

Put the “Act” in Transact

Optimizing your transactional emails to drive revenue



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Enhancing your transactional messages is an easy way to gain untapped revenue. As one of the most underutilized opportunities in marketing, retailers should review this timely and relevant channel to build loyalty and increase orders. The most important component to a successful transactional messaging strategy that incorporates marketing objectives is to remember the primary goal of the message and to create an experience that keeps your customers engaged.

According to MarketingSherpa, 75% of respondents said that they opened and read transactional messages ‘frequently’ or ‘very often/always’. You aren’t going to get better visibility with your customers with any other channel, so take advantage. In this whitepaper, we will outline several ways to drive more revenue with your transactional messages while maintaining and growing deeper customer relationships.

- 1. The devil is in the details.** Creating a cohesive transactional message strategy that matches your brand and the customer experience you want to convey.
- 2. Low hanging fruit.** Areas that you easily act on today to build loyalty and increase revenue.
- 3. Turn up the volume.** Increase the marketing message while staying CAN-SPAM compliant.

The Devil is in the Details

Not every business is clear in their transactional messages regarding how they actually conduct business. Communicating clearly and setting expectations for your customer are key to developing a great relationship. Here are a few key ingredients that if you aren’t already including, you should consider:

Transactional messages should be recognizable as such. The reason they have such a high open rate and increased engagement is because it is an expected experience. If I make a purchase, I should receive an order confirmation receipt and a shipping confirmation from the brand I just purchased from. It’s amazing how many brands do themselves a disservice by not having a recognizable brand name in the subject line. So take a look. What is the from name in your current transactional message?

Subject lines should reflect the subject of the transaction. Don’t reduce engagement by reflecting anything other than the experience the customer recently had. If a customer makes a purchase, indicate in the subject line “Confirmation of order.” It’s that easy and will go a long way in deepening trust with your customer.

Be transparent with policies. Proactively offer information regarding return/cancellations policies or any other restrictions related to their transaction in their confirmation messages. If you are concerned about length of policies, create a link. The easier you make it to transact business, the more likely they are going to repeat purchases.

Set expectations. If you have a series of transactional messages that you utilize such as order confirmation, shipping confirmation, shipping update, or customer experience survey, set expectations about those messages and when they should expect to receive them.





Low Hanging Fruit

Transactional messages have room for quick wins that will allow you to further communicate sell opportunities as well as engage your customers. Outlined below are a few that you can get started quickly:

Provide stellar customer service.

What better way to keep a customer coming back again and again, than to provide amazing customer service throughout the entire process? Instead of just communicating in a transactional message that your order was processed or shipped, take the message to an entirely new level of engagement.

A personalized greeting. There's not a better place to continue a strong dialogue than in a transactional message. It's disturbing when you receive a transactional message that may simply say, "Your order has been received; you will receive a shipping confirmation shortly." No "thanks for your order" or "we appreciate your business." The competition for consumer dollars is fierce and the internet has provided customers with more choices than ever. Make sure your customers feel valued. Don't overlook the often-missed opportunity to build loyalty.

Customer support contact information. Make certain your customers know how to reach you after an order is placed. There's nothing more frustrating to a customer than feeling as though the company they just purchased from is making it difficult for follow up. Determine possible scenarios in the customer experience and tell your customer how to deal with each. For example, what should they do if they see a mistake in the order after they hit submit? Or what happens if the product is now back-ordered when at the time of order it seemed to be in stock? Making this type of data easily accessible reinforces trust and will carry your brand far.

Include all relevant specifics in the email such as items purchased, prices paid, special instructions, order number, and shipping location. Tell them exactly what they purchased. Consumers are still wary that they aren't going to get what they thought they were online. Reinforce trust easily by confirming all of the details of the purchase they just made.

Nurture customer relationship.

Transactional messages don't have to just extend to order confirmation and shipping; perhaps you also include in your series of order confirmations the ability to recommend their purchase. There isn't a better way to say thanks for your purchase than to give your customer a voice about the experience. Good or bad, you will gain invaluable information to help grow your business and will win a loyal brand advocate.

Turn Up the Volume

Generating additional sales is top of mind for every marketer, so why not utilize a highly engaging marketing strategy to create cross-sell and up-sell opportunities? Finding the balance of creating net new sales and keeping the message's original intent can be challenging, but if you continue to be mindful of the reason for transactional messages, you can create a compelling campaign that responds to

both goals. Generally speaking, it is smart to keep the ratio in a transactional message around 20%, this is well known in the industry as the 80/20 rule. It is important to remember CAN-SPAM compliance and the balance of marketing message to transactional message, but there are several ways to easily incorporate opportunities to gain additional revenue.

Product recommendations. This is an amazing feature to consider for your transactional message. You may already have product recommendations on your site, but have you considered taking this same technology and adding two to three product up-sell or cross-sell opportunities to your transactional emails? Nothing is more relevant than recommendations based off their original purchase.

Header link navigation. Adding site navigation in your email header is a small change that can have significant impact. By making your website accessible through your transactional message, you encourage customers to return and shop.


Customized content. Don't forget that you can customize content to also speak to your customer and encourage additional sales. An example may include reward programs, add-on services or warranties specific to products purchased.



Case Study:

National Allergy had a series of transactional messages that were sent once a web order was placed. They believed strongly that there was revenue being left on the table by not engaging those that ordered offline, not including elements to drive additional sales, and not deepening the customer relationship by excluding important links.

[View This Message On Our Website](#)



**Thank You
For Your Order**

Healthy Bedding Sinus Relief HEPA Vacuums Personal Care Allergen Control Air Filtration Asthma Treatment Safe Cleaning

Dear **Barbara Holland**,

Thank you for ordering from National Allergy Supply! Your order number is 2108792. Please refer to this number if you have any questions about your order. We appreciate your business and sincerely hope you are pleased with your purchase. When your order leaves our warehouse, you will receive another email detailing the items shipped and how you can track your package. The details of your order are listed below.

Order Number: 2108792
Web Confirmation Number or PO Number:
Order Date: 05/04/2010

Bill To:
Mr. Nancy Anderson
100 W. Atlantic St.
Orlando, FL 32801, FL 32801-1000

Ship To:
Mr. Nancy Anderson
100 W. Atlantic St.
Orlando, FL 32801, FL 32801-1000

Item #	Item Description	Item Status	Unit \$	QTY	TOTAL
52-3035	Varicream Lip Protectant SPF 30 - 10g Tube	Out of Stock	\$4.99	1	\$4.99
52-3360	Varicream Sunscreen SPF 60 - 4-oz. Tube	In Stock	\$17.49	1	\$17.49
52-3335	Varicream Sunscreen Sport SPF 35 - 4-oz. Tube	In Stock	\$14.49	1	\$14.49
Item Total					\$36.97
Shipping					\$5.99
Sales Tax					\$0.00
Order Total					\$42.96

Prescribed or referred by:
Cory S. Cunningham MD

If you need to make a change to your order or have immediate questions, please reply to this e-mail, call us at 1-888-498-7401 Monday through Friday from 9am until 5:30pm ET, or e-mail us directly at ordprocessing@nationalallergy.com. Thanks again for your business!

Sincerely,
Barbara Holland
Senior Customer Service Representative
National Allergy Supply, Inc.
1620-D Satellite Blvd.
Duluth, GA 30097

The three goals for National Allergies' transactional messages haven't changed. They make the focus of every transactional message to provide customer service, but have found tactics to optimize their messages and drive additional revenue.

Here's how they did it:

- Created transactional messages for offline orders
- Added site navigation in transactional messages
- Included a special section for customers with a call to action

These small changes have meant big wins for National Allergy. They have had these changes in place for less than a 12 month timeframe and have created 315 additional orders.

At the end of the day, no email message is going to gain more engagement than transactional messages. Take these 'quick win' elements and apply them to your marketing strategy today. Increased revenue is heading your way.

Want to learn more about transactional messages?

Join the conversation at bronto.com/blog

About Bronto



Bronto Software provides the leading marketing platform for retailers and other commerce-focused companies to drive revenue through email, mobile and social campaigns. Over 1,000 organizations including Party City, Armani Exchange, Timex, Samsonite, and Trek Bikes rely on Bronto to increase revenue through interactive marketing. The company won the Stevie Award for Best Customer Service in 2009 and 2010, was named a CODiE Award Finalist for Best Marketing Solution in 2011 and is one of Inc Magazine's top 100 fastest growing software companies. For more information, visit bronto.com or call 888-BRONTO-1.