

The Eight-Step Guide to Optimize Your Emails

Thanks so much for participating in this course!

Here's a step-by-step guide to optimize every email you send from now on. If you don't understand one of the steps, or need further clarification, go back and rewatch the corresponding video.

Before You Start Optimizing

Every email in your strategy should have a specific purpose that meets your goals. You may find it helpful to list the purpose of each of your emails. Here's an example:

1. Newsletter
Purpose: Keep in touch with your audience, share content that keeps you top of mind, and take them back to the website.
2. Offers
Purpose: Showcase the latest stock and encourage members to make purchases.
3. Points notices
Purpose: Keep each person up to date when new points are added to their account. Encourage them to use their points and show them ways to do it.

1. Timing

Optimizing the time of your emails means reviewing what's working now. A spreadsheet is a great way to compare the results of your email campaigns by purpose. Open your email service and take a look at what time your audience best engages with each type of email you send. Be sure to factor in time-zone differences.

Email Type	How Often Sent	Day of Week	Time of Day	Results
Newsletters	Monthly	Tuesday	9 a.m.	9% open rate
Offers	Weekly	Friday	10 a.m.	2% open rate

Now that you know a little about what's working and what's not, you can experiment with when to send each email. Do some experimenting, update your spreadsheet to compare, and refine the timing as needed.

2. Subject lines

Write down a list of the last 10 to 20 subject lines of your emails and note the open rate next to each. When you have the list, look for patterns. What got the best open rates?

Take the list of subject lines with the worst open rates to your favorite [subject line testing tool](#) (that link takes you to one I find helpful, but use what works for you). Paste your worst performing subject lines into the tool and score it. Do you see a pattern of improvements you can make?

Try writing the subject lines for the next five emails you plan to write and send. Put those subject lines into the scoring tool and see what you can improve.

3. Images

Make sure that every image you use in your email is the best format for your audience's most commonly used email client, then follow these best practices:

- Brand the image name
- Include clear and useful ALT text
- Reduce the file size if you can
- Hyperlink the image
- Test the email in all displays

When you look at the test email, ask yourself this important question: Does the image improve the content or distract from it?

4. Personalize

When you plan an email, look at all the personal details that will be useful or interesting from the recipient's point of view. If you're sending a points update email, for example, did you include the number of points right in the email or does the user have to click to see them? Not cool. Don't make your audience work to get the information they need to engage with you.

5. Copy

Send a test email to yourself and step back to read it from the recipient's point of view. Read it out loud to hear if it's conversational. Does the tone align with your brand? Can you scan it for what you want if you're short on time? Are the sentences short and readable?

6. Calls to action

Look closely at your calls to action (CTAs). Are they clear and findable? Are they in first person? Do they inspire you to want to act?

7. Footer

Take a careful look at the email footer and ask yourself, is this helpful? Test all the links carefully. Does the tone match your brand? Does the content support the message of the email?

8. Unsubscribe

Find the unsubscribe in your email and notice how long it took you to locate it. Can the link be made more obvious? What is your intent with the unsubscribe? Does the link work?