

2019

EMAIL HERO AWARDS LOOKBOOK

18 award-winning campaigns and the stories of their success



Return Path

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INTRODUCTION

Behind every successful email campaign is a hardworking email team. These email experts work hard to not only craft the email that engaged their subscribers but also build up a successful program that allows their content to reach their audience.

To learn more about these teams and their accomplishments, Return Path launched the Email Hero Awards and reached out to our clients to send us their stories. To help identify the best of the best, we enlisted a panel of judges consisting of four Return Path email experts and a member of the Email Experience Council Member Advisory Committee. Though the results were close, the panel was able to identify 18 standout programs in nine different categories.

For this ebook, we interviewed the teams behind these award winning campaigns to uncover the challenges they faced and the tactics they used to achieve their goals.





INNOVATIVE EMAIL CAMPAIGN: SPCA INTERNATIONAL

Creating an email campaign that stands out from the competition is hard. By creating an emotional connection with their email subject matter, the SPCA International's - Operation Bagdad Pup campaign not only exceeded fundraising goals, they also found 13 forever homes for their Bagdad pups.

To discover the story behind this innovative campaign, we interviewed Stephanie Scott, Director of Marketing & Communications at [SPCA International](#).

What were the goals of this campaign?

We needed to engage SPCA International email subscribers in the effort to rescue 13 dogs and cats from the Middle East for deployed US service members. We were aiming to raise the funds that were needed to rescue all 13 animals and reunite them with their service members in the US after their deployments.

Did you face any key challenges along the way?

SPCA International is a small team of only three people communicating our message to over 350,000 email subscribers and animal lovers. We rely on email to raise over \$1.3 million annually for our mission of improving the safety and well-being of animals worldwide. It is a critical fundraising channel for SPCA International and the animals and rescue teams that count on us.

In May 2017, we switched email marketing systems and let go of our Return Path services in an effort to control costs. We spent 16 painful months without Return Path Certification, as we slowly saw our IP reputation deteriorate and our open rates drop. At one point, we saw an open rate as low as three percent!

We knew it wasn't our subject lines or brand health. Our team has a history of meeting and beating our online revenue expectations, but during this time without Return Path Certification our results were significantly suppressed and we were struggling to meet revenue goals. When we analyzed our results over time, we could see a marked decrease in revenue

begin as soon as we dropped our Certification. At that point, we moved quickly to implement Return Path best practices and move through the Certification process again.

By the time we ran this email campaign, we were Certified again—thank goodness! With our reputation secured, we could focus on building a campaign to engage our supporters in a new way.

What were your campaign results?

We raised the funds we needed and more. Our open rate was strong at 14 percent compared to the 10 percent open rate we received in February on a shared IP address and without Return Path Certification. Our click rates also increased with a 94 percent increase—1.44 percent vs. 0.74 percent.

How did you achieve these results?

As soon as we were Certified again it was like a balloon lifting our results—everything got easier. Open rates increased and stabilized and we have had four of our best email revenue months in the history of the organization. Now we aren't over analyzing the data as we struggle to explain poor results, but rather we are freed to get more creative and innovative in our messaging. Return Path's service allows us to focus on content, storytelling, and relationship building with our subscribers rather worry about sender reputation snags.

In this situation, SPCA International was experiencing a backlog in our Operation Bagdad Pups: Worldwide program with 13 animals awaiting rescue. We decided to bring our urgent need for funding directly to our donors by showing them all [13 animals](#) waiting for help. This allowed them to choose to donate to one or two or to support them all. As the donations rolled in, we marked the animal's photos as "funded" and sent out a new email stating that X number had been funded and Y number remained in need of more help. This helped ratchet up the urgency and compelled those who were holding back to jump in. Today, all these animals are living happy lives in the US with the military service members who befriended them while on deployment in the Middle East.



INNOVATIVE EMAIL CAMPAIGN CONTINUED

WINNER DETAIL VIEW



Stephanie,

If you and I don't help these animals they will be poisoned, shot or a slow death from hunger and thirst. So I must ask:

[Who will you help save?](#)

Each week, U.S. soldiers stationed around the world contact us for help getting their pets out of desperate situations. Today we have 13 on our waiting list, but not enough funding to rescue them all.

HONORABLE MENTION PRE-HEADERS



Honorable Mention: Tarte Cosmetics

[Tarte Cosmetics](#) took a different approach to innovate their email program by performing multiple A/B tests on their preheaders. Tarte Cosmetics's goal was to increase their open rates—and ultimately click-through rates and conversion rates—by performing A/B tests using personalization. Analyzing the results from their tests, Tarte Cosmetics's email marketing team was able to uncover several preheader personalization tactics that increased their KPIs.

Including first name personalization:

- Example: "Gigi, you'll love these warm & cozy looks!" vs. "You'll love these warm & cozy looks!"
- Open rate: **+27%** | Click through rate: **+2%** | Conversion rate: **+16%**

Mention free shipping offer:

- Example: "Plus, Free Shipping on all orders 40+ € EUR!" vs. "Instant Awesomeness is One Click Away!"
- Open rate: **+4%** | Click through rate: **+3%** | Conversion rate: **+62%**



Discover more about how SPCAI optimizes their email program [here](#).

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OFFER EMAIL: OPTICSPLANET

While offer emails are pretty standard in the email industry, it takes a unique email team to create a campaign that not only makes their most loyal customers feel special but inspires these customers to become brand advocates and share their positive brand experiences on social media. Not only was [OpticsPlanet](#) able to build brand advocacy through a single email campaign, but they were also able to turn an offer of free products into an opportunity for additional sales.

To learn the story behind this award-winning offer email, we interviewed Meghan O’Laughlin, the Senior Specialist of Promotions for OpticsPlanet

What were the goals of this campaign?

OpticsPlanet received a large quantity of branded fleece jackets. Rather than let these jackets take up space in a storage closet, we decided to put them to better use by rewarding our VIP customers with a free giveaway.

We sent a personalized email campaign to our VIP customers offering a unique coupon code that allowed them to order the fleece jacket for free. The ultimate goal was to reward our customers for their loyalty and give them an opportunity to represent the OpticsPlanet brand with a fleece jacket.

Did you face any key challenges along the way?

The main challenge for this campaign was setting up these emails with their unique personalization. Personalized emails are difficult to create with a lot of testing involved in the process. Each of these emails included the customer’s name and their own unique coupon code access their free fleece.

Despite all the potential issues and risk of setting up these types of campaigns, our team was able to launch the campaign on time with no issues. As it was sent to a very small email list of our most loyal subscribers, the engagement was incredible with the highest open rate of any we email sent in 2018.

Surprisingly, even though this was a free offer, our VIP subscribers placed additional orders making the conversion rate over 56 percent for this campaign. These customers additionally shared their free gift on social channels and through word of mouth, offering a unique way to brand our company.

What were your campaign results?

This campaign achieved an open rate of 58 percent and a click-through rate of 40 percent.

How did you achieve these results?

Using Return Path tools has helped improve our email program. With insight into our inbox placement metrics we can make sure our emails reach our subscribers, and with Inbox Preview we can make sure our emails look good once they arrive.



Honorable Mention: Prime Publishing

For their offer email, [Prime Publishing](#) focused on optimizing their creative and the subject line to generate as many orders as possible for their limited 81 percent off discount for a premium gold club membership.

Using concise creative to reduce scrolling for their subscribers, subject lines that highlighted the sale, an eye-catching gif, and prominent call to action, they were able to generate 274 orders.



OFFER EMAIL CONTINUED

WINNER DETAIL VIEW

OPTICSPLANET.COM FREE VALUE SHIPPING FREE RETURN SHIPPING AUTHORIZED RETAILER 800-504-5897

Deals Riflescopes Red Dots Flashlights Holsters Bags & Cases

[CUSTOMER NAME]

Thank you for being a valued customer! To show our appreciation, we are offering a

FREE OpticsPlanet Fleece Jacket

Here's how to get it:

1. Pick your size and add it to the cart
2. Enter coupon code LALALALALA

There's no step 3. Your jacket is now free!

Don't forget, get free shipping on orders over \$4



REP YOUR LOYALTY ▶

Limited time offer, while supplies last. Coupon Expires 1/31/2018 @11:59 CDT

WINNER FULL VIEW



The image shows a smartphone displaying the OpticsPlanet offer email. The screen shows a message to the customer, instructions for getting a free jacket, and images of the jacket and other OpticsPlanet merchandise like hats and a gun cleaning mat.

HONORABLE MENTION DETAIL VIEW

A New Year Deal for You!



29+ Todd & Beautiful Patterns
28+ Sizzling Summer Patterns
Master the art of Tunisian Crochet
Elemental Shawl Series
Sonic Scarf Shawl

1 year for \$9

Join Now

When you claim your *I Like Crochet* all-access Charter Membership for just \$9 today, you'll get access to everything we have about crochet—all access and all the time!

- A full year of upcoming issues of *I Like Crochet* magazine—BOTH the web edition and the tablet edition, including 150+ exclusive designer crochet patterns and articles with step-by-step instructions, video tutorials and full-color photography for details of projects and stitches
- Instant access to **EVERY issue we've ever published**—a vast library of more than 4 years of issues with 600+ patterns and tutorials
- A full-year's subscription to the *I Like Crochet* Collections Club that

Read more about how OpticsPlanet succeeded with the right offer email.



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NEWSLETTER: MORNING BREW

Building a newsletter program focusing on information rather than promotion is hard. Not only does the information provided have to be relevant, but it also needs to be engaging to inspire subscribers to open the next campaign. The team at [Morning Brew](#) has developed its own unique newsletter style providing business and technology news in a fun, innovative way.

To discover the story behind creating their award-winning newsletter, we interviewed Tyler Denk, Product & Growth Lead at Morning Brew.

What were the goals of this campaign?

Our goal is to educate and inform millions of young professionals about the latest news in business and technology. While traditional business news tends to be dry and dense, Morning Brew uses an unconventional witty and charismatic style of journalism to provide an enjoyable (and informative) reading experience.

Did you face any key challenges along the way?

As a small startup of just a few employees, we had limited resources (and knowledge) about the email space. We were inexperienced and faced with the challenge of scaling our newsletter audience extremely quickly.

Within my first few months, we migrated to a new email service provider (ESP), invested in Return Path, set up several customized on-boarding journeys, built automated re-engagement campaigns, utilized several A/B tests, and implemented a few other unique automated emails for those who were unengaged.

My team was challenged to learn email best practices and make use of new analytics and tools on the fly as we scaled incredibly fast.

What were your campaign results?

We have a list of 800,000 active users of what I like to consider one of the highest engaged audiences in the email space—with a daily unique open rate consistently north of 45 percent and about a 10 percent click-through rate.

Aside from the surplus of email replies, tweets, and shoutouts praising our newsletter, 95,000 of our active subscribers have shared Morning Brew using their unique referral code with at least one person—that's over 10 percent of our entire list. We also have a premium newsletter, Light Roast, reserved for those with three or more referrals. As of now, our Light Roast list has 37,500 subscribers.

How did you achieve these results?

We used Return Path's tools to monitor our IP reputation incredibly closely every day to ensure that the health of our IP addresses was not impacting our deliverability during our migration to a new ESP. This monitoring became even more important when we migrated again from a shared IP address to two dedicated IP addresses. These tools allowed us to identify problems with specific providers and contact support from both Return Path and our ESP to assist us, when necessary. And as of September 2018, our two dedicated IP address joined the Return Path Certification Program.



Honorable Mention: AARP

[AARP](#) produces a daily newsletter to keep their subscribers up-to-date with the news and stories that affect those 50 and older. Each newsletter has nine features that offer a wide variety of topics that affect their audience. This mix of content allows readers to consume information that they are interested in and empowers them to take action in their lives. The design offers a first-class experience, with content easily digestible through the clean layout and inspiring imagery. Each feature is labeled numerically, with concise copy for each, giving their newsletter a voice unique to AARP.

AARP's newsletter continues to engage its subscribers with an average open rate of 24 percent and click-through rates of seven percent.



NEWSLETTER CONTINUED

WINNER DETAIL VIEW



MORNING BREW

SPONSORED BY  FUNDRISE

Good morning. Today is Presidents' Day. George Washington would have celebrated his 287th birthday on Friday, and of all humankind's technological advancements that would have wowed him, the ice cream cake might be the most impressive.

- **Open:** Most retailers, grocery stores, restaurants, and the Brew's inbox
- **Closed:** Most banks, markets, courts, and USPS

MARKETS YTD PERFORMANCE

 S&P	2,775.60	+10.72%
 10-YR	2.666%	-1.8 bps
 NASDAQ	7,472.41	+12.62%
 GOLD	1,325.00	+2.63%
 DJIA	25,883.25	+10.96%
 OIL	55.79	+20.86%

HONORABLE MENTION DETAIL VIEW

Welcome, David!

Play Games | View Online

THE DAILY
Monday, January 21, 2019

YOUR UPDATE
[Join or Renew](#) Your AARP Membership Today! [JOIN/RENEW](#)



 BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGE

- ① As we honor the memory of Martin Luther King Jr., [take a look at these powerful moments in civil rights history.](#)
- ② [Do you find the idea of working from the comforts of home intriguing?](#) Meet five people who have found ways to stay in the workforce while staying *really* close to home.
- ③ Are you in the know when it comes to news? Find out how well you recall these recent events by taking the [Weekly News Quiz](#).
- ④ [Can you recognize an impostor scam?](#) Find out about two of the most common ones at AARP's free two-part webinar Feb. 5 and 7. Register today!
- ⑤ See which shows are worth adding to your queue or watching live in the latest edition of [What to Watch on TV This Week](#).



[Learn more about Morning Brew's award winning newsletter here.](#)

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*As of market close



SUBJECT LINE: FRONTIER AIRLINES

The subject line can make or break an email campaign. No matter how great the offer inside the email may be, it's useless unless its subject line is able to entice the subscriber to open. Faced with a limited timeframe, [Frontier Airlines](#) was able to increase their Mother's Day bookings with a well crafted subject line.

To learn how the perfect subject line can elevate an email campaign, we interviewed Mattes Hannigan, Marketing Coordinator at Frontier Airlines.

What were the goals of this campaign?

The goal with this email was to generate last minute bookings for Mother's Day travel and future travel bookings.

Did you face any key challenges along the way?

The main challenges were a short booking window for travel in the target period and audience fatigue with travel offers during this time.

What were your campaign results?

Using the subject line, "You bet GIRAFFE I'll be home for Mother's Day! Surprise Mom for as low as \$34," we achieved our goals of engaging customers and driving bookings for Mother's Day. This subject line, in particular, was helpful in engaging customers and provided a 31 percent open rate, which was a full 10 percentage points above the average open rate of 21 percent.

How did you achieve these results?

We use Return Path very extensively during the creation of all email campaigns. For this campaign specifically, we relied heavily on Certification and Reputation Monitor to make sure our program has a strong reputation and to avoid spam traps on a highly competitive day for email offers. In doing so, we were able to get our Mother's Day message across to users with a 31 percent open rate. We also focused on the quality of the offer, dramatic design and positioning, and a sense of urgency with our time-sensitive promotion.



Honorable Mention: Frontier Airlines

Frontier Airlines managed to stand out once more with another campaign that took advantage of the upcoming super blood moon. Using the subject line, "I like big MOONS and I cannot lie," Frontier Airlines then finished the lyrics on the inside of the email stating, "These low fares you can't deny." This topical, timely email campaign was able to generate an open rate of 34 percent.



SUBJECT LINE CONTINUED

WINNER DETAIL VIEW

WINNER FULL VIEW

HONORABLE MENTION DETAIL VIEW

FRONTIER
LOW FARES DONE RIGHT

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!
A VISIT TO MOM IS WITHIN REACH!

To: [REDACTED]
From: Frontier Airlines (deals@emails.flyfrontier.com)
Reply-to: mail@emails.flyfrontier.com
Subject: You bet GIRAFFE I'll be home for Mother's Day! Surprise Mom for as low as \$34!

SURPRISE MOM FOR MOTHER'S DAY!
FARES FROM
\$ 34*
one way

Valid Tuesdays and Wednesdays
Buy by 5/3/2018. Fly by 6/13/2018.
*Fare shown is one way for domestic, nonstop travel on specific dates in select markets.
7 day advance purchase required. Seats are limited. Restrictions apply.

BOOK NOW

BUCK FARES EXTENDED!
DISCOUNT DEN ONLY!
FLY FROM
\$ 20*
BOOK NOW

FRONTIER
LOW FARES DONE RIGHT

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!
A VISIT TO MOM IS WITHIN REACH!

SURPRISE MOM FOR MOTHER'S DAY!

FARES FROM
\$ 34*
one way

Valid Tuesdays and Wednesdays
Buy by 5/3/2018. Fly by 6/13/2018.
*Fare shown is one way for domestic, nonstop travel on specific dates in select markets.
7 day advance purchase required. Seats are limited. Restrictions apply.

BOOK NOW

BUCK FARES EXTENDED!
DISCOUNT DEN ONLY!
FLY FROM
\$ 20*
BOOK NOW



To: [REDACTED]
From: Frontier Airlines (deals@emails.flyfrontier.com)
Reply-to: mail@emails.flyfrontier.com
Subject: I like big MOONS and I cannot lie!

*Discount shown is one way for domestic, travel on specific dates. The following blackout dates apply: Feb. 16-17, 21-23, 2018; Apr. 13, 20, 27, 2018; and May 25, 26, 2018. 7 day advance purchase applies. Seats are limited. Restrictions apply.



Find out more about how Frontier Airlines optimizes their subject lines.



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TRIGGERED EMAIL: TARTE COSMETICS

Triggered emails are a great way to reach out to subscribers with a small reminder when they are still in the buying mindset. [Tarte Cosmetics'](#) abandoned cart email took a new approach that was able to give subscribers that extra push needed to finish the shopping process.

To understand what went into this award-winning campaign, we interviewed the email marketing team at Tarte Cosmetics.

What were the goals of this campaign?

The goal of this cart abandonment email was to recover sales from people who have added products to their shopping cart but haven't purchased within four days. It's essentially our final attempt to get the customer to return and push them through the conversion funnel.

Did you face any key challenges along the way?

The most challenging part was finding the perfect messaging to send this final touch point. Three other abandoned cart emails were sent over the first 72 hours, and these are highly revenue focused with little branding or product education. so creating an email compelling enough to still catch her attention four days post browsing was extremely challenging. We felt that leveraging on-site customer reviews would be most effective, and a nice change of pace from the initial series touches. Instead of receiving another traditional marketing campaign—since they still haven't converted by the third touch—we wanted to show why other customers just like them were choosing to buy the item they were thinking of.

What were your campaign results?

Even though this email comes 96 hours after the initial browse, we still see strong engagement with an average open rate of 30 percent, which is only marginally lower than our closer touch points. We also see a strong average conversion rate of 6.5 percent, which again due to its place in the trigger timeline, showcases how the real-time reviews are an innovative and compelling strategy to push subscribers down the funnel.

How did you achieve these results?

We achieved this goal by using dynamic marketing automation technology and improved deliverability to dynamically pull in reviews of the products subscribers placed in their cart in order to get them to convert. Most of our abandoned cart emails just show the product, but by switching up our strategy and leveraging peer reviews, we are able to connect with them in a new and successful way.



Honorable Mention: OpticsPlanet

[OpticsPlanet](#) took a more informative approach to their triggered email campaigns. Once a purchase was made, OpticsPlanet sent an email with more information including brand stories, warranty information, and suggested categories related to the item purchased and the brand it was purchased from. These campaigns were able to generate high engagement with open rates of 50-70 percent and click-through rates of 15-25 percent.



TRIGGERED EMAIL CONTINUED

WINNER DETAIL VIEW

WINNER FULL VIEW

HONORABLE MENTION DETAIL VIEW

tarte

**psst,
you forgot something...**

still deciding? let our tartelettes tell you why you'll love the items in your cart

OK, YOU CONVINCED ME →



"This product is an absolute must have. I will never use any other concealer. Can't live without this in my makeup bag."

Victoria A

★★★★★
shape tape contour concealer

you might also love ♥



"This bag is twice the size I thought it was going to be! It's cute and spacious."

Sonia R

flamingo sequin bag

★★★★★
"Great little set, love how you can try to products for such a low price. Really impressed with all 3 products. Would make a ... than]

you might also love ♥



"This bag is twice the size I thought it was going to be! It's cute and spacious."

Sonia R

★★★★★

tarte

**psst,
you forgot something...**

still deciding? let our tartelettes tell you why you'll love the items in your cart

OK, YOU CONVINCED ME →



"This product is an absolute must have. I will never use any other concealer. Can't live without this in my makeup bag."

Victoria A

★★★★★
shape tape contour concealer

you might also love ♥



"This bag is twice the size I thought it was going to be! It's cute and spacious."

Sonia R

flamingo sequin bag

★★★★★
"Great little set, love how you can try to products for such a low price. Really impressed with all 3 products. Would make a ... than]

OPTICS
FREE VALUE
SHIPPING
FREE RETURN
SHIPPING
AUTHORIZED
RETAILER
800-504-5897

Deals Riflescopes Red Dots Flashlights Holsters Bags & Cases Knives



Thank You For Choosing
PULSAR
IMAGE QUALITY

SHOP PULSAR

OUR STORY

A premium manufacturer, Pulsar is an industry pioneer that designs cutting edge products for hunting, law enforcement, personal security, and search & rescue operations.

Pulsar positions itself by creating the best optics, software, and features available on the market.

LEARN MORE

Creating your own triggered email campaign? Try these tactics.





THEMED EMAIL: AARP

Themed emails are a great way to connect with subscribers through relevant, timely content. [AARP's](#) fall themed campaign managed to impress by providing their subscribers with targeted information on local events and activities to take advantage of the autumn season.

To understand how themed emails can boost subscriber engagement, we interviewed Gareth Evans, Email Marketing Manager at AARP.

What were the goals of this campaign?

The AARP local fall-themed campaign was a highly dynamic, content-rich, and personalized. There were two main goals:

- 1 Inspire our subscribers to get out, explore their community, and enjoy the season by finding events, activities, and helpful resources specific to their location.
- 2 Ensure that our subscribers, both AARP members and nonmembers, really see that AARP is in their community.

Did you face any key challenges along the way?

Due to the timing of this email, we had to be mindful of the communities that were struggling with the aftermath of two recent natural disasters: Hurricane Florence and Hurricane Michael. We worked with the AARP offices in these affected communities to ensure that they were aware of the campaign and to request a list of counties that should not receive the emails.

What were your campaign results?

This campaign series on average drives 128 percent higher click rates and 148 percent higher click-to-open rates compared with other, similar AARP campaigns. These metrics speak volumes toward the interest our subscribers have in the themed campaigns.

Each section of the email received strong clicks, showing that the curated content is of considerable interest. Users attended local events as a result, ensuring that both goals are achieved. This campaign achieved a strong ROI of 64 percent, with many nonmembers seeing the value of AARP and becoming a member as a direct result of this email campaign.

How did you achieve these results?

Each themed send focuses on the upcoming season, hitting the subscriber's inbox at the optimal time when they are thinking about fun things to do in their area. The email is personalized at the zip code level, ensuring the results are accurate and useful. The design inspires the reader with a bold, fun animated hero design, as well as highlighted content category modules with seasonal imagery. The "Hang Out With AARP" section provides the user the chance to see where AARP shows up in their community. Additional modules include thoughtful links that the user may be interested in, such as veterans' events, caregiving help, work and jobs resources, and more.

By leveraging Return Path's suite of deliverability tools and professional services, we are able to focus our efforts on audience selection and creative development. The Return Path team works closely with AARP's email operations to ensure we maintain 99 percent inbox placement. By eliminating deliverability from our concerns, we're able to run clean tests and optimize the performance of our email campaigns. Furthermore, we're able to use Return Path's ESP Connect to get deep insights into how our email inbox placement performs at individual mailbox providers.



Honorable Mention: Frontier Airlines

[Frontier Airlines](#) took advantage of the holiday season with their Black Friday and Black Saturday promotions. With increased competition in the inbox during the holiday season, Frontier relied on Certification and reputation monitoring to make sure their messages reached their subscribers' inboxes.

With average inbox placement rates of 97.8 percent, their discounted fare email campaigns were able to generate a 50 percent increase on their average conversion rate.

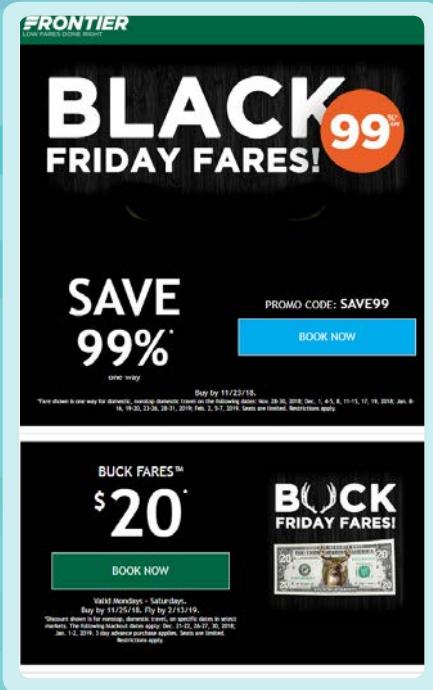


THEMED EMAIL CONTINUED

WINNER DETAIL VIEW

WINNER FULL VIEW

HONORABLE MENTION DETAIL VIEW



Check out some more of our favorite
themed emails.

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EMAIL SERIES: MERCEDES-BENZ USA

An email series is a great way to present a lot of information in multiple segments, keeping subscribers engaged and informed. [Mercedes-Benz USA](#) was able to create a targeted email series to connect with their new car owners and provide them with all the information they needed to know about their new Mercedes-Benz.

To understand what went into this award-winning campaign, we interviewed Victoria O'Neill, Senior Full-Stack Developer assigned to Mercedes-Benz USA.

What were the goals of this campaign?

Historically, our digital communication strategy focused on speaking to the VIN, not the consumer. We provided customers with information about their car, without recognizing their unique history with our brand, thus flattening the highly contextualized nature of ownership into a one-size-fits-all experience. The New Owners Welcome Series sought to challenge this long embedded strategy by providing each customer with relevant, streamlined, and personalized communications based on their history with our brand and not just their newly purchased vehicle's attributes. In particular, we sought to create a communication journey that could be tailor-fit to each customer, not just today, but in the future as well.

Did you face any key challenges along the way?

There were several technical roadblocks that we had to overcome, such as siloed data sources in need of consolidation as well as the migration from legacy IT systems whose design and infrastructure prevented us from achieving our goal of delivering personalized content at a standardized cadence within the ownership lifecycle. We found it more difficult than we anticipated to create a more consolidated, customer-centric approach.

What were your campaign results?

Once we consolidated more than a dozen separate communication streams into a single journey, we were able to implement an email series comprised of three core emails and four possible follow-up emails delivered only to customers meeting specific criteria. As a result of this

strategy, we are now able to deliver our initial welcome email within 24 hours post purchase. With this email series, we have succeeded in reducing the average number of days, post purchase, that it takes a new owner to add their VIN within our mobile app, Mercedes me, from 23 days to 10 days.

How did you achieve these results?

We wanted to ensure that each email of the New Owners Welcome Series would actually arrive in a customer's inbox, so improving our email deliverability was key. Return Path played an integral part in helping us optimize our deliverability metrics and improve our Sender Score. Prior to launching the New Owners Welcome Series, we used the Return Path platform to monitor the success of our efforts to "warm up" brand new IP addresses from which we would send the New Owners Welcome Series. Return Path helped us improve our overall deliverability rate from 86 percent in 2017 to 95 percent in 2018, an increase of 10 percentage points year over year.



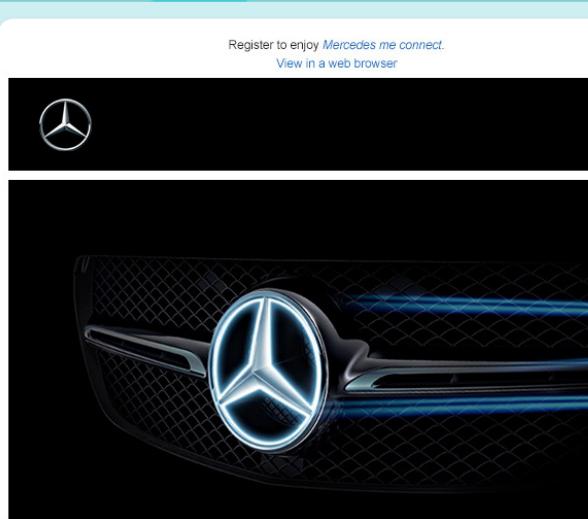
Honorable Mention: Great Wolf Resorts Holdings, Inc

[Great Wolf Resorts](#) also developed a new welcome series with the goals of driving reservations, educating and informing new subscribers, and developing a complete personal profile to improve the relevance of future communication. To achieve this they reinvented their welcome series from scratch, recrafting the messaging and imagery. This new welcome series managed to generate more engagement with click-through rates increasing by as high as 83 percent compared to their old series. In addition, each email in the series generated an increase in revenue per email opened.



EMAIL SERIES CONTINUED

WINNER DETAIL VIEW



Hello, [name].

Thanks for being a part of the Mercedes-Benz family. Every day we strive to deliver unparalleled experiences. It represents our promise to deliver "The best or nothing."

MERCEDES ME CONNECT

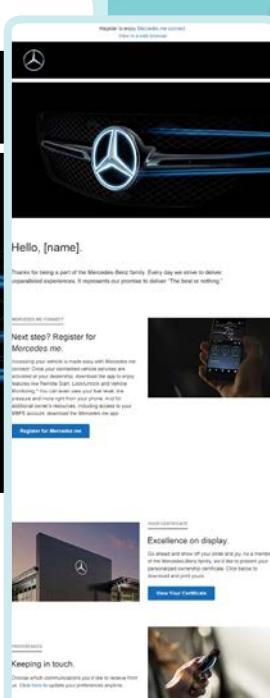
Next step? Register for *Mercedes me*.

Accessing your vehicle is made easy with *Mercedes me* connect. Once your connected vehicle services are activated at your dealership, download the app to enjoy features like Remote Start, Lock/Unlock and Vehicle Monitoring.* You can even view your fuel level, tire pressure and more right from your phone. And for additional owner's resources, including access to your MBFS account, download the *Mercedes me* app.

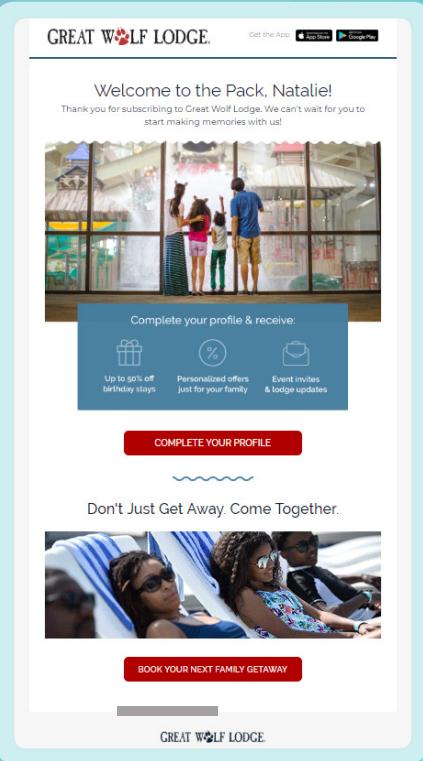


[Register for Mercedes me](#)

WINNER FULL VIEW



HONORABLE MENTION DETAIL VIEW



Starting your own welcome series?
Follow these best practices.

...



WINBACK EMAIL: CAMPSAVER

Winback campaigns are a perfect opportunity to remind inactive subscribers the benefits of an email program and hopefully re-engage subscribers. [CampSaver](#) sent their inactive subscribers a discounted offer, highlighting the top brands they sell along with individual CTAs for the top categories they sell. This campaign provided subscribers an easy way to use the discount on the brands or items that matter most to them.

To discover the key tactics behind a successful winback campaign, we interviewed Katherine Pachowicz, Junior Specialist, Promotions at CampSaver.

What were the goals of this campaign?

The goal of this email was to re-engage email subscribers who had not made a purchase within the last year. We offered these customers 20 percent off orders of \$50 or more and featured our top categories and best-selling brands.

Did you face any key challenges along the way?

This email was designed almost entirely as images which could have caused a lower inbox placement rate with the added risk that one of the images would appear broken.

What were your campaign results?

This email performed very well. It had a 14 percent open rate while other winback emails we have sent tend to have around an 11 percent open rate. The click-through rate of this email was 4.2 percent, where similar emails have a click-through rate around 1.6 percent. We believe the minimalistic design helped to quickly catch the subscribers attention and direct them to the website. The conversion rate was also higher than average at 6.3 percent. Typically, coupons are offered on our outlet items and exclude full priced merchandise. We were able to increase the conversion rate by offering a coupon for products which are rarely discounted.

How did you achieve these results?

Return Path's biggest impact on our email program was helping us improve our rate limits to our biggest mailbox providers.



Honorable Mention: Prime Publishing

In order to reengage their inactive list, [Prime Publishing](#) performed A/B testing on their subject line to find what would connect with subscribers and entice them to open. Their winning subject line "Re: Your Subscription" saw 47 percent higher opens than their original winback campaign. Once subscribers opened the email, they saw a simple message explaining that they are viewed as inactive and presented with two options: to stay on the mailing list or to be removed. This helped Prime Publishing to both reactivate and clean their subscriber list.

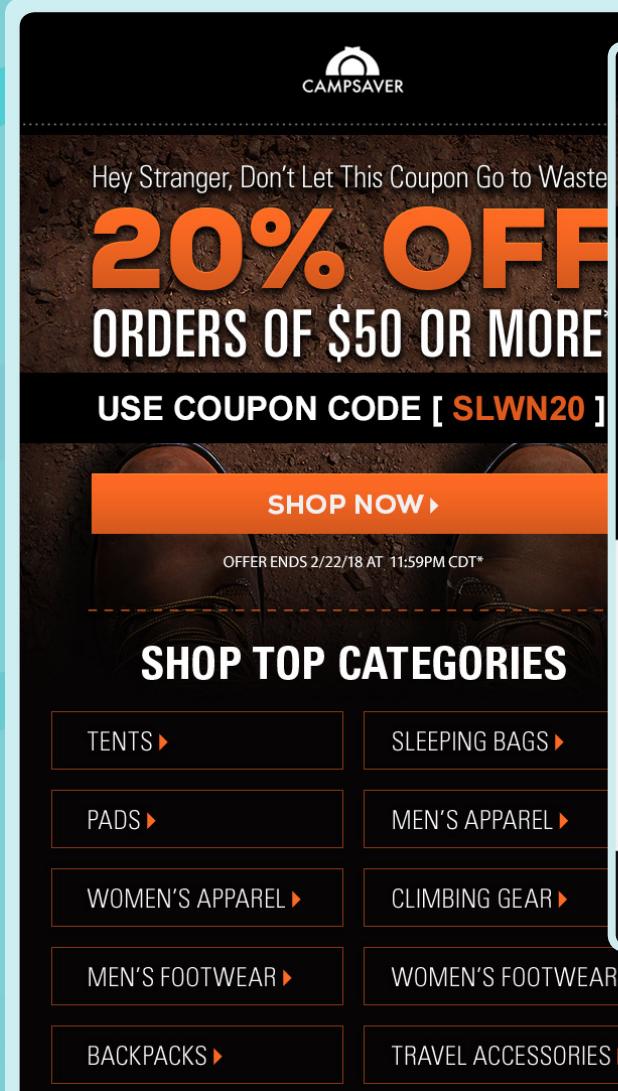


WINBACK EMAIL CONTINUED

WINNER DETAIL VIEW

WINNER FULL VIEW

HONORABLE MENTION DETAIL VIEW



Hey Stranger, Don't Let This Coupon Go to Waste!

20% OFF ORDERS OF \$50 OR MORE*

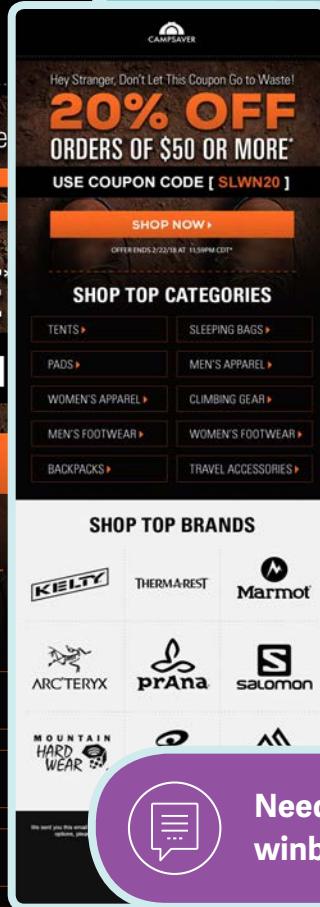
USE COUPON CODE [**SLWN20**]

SHOP NOW

OFFER ENDS 2/22/18 AT 11:59PM CDT*

SHOP TOP CATEGORIES

- TENTS ▶
- SLEEPING BAGS ▶
- PADS ▶
- MEN'S APPAREL ▶
- WOMEN'S APPAREL ▶
- CLIMBING GEAR ▶
- MEN'S FOOTWEAR ▶
- WOMEN'S FOOTWEAR ▶
- BACKPACKS ▶
- TRAVEL ACCESSORIES ▶



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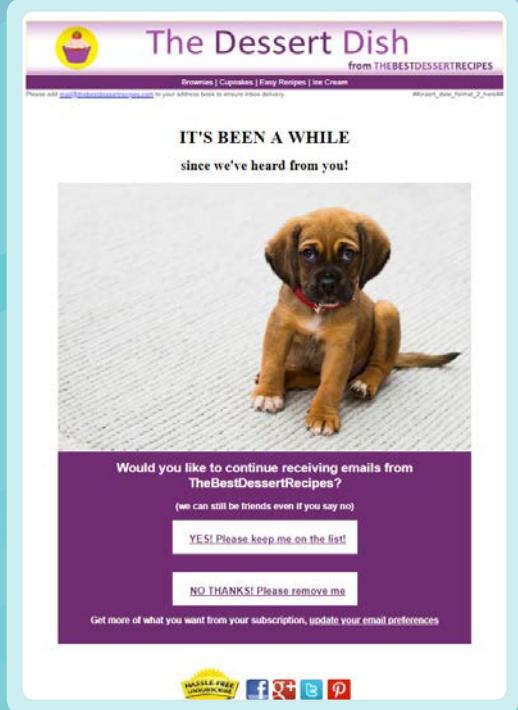
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- MEN'S FOOTWEAR ▶
- WOMEN'S FOOTWEAR ▶
- BACKPACKS ▶
- TRAVEL ACCESSORIES ▶

SHOP TOP BRANDS

KELTY	THERMAREST	Marmot
ARCTERYX	prAna	salomon
MOUNTAIN HARDWEAR		adidas



The Dessert Dish

from THEBESTDESSERTRECIPES

IT'S BEEN A WHILE
since we've heard from you!



Would you like to continue receiving emails from TheBestDessertRecipes?

(we can still be friends even if you say no)

YES! Please keep me on the list!

NO THANKS! Please remove me

Get more of what you want from your subscription, update your email preferences



Need some help building your own
winback campaign? [Try these tactics.](#)

...



MOST IMPROVED: PODS

While most email marketers experience poor results now and again, it takes a special team to take affirmative action in the face of low inbox placement. The team at [PODS](#) was faced with an alarmingly low 60 percent inbox placement rate and was able to optimize their program to increase their deliverability to nearly perfect deliverability.

To understand what went into this award-winning campaign, we interviewed the email marketing team at PODS.

What were the goals of this campaign?

To improve our inbox placement rates and with increased deliverability generate higher open rates for our abandoned cart nurture email campaign.

Did you face any key challenges along the way?

We found that many prospects would enter a fake email address, just so they would be able to see a quote online. Because we would then send to these invalid addresses, the quality of our email list and our reputation suffered. In April, prior to our partnership with Return Path, our inbox placement rate was below 60 percent overall, and Gmail was below 20 percent.

What were your campaign results?

Over the course of four months working with Return Path, our inbox placement went from below 60 percent to above 98 percent for all mailbox providers. During our best week, we averaged 99.6 percent inbox placement.

Across all initiatives, we saw open rates improve for our abandoned cart campaign from 21 percent to 49 percent. Lowering our unknown user rate from a peak of six percent to its new rate of less than 0.1 percent. Our open rates also increased more than 150 percent, from 20 percent to 50 percent.

How did you achieve these results?

We worked closely with our Return Path service team and held weekly meetings to check in on our performance. Though we were following many best practices, with regard to list hygiene, we weren't suppressing unengaged recipients or removing invalid email addresses. Return Path was instrumental helping us convince leadership that these are important tactics to increase our deliverability.

Return Path also allowed us to have much better insights into inbox placement and how our content was being digested. This helped us tailor our email designs to match the viewership, increasing readership and improving our inbox placement, specifically with Gmail. During this time we also updated our creative to increase responsiveness and copy to be less sales related and more informational. With the support of our team at Return Path and ability to track metrics, we were able to greatly improve our open rates and inbox placement.



Honorable Mention: Morning Brew

While any marketer would love to have a rapidly growing and engaging audience, [Morning Brew's](#) small but mighty team had the tough challenge of scaling their newsletter quickly while also protecting the deliverability of their daily emails to their subscribers. Morning Brew's email team was able to successfully migrate their program to a new ESP and move from a shared IP address to two dedicated IP addresses, all while protecting their deliverability and reputation. Now, with their program secure, ownership over their IP addresses, and insight into their performance, Morning Brew is ready to expand their content offerings to their rapidly growing subscriber base—which just surpassed one million readers.



MOST IMPROVED CONTINUED

WINNER DETAIL VIEW

PODS
Moving & Storage, Solved.

Customer #

Call Us Today [877-577-7637](tel:877-577-7637) Ext. 5500 and we'll help you get started.

THANK YOU FOR CONTACTING PODS®.

Why choose PODS? We've made flexibility and control part of the moving and storage process. We deliver a sturdy, weather-resistant container right to your doorstep. You load the container on your schedule, at your pace, and to your standards. Here are some of the ways PODS provide moving and storage experience that differs from alternatives such as self-storage, truck rental and full service moving:

- **Your container is delivered to you.** With PODS, you can drive to someone else. We drop off and pick up your container at your convenience.
- **Load and unload at your own pace.** We work with your schedule, so you can take all the time you need.
- **Move and store with one solution.** Every PODS move includes a month of storage! You can keep your PODS container at your location or at one of our many secure Storage Centers until you're ready to move into your new home.
- **Get easy on-site access to your belongings.** PODS containers are designed to fit in the space of a single parking spot, so you can conveniently store at your location.
- **We have multiple container size options to fit your needs.** With different container sizes available, we have one to fit any move, so you don't have to worry about paying for more than you need.

With our flexible solutions, it's no wonder we're the most trusted brand in our industry, with more moves under our belt than anyone else.

To get you started, we should review the details of your move and quote. Please call [877-577-7637](tel:877-577-7637) Ext. 5500.

Remember, your quote is only valid for seven days from the day you requested it. Thank you again for contacting PODS. We look forward to helping you with your upcoming move.

Sincerely,
PODS Customer Care Team
877-577-7637 Ext. 5500
Hours: Monday - Saturday 8:00am - 10:00pm | Sunday 9:00am - 6:30pm ET

WINNER FULL VIEW

PODS
Moving & Storage, Solved.

Customer #

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HONORABLE MENTION DETAIL VIEW

- **U.S. markets:** Earnings drove markets higher, while the VIX fell 8%. All 11 S&P sectors finished up.
- **Hot stocks:** Netflix surged 10% after crushing earnings Monday. Twitter rose 12% after winning support from a Morgan Stanley analyst.
- **Earnings today:** Alcoa, American Express, Morgan Stanley.

AUTO

Musk Continues to Battle His Model 3 Demons



Fifty years from now, historians of the American auto industry will describe two famous assembly lines: Ford's to produce the Model T and Tesla's to produce the Model 3. The former is revered for its innovation. The latter? So far, it's looking like a flat tire.

It gets worse: Tesla (-1.21%) has suspended its Model 3 assembly line for several days. It told workers to take a vacation or stay home without pay.

Trying to play things cool, the company said, *'Nothing to see here, folks—just a planned break to help us with the bottlenecks and ramp up production.'* But based on the company's failure to consistently meet targets, these reassurances don't seem so...reassuring.



PODS Enterprises, LLC
5255 Rio Vista Drive • Clearwater,
FL 33521
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[Unsubscribe](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)
This is a system-generated email. Rep

Looking to improve your own program?
Follow these best practices.





GET TO KNOW RETURN PATH



Visit our website. There's no better place to find out about Return Path! Browse our resource library, check out our customer success stories, and learn more about our products and services at returnpath.com.



Request a demo. See Return Path's data powered solutions in action. Visit returnpath.com/request-a-demo to get started.



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Return Path

