B test name" with the value "My Test". Below that, there are radio buttons for "Email newsletters" (selected) and "Newsletter subject line". The main area is divided into two columns for "Email newsletter A" and "Email newsletter B". Each column has dropdown menus for "Select folder" (set to "Templates") and "Select email" (set to "template02"). There's a "+ Another email newsletters" link between the columns. Below this, there are several form fields: "Newsletter subject line" (with "Special Offer" entered), "From (name)" (with "Joe" entered), "From (email)" (with "joe@mycompany.com" entered), "Send newsletter to the mailing list" (with "All Active Accounts - Do Not" selected), "Schedule date and time for the test send" (with "Monday" and "7:00" selected), "Get percentage of mailing list to send to" (with "50%" selected), "Select the winner by" (with "most opens" selected), and "Send to the remaining percentage of the mailing list" (with "using automated sends" selected). At the bottom, there's a "Compare results after (hours)" dropdown set to "12" and "Save" and "Cancel" buttons.

We all want to be top of the class, but those that truly are make everything look so easy. While we're all working our butts off they seem to sit back and breeze through it all.

Here are some advanced email marketing tools that will help you excel while making it look easy.



Make sure you get the best test results

Imagine you knew the answer to a test before handing it in. [A/B split testing](#) lets you do just that by testing alternative subject lines and layouts with a portion of your test group before sending it out to your entire list.

Do your homework while you sleep

[TriggerMail](#) automates email campaigns so the right message gets to the right person at the right time. While you're off doing something else.

Do two things at once

After you've made your blog post (or updated any RSS Feed) [FeedMail](#) picks up your blog, converts it into an attractive email and sends it to your subscribers.

Integrate your email marketing with open source networks and Google Analytics

GraphicMail's email marketing service integrates with open source sites such as Wordpress, Joomla and Drupal as well as Google Analytics and we even offer custom-made API integrations. [Tell me more.](#)

 **THE END** 
...OR IS IT THE BEGINNING :)