MACQUARIE

BETTER CLIENT COMMUNICATIONS

Every message you share with your clients is an important element of an ongoing dialogue.

Ongoing conversation

2. Basic principles

Planning a message

3. Audience focused
4. Make the message matter
5. Objective driven

Channel selection

6. Choosing the channel
7. Direct mail vs eDM

Emails

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9. Subject lines
10. Avoid the spam box
11. When to send
12. Getting click through
14. Newsletters

Other

15. Card mailers
16. Powerpoint and presentations
17. Landing pages

every message you create should be:

Audience
focused

Sharp
Smart, concise, clear.

Empathetic
Take the time to understand what people want; put yourself in their shoes.

Objective
driven

Confident
Bold, active and clear about the difference you can make.

Honest
Your business is built on relationships. Relationships are built on trust.

instant
engagement

Every word, every message you create should be relevant or interesting to your audience and support the objective or reason for the message.

sharp empathetic

audience focused

When planning a message, consider what matters most to the people receiving it:

- will it help, impact or hinder them?
- is it useful or important to know?
- will it add value to their day, job, family or situation?

Give this information priority.

- what do they know about the topic?

Don’t assume knowledge.

Make the message matter.

Create a message that will resonate with the people you're talking with, make it relevant to their situation, interests and needs. This tends to mean talking about benefits rather than features (but not always).

Every word, every image created or communicated should be viewed through the lens of the recipient.

Answer questions.

A message can often raise questions. Provide answers to those questions.

BE GUIDED BY THE 5 W'S

WHO caused it to happen? (e.g. The federal government)

.....

WHEN did it happen? (e.g. as part of the May 2015 budget announcement)

.....

WHERE did it happen?
(add this only if relevant or useful – in Canberra)

.....

WHY did it happen? (particularly relevant is as a result of compliance – determined to make super rules more equal…)

.....

WHAT is the result or outcome?
(all fees will increase)

Chop any W if it's not relevant. In this example Canberra is not relevant to the message that matters so it could be cut. If the message referred to stamp duty legislation in NSW, the location would be more relevant.

This is likely to be the *"message that matters"*

CHECKLIST

WRITE TIGHT

Whether it's for a website, mobile device or print, there are copy principles to consider:

FRONTLOADED CONTENT

Make sure the message that matters is given priority

CLEAR HEADLINES AND SUBHEADS

Help scanning readers to understand the message at a glance

SHORT SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS

Make it easy to read and understand

CLARITY AND SIMPLICITY

Remove any jargon, unnecessary words or information, and choose the best word rather than the big word

confident
honest
objective driven

When planning a message, consider what you want to achieve:

- What do you need to communicate and why?
- What do you want people to do as a result of the information?
- What do you want people to feel as a result of the message?

> "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Dr Maya Angelou, author

CHECKLIST

- Use an appropriate brand voice
- Show rather than tell
- Highlight the benefits
- Make it clear what you want the audience to do as a result of the message or information
- Provide a clear call to action or next steps, and if relevant highlight the benefits of the recommended action

Choosing the channel

Different communication types have attributes which will make them more effective for some messages and less effective for others.

But remember, every message you send should be considered as part of the ongoing conversation. None of these items have to stand alone, and many may be much more valuable, and effective, when used in conjunction with others.

Channel	Good for	Measurement	Cost estimate
Email	Providing an at-a-glance summary and encouraging further engagement	Open rate Bounce rate Click through rate	$
Direct mail	Personal communications and educational information	Depending on the campaign and objectives you can measure by: • Creating a unique phone number • Using a promotional code, e.g. "Macquarie-Saver" for the customer to use • Creating campaign-specific URLs	$$$
SMS	Almost instant notification – when immediate action is required	Delivery rates	$$
Powerpoint presentations	Tool for supporting a verbal presentation. Should be used to enhance what is being said not duplicate	N/A	
Landing pages	Providing key information to support promotions and emails	Google Analytics will provide detailed information	
Video	Encouraging comprehension of more complex topics and expressing the reasons for taking action	Depending on how it's used, you can measure views and downloads	$$$$

Source: http://www.targetmarketingmag.com/blog/why-direct-mail-won-t-die

Guide to cost estimate

$	$0.05 - $1 per unit
$$	$1 - $2 per unit
$$$	$1-$3 per unit
$$$$	$1000 + depending on brief

Direct mail vs eDM

Email is valuable for single clear messages – but if there is a story to tell to a small well-selected list of clients, old-school mail maybe more powerful.

While both may be effective in isolation, they may be even more effective when working together.

Could you use a DM followed with an email or two? Or the other way around?

	What's good	What's not
Direct mail	• Can be incredibly personal and impactful • Provides a better opportunity to express the brand and create an impact • Useful for complex communications and educational messages • Generally has a higher response rate.	• Direct mail is often more expensive than eDM. *(Although some studies have shown that the ROI isn't so different because of the higher response rate to physical mail. One study shows that the cost-per-lead or order for acquisition campaigns for DM was $51.40, while for email it was $55.24.)* • Potentially more of a delay in response if an action is required.
eDM	• Email is faster, often simpler and likely to be cheaper • Can be easily customised • There's more control over delivery (such as timing when an email lands in an inbox) • Results can be measured (such as open rates and click-through rates) • It's a more immediate experience for the recipient: any action required can be completed straightaway.	• Inboxes are overloaded and emails are easily lost, buried, ignored and forgotten • An email feels more impersonal is not likely to make a client feel special.

(Source of comparison: http://www.talismansolutions.co.uk/blog/email-vs-direct-mail-for-financial-services-marketing/)

Emails

ABOUT THE AUDIENCE

- Likely to have an overloaded inbox
- Many are likely to have images turned off
- Some will be reading via screen readers and need accessibility consideration

WHAT MAKES PEOPLE OPEN AN EMAIL?

- Sent by a trusted source
- Compelling, useful, relevant subject line

TRUSTED SOURCE

When sending an email to a client, your brand name should be clear in the “From” field.

BUT, it’s important to remember, even if clients have agreed to receive emails, trust can be eroded if the subject lines and the content or offer provided is not consistent, honest and valuable.

Similarly, if you consistently deliver content that is valuable and interesting, clients are more likely to open the next email they receive from you.

COMPELLING, RELEVANT SUBJECT LINE

In simple terms, subject lines should be engaging and interesting but reflect the key message of the actual email itself.

In reality, what’s compelling and interesting may mean different things to different audiences in different contexts.

For example:
3 mortgage facts that could save you time and money – will only be interesting to those that have a mortgage.

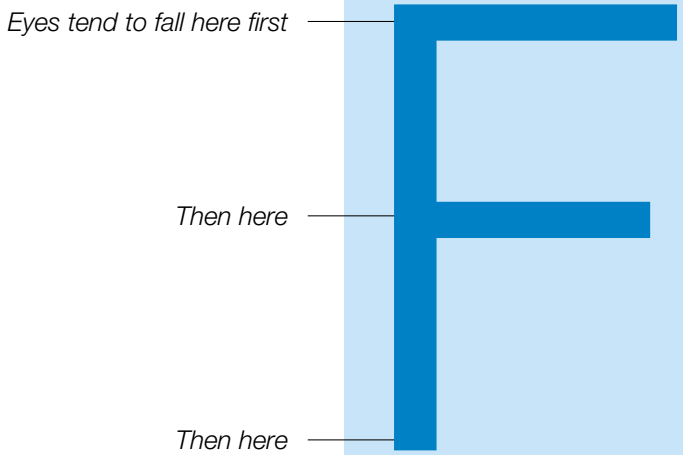
Budget analysis: what it will mean for your business – will be interesting to those who have a business, and only relatively soon after the budget, not 3 months later.

Digital design

People don’t read every word, see every image or watch every frame.

- If your message is copy driven make it easy to read and scannable.
- If your message is visually driven, ensure there are alternative ways to hear or understand the key points.

When online, people tend to read in an F-shape Pattern.



Subject line recipe

There is no magic formula for subject line success, but there are a few things that tend to work well according to research and statistics compiled by email, content, marketing and statistics experts.

(*References: Return Path, Exact Target, Hubspot)*

key ingredients

RELEVANCE

This can mean highlighting information that is timely, location-specific, audience-specific, or all three. For example:

How the Budget will impact business in Western Sydney

CLARITY

"When it comes to email marketing, the best subject lines *tell* what's inside, and the worst subject lines *sell* what's inside." *MailChimp*

optional flavour enhancers

ACTIVE WORDS

Use verbs to make the subject line active and urgent:

Put your mortgage to the test

vs

Mortgage test

INTRIGUE

Arouse curiosity (but not at the expense of clarity). Try a surprising angle or a relevant question:

What could be better than 10,000 reward points?

Make sure the actual email content addresses any intrigue set up in the subject line.

URGENCY

Use this like chilli, with care and consideration. Over-use or misuse can erode trust.

Your last chance to get 10,000 bonus rewards is valuable.

Your last chance to increase your credit limit does not ring true.

method

MIX

Use a combination of the key ingredients and flavour enhancers.

TEST

Determine what resonates, what doesn't. Do some ingredients seem to work better than others?

REPEAT

Try alternate combinations, create new combinations based on learnings from previous tests and send results.

SIZE MATTERS

"A typical desktop inbox displays about 60 characters of an email's subject line, while mobile devices show just 25-30 characters."

Return Path

Source: https://blog.bufferapp.com/8-effective-email-strategies-backed-by-research and http://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/29591/The-6-Step-Secret-Sauce-for-Awesome-Email-Subject-Lines.aspx

Avoid the spam box

Spam filters tend to be sensitive to certain words and characters in subject lines.

Try to avoid subject lines that include the following:

- RE:
- FW:
- Hello
- Special Offer
- Free
- Act now
- Limited time
- Exclamation points
- ALL CAPS

GOOD SUBJECT LINE EXAMPLES

(Source: http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/best-email-subject-lines-list)

- Refinery29: “The broke girl’s guide to a luxury vacation”
- Zillow: “What Can You Afford?”
- JetBlue: “You’re missing out on points.”
- Buffer: “Buffer has been hacked – here is what’s going on”

BAD SUBJECT LINE CREATIONS

(examples are representation of everyday experiences)

- All caps: YOU MUST READ THIS NOW
- Generic: Newsletter this week
- Click bait: The most surprising thing you have ever heard, you won’t believe what happened next
- Too much punctuation: Like this!!!???!!!
- Fake urgency: Urgent! Apply for credit increase now

When to send

Marketing software company Responsys analysed 1 billion email marketing messages sent by 350 marketers within Australia. Here's what they found:

Which day?

- Thursday delivers the highest average open rates in the week at 22%
- Tuesday has the highest click-through rate at 9%
- Monday and Friday are the worst days for open rates (excluding weekends)
- Friday delivers the lowest click-through rate (excluding weekends).

What time?

- 9am-10am: A good time to send out emails, consumers (typically at work) are looking through emails and are receptive to offers
- 3pm-5pm: Apathy sets in for people at work. They have a greater tendency to check out property and financial service emails, but all campaigns have a greater chance of being viewed
- 5pm-7pm: Consumers who are working late will be inclined to look at emails promoting holidays and B2B promotions
- 7pm-10pm: Offers relating to clothes and special interests (e.g. gym promotions) perform well during this period.

What's your time zone?

Consider the local time where the majority of your customers are.

Research your target audience

- Are they more likely to commute and read emails on the way to and from work?
- Are they business people who will need to fit it into their working day?
- Are they more likely to read emails at home?

TEST, TEST, TEST

For example,

- change the time you send the edm, but keep the same day, and see if you notice any significant differences
- use data from previous campaigns to find out what worked best
- use Google Analytics to see when customers are most active on the website and what devices they are using. Tailor your email campaigns to match.

Getting the click through

The number of clients that click through to your website, or take the action you want them to take as a result of the message you share, can help you determine engagement with the message.

Emails with high click through rates tend to have this in common:

relevant, interesting, useful content

Highlight the message that matters to the audience. Craft the information to create a compelling reason to take action or click through.

Why is it interesting, valuable, important?

clear calls-to-action

Don't bury the action that you want the client to take. Every email should give them a reason to take action and then a clear way to do it.

> "Average email click-through rate approximately 6%."
>
> *Constant Contact (http://blogs.constantcontact.com/click-through-rate/)*

Newsletters

> “Most effective newsletters aim to educate, not sell.”

A newsletter is like a movie trailer, it should make clients want to see the actual content.

Your objective

A newsletter is about showing and sharing insights, expertise, knowledge and value.

Assumed audience focus

(interests, thoughts, feelings) – relevant, useful, and engaging content that’s easy to read

Guidelines

As a rule a newsletter should not be about you. It’s about your clients and their interests and questions that you have answers to.

What content do you share?

When you spot an interesting item in a newsletter what do you do? Most of us:

- click through
- read the article (and if it’s good or useful)
- share it (via email or social)

The quality and utility of the curated or commissioned end content, is essential for a successful valuable newsletter that people open and subscribe to.

- Useful content = SEO *(search engine optimisation)* and shares
- Regular useful content = trust and new subscribers

Direct mail

card mailers | statements

According to the US-based Direct Marketing Association's 2015 DMA Response Rate Report:

- direct mail achieves a 3.7% response rate with a house list, and a 1% response rate with a prospect list
- all digital channels combined achieves a 0.62% response rate.

Which formats get the best response?:

- oversized envelopes have the best response rate at 5%
- postcards 4.25%
- dimensional 4%
- catalogs 3.9%
- letter-sized envelopes 3.5%.

We might be in an increasingly digital world, but ironically that can make the impact of a classic direct mail more powerful. These days there is a lot less clutter in a mailbox which can make a strong personal message stand out.

A well addressed, well designed Direct Mail can be a real attention grabber. It may cost more time and money to produce, but if well done, according to conversion statistics, it is often worth the effort and cost.

"Email marketing, because it so often gets filtered out by all but brand loyalists, does not deliver the same business success as direct mail."

The ADMA Creative Effectiveness Report 2014

The objective:

- get a response
- call for a consultation
- express interest in an offer
- be filed away for future reference.

Assumed audience focus

(interests, thoughts, feelings) – why? what's in it for me?

PowerPoint & presentations

> “Slides should reinforce your words, not repeat them”
>
> *Seth Godin, author/public speaker*

Slides should support and guide a presentation, they should not be a complete transcription of a talk.

Presentation software has been created for presentation purposes. It should not be used as an alternative to MS Word.

Use one main point per slide.

Instant engagement is just as important – remember your tone of voice guidelines, think about your audience, their interests and expectations and the purpose of the presentation.

Landing pages

An email, banner ad, promotion button and even direct mail can link to a landing page.

Clear compelling headline

The most important element is a page headline or header that is aligned to the prompt that “landed” the client.

It should also be interesting and engaging – once again consider the message that matters to the audience.

Establish exactly what the product or service is. *What does it do – how can it help?*

Strong call to action

Make it clear what the client should do next. Describe the action to be taken – for example if the action is to complete a form to attend a seminar *“register now”* would be better than *“submit”*.

Keep form fields to a minimum. First name, Last name and email address or phone number is normally adequate, business name and role may also be appropriate.

When gathering personal details, make sure an explanation of how those details will be used is incorporated.

Trust elements

Incorporate trust elements like testimonials, reviews, media mentions, partner logos where appropriate.

Single purpose

All copy and images should support the objective. Limit links that distract from the key purpose or CTA.

Reference example:

http://blog.crazyegg.com/2015/02/25/epic-landing-page-makeover/