The Future of Email Marketing

Email has become one of the most popular channels of marketing in the world. Advertisers are attracted to email marketing because it provides them to communicate directly with users and it is way cheaper and faster compared to direct mail advertising. In order to save money, more and more businesses are resorting to email marketing because it has the ability to acquire customers and maintain relationships with them.

According to GartnerG2, a research service from Gartner Inc., consumers will be more yielding in accepting mail containing advertisements as they get increasingly adept in using email, building trust and familiarity with advertisers. The company's projection for advertising revenue for 2005 totals to about $1.5 billion.

One of the numerous advantages of email marketing is that within days of its establishment, results can already be seen and necessary actions can already be decided upon. The entire cycle of an email campaign is indeed very much shorter than direct mail marketing campaigns.

Advertisers can utilize email strategies that are personalized and combine or align them with their traditional mail marketing plans in order for them to realize campaign goals. Permission email marketing, or opt-in email marketing is a way of advertising where the recipient of an email containing an advertisement has given permission to receive it. It is an effective method, since in theory, the person who is about to receive the email is anticipating the advertisement, and therefore, he or she will not simply delete it and will take the time to read the ad.

There are several challenges faced by email marketing in the present. More and more people are getting victimized by spamming. To offset this problem, the use of filtering and blocking software has proliferated immensely. If this goes on, the use of protective programs can be a standard in the future.

With the rate that the situation is going, the strategies that will be used in email marketing in the near future will be concentrated on making it entirely safe and legal.

GartnerG2 recommends the following measures for advertisers to maximize their campaigns:

1. Advanced personalization should be utilized to communicate with customers
2. Permit present and prospective customers to give feedback. Make sure to acknowledge and utilize them
3. Send no more than two emails per customer, three for business audiences
4. Use email addresses that are collected only through opt-in means when sending emails

Other strategies should be implemented by advertisers to gear up for the future:

1. Details should be provided for the lists
When subscription links are accessed, they lead into a page where users can see details on the kind of communication they will receive from advertisers. Instructions on what to do with the

information should also be included.

2. Use double-opt in subscriptions
Double opt-ins protect people who did not sign-up to a particular kind of subscriptions by alerting them if someone tries to send them unsolicited email

3. Install security for mailing lists
At least, lists should be password-protected. If possible, store lists somewhere that is not connected to the network. This will reduce the risk of getting hackers and viruses in the lists.

4. Avoid co-registrations
A lot of marketers are making use of co-registration to boost up their lists, but what they do not know is that it is a very dangerous endeavor. Co-registrations offer users with forms from different web sites that offer to provide communications through email coming from various merchants that are related to different fields of interest. What users don not know is that co-registering increases the chances of getting spam mail with the ones that they are actually supposed to receive.

5. Avoid using red flag words
words like discount, free, special, bonus, are often used by marketers for their mails. Mail containing too many of these words can put an advertiser's message to spam folders. Advertisers can test if their mail can get past the spam filters by creating an account in Yahoo, for instance, then try sending mail to an intended address, and check which folder they will end up.

It requires a little more effort for these strategies to implement, but it will surely be worth it in the end. Advertisers need only to select the strategy that is most appropriate for their businesses, and it will definitely bring immense improvement to their database of mailing lists.