E-MAIL MARKETING: GAIN SOME CURB APPEAL.

Email marketing brings in customers.

Email marketing is sending both general and targeted messages to specific groups of people via email. Most often it involves using templates to share information about new products, services, offers and specials. Email marketing is directed at past, current and potential customers and it's intended to solicit new business, encourage customer loyalty and build brand awareness.

> Companies made an average **$40** for every **$1** spent on email marketing in 2011.[3] And email has only grown in popularity since then.

Email marketing can be a powerful strategy for bringing new customers into your dealership. It puts your message right into potential customers' inboxes (on their mobile phones, too!) and offers a great return on investment (ROI).

An effective and untapped marketing tool

Email is the most popular online activity and it's the most dominant way of sharing information.

42% of businesses say email is one of their most effective lead generation channels.[5]

Yet, only 22% of automotive dealerships are engaged in email marketing.[6]

For dealerships willing to start campaigns, email marketing is a huge opportunity to bring more potential customers into their showrooms.

66% of consumers have made a purchase as a result of an email marketing message.[1]

Email is almost **40x** better at acquiring new customers than Facebook and Twitter.[2]

74% of consumers say they prefer to receive their commercial messaging by email.[4]

[1] Saturday Stat Series: The Influence of Email Marketing Messages, Direct Marketing Association, 2013.

[2] Why marketers should keep sending you e-mails, McKinsey & Company, 2014.

[3] Direct Marketing Association, 2011.

Email marketing best practices

Build a subscriber list and keep it up-to-date

Leverage your network and build an initial list from existing and established business relationships and contacts. Then:

- Gather new contacts through your website using a lead form, general inquiry or contact form and newsletter and contest sign-up forms.

- Manage contact records in a user-friendly database or online tool.

- Each time an email is deployed, investigate and remove addresses that initiate bounce-backs.

- Decide if a blast or nurture method will achieve the best results. Blast is a one-time communication and nurture builds off behavior and can be scheduled to deploy in advance.

Grow your subscriber list and manage it well right from very beginning to make sure your email marketing efforts are streamlined and effective.

Manage legal implications

Bill C-28: Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) is design to protect Canadians from spam (unsolicited electronic messaging), while ensuring that businesses can continue to engage in fair and effective methods of electronic communication. In order for businesses to send commercial electronic messages, CASL requires that you:

- Obtain either implied or express consent.

- Identify yourself and the business or organization sending the message.

- Include an unsubscribe mechanism on every message sent.

Take the necessary steps to understand e-mail marketing best practices from a legal perspective. For detailed information regarding CASL, visit *www.fightspam.gc.ca*.

Use communication categories

Divide your email marketing program into logical communication categories such as:

- Newsletters
- New inventory
- Announcements
- Special offers
- News and press releases

Test and track different email marketing campaigns to understand which strategies were effective and where there's room for improvement.

Send different types of messages

Run a successful email marketing campaign by sending relevant messaging such as:

- Mass email: When you're having a large-scale promotion or sale and want to share with everyone on your list.
- Targeted/custom email: When you have information or an offer specific to a particular group of potential customers.
- Triggered email: Automated so that everyone who sends email to you about a particular vehicle then receives an email back about a relevant offer or promotion.

Pay attention to which types of messages generate the most interest and bring the most people into your dealership, and plan future campaigns based on past successes.

Design user-friendly email templates

Design your e-mail templates with brand guidelines and e-mail marketing best practices in mind:

- Leverage responsive e-mail templates to ensure proper display of content across desktop and mobile platforms.
- Design with tables, specifying exact cell widths.
- Use a respectable ratio between text, images and hyperlinks to avoid spam filter flags.
- Use respectful font sizes, cases and colours. No shouting in giant, red, all-caps text.
- Use images that support your message, preferably in GIF format, to ensure smallest possible file size.

- Review and test thoroughly for proper display, spelling errors, broken links and images that do not load.
- Use themed templates that complement your communication categories to help people immediately distinguish between promotional vs. operational messaging.

Design your email templates to be simple and easy to read and showcase relevant content to capture subscribers' interest.

Use smart "From" and "Subject" lines

Use your dealership's name in the "From" line, and be clear about who's sending the message. Keep this consistent over time to improve open rates.

Use subject lines that are informative and concise to encourage subscribers to open your message. Don't use words or phrases like "free" or "percent off" that can trigger spam filters or negatively affect open rates.

Go professional to get the best results

There are many elements to developing successful email marketing campaigns. If you choose to seek professional assistance, be sure to get help with:

- Creating a process to build, add to, and keep subscriber lists up-to-date.
- Knowing and managing the legal implications of sending email marketing messages.
- Building impactful, targeted, and user-friendly templates based on communication segments.
- Optimizing email messages for display on mobile devices.
- Tracking and measuring campaigns, including ongoing testing to make sure subject lines are effective at improving open rates and if newsletter design and content is encouraging conversion.

A professional email marketing strategy can engage past and future customers and bring more qualified buyers into your dealership.

Some email marketing software options

Cost-effective

	MailChimp	Constant Contact
Price:	Free	$20 per month
Pros:	• Professional-looking email campaigns without needing to be an expert.[7] • Great at keeping customers in the loop without bogging them down with spam.[7] • Ample help and support.[7]	• The drag-and-drop format makes it simple to create email campaigns.[9] • Well-designed interface that is easy to learn and use.[10] • Email newsletter templates (400+) that get you up and running in minutes.[10]
Cons:	• Once a campaign is sent, the name of the campaign cannot be changed.[7] • Post-send link modifications.[7] • You need to create a campaign or email template, then upload the assets.[7]	• There is no automatic option for previewing your message in email inboxes.[9] • Charges extra for additional features such as conducting online surveys.[10] • Cluttered user interface can make finding what you're looking for time-consuming.[10]
Verdict:	"One thing that I love about MailChimp is the out-of-the-box email templates - very beautifully designed HTML templates that make you look professional and polished, without having to know code!"[8]	"Constant Contact has a wide range of templates that allow you to customize your company's advertising."[9]

Robust Solutions

	Pardot (by SalesForce)	Marketo
Price:	$1,000 per month	$895 per month
Pros:	• The interface and work flow for completing marketing tasks like sending emails or designing forms is clean and easy to learn.[11] • Lead scoring.[11] • A/B testing.[11]	• Lead scoring allows you to track behavior based on specific web page visits.[13] • Lead generation forms are used to build, use and implement to draw in anonymous leads.[13] • Build campaigns and engagement streams.[13] • Drag-and-drop functionality - you do not need an IT background to run this tool.[13]
Cons:	• Ties into a number of different CRM programs. In trying to work with all those different products it does not have a great interface with any of them.[11]	• Analytics are limited in their ability to pull the needed information.[13] • Reports/lists/etc., can take a while to run.[13]
Verdict:	"Pardot is great in that it has many connections to external services that give you better insights into your contact's digital body language"[12]	"Marketo takes excellent care of its customers. They really make you feel special. And they are constantly innovating and at the forefront of technology.[13]

[7] MailChimp - Reviews and Ratings, TrustRadius (https://www.trustradius.com/products/mailchimp/reviews).

[8] MailChimp Review, Joy M., G2 Crowd, April 2013 (https://www.g2crowd.com/survey_responses/mailchimp-review-12731).

[9] Constant Contact, TopTenReviews.com, Purch (http://email-marketing-software-review.toptenreviews.com/constant-contact-review.html).

[10] Constant Contact vs. iContact vs. Vertical Response Vs..., WeRockYourWeb.com, November 2014 (http://www.werockyourweb.com/constant-contact-vs-icontact-vs-vertical-response/#constant_contact).

[11] User Review: Pardot solid but has some holes, TrustRadius (https://www.trustradius.com/reviews/pardot-2013-05-09-06-58-56).

[12] Pardot Reviews, Zach L., G2 Crowd, November 2013 (https://www.g2crowd.com/products/pardot/reviews).

[13] Marketo Marketing Automation - Reviews and Ratings, TrustRadius (https://www.trustradius.com/products/marketo-marketing-automation/reviews).

Performance Solutions

	Eloqua (by Oracle)
Price:	$2,000 per month
Pros:[14]	• Stellar support. • Huge selection of apps that extend functionality. • Campaign Canvas.
Cons:[14]	• There isn't as much documentation for program builder. • My Oracle Support can be tricky to navigate. • Cost. On the lower end, it's more expensive than other tools.
Verdict:	"B2B, technology, long sales cycle, emerging product, high price point. Our customers need to be educated, nurtured, and convinced that they have a problem that can be solved by our product."[12]

[12] Pardot Reviews, Zach L., G2 Crowd, November 2013
(https://www.g2crowd.com/products/pardot/reviews).

[14] Eloqua – Reviews and Ratings, TrustRadius
(https://www.trustradius.com/products/eloqua/reviews).