



Peak Sale, Peak Performance.

A survival guide for the peak sales season.

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Foreword

Running an international email program creates a whole new set of challenges, and as we move into this year's peak sales season, these challenges become even greater. Seven years ago, Black Friday was a US-specific promotion. Today, it is our single biggest sales event of the year, and almost all our markets run promotions around it. Promotions now start many weeks before Black Friday, Cyber Monday has extended into Cyber Week, and newer events like Singles Day have been added to the mix - all making it harder to deliver perfect quality on time.

SOME OF THE (MANY!) THINGS WE HAVE TO JUGGLE INCLUDE:

Centralized versus local

Centralized teams are more cost effective, but local teams better understand our customers' needs. North American consumers like to see crispy French-fries in their Airfryers, while APAC subscribers respond best to a juicy chicken drumstick!

Third-party agreements

Every country promotes different products with different deals/ prices. Try managing over 30 countries during Black Friday, when each country has different vendor agreements (e.g. with Amazon) on discounts, plus maintaining sufficient stock levels!

Different time zones

All our email sends are based on local time zones, and during peak season, sending at the optimal time becomes even more important. The inevitable last-minute changes make planning for volume-based deliverability challenges even tougher.

Multiple mailbox providers

Sending to multiple MBPs - each with their own unique deliverability requirements - means market-specific problems are a given during peak season. Even less active countries start sending more, meaning an increased risk of blocklistings.

Personalization versus bulk deals

During big sales events like Black Friday, it's always much harder to balance promoting our best deals with our customers' needs and interests - especially when our sales and marketing teams have totally different opinions!

The risk of "send more emails"

The whole company is watching during these peak periods, and our dashboards are focused on sales performance. Sending more emails can seem like a great idea to non-experts, but does it really add value? Or does it just destroy deliverability?

Dealing with all these complex challenges means one thing is certain - it really helps to have a great deliverability partner. For Philips, working with Validity is an absolute no-brainer. Sender reputation and inbox placement rates can change very quickly during peak season. Having Validity as our deliverability partner helps us identify and fix negative trends before they become a problem. Our Certification also plays a key role, ensuring everything we do is best in class and maximizing our inbox placement to ensure tens of millions more emails reach our customers' inboxes.

Charlie Wijen

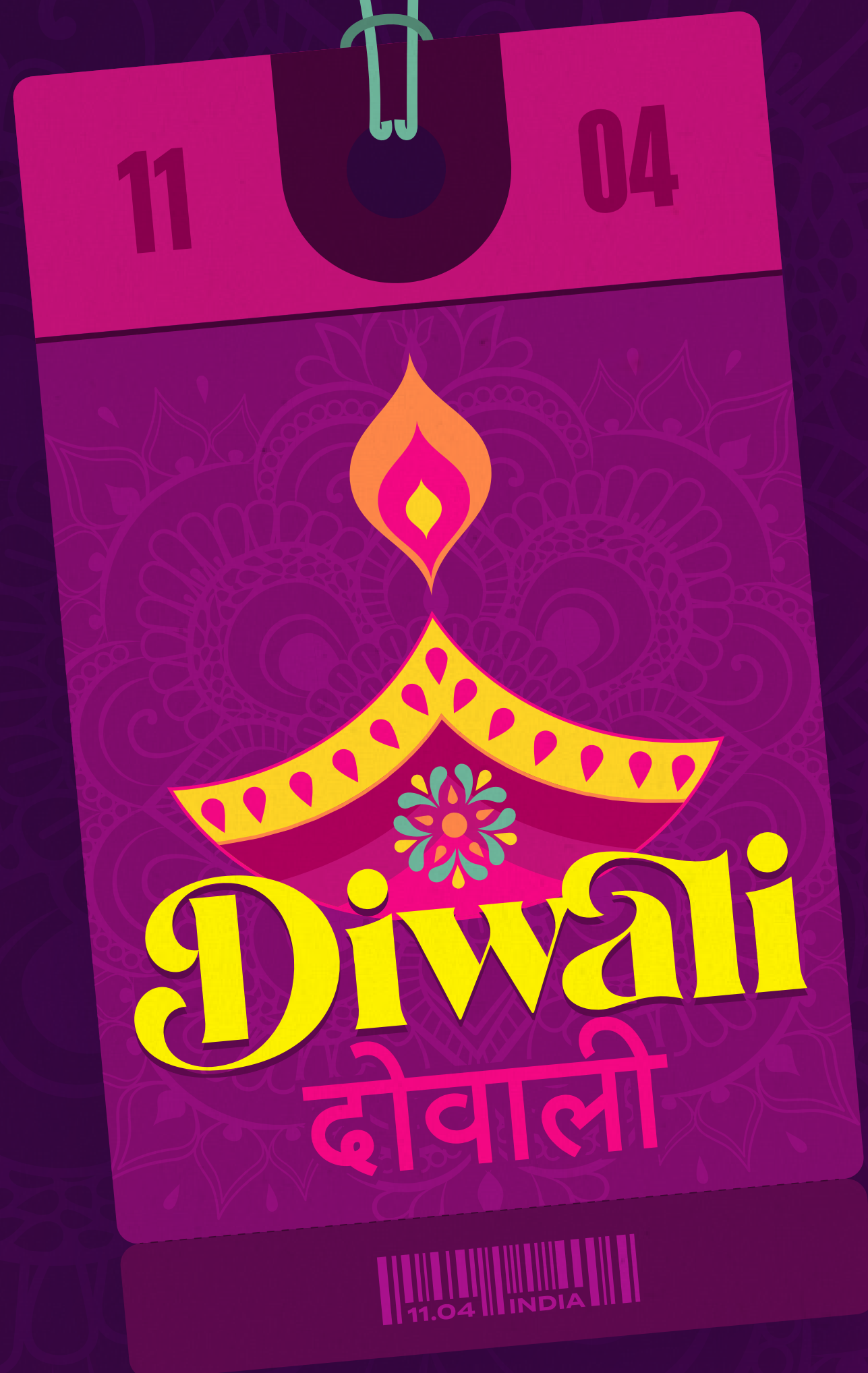
CRM Manager (Digital Consumer Experience, Philips Domestic Appliances)



Introduction

P eak sales season used to refer to the five-week period running from Thanksgiving until New Year's Day. Now it starts in mid-October and lasts until mid-February, and that's not counting a broad range of other big retail events that happen throughout the year. Subscriber fatigue leads to higher complaints and lower engagement this time of year, which creates deliverability problems and a downturn in ROI. In this report, we'll consider some of the most important global retail events in Q4, the challenges and opportunities they present, and how email marketers can prepare for them.





Diwali - India

What is it?

Diwali is a festival of lights and one of the major festivals celebrated by Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and some Buddhists. It represents the spiritual victory of light over darkness and is widely associated with Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity.

Diwali marks a major shopping period in India and is comparable to the holiday/festive season in terms of consumer purchases and economic activity. Households traditionally make large purchases during this time as a way of renewing relationships and social networks. In India alone, consumers are expected to spend more than \$4 billion.

Diwali is observed on Amavasya (new moon) - the 15th day of the month of Kartik. In 2021, Diwali will be observed on November 4th as part of the six-day Deepawali celebrations running from November 1st to 6th.

1. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diwali

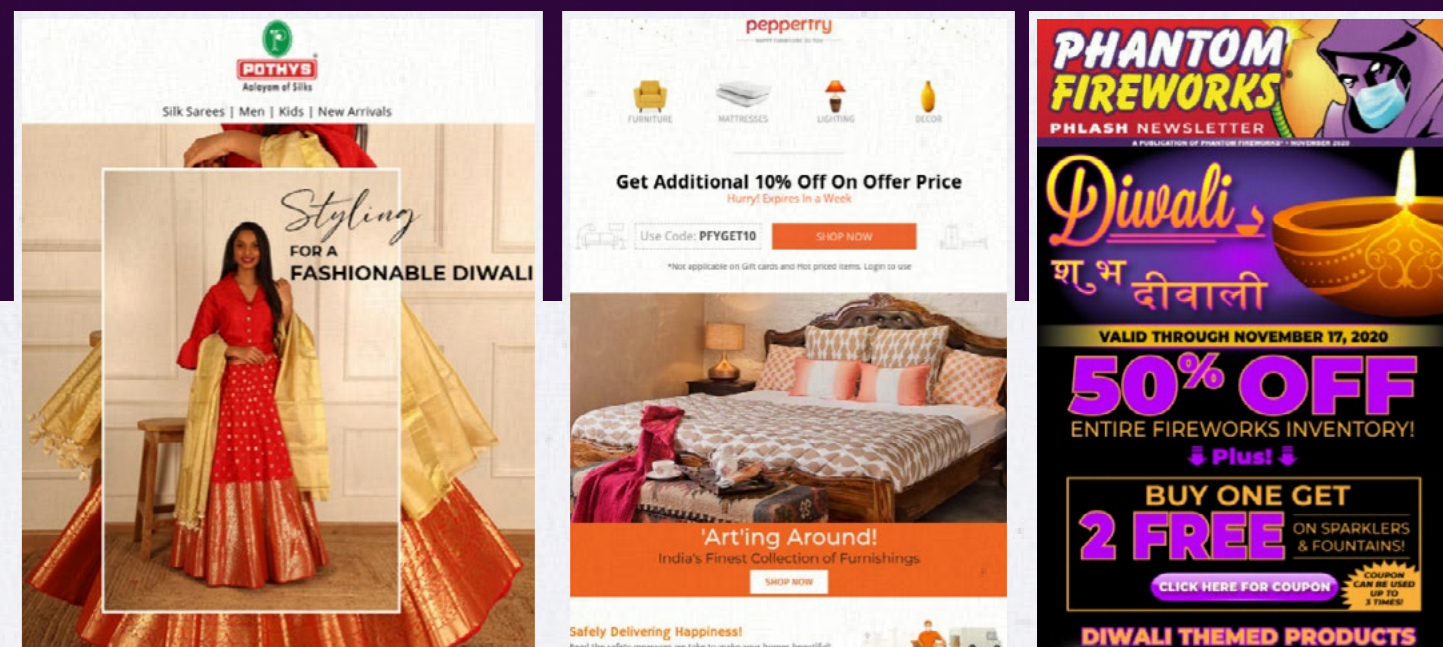
2. www.indiatoday.in/information/story/when-is-diwali-in-2021-in-india-here-is-a-complete-calendar-of-five-days-celebration-1761943-2021-01-23



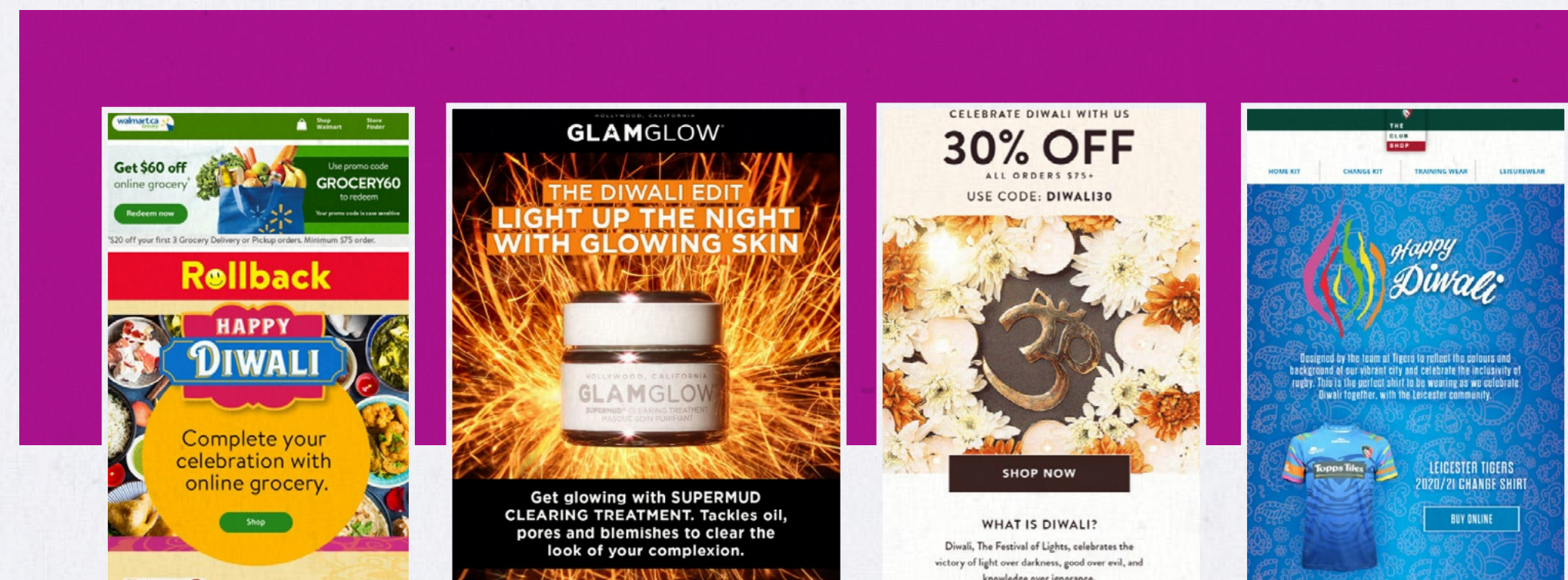
Diwali

How is it being promoted?

Traditional Diwali purchases include clothing, household goods, jewelry, and other high-value gifts. Confectionery and fireworks are also extremely popular.



Email promotions generally start around two weeks in advance. Typical emails and subject lines are short, and emoji use is high (52%) with lights, celestial symbols (sun, moon, and stars), and fireworks being particularly popular.



As Diwali is observed around the world, some email marketers have already recognized an opportunity to convey their best wishes to the many subscribers who will be celebrating. Note some of the clever approaches they have taken, recognizing some customers will be less familiar with this event. Sivana includes content to explain what Diwali is, while Glamglow connects the theme of “light” with the “glowing skin” promised by their products.

Marketing challenges

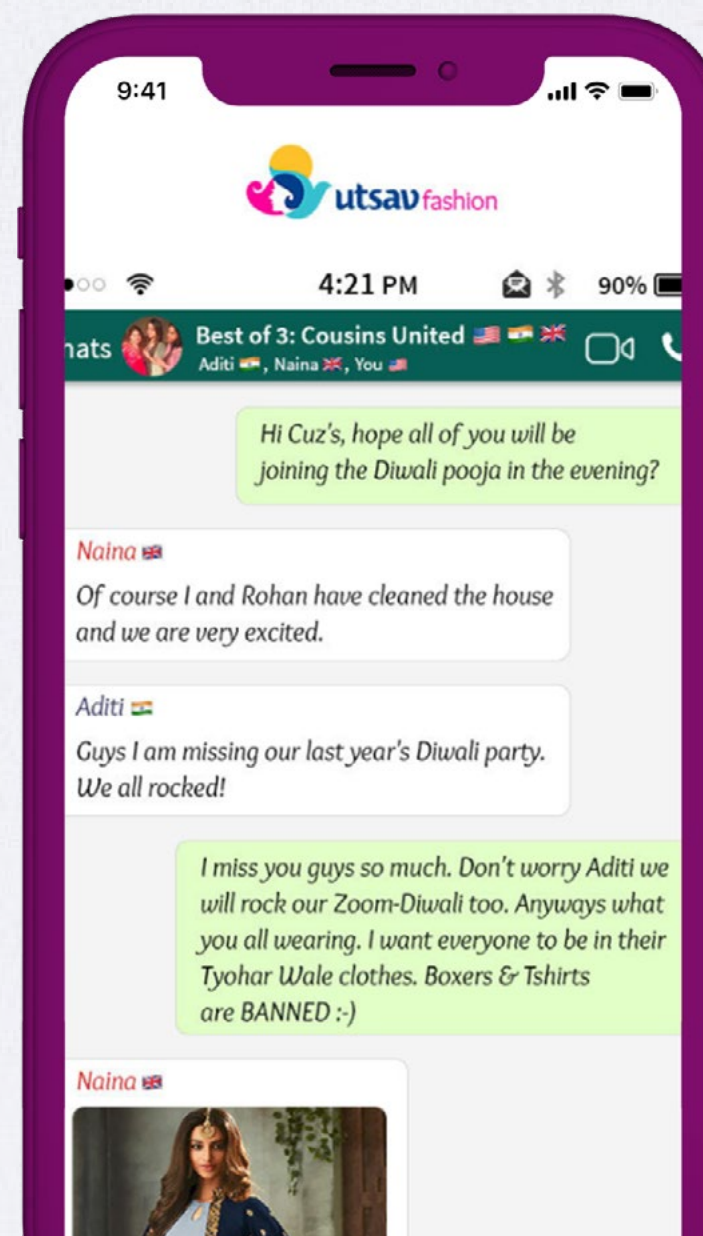
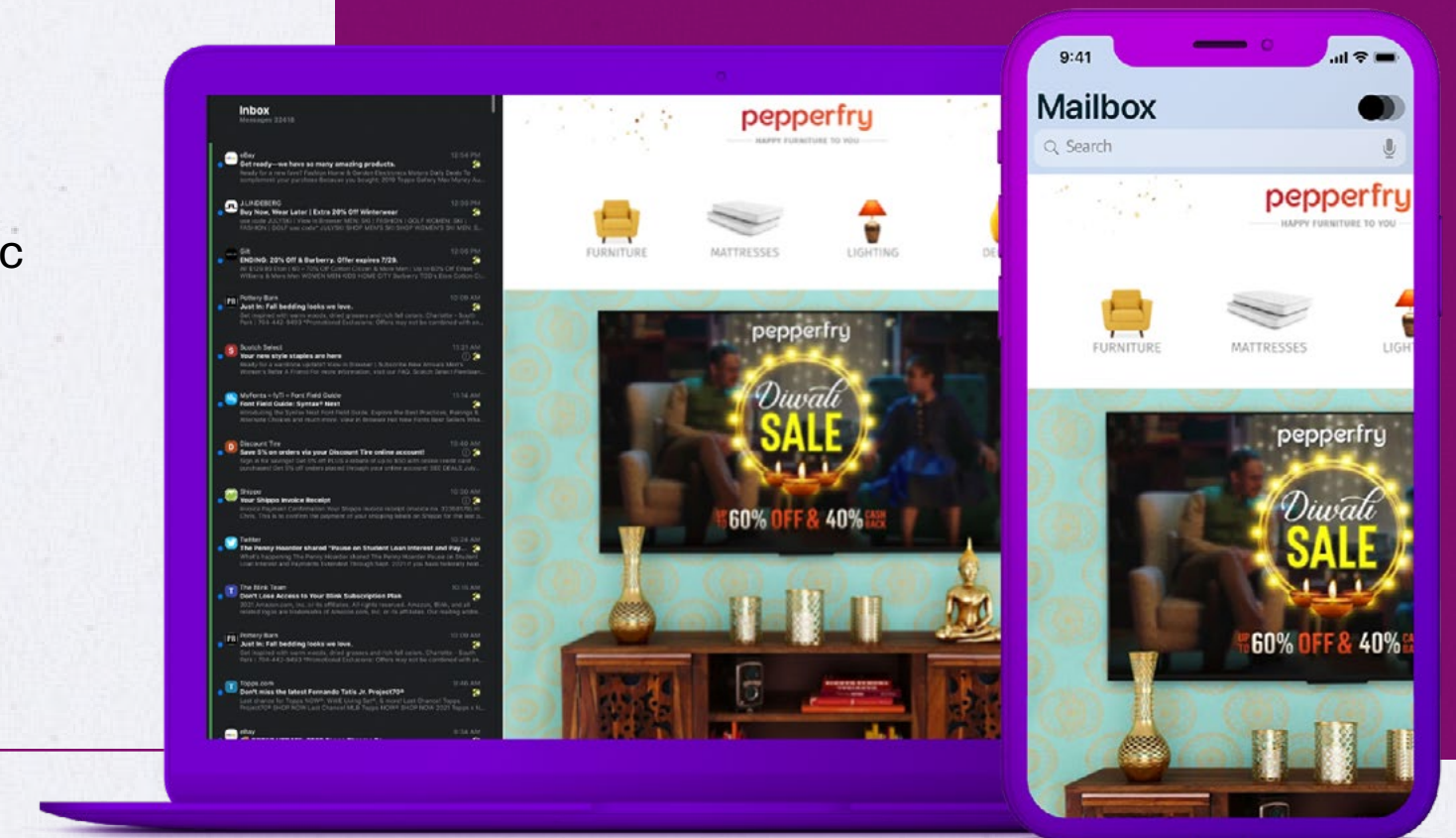
The Indian mailbox provider (MBP) landscape is dominated by Gmail, with over 80% of all subscribers owning an account with this MBP. This means deliverability best practices are strongly informed by everything that is important to Gmail's highly sophisticated AI-powered filtering solution, with strong signals provided by positive subscriber engagement. Looking good to Gmail means being fully authenticated, using a positive opt-in consent model, maintaining a good sender reputation, mailing only to engaged subscribers, and providing an easy-to-use opt-out function. Learn more about how to please Gmail below.

India is a mobile-first demography - approximately 70% of consumers access their emails via mobile devices. This is because Google dominates the market with its low-cost Android phones (explaining the huge Gmail adoption). Against this context, it's highly surprising that less than half of the Diwali emails we reviewed are optimized for viewing on mobile devices.

The primary use of Android devices among mobile subscribers in this market means there is no automatic resizing, which degrades the impact of these emails. During such a high-volume period, mobile optimization and render testing are vital to ensure that senders' content stands out in congested inboxes.

EMAIL PRO TIP THE IMPORTANCE OF RESPONSIVE DESIGN

Responsive email layouts are key to ensuring email accessibility. In the example below, the email looks fine on a computer screen, but when it is viewed on mobile, half of the content is missing.



Over the past five years, Facebook's collaboration with local provider Jio to provide low-cost phones has driven huge growth in messaging platforms like WhatsApp. While email remains the primary communications driver, marketers are facing heavy competition from mobile messaging.

A clever way of dealing with this can be seen in this example, where the sender has created their email message in the style of a WhatsApp message, complete with images of all the clothes the three cousins are discussing in their conversation.



Click Frenzy – Australia

What is it?

Launched in 2012, Click Frenzy is an Australian online sales initiative inspired by Cyber Monday. While several sales are held throughout the year, Click Frenzy is best known for a sale called the “Main Event,” which will run from November 9th to 11th of this year.

The event is underpinned by the sales partnerships Click Frenzy negotiates with many of Australia’s leading retailers. Consumers are encouraged to visit the Click Frenzy website (www.clickfrenzy.com.au) to benefit from having all these deals, which are also available from the partners’ own websites, in a single location.

Click Frenzy has been growing more than 40% each year, and now has over 1.7 million members.

1. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Click_Frenzy
2. www.clickfrenzy.com.au/advertise
3. powerretail.com.au/in-focus/click-frenzy-to-break-records-in-2020/

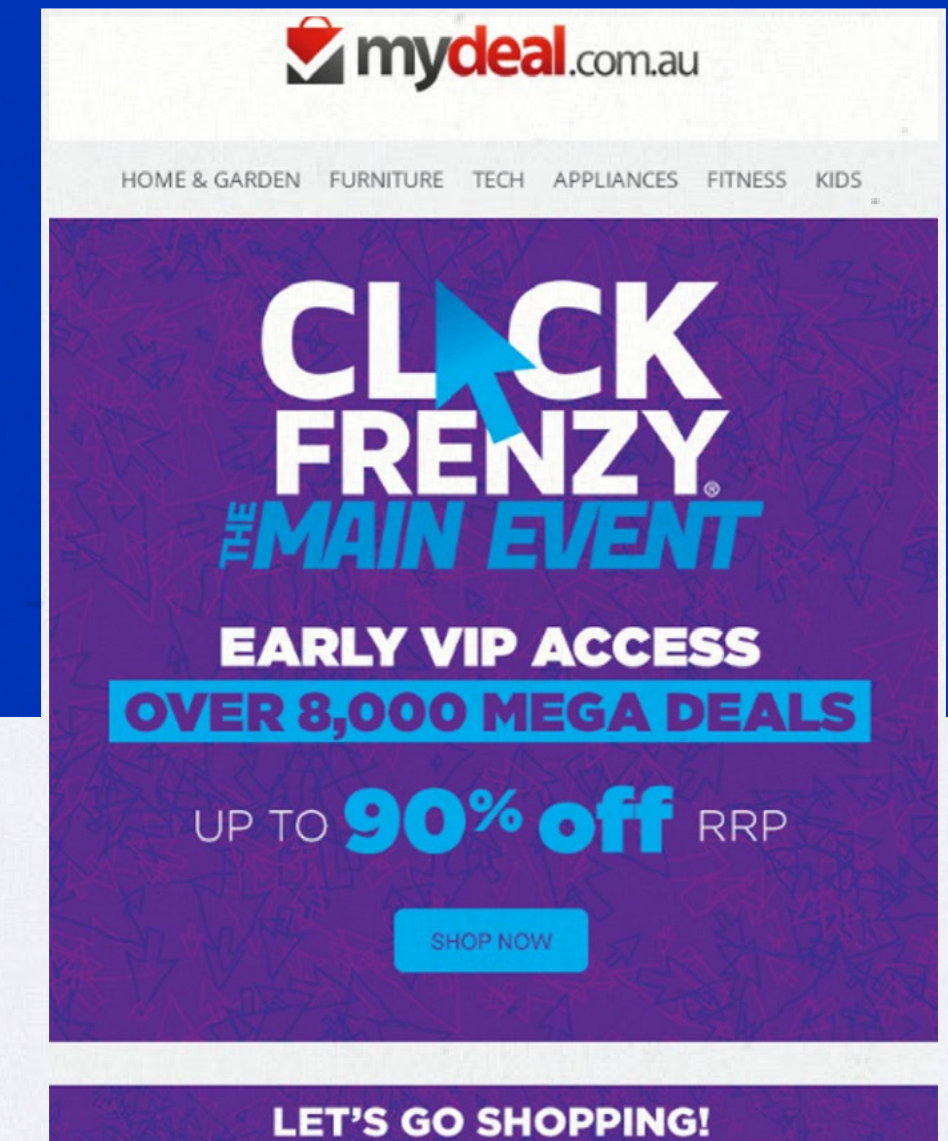
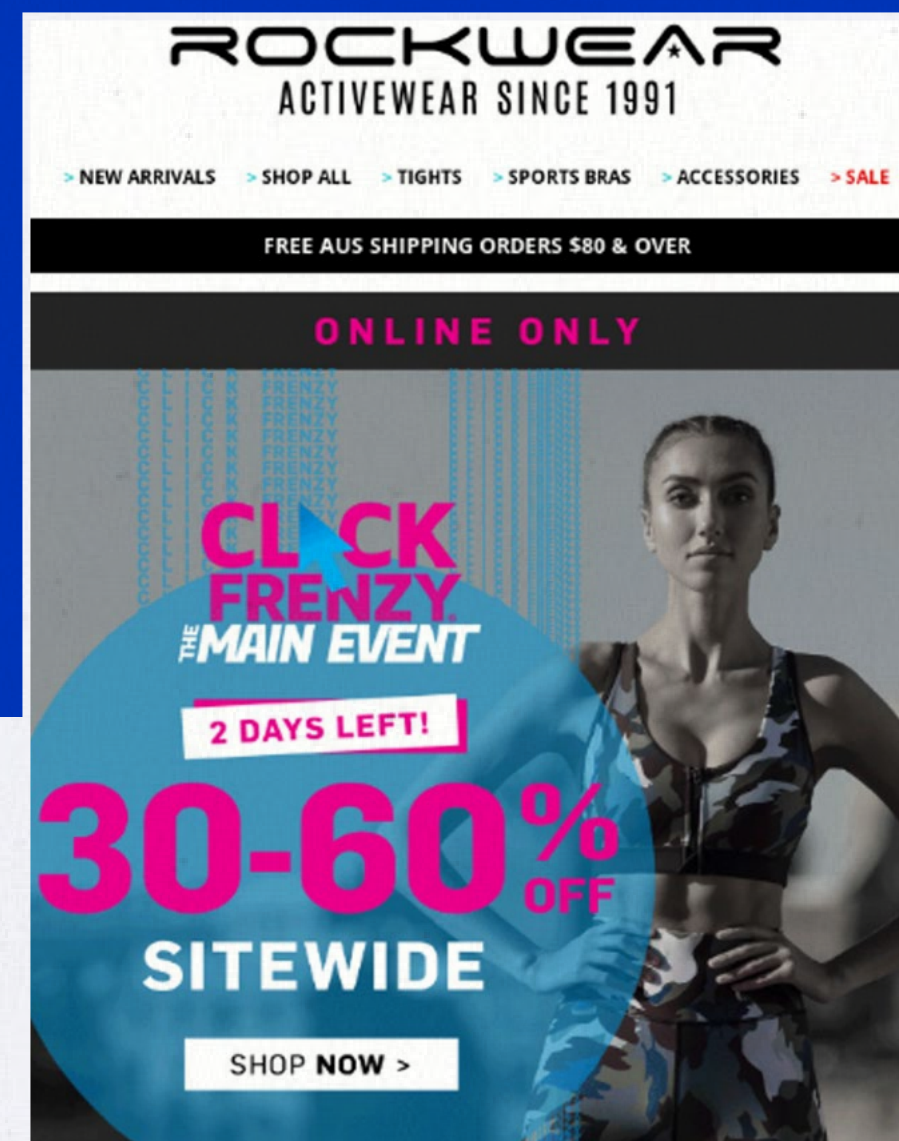


The logo for Click Frenzy, with 'CLICK' in white and 'FRENZY' in pink script on a dark blue background.

How is it being promoted?

Click Frenzy is a high-pressure event, with most email activity taking place during - and in the week leading up to - the event. Participants have the option of offering early/VIP access to members, increasing the pressure to be quick off the mark. This means for a highly concentrated period, Australian inboxes are overwhelmed with Click Frenzy promotions, and competition for eye-share is fierce.

Typical emails are brief, with short subject lines and high levels of emoji usage. Participants are under heavy pressure to offer deep discounts. The email activity reviewed for last year's Main Event offered average discounts of 32%, although many had offers exceeding 50% off.



As the event comes to an end, emails seek to create additional pressure through the use of aggressive subject lines ("Only a Few Hours Left", "Last Chance", "Ends Midnight") and dynamic content like countdown timers.



Marketing challenges

While Gmail and Microsoft occupy a large part of the Australian MBP landscape, local providers like BigPond (part of Telstra) also have an important presence. BigPond is well known for applying strict throttling criteria, which can be especially problematic during high-volume periods like Click Frenzy. Senders who are accredited with Validity's global [Certification](#) program stand to benefit from Bigpond's partnership with the program.

The "boiler room" pressure described above means emails risk looking distinctly spammy. The large discounts in both subject lines and email bodies, plus frequent use of block capitalization, make them look cheap and risk triggering spam filters. Widespread use of animated GIFs (53% of all emails) and countdown timers means text-to-image ratios are very low, impacting email load times and risking loss of subscriber attention.

Senders should make greater use of alternative promotional tactics like money off, free delivery, and buy one get one free. It's also vital to render test all emails to identify high-risk elements that may cause them to be categorized as spam, as well as to preemptively seed test these emails to ensure they will achieve high inbox placement rates.

Australian senders are remarkably bad when it comes to making effective use of pre-header text, with almost two-thirds of Click Frenzy emails displaying like this:

Subject	Preheader
Last Call: Click Frenzy Deals END Midnight!	If this e-mail is not displayed properly, click here. Catch.com.au
It's your last chance to shop our CLICK FRENZY SALE	Click here to view online Shaver Shop Shipping Shaver Shop M
Final Hours! Click Frenzy ends tonight!	View this email in your browser Hush Puppies NEW WOMENS
Final Hours! Click Frenzy ends tonight!	View this email in your browser Hush Puppies NEW WOMENS
Click Frenzy Last Chance!	View this email in your browser WOMENS MENS GIRLS BOYS
Click Frenzy: Extra 50% off Streetwear!	If this e-mail is not displayed properly, click here. Catch.com.au

This represents a missed opportunity. Pre-headers are often referred to as the "second subject line." They create a valuable opportunity to provide additional details about offers and could ultimately be what persuades recipients to open these emails.



Singles Day - Far East

What is it?

Singles Day began as a Chinese shopping holiday, originating as an unofficial celebration for bachelors. The date, November 11th (11/11), was chosen because the number one represents an individual who is single. Ironically, Singles Day has become a popular day to celebrate relationships. It is also now the largest shopping day in the world, with Alibaba shoppers alone spending \$38 billion in 2020. The holiday is now catching on in Australia, and marketers in Europe and North America are starting to include this event in their marketing calendars.

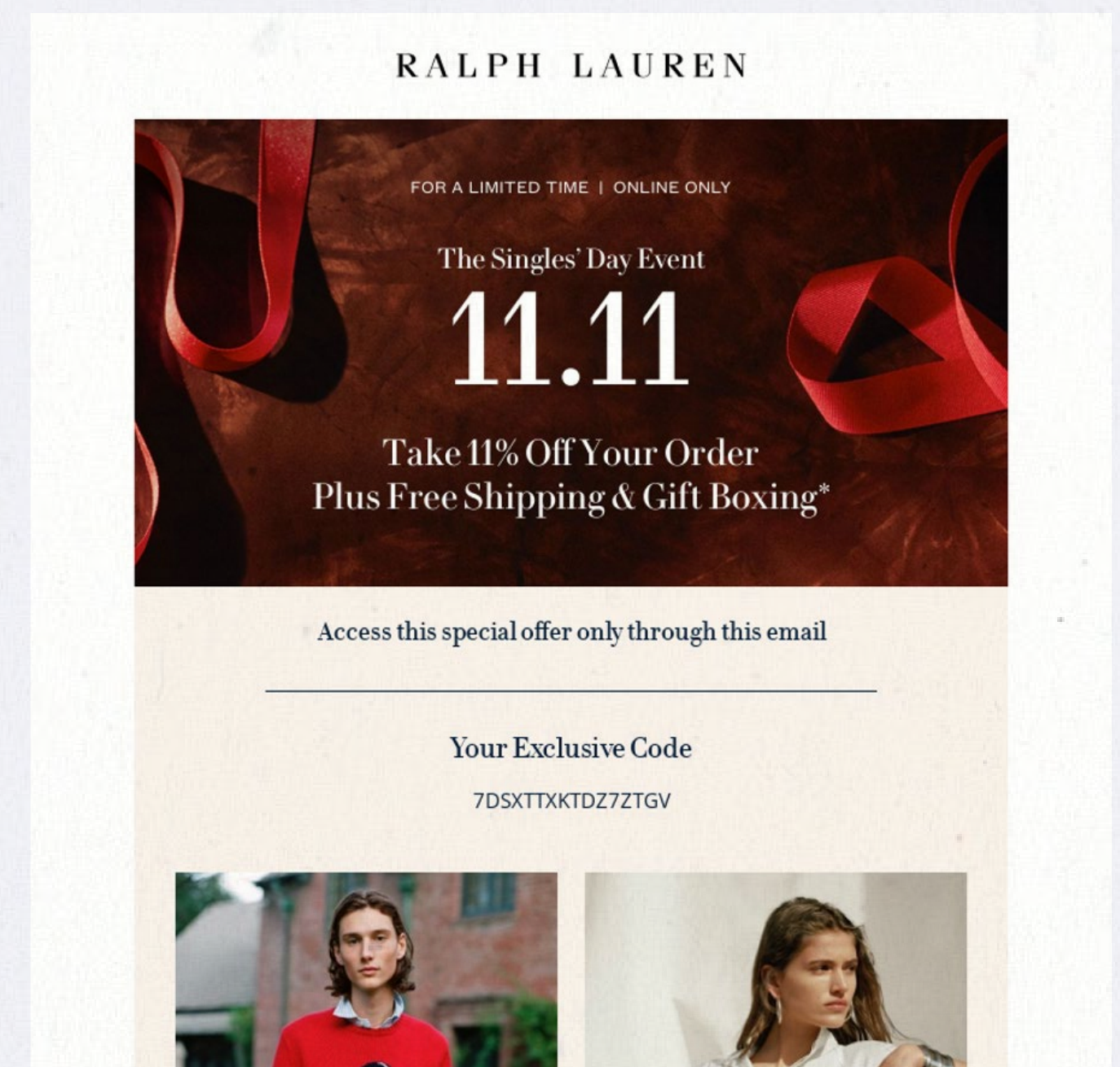
1. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Singles%27_Day
2. nationaltoday.com/singles-day/



SINGLES DAY

How is it being promoted?

Singles Day is starting to catch on in Europe and North America. Last year, brands like Missguided, Ralph Lauren, and Net-a-Porter all made it a key part of their respective marketing calendars.



Note how these promotions are designed to appeal to a broad audience, not just to people of Chinese heritage who live in the UK or US. These examples also show the ways key themes have been worked into the messaging, with calls to action that include “25% off every single thing,” and the clever use of an “11%” discount.

SINGLES DAY

Marketing challenges

The deliverability challenges are significant for senders planning Singles Day email campaigns aimed at the Chinese market. Chinese postmasters typically have a much higher set of standards for identifying good email senders. China also operates a complex set of anti-spam laws, with strict requirements around the use of verified permission and the “AD” descriptor in subject lines, as well as an ever-evolving list of permitted topics defined by the government. Senders should also be aware of the new Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL), which is currently at the consultation stage.



VALIDITY'S PRIVACY AND COMPLIANCE KNOWLEDGE EBOOK.



For senders running Singles Day promotions in other countries, be aware that many customers might not yet be familiar with this date. Be intentional about using pre-header text and subject lines that clearly explain what the event is and consider including a short synopsis that can be read when recipients open their emails. It's particularly important to establish the relevance of terms like “single” and “11/11” – otherwise, the clever use of them will fall flat. Jokes aren't funny if people don't understand the punchline!



Peak Sale, Peak Performance

EXPERT COMMENTARY

Spotlight on Artificial Intelligence (AI): Many marketers are turning to an array of digital tools and platforms to engage with their customers, and they are particularly keen to expand their use of artificial intelligence (AI). While AI has been driving functionality like spam filtering and fraud prevention solutions for several years, 2020 saw an explosion in new use cases including personalization, segmentation, and next best action.

Validity customer eBay has implemented Phrasee (an AI-powered copywriting technology) to optimize subject lines and headline copy within its email program, resulting in an average click rate uplift of 42%. Dell has been using AI-driven, predictive eye tracking as part of its split testing program. As a result, it is seeing positive open and click variations of over 100%, determined by the optimal positioning of key content elements.

The exceptionally high volumes of email traffic during the peak sale period mean congested inboxes and increased competition for eye-share, placing a premium on targeting and relevance. Smart marketers are moving fast to adopt AI-driven functionality to help them achieve their program goals and objectives.



El Buen Fin - Mexico

What is it?

El Buen Fin is an annual nationwide shopping event in Mexico. It began in 2011 and occurs the weekend before Mexican Revolution Day, which is observed on the third Monday of November. Inspired by Black Friday, the purpose of El Buen Fin is to stimulate the economy by encouraging consumption and improving quality of life. Many marketing communications are focused on more than just promotions and discounts.

This also means El Buen Fin is not just a retail-specific event. Airlines, hotels, and travel agents all participate, as do financial services companies. Businesses in Mexico's North especially use it as an opportunity to attract US buyers, and we have also seen Spanish businesses run promotions for this event.

Last year, El Buen Fin ran for 12 days to reactivate an economy stricken by the pandemic. This year's edition will run from November 12th to 15th, although many offers will start on the 11th. More than 80,000 companies participating are expected to generate over 400,000 million pesos of revenue.

1. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_Buen_Fin

2. www.theyucatanimes.com/2020/11/el-buen-fin-will-last-12-days/

3. www.cuandopasa.com/index.php?v=v91944j

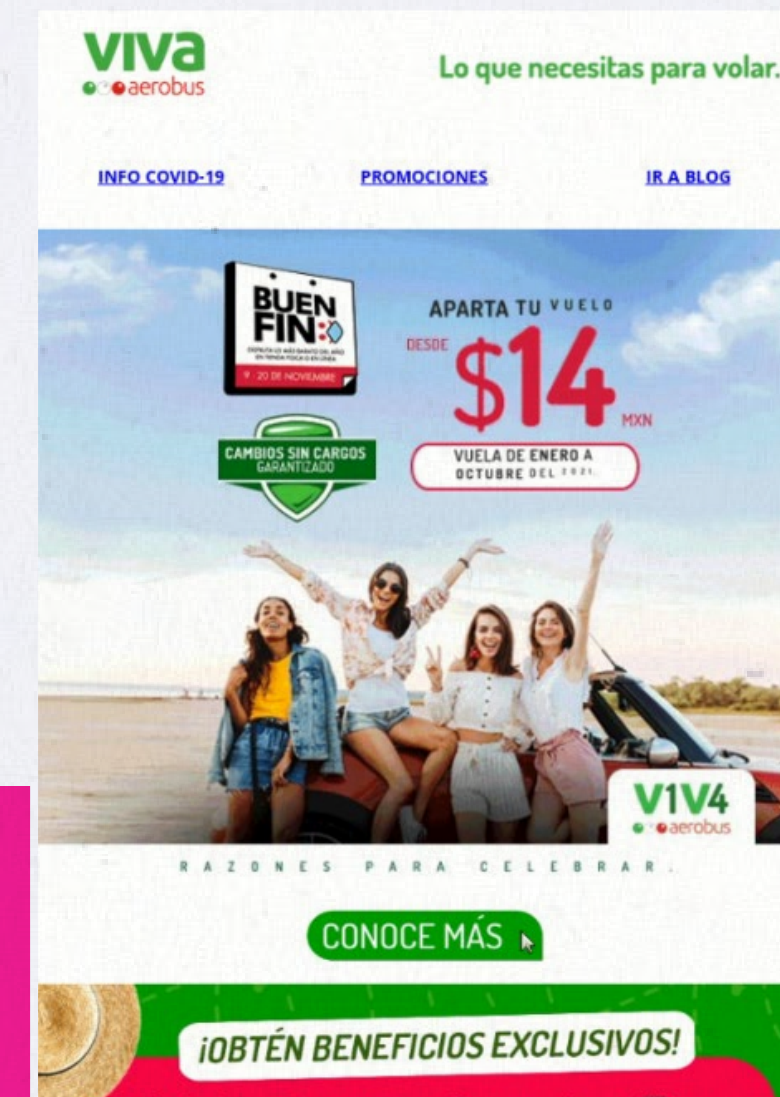


EL
**BUEN
FIN** :)

How is it being promoted?

Campaigns typically start in early November, and many senders use awareness-building tactics (e.g., “5 Days to Go”) to create a sense of anticipation before the event. While use of animated GIFs is commonplace, most emails are lightweight, and higher-than-average word counts ensure sensible text-to-image ratios are achieved. In line with the comment above, discounts are rarely featured in the email subject lines.

However, subject line emojis are highly popular and are featured in most emails. Mexican marketers are smart about how they use them, regularly using these images to identify/amplify offers (e.g., a credit card for a financial, a dog/cat for a pets offer). This helps these emails stand out and gain attention.



It's notable that El Buen Fin is intended to appeal to Mexicans' sense of patriotism, and many of the calls to action are based on not waiting for Black Friday. We have even seen some references to “Adelantamos Navidad” (“We’re Fast-forwarding Christmas”).



Marketing challenges

Mexico is one of the few major countries where Microsoft remains the dominant MBP. This means deliverability success at Hotmail and Outlook.com is shaped by factors such as sender reputation (IP and domain), authentication, list accuracy, complaint rates, and content. This includes feedback from Microsoft's Spamfighters program (known to Validity users as SRD). The program provides voters' feedback on whether they believe the emails they receive are junk or not. Senders who are accredited with Validity's Sender Certification will benefit in this market.

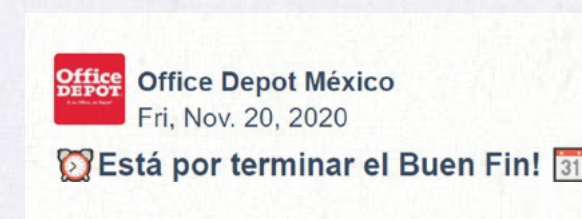
While Mexican senders make regular use of animated GIFs, they are not using them as effectively as they could. In many cases, they only feature deep in the emails, and with research showing only ¼ of email readers scroll past the second page, their impact is reduced.

With Apple's Mail Privacy Protection (MPP) becoming effective in the near future, the use of countdown timers (a staple of end-of-sale emails) will be severely impacted. Email marketers can learn from their Mexican counterparts who already use a range of innovative alternatives, including:

Animated GIFs where the calendar flips through to the final date of the sale:



Calendar emojis and alarm clocks to create awareness about the end of a sale:

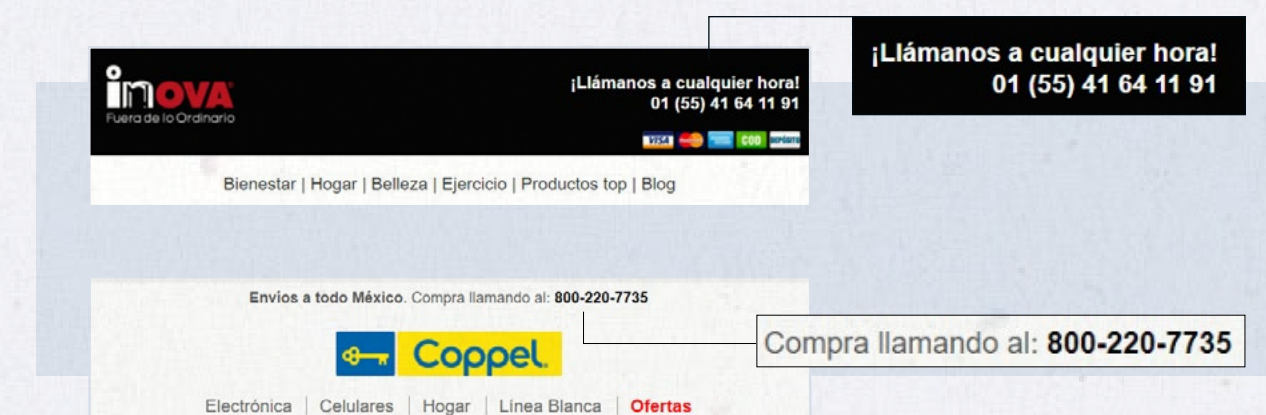


EMAIL PRO TIP MAXIMIZING YOUR IMPACT



In this example, the animated "free shipping" image requires four scrolls to be seen. When animated GIFs are used, they should appear above their fold to maximize impact and gain attention in crowded inboxes.

The DMA's Consumer Email Tracker report (sponsored by Validity) shows only ¼ of responses to interesting emails are in the form of click-throughs, and marketers should be more focused on making alternate routes to response more visible.



In these examples, senders position their customer service phone numbers prominently, making it easy for customers who would prefer to respond through this channel.



Black Friday - Global

What is it?

The Friday after Thanksgiving Day, also known as Black Friday, is one of the busiest shopping days in the United States. On Black Friday, many stores offer highly promoted sales and open their doors very early to kickstart shopping for the holiday season. The term “Black Friday” originated in Philadelphia in 1961, where it was used by police to describe the heavy traffic on the day after Thanksgiving. As the phrase gained national attention in the early 1980s, merchants suggested an alternative meaning for it. While retailers operated at a financial loss for most of the year, they would start to make a profit beginning the day after Thanksgiving. When recording this information in financial records, accountants at the time would use red ink to show financial losses and black ink to show financial gains. Black Friday marks the beginning of the period when retailers are no longer “in the red.”

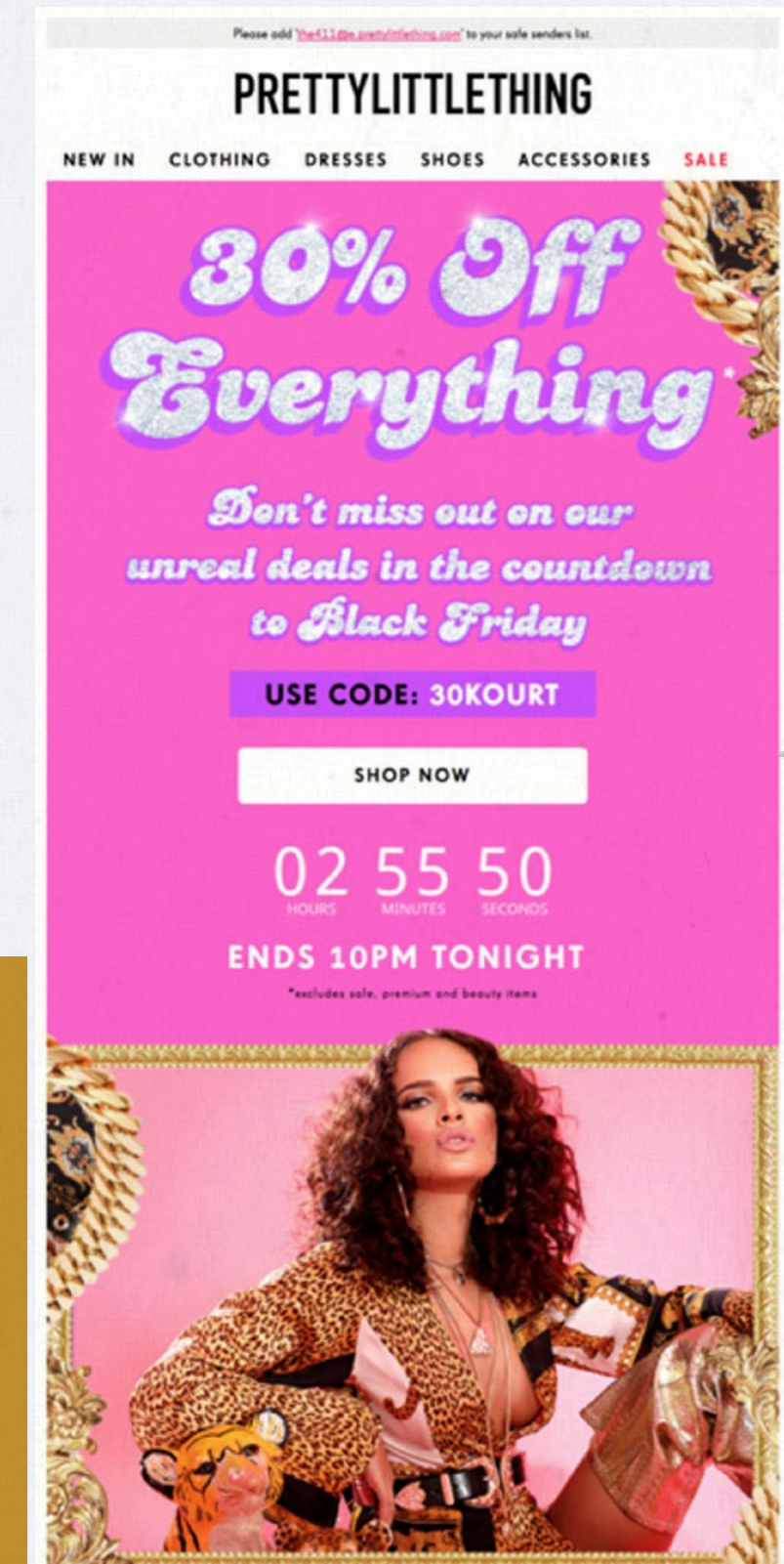
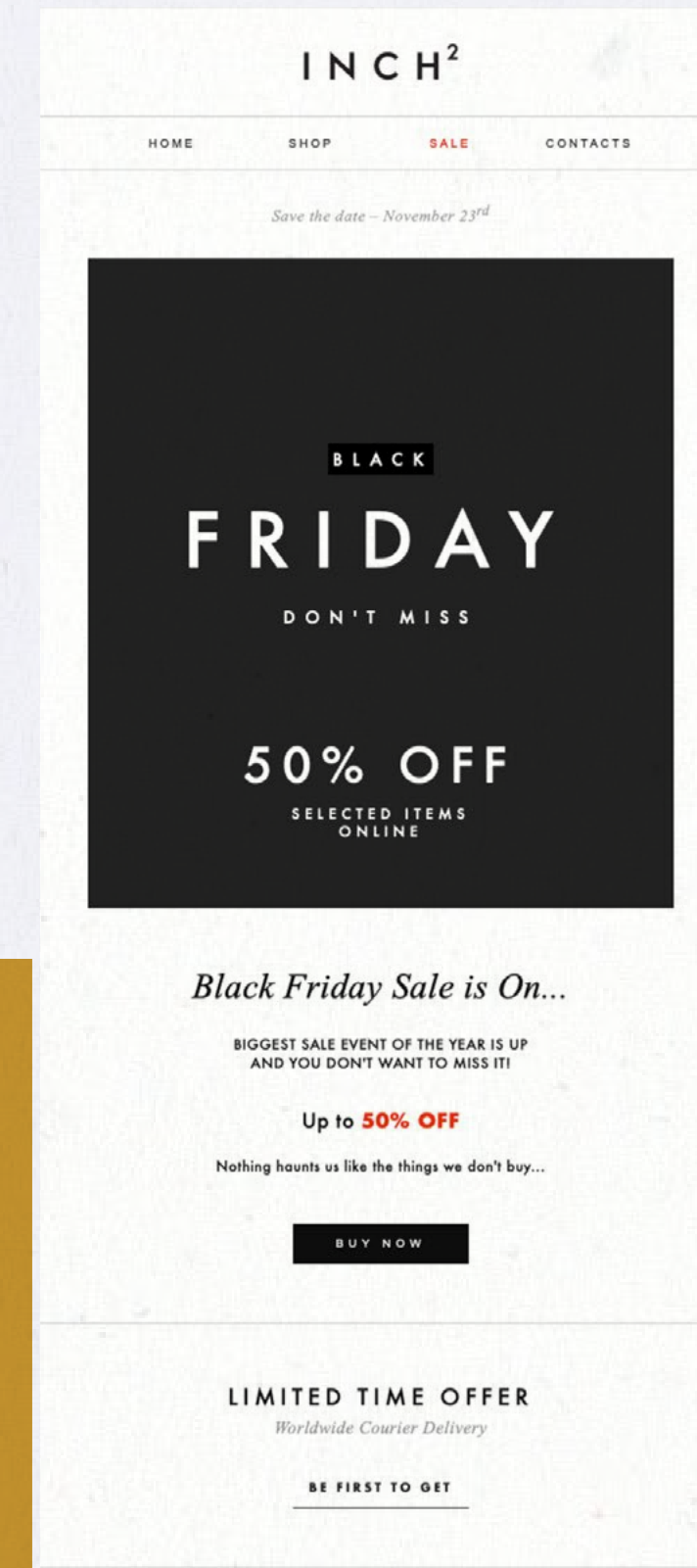
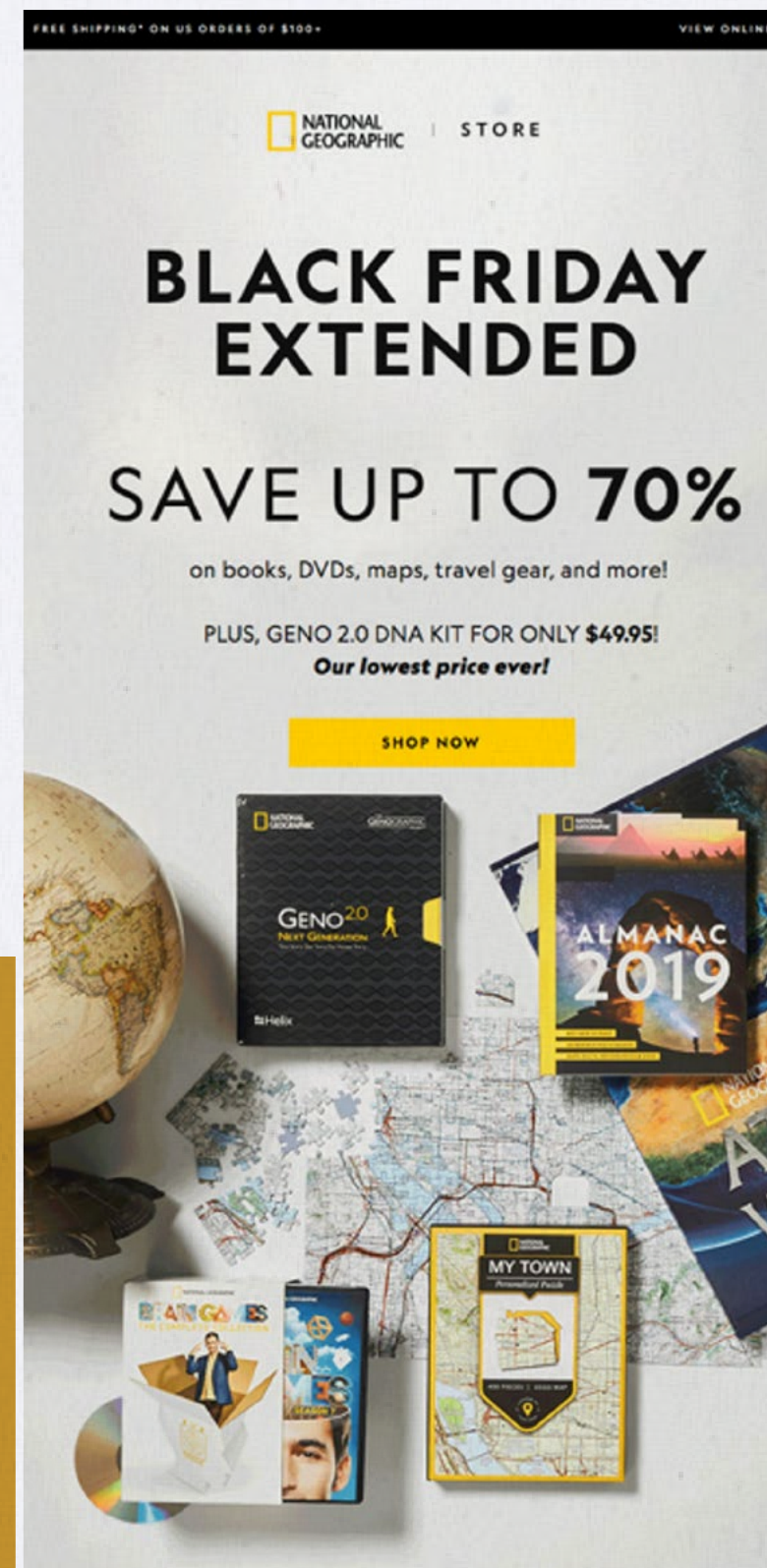
1. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Friday_\(shopping\)#cite_note-Zimmer-7](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Friday_(shopping)#cite_note-Zimmer-7)



BLACK FRIDAY

How is it being promoted?

According to MediaPost, subscribers take less than three seconds to decide if they'll click on Black Friday marketing emails. Once they open an email, senders only have 11 seconds to capture their attention. It's important to plan a Black Friday campaign that stands out from all the others.



National Geographic grabs their readers' attention by highlighting their most prominent sales. Pretty Little Thing includes a countdown to the end of their sale and uses phrases like "don't miss out" to employ a sense of urgency. They also include a promo code directly in their email, encouraging subscribers to take advantage of the sale. Inch2 takes things a step further by noting their worldwide shipping, letting customers know they can take advantage of their Black Friday deals from anywhere in the world. This is important as Black Friday gains popularity outside the US.

BLACK
FRIDAY

Marketing challenges

It's never too early to start prepping email marketing databases for Black Friday. Senders can gain valuable insight into their sender reputation through [Sender Score](#) to ensure campaigns reach their target audience.

As Black Friday approaches, consumers are going to be using web-to-lead forms to sign up for sales offers and loyalty programs to get access to exclusive deals. Therefore, it's important for senders to make sure the information in their database is clean, valid, and up to date. Verify the accuracy of email addresses, physical addresses, and phone numbers. Check email addresses in real time at the point of capture to protect data cleanliness and ensure email campaigns are reaching their target audience.

EMAIL PRO TIP AVOID SUBSCRIBER FATIGUE

50% OFF
SALE
STARTS NOW

IN CASE OF CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EMERGENCY

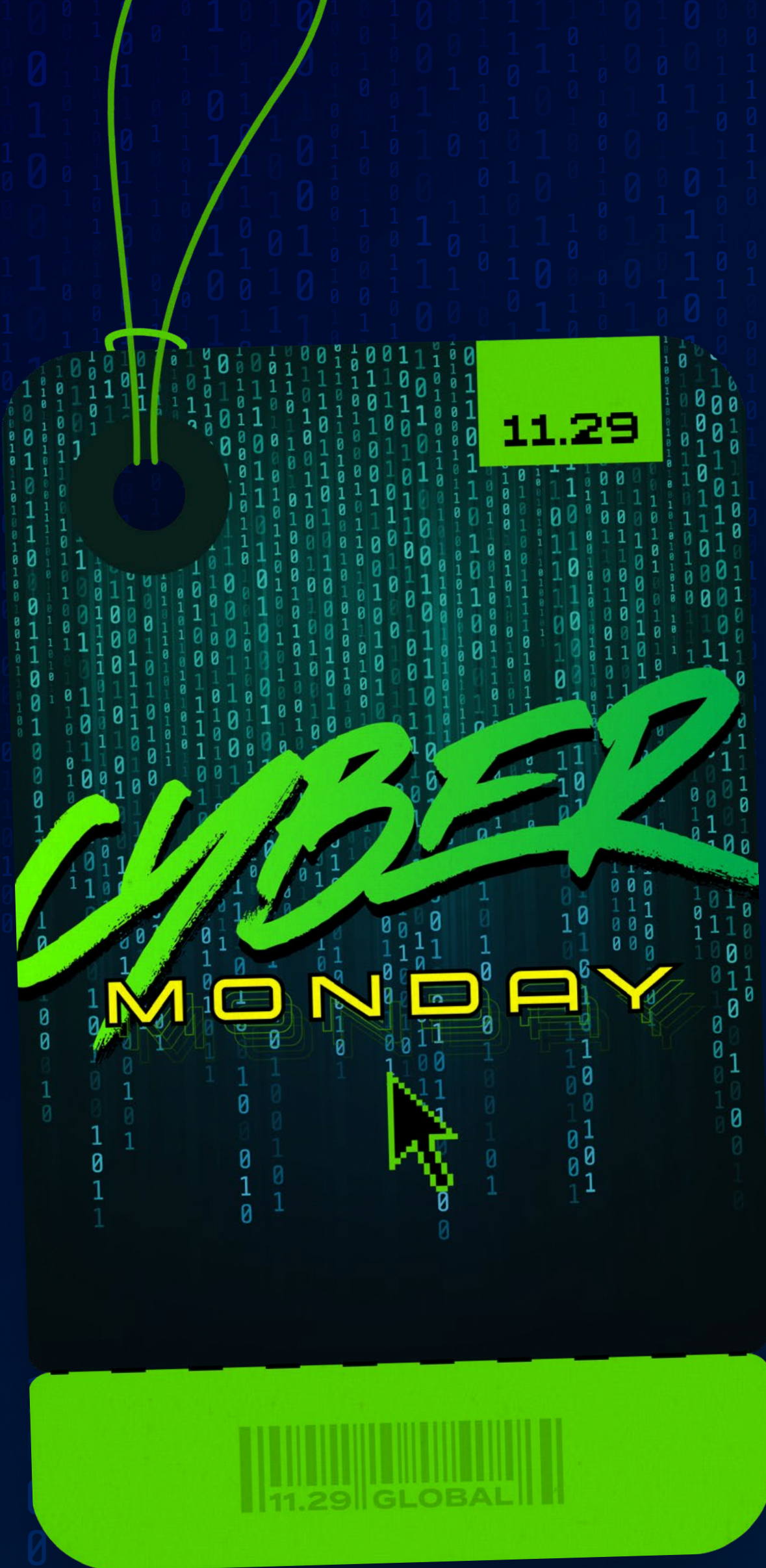
BROWSE
HERE ▶

DOES YOUR INBOX NEED A BREATHER?

If you've heard enough about the best sale ever, [click here](#) and you won't hear a peep until it's all over.

Over time, Black Friday has become Black November, and Cyber Monday has expanded into Cyber Week. The higher volume of emails being sent during this time will be a big driver of subscriber fatigue. Consider strategically testing emails, segmenting lists into groups, combining offers to limit the number of emails sent, or allowing subscribers to select email frequency to prevent subscriber fatigue.





Cyber Monday - Global

What is it?

Right around the corner from Black Friday is Cyber Monday, which is the Monday following Thanksgiving Day. Much like Black Friday, Cyber Monday is famous for the incredible sales and discounts offered by top brands around the world. In fact, with a total of \$10.7 billion in online spending in 2020, Cyber Monday has officially surpassed Black Friday as the biggest US shopping holiday of the year. The main difference is that while Black Friday encourages people to shop in person, Cyber Monday appeals to the online shopping crowd. The holiday was created by retailers in 2005 to encourage people to shop online, and with the rise of social media and companies like Amazon, it has only grown in popularity.

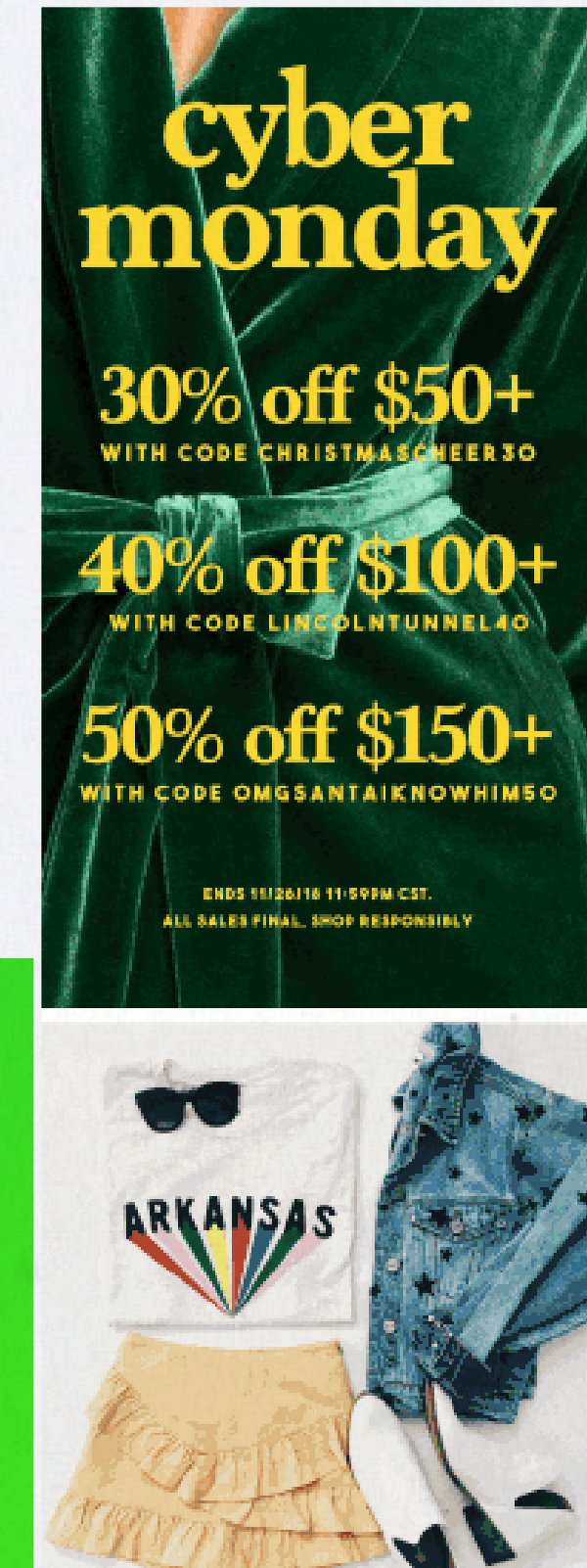
1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyber_Monday





How is it being promoted?

The purpose of Cyber Monday emails is to create a sense of urgency, advertise promotions, and encourage customers to make holiday purchases. With the influx of promotional emails arriving in people's inboxes this time of year, it's important to craft subject lines and create designs that will help emails stand out.



Companies like Eye Buy Direct, ModCloth, and Riffraff capture recipients' attention by including GIFs in their designs. They also disclose sales and provide promo codes upfront, giving subscribers all the info they need to start shopping. When it comes to subject lines, including relevant emojis is a fun way to stand out from the crowd and pique subscriber interest.

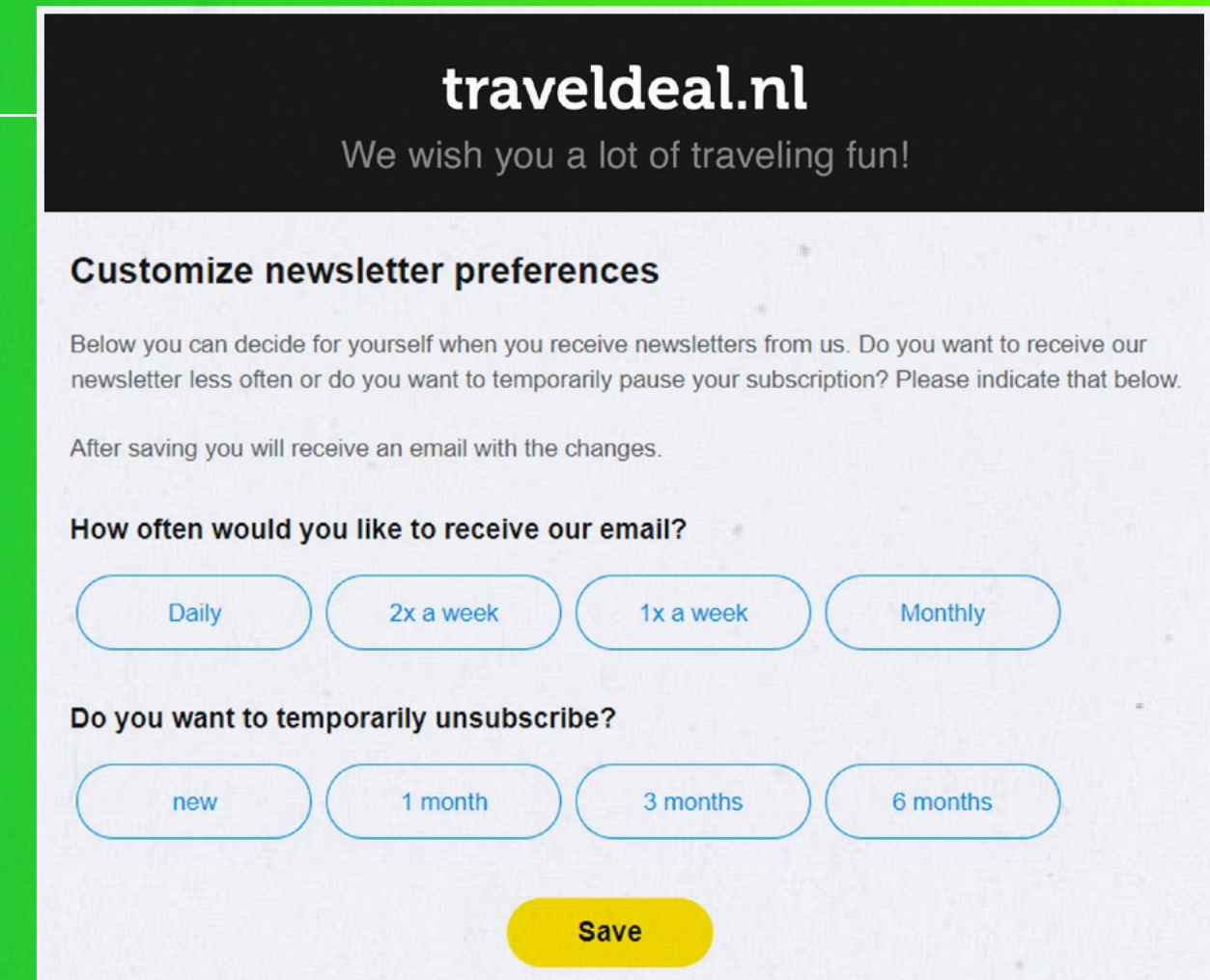


Marketing challenges

According to one of our major mailbox provider partners, 70% of all traffic they see is at the top of the hour, because most senders schedule their campaigns to start going out at these times. Off-setting by just a few minutes (e.g. “10 to” or “quarter past”) will mean better deliverability, faster throughput, and greater visibility – simply because senders won’t be competing as much for limited bandwidth and processing capacity.

Senders shouldn’t send every person in their database every campaign message. While it might seem like sending more emails could increase opens and clicks, sending emails with similar messaging over and over again could ruin a sender’s reputation with subscribers and MBPs. Avoid a damaged sender reputation by having a cadence of emails that makes sense for promoting Cyber Monday deals.

Since Cyber Monday happens entirely online, it’s important to optimize email campaigns for viewing on mobile devices. Most people access email messages from their cell phones. Pay careful attention to subject line length, keep CTAs in the front, and test emails across multiple devices to ensure optimal viewing and performance.



Apple’s recent **Mail Privacy Protection (MPP)** announcement means bad news for many Cyber Monday senders. The image caching that MPP will introduce means it is likely real-time content like countdown timers will no longer update in real time, remaining static at the time they were cached (when the emails are delivered). Countdown timers are used to create urgency as deadlines approach, and senders will need to invest more time in their split testing programs as they identify alternatives.



Holiday Season – Global

What is it?

The holiday season, also known as the “festive season” in some parts of the world, refers to the period of time from Thanksgiving until New Year’s Day, including holidays like Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and Boxing Day. For the retail sector, the holiday season is often associated with a period of peak-season shopping, as well as a period of sales at the end of the season known as the “January sales.”

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_and_holiday_season



Holiday
season

How is it being promoted?

Emails were responsible for 20% of all online visits during the last holiday season. Therefore, it's important to personalize email campaigns and share useful information to keep readers' attention. Including gift guides and catalogs, sending "abandoned cart" reminders, highlighting unique seasonal offers and discounts, and even adding a little humor are all great ways to keep subscribers engaged.


DRROEBUCK'S

**BOXING DAY SALE
ENDS TODAY!**

TAKE **30% OFF** YOUR
PURCHASE WITH
CODE **BOXITUP**

Sale ends December 26, 2018 at 11:59pm EST

SHOP THE SALE



First up: Thanksgiving. Here's your ultimate to-do list. FREE SHIPPING & RETURNS IN THE U.S.

BONOBOS NEW BOTTOMS TOPS TAILORED

Everything You Have to Do Before Thanksgiving Comes:

- Buy tickets home, like, today
- Get something nice to wear for dinner
- Bring something that is not canned cranberry sauce
- Make peace with holiday weight
- Grab some new jeans for TG Eve
- Memorize cousins' kids' names
- Find pants with some elastic in them (lots of elastic tbh)
- Learn how to make turkey
- Get a sweater that will hide stains
- Hoard leftovers

Shop last minute gifts at PUMA.com. The countdown is on. If you are unable to see the message below, click here to view.

MEN WOMEN KIDS SALE FIND A STORE

FREE OVERNIGHT SHIPPING*
ENDS TODAY AT 2PM EST.

SHOP NOW

HOLIDAY SALE EVENT
UP TO 50% OFF**

SHOP NOW

GIFT CARDS GIFT GUIDE HOLIDAY FAQ

f t y i p



Marketing challenges

It's not the holiday season for everyone.

Segmentation and targeting will be especially important this time of year to ensure subscribers are receiving relevant messages. Senders should try to collect information about their audience's behavior to help them properly target email campaigns.

Due to the pandemic, many people will not be able to celebrate the holiday season with their loved ones. Senders should make the "snooze" functionality a part of their toolkit so subscribers can take a break from potentially painful communications.

If senders have offered their best deals to promote Black Friday and Cyber Monday, there will be tremendous pressure to continue offering big discounts without running at a loss. Consider which emails are most effective when it comes to driving revenue. Focus on sending emails that add value and help people during the stressful holiday season (e.g., "Top 10 Tips for Buying Presents for Difficult Relatives," or "How to Cook the Perfect Christmas Dinner"). There will also be a big focus on supporting good causes this year, and senders should get their customers jointly involved.

Senders with bad sending practices – critical spam traps, poor quality data, and so on – stand the chance of ending up on a blocklist. Due to the high volume of emails going out during the holiday season, the likelihood of ending up on a blocklist is higher than usual. MBPs prevent blocklisted senders from reaching the inbox to ensure their users are only receiving email from safe senders.

EMAIL PRO TIP STAY OFF THE BLOCKLIST

Use a blocklist lookup tool like Validity's Sender Score to see if you've ended up on the list – and if you have, check out our eBook, *Don't Block Me*, for tips on how to get delisted.



GET THE GUIDE HERE!



Connecting the Dots

As you can see, each holiday presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities for email marketers. Now that you have a better understanding of what these challenges are and how they arise, it's time to discuss a solution so you can start taking advantage of opportunities and driving revenue.

Everest, Validity's all-in-one email success platform, provides crucial insights and deliverability guidance that can help prepare you for the email marketing challenges associated with peak sales season. In the following section, we'll discuss how Everest can help you reach more people, increase engagement, and improve efficiencies of your email program.





CONNECTING THE DOTS

Get more messages to more people

LIST VALIDATION

The Challenge

New sign-ups surge during peak sales season, with consumers drawn to new brands by enticing offers and senders digging deep into their customer databases hoping to reengage inactive recipients. During (and leading up to) peak sales season, invalid email addresses risk compromising the health of a sender's addressable database. With all MBPs taking a dim view of poor data quality, sender reputation metrics can take a hit. Increases in unknown users cause bounces and spam trap spikes, indicating issues with list hygiene.

The Solution

Everest provides senders with the ability to verify email addresses at the point of collection, via a webpage sign-up form, and in bulk. This ensures all acquired email addresses are valid and safe to mail. Everest also identifies invalid addresses in the existing customer database.

AUTHENTICATION

The Challenge

Once a marketer decides upon their target audience, it's critical they identify themselves as a legitimate sender. Black Friday has long been a catalyst for spoofing and phishing campaigns. Utilizing industry-standard authentication is an accessible way for marketers to identify their emails as trustworthy.

The Solution

Everest provides comprehensive monitoring to ensure authentication is correct, complete, and compliant. Sender Policy Framework (SPF), DomainKeys Identified Mail (DKIM), and Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting, and Conformance (DMARC) are all critical to protecting peak sales season campaigns.

INBOX PLACEMENT & CERTIFICATION

The Challenge

Inbox placement gets tougher during peak sales season, as email volume rises well above average. MBPs react to this by toughening spam filtering algorithms, and senders may experience increased deferrals and throttling.

The Solution

With insight into inbox placement across 38 countries, Everest has marketers' backs. It provides marketers with visibility into where their emails are landing, as well as actionable advice.

Validity's Sender Certification program affords marketers benefits at both global and regional MBPs, such as Microsoft, Bigpond, and Orange. Senders experience an average inbox placement uplift of 9% at major MBPs with resulting impact on open and click rates clear to see, as seen in [recent research conducted](#) by our friends at Emarsys.



CONNECTING THE DOTS

Stand out in a crowded inbox

COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE

The Challenge

Global email volumes have grown 94% in the last 18 months. We're set for the largest volume peak sales season in history, and for many consumers, this means nearly double the amount of email in their inbox. The competition for consumer attention is fierce.

The Solution

Everest makes competitive intelligence a simple task for marketers, providing visibility into the type of subject lines competitors are using, as well as information about sending volume and frequency analytics. This information allows senders to make campaigns' content and deployment more effective.

BIMI (BRAND INDICATORS FOR MESSAGE IDENTIFICATION)

The Challenge

In the newly released DMA 2021 Consumer Email Tracker, consumers rated "recognizing the brand" as the most important factor when deciding whether to open an email. What can brands do to stand out and be recognized in a crowded inbox?

The Solution

BIMI allows marketers to display their brand's logo in the inbox. Recently, general availability of BIMI was announced by Gmail, and Validity announced a new BIMI Certificates offering for Certified senders. This is offered alongside Everest's BIMI suite to ensure smooth implementation. Read more about BIMI's effectiveness in Validity's [I've Gotta BIMI](#) eBook.

SUBJECT LINE PREVIEWER

The Challenge

Making the most of an email's real estate within the inbox is critical to gain consumers' attention. Whether you're looking to meet legal requirements for China-bound email or optimize pre-header text, this real estate can be utilized in many ways. However, as seen with Click Frenzy activity, it is often underappreciated.

The Solution

Everest's subject line previewer allows you to optimize the friendly-from, subject line, and pre-header text across the world's most popular devices and email clients. This ensures your email is primed for engagement when it lands in the inbox.





CONNECTING THE DOTS

Execute better campaigns faster

APPS & INTEGRATIONS

The Challenge

One of the largest parts of an email marketer's day-to-day is navigating multiple systems to plan, execute, and analyze their email marketing program. During a pressure-filled period like peak sales season, time is money.

The Solution

Everest brings together previously disparate data sources into a single email success platform. Everest includes insights from across Validity's market-leading data network, as well as from the wider email ecosystem, including Microsoft Smart Network Data Services (SNDS), Google Postmaster tools, and major ESP integrations.

DASHBOARDS & ALERTING

The Challenge

Marketers need a consistent gauge on event-relevant performance. Every peak sales milestone has its own set of characteristics.

The Solution

Everest includes customizable and shareable dashboards to ensure you're trending in the right direction. It also provides alerts on major platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Slack to ensure if there's a problem, you can identify and mitigate it, minimizing impact on performance.



Businesses run better and grow faster with trustworthy data. Tens of thousands of organizations rely on Validity solutions – including Everest, DemandTools, BriteVerify, Trust Assessments, and GridBuddy Cloud – to target, contact, engage, and retain customers effectively. Marketing, sales, and customer success teams worldwide trust Validity solutions to help them create smarter campaigns, generate leads, drive response, and increase revenue. For more information visit validity.com and connect with us on LinkedIn and Twitter.

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