

The background features a dark blue curved shape on the left side. Scattered around are various icons: a teal leaf-like shape, a yellow leaf-like shape, a red gear with circular arrows, a yellow square with a list and arrow, a red person icon, a teal bookmark with a star, and several geometric shapes like squares and diamonds. A large red leaf-like shape is at the bottom right.

Gmail: Strategies to Maximize Your Inbox Placement

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Today's Presenters

Matthew Volkman, MBA

- He/Him
- Act-On Deliverability Consultant
- 15 year veteran of email marketing
- Experience ranges from Fortune 500 companies, such as Disney, as well as small, local non-profits.



Alex Cunningham

- He/Him
- Act-On Deliverability Consultant
- Over 5 years of experience working in email deliverability



Agenda

- Overview of Gmail
- Technical Requirements & Set-up
- Engagement
- Email Design
- There is no magic bullet...
- Q&A

Gmail



Get to Know Gmail

- One of the most popular and recognizable companies
- 1.8 billion active users
- 300 billion sent/received last year
- Maximum storage of 15 gigabytes of storage
- Spam filter is a community-driven system



Get to Know Gmail

Similarities

- Overall there is a large amount of overlap between email providers
- Technical requirements are important to minimize authentication errors and delivery errors
- List quality, reputation, and user engagement
- Available on multiple devices

Differences

- Filters and labels
- Gmail add-ons and tools
- Feedback loops only provide aggregate information

Technical Set-Up



Authentication

*Gmail wants to know who is sending the email
and if the sender can be trusted...*

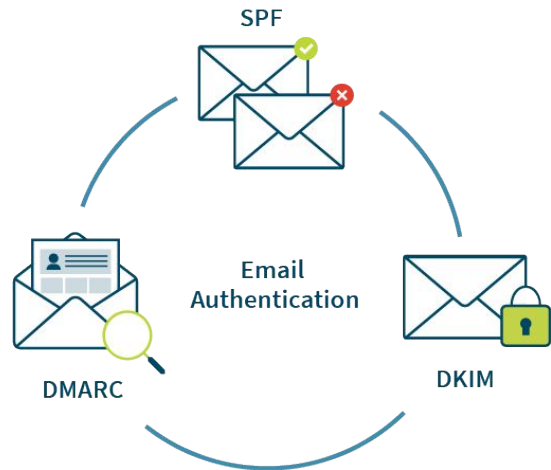
Authentication

Prevents recipients from malicious emails or phishing attempts

Used to ensure that the mail was truly sent from the domain name it claims to be from

Authentication notifies the receiving server that Act-On is authorized to send mail on your behalf

DKIM & SPF are setup in every Act-On account



Bonus: Tools

Google Postmaster

- Free tool
- Source of truth for everything related to Gmail
- Gmail does not share feedback loops that identify specific complaining recipients. Instead, they rely on aggregate information about rate trends for a sender
- Provides a review of your domain reputation, spam report rates, email authentication and more



Best Practices: Authentication

Complete tech requirements and ensure that there are no configuration errors

Setup and regularly review Postmaster Tools

SPF alignment and DMARC are NOT required to reach the inbox. While they are recommended, they will have limited impact on the placement of your message

Decide on a DMARC alignment that makes the most sense for your company

Engagement



Engagement

Engagement is the linchpin to inboxing with Gmail

Important Considerations: Engagement

- Provide *relevant* content to your subscribers
- Regular interaction from your subscribers indicates engagement
- Sophisticated algorithm that analyzes Gmail inboxing/placement
- Key measurement to determine inbox placement for each recipient
- Examples of positive and negative interactions



Best Practices: Engagement

- Utilize engaged and unengaged segments as much as possible
- Aggressive list hygiene practices
- Fully opted in audience
- Consistent volumes and frequencies
- Relevant content/AB Testing/Personalization/Dynamic Content
 - Focus: Subject line and CTA
- Send different categories of mail (promotional, transactional, social, etc.) from different email addresses and keep those addresses consistent
- Segmentation
 - Act-On list segmentation
- Bounce limit

Promotions Tab Insights

Studies have shown that messages in the Promotions tab will not negatively affect open rates or engagement

It is impossible to determine why a particular message lands in a specific folder as it is based on a algorithm they use to look closely at the mail each recipient reads most often.

If a message is in any tab, it is actually in the inbox.

All in all, it is not worth fighting (only enabled by ~20% of users).

This tab allows for users to interact with mail on their terms.

We find that people are far more likely to consider engaging with marketing emails when they are in the right place to do so.

Email Design



Design and Dimensions

Good design is good business

Design and Dimensions

Design conveys your message

- CTA above the fold
- Minimal competition with other links
- Images and content that drive the point home
- Entices contact to read more

Improves inboxing

- Increases engagement
- Alt-tags
- Test your designs regularly
- Device agnostic



Design and Dimensions

- Golden triangle design philosophy to increase engagement
- Minimum legible font size for most mobile inboxes is 13px
- Optimize images for load time with a resolution of 72dpi
- Gmail dimensions:

Dimension	Recommended	Common Alternative
Template Width	600px	640px
Template Height	Important detail in first 350px	Up to 3000px
Header Height	Up to 150-200px	Up to 300px
General Email Size	Up to 102 KB	N/A

Best Practices: Design

- Use the subject line and preview text to tease content
- A/B testing
- Use visual indicators, such as color shapes and buttons
- Create a strong hierarchy
- Make it easy to unsubscribe/don't cross-subscribe
- Secure links. No text in images/don't link to third party domains (i.e. Google docs, link shorteners)
- Personalization and dynamic content

There is no magic bullet...

- While authentication is important, it will not fix a permission issue
- You will not be able to “trick” the system
- Target your messaging to audience subset (customer type, region, products, etc.)
- Design messages with engagement in mind
- Make sure users have opted-in to receive your mail



How can you reach our team?

Ask your AM or CSM to schedule a meeting with a Deliverability Consultant to discuss your deliverability and explore strategies to improve inboxing.



The background is a dark blue gradient with subtle wavy lines. It features several geometric shapes and icons: a teal teardrop shape in the top left, a yellow teardrop shape in the top center, a red teardrop shape in the bottom right, a red gear icon with circular arrows, a yellow square with a list and arrow, a red person icon, a teal bookmark with a star, and various white and grey geometric shapes like squares, diamonds, and circles.

**Thank you for
attending!**

Q&A

