

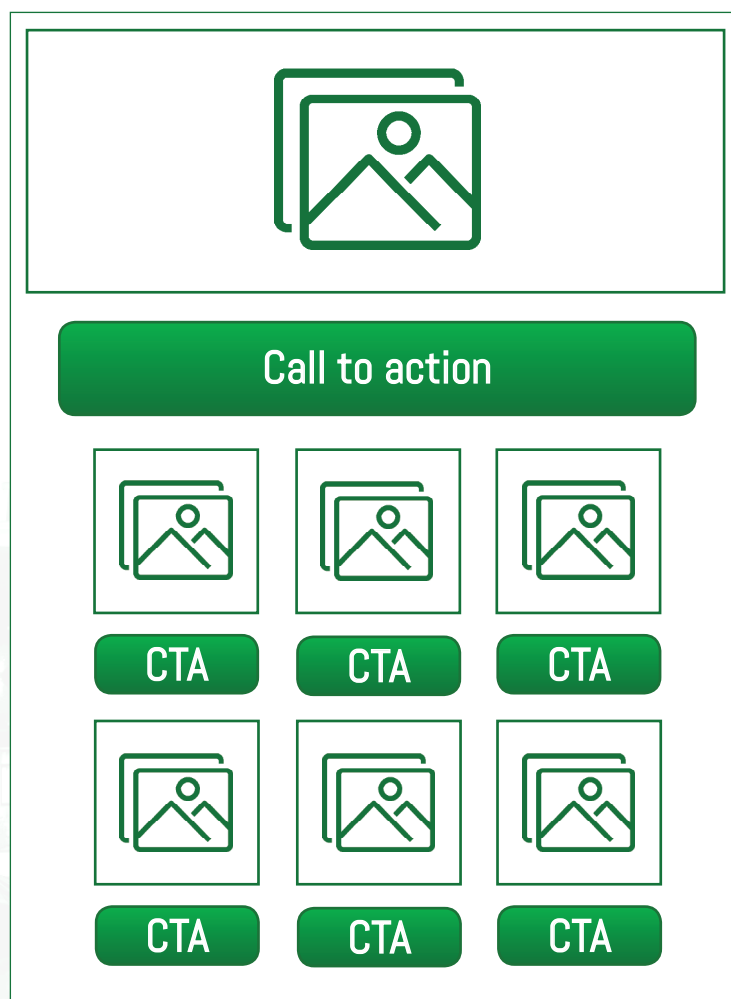
Whitepaper

Call to Action

The Call to Action

When companies send emails, the first goal would be that subscribers open the email. The next step would be that all of them actually read the email. And the final challenge is to get them to convert their interest into an action like a sale. But how do you make your readers convert or perform a task?

Introducing the: Call to Action (CTA)! Getting readers to perform a task is in effect the whole purpose of sending emails in the first place. A good call to action should be compelling and persuasive at the same time. Take for example our CTA below.



General Tips

HTML vs Image

A CTA button asking for your attention is something we are all too familiar with. Generally buttons are made in two different ways, an image or they're built with HTML. Using an image for buttons is nice and gives you a lot of creative possibilities. But on the other hand, images need to be downloaded first by the recipient before they can be shown, so in the worst case scenario, a server goes down and your image will not be shown at all. HTML buttons on the other side will load faster, will always be there and therefore will be a safe bet. The choice to make here is: going safe or going for design.

Button vs link

A CTA can be simple text that triggers you to do something, but it can also be a nice button asking to perform a task. Buttons should be attention-grabbing and used for primary actions. In the end, buttons still are the best CTA out there. But! They lose all off their effect when used excessively in an email. One or two CTA buttons in an email is more than enough. If you're promoting multiple products, this changes of course to a CTA button per product. But even then it's still important not to go overboard with spraying buttons all over the place, adding to many CTA's can only result in recipients not clicking at all.

But buttons aren't always the best choice for a call to action. A text link can also be a nice call to action and used properly, just as effective. When having a longer piece of text in your email, it's better to incorporate a link. This will make sure readers don't stop in the middle of a sentence, because a big call to action is blocking a smooth reading flow. When using a text link, it's always important to lengthen the number of words that a link covers to achieve a bigger chance of clicking.

Keep it short and clear

The most common mistake made with email call to actions is the amount of words used. The best tip to give here would be, bring it back to the core essentials. An effective call to action is between two to five words maximum.

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| ✓ Sign up | ✓ Act now |
| ✓ Subscribe | ✓ Buy now |
| ✓ Download now | ✓ Join now |
| ✓ Save €100,- | ✓ Check it out |
| ✓ Save 10% | ✓ Learn more |

Use urgency

Use urgent language for the call to action. What would be the desired action? Buy something, download something? Whatever the desired action might be, you need to create a sense of urgency.

Make it stand out

A good CTA needs to stand out from the rest of the email and grab the user's attention. This is done by giving the call to action button or link a distinctive color that's in contrast with the background colour. In case of the button CTA, make sure there's plenty of (white) space around the button. Some marketers use a trick to make sure the call to action pops out. They blur their eyes or look away from the email for a brief moment. Then look back and see which element they notice first. Your eyes should be instantly drawn to the call to action.

Call to Action placement

The placement of your call to action button is very important. Eye pattern research has shown that placing a button left has a better effects then placing it on the right side of the email. Readers look at websites and emails in an F shape motion. Center placement is of course always a safe bet.

But also placing the CTA above the fold is important, because not all your recipients will read the entire email, but you still want to have as many clicks as possible. (The part of the email that appears without needing to scroll down is considered "above the fold.")

Colours, size and arrows

The size of the call to action button is very important. If the button is too big it will overpower the rest of the email. When a button is too small it will get snowed over by all the other information provided in the email. You want your button to be large enough to stand out without overwhelming the design.

The colour of the call to action is also something that can have a big impact on a person clicking or not.

Just like with everything related to email marketing, testing is still king! But in general colours like red and orange show the best performance. Keep in mind contrasting colours are the way to go.

Test

Test different locations, different words, different font colours and sizes, images versus text. In short, test everything that you can think of. Of course, don't test them all at once because you won't get usable data.

Example Call to Action

Link CTA

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Vivamus venenatis mauris id mi dapibus bibendum. Integer id luctus mauris, ac consectetur est. Integer sed sodales enim. Aliquam congue aliquam volutpat. Donec aliquet placerat ante a vulputate. Pellentesque vestibulum aliquet dapibus. Aliquam sagittis dolor quis facilisis mollis. Morbi eleifend arcu a magna consectetur porttitor. [-> Cras aliquet ornare nibh nec suscipit <-](#). Mauris est felis, posuere nec ipsum ut, laoreet lacinia nisl. Pellentesque nec felis neque. Suspendisse lobortis lacus elit, ac interdum augue molestie id. Nunc malesuada felis sit amet metus interdum iaculis. Ut sed turpis sed enim commodo dictum. Cras luctus ex turpis, non facilisis risus placerat aliquet.

Normal call to action

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Using arrows

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included

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