

# 10 ways to boost email open rates

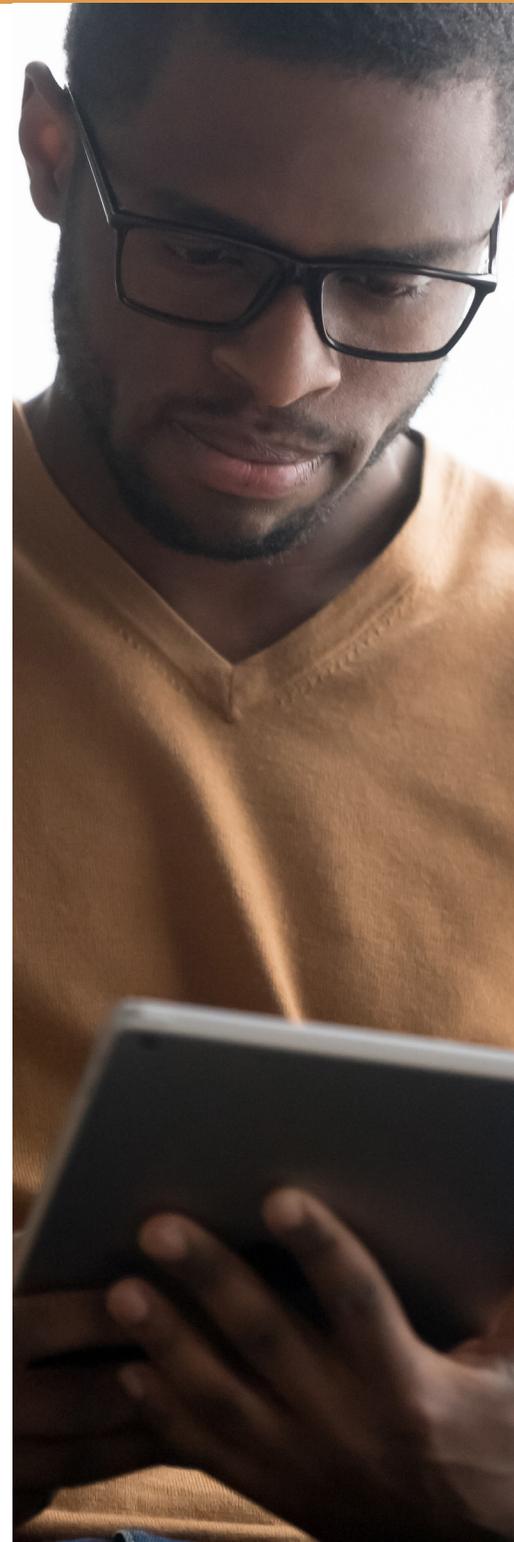
It's one thing to craft an incredible email campaign. It's another thing to get people to read it. The first hurdle any email campaign needs to leap is getting a great open rate.

Your open rate tells you how many people on your sending list have opened your emails. You can calculate it by dividing the total number of emails opened by the total number of emails sent (minus bounced emails).

A high open rate is a good indicator of a healthy campaign. It shows that your content is drawing clients in and they're interested and engaged. Of course, that's not the whole story. There's more to converting prospects into clients than getting them to open your emails. But it's a great start.

Open rates are also a way to measure how engaged your clients are with your emails in general. Keeping an eye on your open rates is like keeping your finger on the pulse of your email marketing.

All in all, it's well worth learning how to optimize your opens. That's why we've compiled our top ten best tips for boosting your open rates (and keeping them high).



# 1 - Optimize your subject lines.

The modern inbox is a crowded place. According to [research by Adobe](#), the average professional spends 20 weeks per year reading and replying to emails. And that's just the emails they actually open. Hundreds more land in their inboxes and get ignored.

To get in on that 28% of the working day, your email needs to stand out in the inbox. That means optimizing the very first things your client will see.

When your clients open their inbox and find your email, they'll see three things:

- 1) Your subject line
- 2) Your sender name
- 3) Your preheader text

Of these three, the subject line is arguably the most important.

The subject line tells the client what they should expect from your email, and why they should open it. Nailing your subject line can give your open rates a serious boost in achieving the [average B2B open rate of 21.3%](#).

Creating subject lines that convert is an art. Here are some tactics which will help you master that art:

- **Personalization** will make your subject lines relevant for your clients. The more relevant your emails seem, the more likely your clients are to open them.
- Keep them **short and sweet**. Different mailboxes cut off the subject line at different points. Mobile screens may also condense or cut your subject line (more on that later). So, try and keep the most important information at the start of your subject lines.
- **Don't make false promises**. A subject line that promises the world may get you opens, but they're not worth it in the long run. Your subject line doesn't exist in isolation. If the content of your email can't live up to the promise of your subject line, your clients will lose trust in you.

## 2 - Choose the right sender name.

Your sender name's basic job is to let the client know who's emailing them. It should also seem professional and trustworthy.

A 'no-reply' sender name will seem cold and impersonal. At the other extreme, a person's name with no added information isn't great either. Unless the recipient knows the person, a random person's name in the inbox can be confusing.

Mixing personal names, job titles, and brand names can be an effective blend. For example, 'George at [BRAND NAME]', or '[BRAND NAME] customer services'. This keeps things friendly while removing ambiguity.

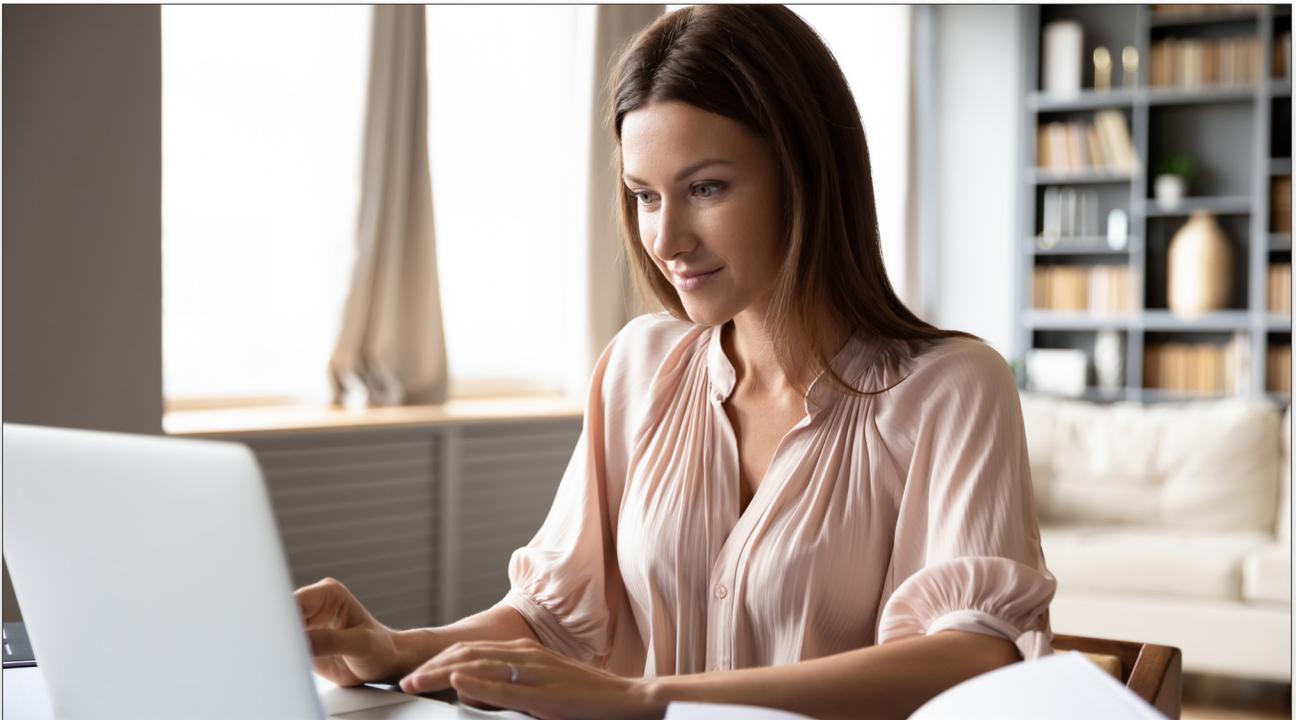
As with subject lines, remember that a sender name that's too long might get cut off. So keep it snappy!



# 3 - Write great preheader text.

Your sender name, subject line, and preheader text work as a relay. The sender name tells the client who's emailing them. The subject line tells them why they should open the email. The preheader text leads them over the hump.

As such, your preheader text has to bridge the gap between subject line and content. It should be enticing and expand on the subject line. It should also lead seamlessly into the email itself.



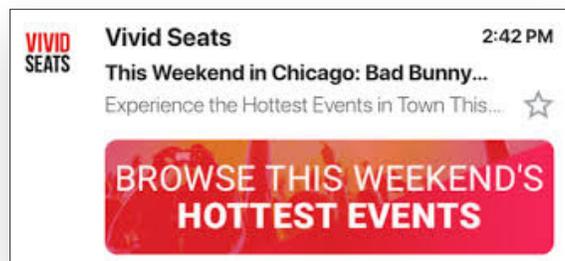
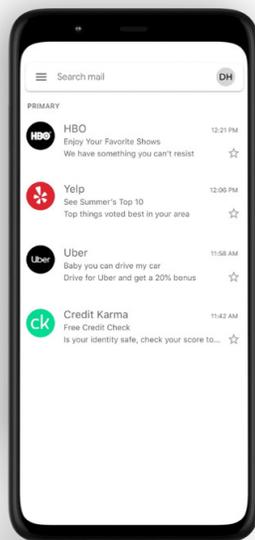
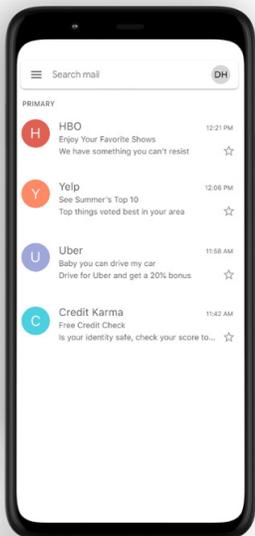
# 4 - Create your first campaign

You can make your emails stand out with BIMI and Gmail Annotations.

BIMI is an authentication protocol. It stands for Brand Indicators for Message Identification. You can use it to add your logo to emails pre-open. Here, you can see the difference between emails with and without BIMI enabled:

Emailers with BIMI really stand out in the inbox. Implementing BIMI will also increase your brand recognition and inspire trust in your emails.

Gmail Annotations work in a similar way. They allow you to add images which, again, can be seen in the inbox -like this:



# 5 - Find the best time to send.

Clients are more likely to open emails at a time when they're engaged with their inbox. Establishing the best time can work wonders for your open rate. It used to be that sending email while your clients are at lunch or in the evening relaxing at home was a bad idea. Research showed year after year the best times to send email was during the work week.

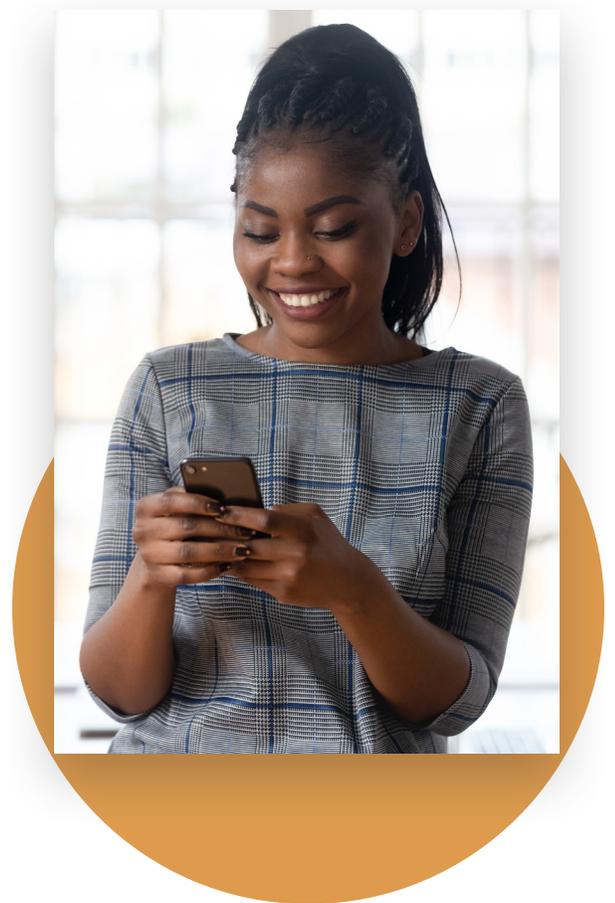
But, the 2020 global pandemic turned previous industry research upside down. The [best time to send an email newsletter](#) is *no longer Monday morning*.

There is no hard and fast rule for the best time to send. While there are general averages you can go by, nothing is guaranteed. It all depends on who your clients are, and how and where they work.

## **Certain factors can help you to establish best send times.**

For example, when do they usually engage with your emails? Is this still a good time to grab their attention?

Keep an eye out and [track your metrics](#). See what insights you can glean on a client by client basis. Vuture measures this in a dashboard to make it easy for you to see when the best time is to send to your audience.



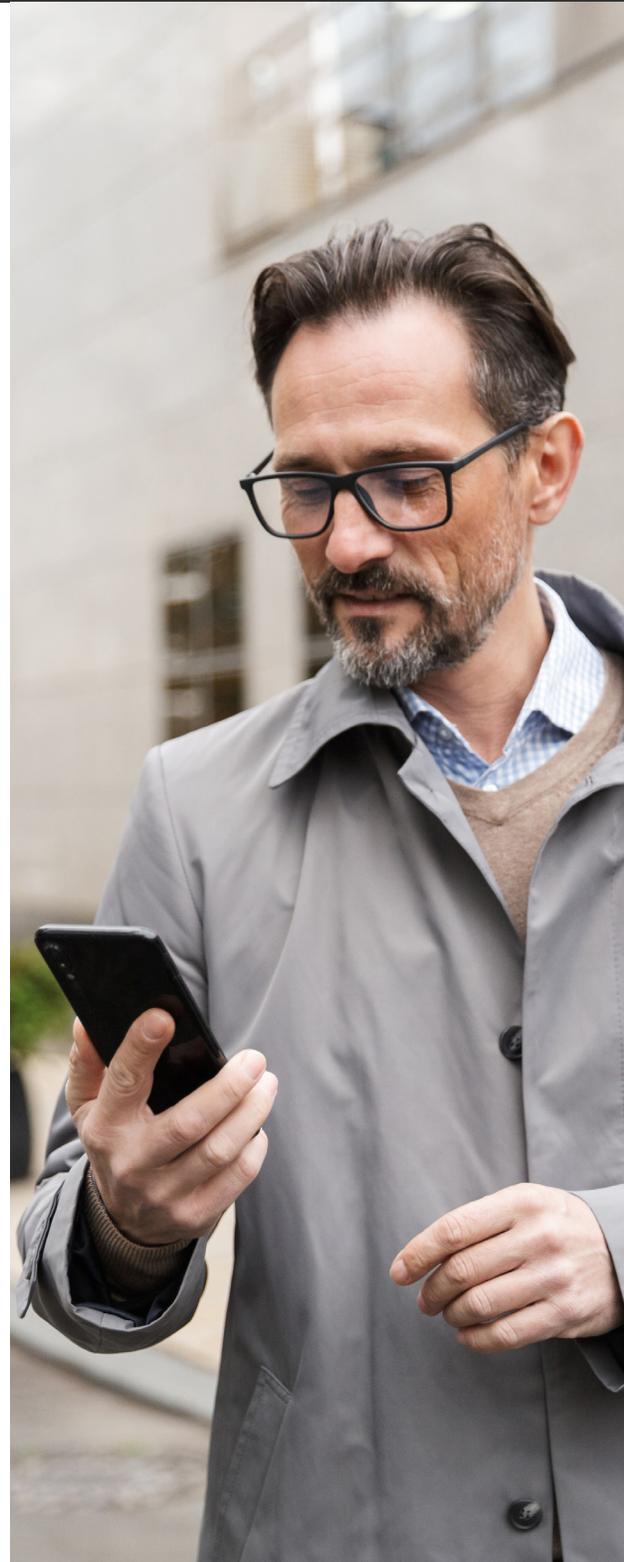
# 6 – Test and improve

Thirty-five percent (35%) of business professionals [check their emails on a mobile device](#). That number is increasing as mobile-savvy millennials take over the workforce. To reach everyone, it's [vital that you step up your tech game](#).

People use mobile devices on the go. They need to be able to get the pertinent information at a glance. This means keeping your copy clear and concise.

And small screens are — well — small. Your subject lines, sender names, and so on, can be cut off by some devices. This is another reason to make sure important information is featured up front.

Remember too that mobile connections may be slow. Try and keep images small and fast-loading. Mobile clients won't wait around for your image-rich email to load!



# 7 - Test, test, test!

**Split, or A/B testing** is the best way to optimize your open rates. We could give you hundreds of recommendations, but testing will tell you what your actual audience wants.

Split testing is simple. You pick a factor to test, for example, emojis in subject lines, and design two variations with this element. (Perhaps send one subject line with and one without emojis.) You then see how each variation performs with a split audience.

## Half the work with split testing is deciding what to test.

When optimizing open rates, there are plenty of options available. Test things like:

- **The length of your subject line.** For example, does ‘Grow your business with these ten tips!’ receive more opens than ‘Grow your business!’
- **The tone of your subject line.** Does a question work better than a statement?
- **Your sender name.** Do people prefer ‘George at Brandname’ or ‘Brandname Promotions’?
- **Your preheader text.** Does ‘Build your brand with these insights’ generate more interest than ‘Click through now for our brand-building insights’?
- **Your sending time.** Do people open more emails on a particular day? Or at a particular time of day?

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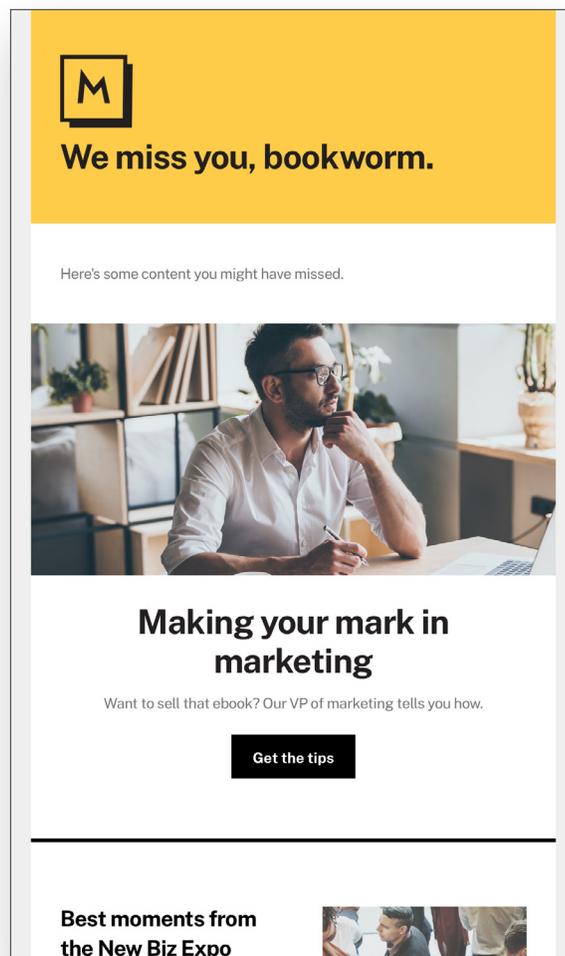
# 8 – Check your sender reputation.

To earn a high open rate, your emails need to land in the inbox in the first place. For that, you need a good sender reputation.

If you've been a good sender throughout your email career, internet service providers (ISPs) will love you. Your emails will fly through their filters and land straight in the inbox.

However, if you have a history of spam complaints and low engagement, you could be in trouble.

Tools like [SenderScore](#) and [Gmail Postmaster](#) can tell you about your sender reputation. If you find that your sender reputation is low, start by improving your email practices. Provide high value content, focus on engagement, and clean your list. Do whatever you can to win over the ISPs.



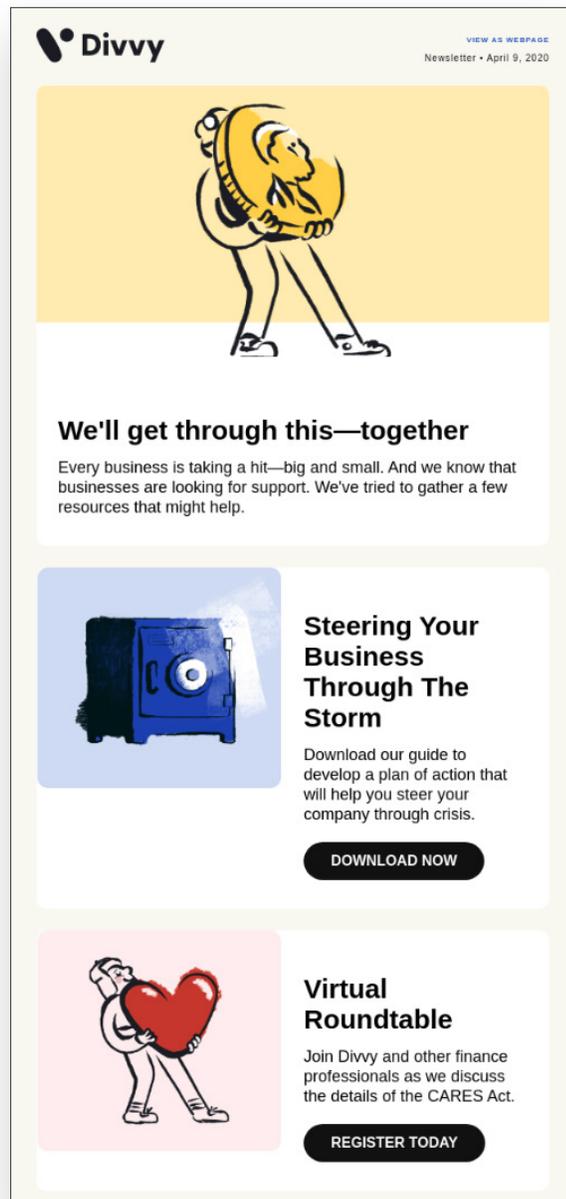
# 9 – Optimize your content.

If people know your content is amazing, they'll keep opening your emails. And that's important. **Open rates aren't a one-time thing** - a customer's personal open rate will rise or fall over time. You may get clients through the door with intriguing subject lines, but you keep them coming back with great content.

So, give your clients what they want. Write about things that interest them and are relevant to them. Offer them services, insights, or discounts, all which provide value. Think about who you're talking to, when, and why. For example, if you offer tax services, consider sending out offers or promotional content on this around key tax times (e.g. when the new budget is announced).

Current events can also inspire relevant and valuable content. Here, Divvy provides its customers useful content designed to help them through the Covid-19 pandemic.

If open rates have been dropping, it might be worth asking your clients what they'd like from your content. It could be that you've drifted off course, or that the market has changed. Send out a re-engagement campaign (perhaps with a questionnaire), and let your clients tell you what they want.



The screenshot shows a Divvy newsletter email. At the top left is the Divvy logo, and at the top right is the text "VIEW AS WEBSITE" and "Newsletter • April 9, 2020". The main content area has a yellow background with a cartoon character holding a large gold coin. Below this is the headline "We'll get through this—together" and a sub-headline "Every business is taking a hit—big and small. And we know that businesses are looking for support. We've tried to gather a few resources that might help." Below this is a blue square with a cartoon character holding a blue safe, followed by the headline "Steering Your Business Through The Storm" and a sub-headline "Download our guide to develop a plan of action that will help you steer your company through crisis." Below this is a black button with the text "DOWNLOAD NOW". Below this is a pink square with a cartoon character holding a red heart, followed by the headline "Virtual Roundtable" and a sub-headline "Join Divvy and other finance professionals as we discuss the details of the CARES Act." Below this is a black button with the text "REGISTER TODAY".

# 10 – Watch your metrics like a hawk.

Gaining good open rates is one thing, but the real win is keeping them.

Maintaining great open rates is all about keeping an eye on your metrics. You need to know when things are going well, and when they aren't.

Watch your open rates and [other key metrics](#), and take note when they rise and when they fall. Analyse any changes, and draw insights you can use to keep your campaigns vibrant.

## **Boost your open rates and engage clients.**

As a general rule, if you're a good sender who offers high value content, your open rates will stay strong. But there's no harm in giving them a little help.

To recap, the 10 best ways to boost your email open rates are to:

- Craft great subject lines
- Display a trustworthy and professional sender-name
- Work hard on your preheader text

- Stand out in the inbox with BIMl and Google Annotations
- Consider the best time to send
- Optimize your emails across all platforms and devices
- Test everything
- Possess a great sender reputation
- Create the kind of content your clients love to receive
- Keep studying, analyzing, and improving.

**Follow these basic tips, and you can't go wrong!**