

# Email remains the backbone to engaging today's multi-channel consumer, according to IBM study

September 15 2015, by Doug Frain

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IBM today announced [findings](#) from its 2015 Email Marketing Metrics Benchmark Study, which analyzes email marketing trends from 3,000 global brands, representing 40 countries and multiple industries.

Customers demand perfect moments from brands, where relevant deals on items they want, often before they realize it themselves, are presented at precisely the right time and place. With 50 percent of companies increasing their digital marketing budgets in 2015, it's clear Chief Marketing Officers and teams are looking to answer the call by delivering these experiences across multiple channels including social, mobile, Web and in the store. As the adoption of these tactics continues to grow email remains a vital component—the Direct Marketing Association reports that for every \$1 spent on email marketing, there's an average return of \$44.25.

According to the IBM's 2015 Email Marketing Metrics Benchmark Study, top performing brands demonstrated a commitment to establishing an ongoing engagement with customers, one that provides each individual with additional value while opening up new revenue opportunity for the business. Specifically the study found that brands used email campaigns triggered by a person's previous action, such as a recent purchase or the resetting of their password, drove higher customer engagement due to the timeliness and relevancy of these messages. In fact according to the study these campaigns (known as transactional

emails) produced an open rate of 72 percent and average click through rate of 30 percent.

For example, if 500 customers who purchased a cruise vacation are sent a follow up email containing additional deals on related items, 360 consumers would open the email with close to 110 clicking on the link to get more detail.

"Keeping our fans around the country up to date on the Kentucky Derby is a key component of our digital marketing," said Kate Ellis, Marketing Analyst at the Kentucky Derby. "Email is vital as it allows us to target our messages to specific levels or types of customers, giving them each the information they want including important upcoming news, details about their trip to the Derby, charitable initiatives and other special events. We can also use it to conduct surveys about their experiences. Looking forward email will continue remain a critical vehicle for us to engage customers with personalized campaigns that drive business success."

Additional key findings include:

- Top performing brands in the travel industry excelled, with email open rates reaching upwards of 50 percent, 10 times more than their lower performing peers. Travel brands, which tend to effectively use strong visuals and offer-heavy approaches, led all top performers with click-through rates of just over 15 percent.
- While the travel industry soared, retail/ecommerce missed the mark, producing some of the lowest customer engagement rates. These low rates result from retailers that continue to rely on traditional batch-and-blast methods which lack the personalization that today's consumer demands.
- Asia-Pacific brands outperformed their counterparts in North America and Europe on most benchmarks, with top quartile

performers achieving a nearly 50 percent open rate. This likely indicates that marketers in the region are capitalizing on the explosive digital marketing growth in the area.

IBM's Email Marketing Metrics Benchmark Study is an annual global study that analyzes emails sent by 3,000 brands in industries such as travel, retail, IT, insurance and more. The goal of the study is for marketers to aim beyond "average," comparing their campaign performances to top performers on the benchmarks that are most important to their business goals. With buyers constantly shifting and new devices, such as wearables, regularly emerging, marketers are forced to change the way they engage with their customers and stand out from the more than 400 emails the average customer receives from brands each month.

"In an industry that's evolving at the speed of light, email, when leveraged in context of the customer's experiences, remains one of the most effective ways for brands to engage with the always on consumer," said Deepak Advani, General Manager, IBM Commerce. "By combing email marketing with deep analytics, marketers can now understand their customers on entirely new levels, generating additional insights from the digital world to deliver meaningful experiences for each consumer at the right place and the right time."

**More information:** To view the full report and insight into further analysis, click here: [http://www.silverpop.com/Landing-Templates/1-GLOBAL-IBM/NA-IOT/US-IMT/2015/2015-benchmark-study/?Engage\\_Campaign\\_ID=70133000000hzac&Engage\\_Campaign\\_Status=Registered&LeadSource=MC\\_Q3-15\\_2015Benchmark\\_PressRelease\\_70133000000hzac&PromoCode=MC\\_Q3-15\\_2015Benchmark\\_PressRelease\\_70133000000hzac](http://www.silverpop.com/Landing-Templates/1-GLOBAL-IBM/NA-IOT/US-IMT/2015/2015-benchmark-study/?Engage_Campaign_ID=70133000000hzac&Engage_Campaign_Status=Registered&LeadSource=MC_Q3-15_2015Benchmark_PressRelease_7013300000hzac&PromoCode=MC_Q3-15_2015Benchmark_PressRelease_70133000000hzac)

Provided by IBM

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