

Whitepaper

Personalisation

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Years and years ago, when email marketing was still in its infancy, the main email strategy to follow was: **Spray and Pray!** Send as many emails as you can, and then pray that someone reacts. Nowadays people receive hundreds of emails a day and standing out in cluttered inboxes is a big challenge. Switching from the 'one message fits all' strategy to a conversational strategy helps companies stand out and receive better results. How do they do this? Personalisation!

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Every year new marketing trends come and go, "big data", "responsive design", name it. But the personalisation topic is one that's here to stay. Marketers and business owners seem to be aware of the opportunities that personalisation offer. So why isn't everyone using it? The technology is already there! Well it's not completely true that nobody is using it. It's just not being done as often or as well as it could be. The personalisation topic is so big, that you can easily get lost in all the information provided. That's why in this whitepaper we will only discuss and cover the basics.

General Tips

Personalisation opportunities

To create the best personalised experience for your subscribers, there are a couple of ways to go about it. The most obvious one is of course the personalised salutation. “Welcome”, “Dear” or “Hello” followed by a personalisation field [name]. But personalisation can be used in many more areas. You can personalise the Subject line by incorporating the name of the recipient, or the region they live in, the interest they might have. The options are of course endless.

One other area to start personalising is in the Preheader and footer. A great example of the footer would be showing the email address that is subscribed to your mailing. But personalisation also includes adding personalised recommendations into your emails. This can increase conversion rates and click-through rates.

Finally you can also personalise images or the content in general, depending on certain parameters like for example gender. If it's a female, use a pink background with pictures that are compelling to woman, and then the opposite applies of course for men.

Customer Personalisation

But what types of personalisation do we actually have? Well we can place this in two different categories, the demographics and behavioral personalisation types.

Demographics:

- ✓ Name
- ✓ Gender
- ✓ Interests
- ✓ Birthday
- ✓ Address
- ✓ Etc...

Behavioral:

- ✓ Last purchase
- ✓ Last site visit
- ✓ Last open and clicks in email
- ✓ Etc...

But I can hear you think, “we don't have all these details of our subscribers”. Well the only good response to this would be: start collecting and ask for it. But keep in mind, that with all the new NSA revelations, people are reluctant and afraid to provide information. So for marketers it's important to be transparent and to let your subscribers know that the only purpose is to be more relevant in your communication to them.

Customer Persona

Because there are so many personalisation options, you tend to think, I might be better off writing my mails manually again if I want to use personalisation to its fullest. Therefore it's best to create customer personas. Personas are:

research based archetypal modeled representations of who buyers are, what they are trying to accomplish, what goals drive their behavior, how they think, how they buy and why they make buying decisions.

These personas can help you standardize personalised content that you can implement into your campaigns. A simple example of this would be the generation personas we have all heard of. Generation X, Y and Z. Each with its individual approach and preferences. For each generation you create content, images and offers. And depending on the subscribers information they are placed in one of the three personas and automatically receive that tailored content and offer.

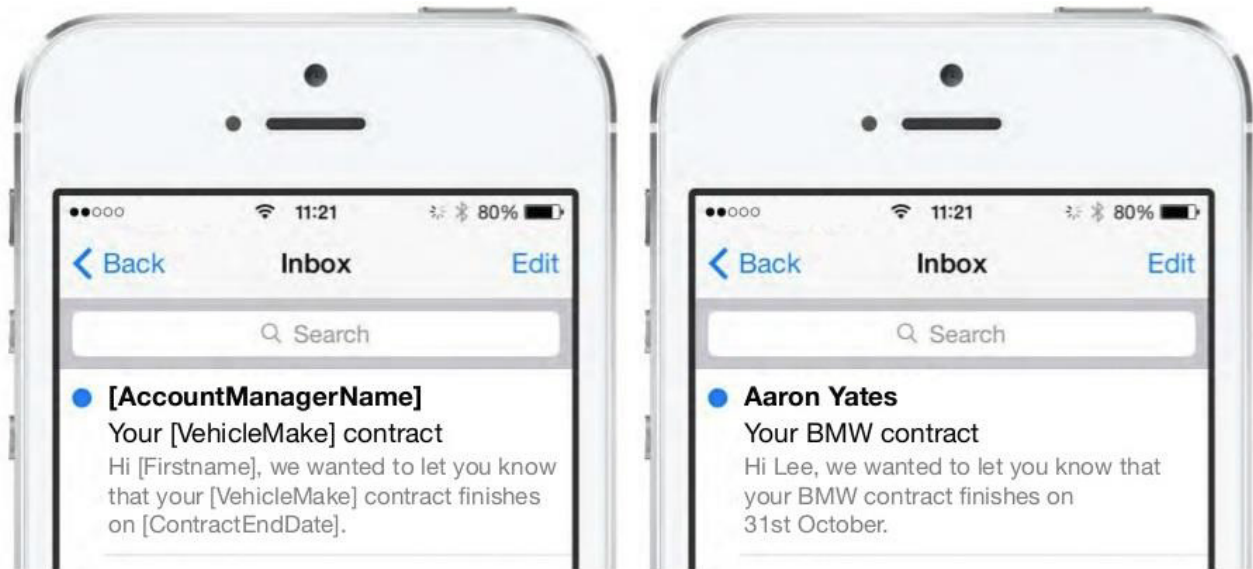
Customer Persona

Up to this point we have been looking at personalisation that originates from the subscribers side. But you can also personalise your own company information. This is for example used a lot in B2B sales campaigns. One mailing is being sent to a certain database or list. And each individual recipient will see a personalised from-address and signature depending on the recipients account manager.

Mistakes in personalisation

Adding any type of personalisation into your email campaign can be risky because of the potential for errors. Therefore you need to use default values for situations where no personalisation information is available. For example the personalisation: Dear [Firstname], would look strange when first name information is not available for certain recipients. Most ESP's have a solution for this, by replacing the first name (when not available) with for example "customer" or "relation". Which will show like "Dear customer,".

Personalisation examples



"AccountManagerName" SenderName

The from address and SenderName are a great personalisation tool for the B2B market. Instead of campaigns being sent from the boring info@, you give the receiver the idea the campaign came from his own contact person, in this case the account manager.

"VehicleMake" Subject line

Subject line personalisation is being used more and more. Because the subject line is crucial to achieve high open rates, recognition in the form of personalization will only support this.

"FirstName" Salutation

The most common personalization form is the salutation, hello first-name or in a more official way hello last-name.

"ContractEndDate" CRM data

More and more ESP's integrate with CRM tools. This means that the data stored in these systems can be used to personalize your campaigns even further. This way even the content of the email can be completely tailored to each individual reader.