

SIX COMMON MISTAKES THAT DERAILED YOUR HOLIDAY MARKETING

There's no time like the holidays. But for digital marketers around the world, that might be better phrased as: There's no time *during* the holidays! Before the non-stop flurry of work begins for you and your fellow digital marketers, read this cheat sheet that Selligent deliverability experts have put together so you can steer clear of the most common email marketing Grinches this holiday season.



Mistake #1 **Taking on Major Changes**

Avoid making any changes that would affect your sending infrastructure in the month or two leading up to the holidays. For example, changing your sending internet provider (IP) or mail domain could damage your brand's sender reputation. Fixing the issue could mean warming up a new IP entirely, reducing the time your marketers can use to spend on holiday campaigns and dragging down deliverability results in the meantime.



Mistake #2 **Forgetting to Double-Check Your Sending Infrastructure**

In an ideal world, your email sending infrastructure would be bulletproof. But this is real life and mistakes happen - errors can sneak in from new campaigns, platforms, or system updates.

Give your infrastructure a quick tune-up before problems become emergencies. Your Selligent Support Services team is available to help you audit and spot errors that have built up over time. For non-clients, you can also access our deliverability eBook for best practices.¹



Hot tip: Email reputation issues take longer to fix during the holidays. Because postmaster teams at mailbox providers receive more cases during this time of year, they're often understaffed. Response times are going to be longer, and your issues might not be fully resolved until after the season.



Mistake #3 **Using Poorly Validated Target Lists**

Here are our top three tips to keep lists as valid and clean as possible:

- Don't use lists from 3rd parties
- Suspend your customer re-activation campaigns until after the holidays
- Target only your most engaged contacts



Hot tip: Don't use this time of year to reach out to inactive or dead contacts. Prioritize only your most active contacts who have engaged (opened and clicked) with your emails in the past 6-9 months.



Mistake #4 **Emailing Wildly**

Don't Suddenly Increase Number of Emails Per Customer

Consistency is key. Everyone receives tons of emails during this time of year so your customers are more likely to mark messages as spam. Instead, optimize and personalize the content you're already sending. Combine offers or products into a single clear and useful email, instead of spreading them across multiple emails.

If you do choose to send more emails than usual, be sure to monitor your campaign results to look for unusual drops or complaints. Then, rethink and adapt your strategy as soon as possible.

Don't Spike Daily Email Volumes

Try to avoid huge spikes in the total number of emails you send daily. Mailbox providers might flag this as suspicious behavior and redirect your messages to spam as well. Instead, increase your traffic slowly in the months before the holidays. Selligent clients can reach out to their Support Teams at any time for assistance.



Mistake #5 **Don't Mislead with Subject Lines**

Keep your content relevant and personal. Keeping your email copy in line with customer expectations is a good rule of thumb. Subject lines should be clear and short; avoid clickbait or misleading messages. The email copy should match the promise you make so readers are satisfied.



Hot tip: Get users to click on your email links. In-email clicks send positive messages to the mailbox provider that increase your sender reputation and inbox placement.



Mistake #6 **Using New Templates Without Testing**

If users can't immediately recognize your emails, they might mark it as spam, or your mailbox provider might even mark this traffic as "new" and increase their filtering levels for your IP address, IP, domain, or your campaigns in general. Avoid making major template changes right before or during important sales periods, and ease your contacts into new templates well before the holiday season and always AB test the new style.



Hard Lessons: Increasing email volumes usually means more of your emails will be left unopened, which to a mailbox provider is an indication of unwanted mail. Your sender reputation could drop as a result, and your emails could be re-routed to the spam folder or blocked. For that reason, we also don't recommend sending messages to contacts not usually included in your campaigns (see mistake #3).