



e-Mail Marketing

Introduction

Direct e-mail marketing is a powerful form of one-to-one marketing that builds and maintains trust and loyalty between your organisation and its customers and trading partners.

With the introduction of new Australian anti-spam laws and international privacy laws the process of conducting e-mail marketing can be complicated for organisations to set-up.

Having worked in the eBusiness and Internet industry since 1997, EPS has been able to test a wide range of systems and software to conduct *e-mail marketing* or *mass e-mail*. We have devised a solution that will meet all the needs of any organisation.

Our solution draws upon the best software solutions available in the market place and come with EPS' usual level of attentive customer service and consultative advice. We will work closely with our clients to devise the best mass e-mailing solution for your organisation; whether that means outsourcing the process to EPS or EPS providing you with all the tools and training to run the process independently and in-house.

The following documentation explains various options available to our clientele.

The issues

- You need to conduct e-mail marketing in a professional, efficient and cost effective manner
- You need the e-mail delivered to your customers to conform to the latest Internet standards:
 - A properly designed and formatted e-mail that makes effective use of branding, layout, graphics and colours.
 - Each e-mail individually addressed to the recipient
 - A plain text version of the e-mail to be sent to recipients whose e-mail programs cannot read graphics and colours so that you can be confident that recipients will receive the e-mail in the most appropriate format
 - When customers subscribe or unsubscribe from your eNewsletter they are sent a confirmation message
- You need your intended recipients to be able to automatically sign-up via your website or by e-mail
- You need to conform to Australian privacy and anti-spam laws. That means you must allow users to automatically subscribe and unsubscribe from your mass e-mail database.
- You may need an unskilled user to be able to compose each of your regular mass e-mails
- You may need to have full control in-house over the sending and management of the regular mass e-mails that your organisation sends.
- Then again, you may wish to outsource the entire process and have it professionally managed by EPS on your behalf

The Solution

There are two alternative solutions that EPS offers depending on your needs:

1. **In-house:** EPS can train you in everything that we know so that you can manage the entire process yourself. This means you will purchase the software that we recommend and we will consult with you to initially set-up and customise the overall solution so that it meets your precise needs.
2. **Outsourced:** Alternatively, EPS offers a fully outsourced solution, whereby we take care of updating your regular mass e-mails, sending, maintaining and reporting back to our client. The total process is managed by EPS.

With either option our solution will contain all the elements so that you can send professional e-mails, as often as you like.

The Processes Involved

To conduct professional e-mail marketing there are several key stages. Each of these stages are explained in more detail over the following pages:

1. Design of the original e-mail template
2. Set-up and use of specialised software that sends and manages the mass e-mails
3. Maintaining and changing the content of your mass e-mails for future mail-outs
4. The set-up of your website and database so that your intended recipients can easily sign-up to receive your mass e-mail
5. Outsourcing the on-going sending and management of your e-mail strategy to EPS or training in how to conduct your e-mail marketing in-house

Stage 1: Design of a 'rich text' template.

When sending a mass e-mail that is professionally formatted you are sending what is called a 'rich text' or 'HTML' version of an e-mail. It is important to send a mass e-mail that looks professional. EPS can show you a range of examples, however no doubt you have received them before.

As professional web designers EPS will construct for you the initial template. This will involve liaising with existing designers you work with or use your pre-existing marketing material. Either way, your professionally designed template will be customised for your needs and your situation. Using our expertise we will optimise the images provided, minimise extraneous code and make sure the e-mail that you send is optimised so that it is sent with minimum bandwidth. This is important so that your recipients can download the e-mail fast.

Graphical design and layout elements will be used to make the message visually appealing and easy to read. This template will also be able to be used as a standard e-mail template for company announcements, or for future e-mail campaigns. The template will be created so that the key 'text' content areas can be easily changed. There may also be menus at the top of the e-mail which jump recipients to specific articles later in the e-mail.

Depending on the nature of your business and recipients, our consultants will discuss with you all the different options available before beginning this important design stage.

EPS recommends that the initial creation of the e-mail is outsourced as EPS are experts in optimising images and web code. This will enable you to send emails to your recipients which are fast to download.

Stage 2: Set-up and use of specialised mass e-mail software that sends and manages the mass e-mail

When it comes to actually sending the mass e-mail EPS will either use (if you outsource the management to EPS), or recommend to you specific award winning software that we believe is the best on the market for conducting mass mail-outs.

The software that EPS recommends is fully web based so that clients can control their e-mail marketing campaigns from any internet connected computer.

We have trialled all the major mass e-mail software on the market. The software that we will recommend has been used by EPS in numerous mass email campaigns. It contains all the key features required to manage mass e-mails in the most professional, legal and efficient manner. The features are extensive and as you learn to use the software you will find other applications it can be used for within your business.

The licensing cost is approximately AUD\$330 per annum and means if you want to you can have full control over sending your mass e-mails. EPS also runs a hosting business, and if your website is hosted with EPS (at a cost of \$770 per year), the software will be included at no extra cost. For more information please visit <http://www.eps.com.au/solutions/hosting.html>.

A summary of the key features follow:

- Send highly formatted professional messages that are personalised for each of your recipients
- Keep your valuable recipient details private and completely secure.
- Run and maintain eNewsletters with powerful automated subscription, removal and filtering support
- Automatic subscribe and unsubscribe features
- Automatic e-mails sent to users when they request to subscribe or unsubscribe to the eNewsletter
- Customise the content of your messages for individual recipients
- Handle bounces automatically and verify recipients with ease
- Send messages directly to your recipients from your desktop or any internet connected computer
- Prepare and schedule messages for delivery any time in the future
- Prepare and send your messages in practically any language and with any encoding
- Fully control and target your mailings with powerful filters, in-line message scripting, reply management controls, customisable headers and in-depth logging & reporting
- Work with existing customer lists, data and information in practically any format (databases, files - including CSV, address books and more)
- Do follow-up mailings with precision, resume from failures with complete peace of mind and have access to all send related details in highly defined reports and logs
- Send both rich text and plain text versions of your messages so you can be confident that recipients will receive the e-mail in the most appropriate format

Stage 3: Ability to edit your overall template so, if required you can send your own eNewsletters with ease.

So now you are set-up with a solution that allows you to manage all your e-mail needs. When sending a mass e-mail that is professionally formatted you are sending what is called a 'rich text' or 'HTML' version of the e-mail. However, you need to create the HTML code that produces your e-mail. The question is, how does someone edit your e-mail every time to send it without turning to a web developer or someone with specialist coding knowledge?

Depending on how complex the design of your e-mail template is, you can use the mass e-mail software to edit and send future e-mails.

However, if you wish to include a menu at the top of your e-mail which recipients can click to be taken to content lower down in the e-mail, we recommend the purchase of *Macromedia Contribute* for approximately AUD\$250 (full license) which allows you to update any type of e-mail content. *Contribute* is the easiest way for individuals and teams to update, create, and publish web content to any HTML website, or to an eNewsletter. Contribute allows non-technical users to update web and e-mail content while maintaining site standards for style, layout, and code.

Creating a copy of your eNewsletter this way means that your eNewsletter will also be available on your website so that you can provide links to an 'archive' of eNewsletters. Effectively you kill two birds with one stone by creating a web page version of your eNewsletter and the email version.

When discussing the design of your eNewsletter EPS will further describe this option in more detail.

Stage 4: The set-up of your website and email database so that your intended recipients can easily sign-up to receive your mass e-mail

So now with the preceding three steps you are able to send and manage a professional mass e-mail. There are a few more pieces to the puzzle so that everything operates smoothly.

We will also help you set-up your website so that people can automatically subscribe to the eNewsletter from your Website. This includes registering a name and e-mail address so your e-mails can be personalised every time you send them. Australian anti-spam law states that confirmation messages must be sent to subscribers confirming their request to subscribe or unsubscribe. EPS' solution also automatically does this. Subscribers can also indicate whether they would like to receive the *plain text* or *HTML version* with graphics.

Our system also enables people who wish to receive the eNewsletter to do so by sending an e-mail with the word 'subscribe' to a certain e-mail address to be automatically added to the master database. This makes it possible for people to sign-up via a variety of means.

Stage 5: Training and documentation

Should you opt for our "in-house solution" EPS will provide full training and documentation in everything we have described.

Pulling all these different elements together can be time consuming. It has taken EPS years to find the best software suppliers and methodology so that we can hand the power over to our clients should they wish to manage the entire process themselves. EPS will train you in how to use the software, and set-up your website and in-house e-mail communications to take advantage of your investments.

Training by our staff will be tailored to your specific needs, and full documentation will be provided. The training will cover all aspects of setting up of the mass e-mail software, the content management software, editing a copy of the eNewsletter, placing links to the archive of eNewsletters on your website, testing and conducting an actual mail-out to a test group.

The investment

- The figures quoted below are indicative only and are subject to change after discussion of the precise needs of any organisation.
- Please contact EPS for clarification and discussion of any element of this information and any questions about how the final solution will precisely operate.

Option 1 – Software purchase and training to conduct mail-outs in-house

Stage	Description	Investment
1	Design of rich text email	\$550.00
2	Yearly licensing fee for mass e-mail software	\$330.00 ¹
3	Content management software– (required only if the layout and design of the rich text email is complicated, and is payable directly to software manufacturer, <i>not</i> EPS)	~ \$150.00
4	Set-up of website for automatic sign-ups	\$330.00
5	Training and documentation of entire process	\$880.00
	TOTAL FEE TO EPS	\$2090.00

Option 2 – Outsource the mass e-mail process to EPS

Item	Description	Investment
1	Design of rich text email	\$550.00
2	Set-up of website for automatic sign-ups	\$330.00
3	Outsourcing the composition and sending of each eNewsletter	~ \$220.00 / mail-out.

Benefits

- Service is fully hosted on our servers; no software updates or maintenance required.
- Professional, easy to use e-mail marketing for any organisation

Requirements

In order for EPS to complete an 'in-house' solution the following requirements must be met:

- Connection to the Internet from the computer that will manage the email campaign.
- Two e-mail accounts will be required (e.g. subscribe@yourdomain.com, bounces@yourdomain.com)
- FTP access to your Website and access to your server/hosting administrators to answer technical questions
- One staff member to conduct training with. Training can be conducted over the telephone if required, however in-person is preferred.

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