

6 Tips to Reduce Email Bounce Rates

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In brief

To reduce your email bounce rate, start by verifying addresses with an email verification tool and regularly cleaning your list to remove inactive or invalid contacts. Avoid buying email lists, segment subscribers by engagement, send non-spammy content, and run A/B tests to see what resonates with your audience.

Email marketing can be one of the easiest ways to engage directly with customers. Emails tend to have an impressive ROI when they're deployed efficiently. Your email bounce rate is a key performance indicator. It can tell you how many subscribers aren't receiving your emails. Other KPIs include who opens the email, what they click on, and the number of recipients opting out of receiving future communications from you. As important as bounce rates are in terms of a KPI for email marketing, they tend to get overlooked. However, when you pay attention to your bounce rates and take steps to reduce them, you can get better outcomes overall for your campaigns. Your bounce rate is the number of emails in any campaign bounced back, this means they can't be delivered to the recipient they're intended for. When you have a high bounce rate for emails, it affects email deliverability and engagement. There are two types of bounces, hard and soft. A hard bounce means there's a permanent delivery failure. A soft bounce might be due to a server issue or a full inbox, and they're often temporary delays. The following are tips to reduce your bounce rates and get it around 2%, which is the ideal average across industries.

1. Use An Email Verification Tool

When you use an email verification tool, you can find out if the mailbox exists, can receive emails, and is properly formatted. This can be helpful, considering many people will use a fake email if they want to get a lead magnet without receiving further communications from the company offering it. Sometimes, people also accidentally enter the wrong email address during checkout.

2. Clean Up Your Lists Regularly

An email verification tool is also a good idea to clean your email lists regularly. There are going to be emails that become inactive over time. Your subscribers might change their addresses, or they might change employers if you have people's business addresses. These are going to turn into bounces. Set intervals where you go through and delete addresses with a hard bounce or a few soft bounces. You can also eliminate accounts that haven't opened your emails in a few months. If you don't want to do this manually, there are third-party tools that will go through and determine which emails you should keep and which you should purge.

3. Don't Send Spammy Emails

Your marketing emails need to be engaging and thoughtful. Email service providers have, in recent years, taken steps to reduce the number of spam users get. But, unfortunately, if your emails are flagged, they will go straight to the spam folder, even if they aren't. Make sure that your formats are user-friendly and visually appealing. Avoid spammy copy like "act now" or other urgent phrases. Check for broken images and include your business contact information in the footer.

4. Segment Your Lists Based on Engagement

To look for spam and junk mail, email service providers look at many factors, including open and click-through rates. If you break down your lists and segment them by engagement, it'll help you target your marketing more effectively and reduce the risk of being flagged as spam. If you segment your lists, you can figure out who has the highest engagement rates with what types of content. Segmentation can help you avoid being sent straight to spam.

5. Don't Buy Lists

As tempting as it may be, especially if you're just starting to build your email list, don't buy addresses. It's going to increase your bounce rates in almost every case. The people on lists that you might buy never opted in. They will mark you as spam, and the email service may completely blacklist you. The rewards of buying email lists are never going to outweigh the risks.

6. Conduct Split Testing

Finally, A/B tests, also known as split tests, are a way to figure out which content most effectively resonates with your audience. For example, you're sending a slightly different version of an email to certain contacts. Then, the one that had the highest engagement was the winner. You can test simple, small things that have a significant impact, like your call-to-action and subject lines. These tests help reduce bounce rates because they show what your audience doesn't see as valuable and what your audience likes the most.

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