

Promotion - What to Include in an E-mail Campaign Mailing

E-mail is a wonderful way to reach a large number of people, and when they forward messages to others, your reach can be even greater than you know. Here are some ideas for messages that get noticed and passed on. A separate module discusses the more technical aspects of e-mailing.

The main reasons you might have to broadcast messages may be to publicize an exhibition, sale or a special event like a workshop, class, charitable activity, or personal achievement. You may even want to e-mail a regular update or newsletter as a way of keeping in touch with people interested in your work.

The first thing people will see is your sender name and your subject line, in a list of incoming mail. It's best if your real name appears as the sender. Cute or obscure nicknames look juvenile and unprofessional. Take some time with the subject line. In order to deal with spam, some people have set up filters to delete messages with certain words in the subject line. "Free, act now, sale, bonus, % off," are some words that could signal annoying advertising messages. It's safest to be specific and clear about your subject message. Something like "Gallery to show my work" or "Crafts in City Centre on Saturday" should get safely past spam filters.

E-mail messages are meant to be a swift, efficient way to communicate, so keep your information short and to the point. Since many readers skim their e-mail messages, announce your news in the very first paragraph. If people aren't interested immediately, they might delete your message without reading further.

Be sure to be clear about the purpose of your message and what you would like people to do, whether it is to attend an event, order something, register for a workshop, or respond to a question or survey. Give them all the information they need to be able to do what you're suggesting, such as hours, address, phone number, cost. If there is a Web site for the gallery, exhibition, course or event, include a complete link so that people can easily go straight to the page for further information.

If you're including an attachment with your message, be sure to mention it in the body of your message. Some viruses are passed as attachments, and people should never open attachments that they aren't expecting or know about. If you don't mention that you've attached a photo, graphic, newsletter, flyer or invitation, many of your readers could ignore it entirely.

Don't, however, put important information in the attachment without including it in the body of the e-mail. Make sure that people can easily read what's happening, where it's taking place, when, who's involved, and why. If they can't or won't open the attachment, you still want them to receive the basic information.

Finally, always include a signature file at the end of your e-mail messages. This can include your full name, address, phone number, Web site, and a brief promotional message that you change frequently. Here is where you can put the marketing messages that might signal spam in the subject line, such as "Free admission with purchase," or "10% off in pre-Christmas sale." Also, consider including your e-mail address in your signature file. If your readers forward your message to an e-mail discussion list, your e-mail address might not automatically appear. Including it in your message lets people contact you if they're interested.

Creating powerful, brief e-mail messages can help you extend your promotions to more people than you can imagine.