Top 3 Tips for Creating an Effective Welcome Campaign for Email Marketing

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Personalization remains *the* major trend in email marketing. It's not enough in 2016 to bombard potential customers with emails and hope your message gets through. A modern campaign involves creating relevant, personalized messages that build relationships. And it all starts with the very first messages your potential customer receives: the welcome campaign.

Welcome campaigns typically begin after a member has signed up to receive emails, and the first message is incredibly important since it will deliver the customers' initial impression of your brand. Welcome campaigns are an excellent opportunity to introduce your brand, communicate the benefits you offer and make the new member feel welcome.

Research shows that welcome campaigns frequently have the highest engagement metrics of any email marketing campaign. A study by data solutions provider Return Path showed that the welcome campaign engagement rate is 42% higher than other campaign types. This underscores the importance of getting the welcome campaign just right.

So how should you proceed? The welcome campaign you create will necessarily reflect the unique objectives of your

industry and target audience. But there are general guidelines that work across all sectors. Here are three tips to help you create an effective welcome campaign:

1.

   Set the tone with the confirmation email. When users sign up, it's essential to respond with a confirmation email that thanks new members for their interest. But a well-crafted initial email should go beyond the basics and convey a positive impression about the brand. A good confirmation email should also start the relationship off right with personalization elements that let customers know that you recognize them as individuals. It should provide information about the type and frequency of future communication to build anticipation and increase open rates for subsequent emails.

2. **Gather more information about the customer.** A welcome campaign must provide customers with information about the company, but it's also an excellent opportunity to find out more about the customer. Initial sign-up processes are typically kept short by design for customer convenience, but after the customer is on

board, it's important to continue collecting data and provide members with an opportunity to update communication preferences. The more customer data you can solicit, the better targeted and personalized communications will be going forward.

3. **Use newly received information to personalize communication.** As the welcome campaign wraps up, it's a great idea to use the new customer information you've collected over the course of the campaign to personalize the final communications in this campaign phase. When you send customers relevant content that reflects their stated interests and preferences, you're sending a message that they are valued and that future communications will contain benefits specifically for them. That not only raises interest for ongoing communication, it encourages members to keep providing details.

As you design and deploy your welcome campaign, it's critical to keep in mind that customers today favor an omni-channel approach, so make sure you provide links to other platforms such as social media channels so that customers can choose to interact with your brand on their own terms. Make it simple for them to reach out, and use each interaction as an opportunity to collect new information and strengthen the relationship. By following these tips to create an effective welcome campaign and following up with personalized communication, you'll be well on your way to building a long-term relationship that benefits your brand and the customer.

About the Author: Gemma works closely with clients to assist them with their digital strategies and meeting their overall marketing aims and objectives. She holds regular meetings where she is able to assess their current campaigns as well as provide best practise advice on email marketing and industry trends.