

# 10 TIPS FOR USING EMAIL TO DRIVE MOBILE ENGAGEMENT — AND VICE-VERSA

With mobile devices continuing to proliferate and increase in sophistication, smartphones and tablets have assumed a growing role in the buyer journey, and businesses are taking note. Consider: Using mobile touchpoints, such as personalized push notifications and text messages, can increase conversion rates by 8.5 percent<sup>1</sup>. And in 3Q 2014, nearly 20 percent of U.S. retail online purchases came via mobile devices<sup>2</sup>.

Checking emails is one of the most common uses of smartphones and tablets, with more than 50 percent of emails now opened on mobile devices<sup>3</sup>. And given that more than two-thirds of consumers prefer to receive communications from brands via email<sup>4</sup>, smart marketers are looking for new ways to connect with mobile customers via email, SMS and mobile apps.

Here are 10 ways you can leverage email to drive mobile engagement and revenue – and vice-versa.

## Section 1: Using Email to Drive Mobile Engagement

Email can help “remove the friction” and make it easier for customers to buy when they browse your content, no matter which device they’re using at the time. The channel also provides an opportunity to expand the mobile channels you use to interact, a key strategy given that using mobile touchpoints within marketing programs can increase customer lifetime value nearly 5 percent<sup>1</sup>. Employ these tactics to enhance your customers’ mobile experience:

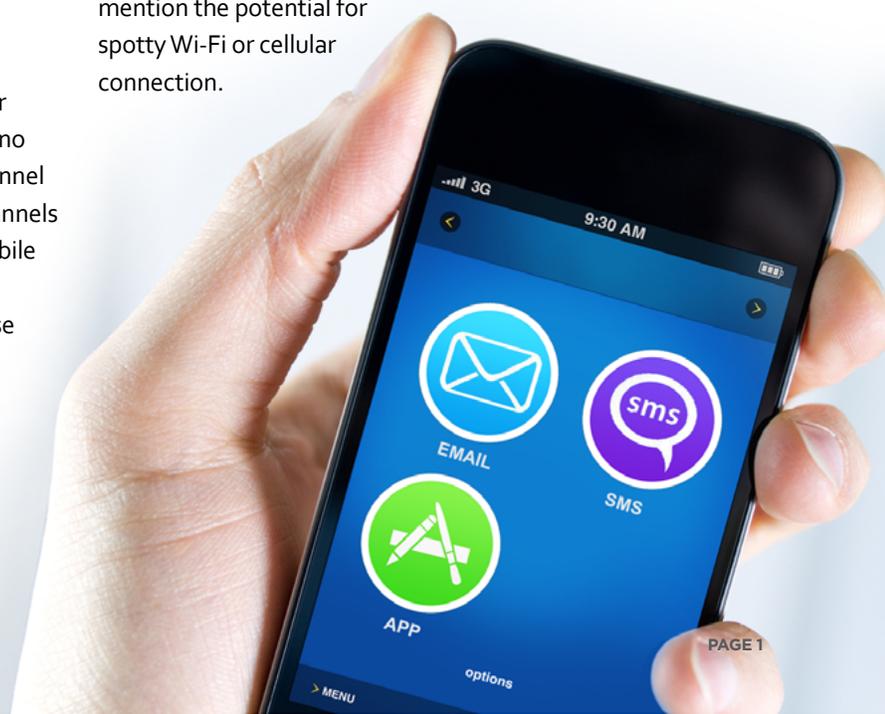
### 1 Ask new customers for payment information.

It’s a scenario that gives retailers nightmares: A customer finds the product they want, but bails during the purchase process because completing the account registration and/or payment process is too awkward or time-consuming on a small screen and keyboard.

To help avoid this predicament, consider adding an email message to your onboarding program asking new customers to register accounts and/or payment information. This makes shopping by smartphone as close to a one-click experience as possible. And while you’re at it, add any other content that can simplify the mobile shopping experience. (See the “Make Your Emails as Mobile-Friendly as Possible” sidebar on p. 2 for more ideas.)

### 2 Account for mobile context by resending emails and remarketing.

People on smartphones are often on the move, multitasking or in a public environment. That means plenty of distractions, not to mention the potential for spotty Wi-Fi or cellular connection.





Recognize the reality that some of your mobile contacts may not have the opportunity to fully follow through on your call to action by doing some or all of the following:

- **Make your emails more memorable:** Want your mobile customers to retain your emails in their inbox until they're ready to act? You've got to deliver engaging messages that give them a reason to come back, click and convert. Incorporating more personality, educational information and dynamic content can help get you there.
- **Send select messages again:** Consider resending an email to those who opened and clicked a message on a mobile device but didn't convert within a short time (12 hours or fewer). Revise it (different subject line or supporting copy) so the email doesn't look like a duplicate.
- **Remarket to mobile browsers:** Create an education-based browse remarketing email for contacts who visit your site via mobile and don't buy or otherwise convert within a set time.

### 3 Invite customers to download, install and use your mobile app.

Send contacts a "download our mobile app" email invitation as a "white space" message to all subscribers, and add it to your onboarding program for new subscribers. Talk about the cool things the app can do, but always keep the focus on the benefits: what your app will do for your subscribers. ([Read more about "white space" emails.](#))

Link directly to the download page and specify technical requirements, such as platforms it requires, how much space it takes up, etc.

### 4 Encourage app downloaders to continue engaging with the app and accept push notifications.

About 30 percent of downloaded apps are only used once or twice<sup>5</sup>. To help ensure customers continue engaging with yours, follow up on your initial invitation by adding benefit-focused reminders to your other broadcast messages, transactional emails and triggered messages. Possible

## MAKING YOUR EMAILS AS MOBILE-FRIENDLY AS POSSIBLE

Many marketers have made considerable strides in creating emails that render well across devices. But what happens when customers take the next step and click on these emails? If your customers struggle to view pages, add items to carts or check out, they'll flee. Here are five quick tips to help take the friction out of browsing and buying via smartphones:

- 1) **Use responsive design techniques that simplify your email.** Think fewer offers, bigger icons and call-to-action buttons, and larger images and fonts.
- 2) **Offer social sign-in.** Enable customers to log in via their Facebook or Twitter accounts or to create an account instead of filling out multiple data fields.
- 3) **Introduce an alternative payment option, such as PayPal.** Allow customers to choose a stored credit card instead of typing in card numbers, expiration dates and security codes each time (this also reduces security risks).
- 4) **Add a "Remind me later" button.** Ask for the shopper's email address and set up rules that trigger an email with product information and a link back to the product page within the next 24 hours. Send a soft, service-oriented reminder email to those who haven't clicked or converted in a set time.
- 5) **Deep-link directly to your mobile app.** Where applicable, consider routing an email recipient to your app rather than a mobile website homepage or other default location. Depending on circumstances, sending the reader to your app may provide a superior customer experience.



content includes troubleshooting advice and FAQs, a link to a help desk, updates on the latest app feature, and information about push notifications.

Push notifications – the ding, chime, buzz or silent pop-up number – bring your users back to the app, but they can get annoying fast. So, many users opt not to accept them. Email can help you push past this objection and start harnessing the power of targeted push notifications.

To this end, add content to your dedicated mobile app email that tells users what benefits they'll get and how often you expect to send notifications.

## 5 Promote SMS sign-up in your emails.

Email is one of the most powerful methods for increasing your SMS subscribers. Since recipients have already agreed to establish a relationship with you – versus someone who's just visiting your website, for example – they may be more likely to sign up for mobile alerts.

To help maximize your efforts in this area, send a dedicated email focused on your SMS program, with a simple call to action in the top half of the email. Consider using an incentive, such as "Sign Up for Our SMS Program and Get 10% Off Your Next Purchase."

## Section 2: Using Mobile Apps and SMS to Drive Email Engagement

Email and mobile don't have to compete against each other. Instead, they can help each other grow and prosper. Use these SMS and mobile app tactics to help expand and enhance your email program:

### 1 Add email subscriber acquisition to your SMS texting program.

Your customers don't go anywhere without their phones these days, so make it easy for customers browsing at your physical locations, waiting in line, or viewing billboard ads or event signage to text to opt in to your email program.

Likewise, context and value is key to getting people to opt in to your email program via an SMS invite. Begin with a simplified opt-in tailored to small screens and distracted environments. Then, broaden engagement and gather data via email follow-ups.

Best practices for acquisition via SMS include the following:

- **Keep it visible**, in the top half of the message
- **Be clear** about what you want users to do.
- **Make your opt-in pitch short** and easy to remember.
- Consider using **capital letters** for keywords.

## MOBILE AND EMAIL SUCCESS STORY: BRIDGEVINE

Bridgevine, a reseller for cable and telecommunications companies, was challenged with prospective customers not following through with conversions – in this instance, calling into the call center to schedule an installation appointment. So, the team decided to implement an automated email and SMS campaign with the goal of being more proactive.

Bridgevine placed a short form including both email address and mobile number on its TimeWarner microsite. If a prospect completes the form and opts in to receive future communications, but doesn't immediately schedule an appointment, the individual is automatically placed into an automated re-touch program.

In this program, the lead receives an automated SMS and email – both triggered via Silverpop Engage – upon submission of the form. The first SMS is delivered within one or two minutes of the form submission. The lead continues to receive automated SMS and email messages for up to three days, unless it becomes a conversion before then.

If the prospect in the program calls to schedule an installation appointment, the Silverpop platform is tied to Bridgevine's call center via an API, therefore automatically removing the prospect from the program.

The program has resulted in a 300 percent increase in conversions, with a call-back rate of 33 percent. More than 30 percent of the prospects who provided their email addresses also opted in to the SMS program.



## 2 Use your mobile app to increase email subscribers.

U.S. Android and iPhone users age 18 and over spend 65 percent more time each month using apps than they did just two years ago.<sup>5</sup> The growing adoption of mobile apps means you may be reaching new customers not currently in your database.

With that in mind, consider asking new downloaders for their email address or offer social registration through which you can obtain their email address and permission. You might also add a prominent email subscribe button within your app that opens a simplified version of your opt-in or preference page.

Remember: Many apps are used once or twice and then forgotten, so capturing email addresses enables you to educate and nurture these downloaders and increase engagement.

## 3 Repurpose stand-alone email content into a special button on your app.

One of the biggest challenges facing marketers today is coming up with the content needed to engage customers across channels and campaigns. To help overcome this challenge and give your email messages a second life with your customers, consider repackaging the content from emails that focus on a specific idea or theme – a how-to guide or new product promotion, for example – into your mobile app.

For instance, a holiday email marketing best practice is to send a message with holiday-specific information such as special store or customer-service hours, free-shipping deadlines, gift card promotions and return policies. This content could be turned into a “Holiday Shopping Help” button on your app that could connect with your on-the-go customers and recommunicate the information from your original email.

## 4 Send push notifications that complement your email program.

Savvy marketers know that service-oriented emails triggered by a customer’s actions are a great way to increase engagement and revenue. Providing similar personalized, behavior-driven push notifications can be an excellent way to complement your automated emails. These can integrate with your ecommerce program to trigger messages such as shipping status, cart or browse reminders, supply or price changes, etc.

You can also send push notifications to alert customers to new email content on your app, as described in No. 3, thereby helping to spread the word about your email program.

## 5 Reflect mobile behaviors in your emails.

Many of the most successful marketers use an individual’s Web and email behaviors to personalize email content. But with customers doing so much more with mobile apps and text messages, new opportunities have arisen to enhance your emails.

Did a customer interact with your mobile app, respond to a text message or cross a geofence around a store? Use these actions – along with everything else you know about the customer – to trigger emails or populate dynamic content within emails.

*For more tips and strategies for how you can most effectively use email and mobile together, visit [Silverpop’s Resources page](#).*

### Footnotes

- 1-Aberdeen Group, “Secrets to Better Engage the Mobile Consumer: The Role of Push Notifications,” Aug. 2014
- 2-IBM Digital Analytics Benchmark, Oct. 2014
- 3-Lauren Smith, Litmus, “Email Client Market Share: Where People Opened in 2013,” Jan. 16, 2014
- 4-Silverpop, “Are You a Best Friend Brand?” July 2014
- 5-Dave Hoch, Localytics, “App Retention Improves – Apps Used Only Once Declines to 20%,” June 11, 2014
- 6-Nielsen, “Smartphones: So Many Apps, So Much Time,” July 1, 2014

Silverpop, an IBM Company, is a cloud-based digital marketing provider that offers email marketing and lead management solutions. By providing deep, behavior-based customer insights and an intuitive engagement engine, Silverpop reduces the complexity of omnichannel marketing and enables exceptional experiences for customers across the entire buyer journey. As part of IBM’s ExperienceOne integrated portfolio, Silverpop will help convert prospects into loyal customers through more relevant one-to-one interactions. [Watch our demo](#) to see our product in action, and [contact Silverpop](#) to see how we can help you accomplish your marketing goals for 2015.

