



CASE STUDY

Marks & Spencer
sees incremental
gains in inbox
placement leading to
higher engagement
and more sales.

M&S

EST. 1884

[Marks and Spencer](#) (M&S) is one of the UK's oldest and most loved retailers specializing in high-quality food, wine, home goods, and clothing. Founded in 1884, this major retailer built its business on adhering to strong values of innovation, inspiration, and integrity. Consumers were drawn to the products that grew out of these ideals, and today, M&S has a loyal and supportive customer base that has fueled the company's growth to 18 million registered website users.

The Highlights:

~100%

INBOX PLACEMENT RATE

20%

INCREASE IN TOTAL OPENS

86%

DECREASE IN BOUNCE RATE

The challenge:

Expanding their email program without sacrificing deliverability.

The company prides itself on sending carefully managed and curated messages to a very loyal and engaged subscriber base. M&S uses subscriber preference data to ensure they're sending subscribers meaningful communications offering inspiration, exclusivity, and value. Many of the subscribers are members of their Sparks membership club. These subscribers look forward to a variety of member benefits, including personalised offers, events, and experiences, and priority access to sales. Fostering strong customer relationships—particularly with this customer group—depends on M&S's successful email program.

The personalised, relevant content they send is vital to retaining a loyal customer base and significantly contributes to driving traffic and revenue both online and in stores. With high creative standards and sophisticated data-driven campaigns, they wanted to ensure their messages were reaching their subscribers. Deliverability has always been a major priority for M&S, but as they embarked on expanding their email program to significantly increase their list size, they wanted to ensure their deliverability wouldn't suffer as a result.



With the Sender Certification program, [Validity] showed us a route to be best-in-class for delivery. We've seen faster delivery and incremental gains in placement, which have led to significant improvements in all of our metrics, including fewer bounces and a 20% increase in open rates.

James Howe

Email Broadcast Manager



For more information visit [validity.com](https://www.validity.com)

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The solution:

Sender Certification, reduced filtering and throttling, and increased broadcast volumes.

In an effort to ensure their campaigns always reach customers' inboxes, M&S applied for Validity's Sender Certification—a program designed to improve email performance through best practices, continuous security monitoring, and access to exclusive email data. Inclusion in the program can significantly reduce filtering and throttling of email marketing campaigns, resulting in improved inbox placement and greater ROI.

M&S's email program had a history of excellence, which made them well-qualified candidates for Sender Certification. Their high-quality email program already helped them establish strong delivery rates, but Sender Certification helped them achieve near-perfect inbox placement rates. Once they were accepted into the program, they saw immediate results that maximized inbox placement. Most importantly, being Certified allowed M&S to increase their broadcast volumes with confidence.

The results:

Reduced bounce rate, increased opens and clicks, and near 100% IPR.

After becoming Certified, M&S saw positive changes in the overall performance of their campaigns across a range of KPIs. With Sender Certification, their deliverability issues were almost immediately resolved, resulting in inbox placement rates near 100%. Reaching nearly all of their subscribers in a timely fashion resulted in over 20% more opens. Furthermore, M&S saw their bounce rate drop by 86%, helping to cement their reputation with mailbox providers (MBPs). Reduced throttling at MBPs optimized M&S's delivery speed, ensuring subscribers could take full advantage of limited-time offers sent to the inbox. The overall impact of implementing Certification led to 8% more click-throughs and higher engagement with their website, which ultimately resulted in more sales.

As M&S continues to send highly sophisticated and engaging campaigns to their subscribers, they are fully confident their campaigns will reach the inbox, thanks to the assurance Validity's Sender Certification program provides them.