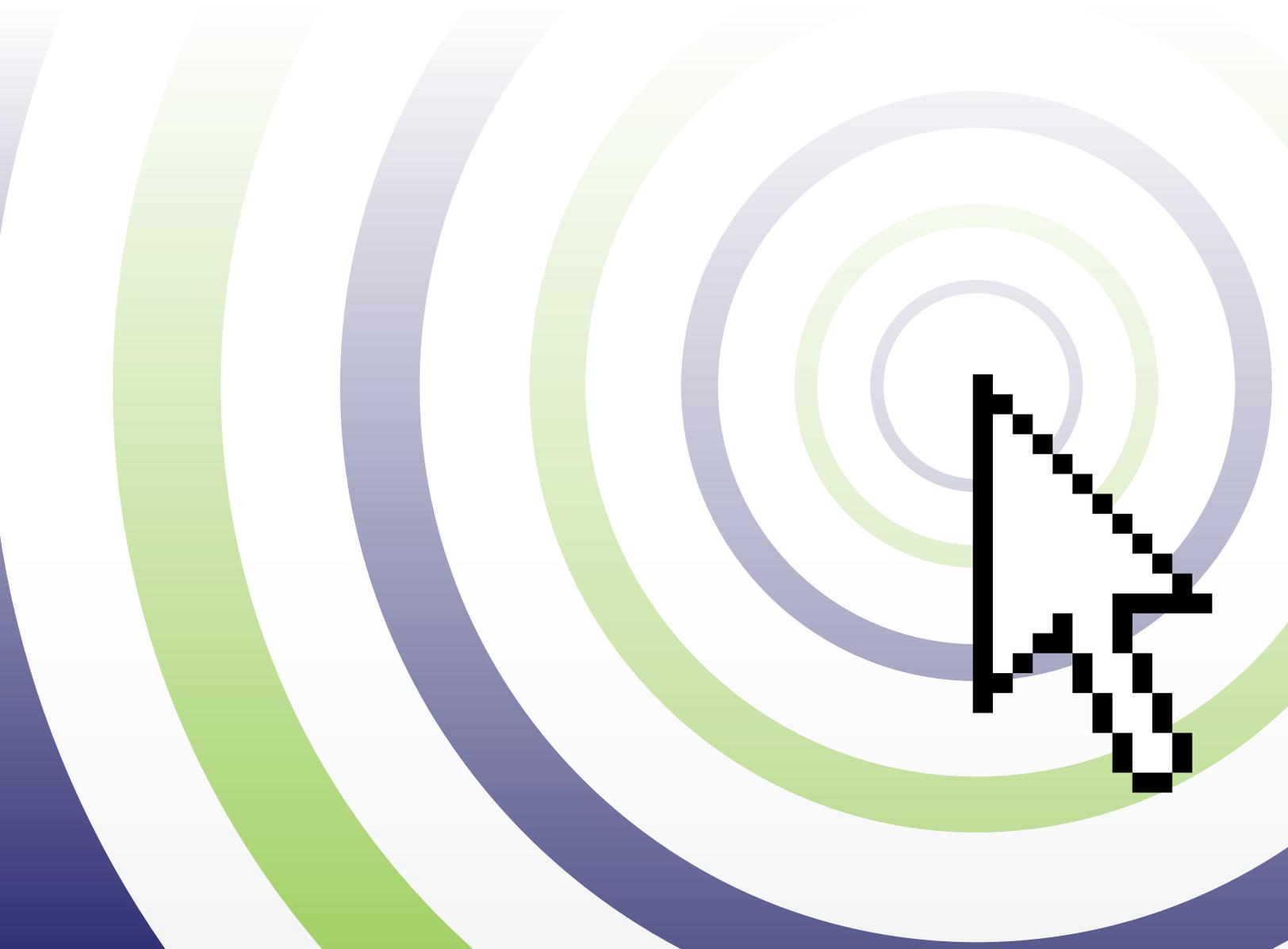# The Importance of a Click

Tips and tactics to improve your email click rates

Introduction

A Click. One simple action among many when it comes to email marketing. However, improving your email click rates can be the difference between sale or no sale.

At Delivra, we've spent the last 13 years building software and providing services to help companies improve their email marketing results and add dollars to their bottom line. We have a vast amount of instructional knowledge we've gathered about email marketing over the years and we're here to share it with you.

In this whitepaper, we'll discuss the fundamental reasoning behind tracking clicks, tactics we've seen improve click rates, and finally some real life examples of how we've helped our clients navigate the complicated role of an email click.

Clicks: An Overview

Before we get into how to improve the clicks across your email marketing communications, let's talk about why it's an important metric to track and increase. The act of a click is a very impactful measurement for marketers because it measures interest. A click is an indication the recipient is perhaps more engaged than the rest. Think about this in fishing terms... you've set the bait by sending the initial email, the recipient has nibbled on the bait by opening the email... by clicking they've taken the bite and it's up to you to reel them in!

There are a number of click metrics email marketers measure. We find the most important and impactful are:

- Click through rate **(CTR)**
- Click to open **(CTOR)**

I'm sure you've paused a second or more to ask yourself... what is a good CTR or CTOR? And, you're not going to like this answer. It depends on a number of variables such as your industry, your list size, and the types of emails you're sending. We recommend our clients' benchmark their own data over a period of a year to determine a good CTR and CTOR relative to their organization. We also recommend if your email marketing contains many different personas (i.e. customers vs. potential customers) each persona have their own click benchmarks.

Calculating the difference between CTR and CTOR is subtle, but can paint an entirely different picture for marketers. For instance, a single email can yield a horrendous click through rate and a phenomenal click to open rate. What this tells the marketer is he/she has a list problem. Either the message didn't resonate with the majority of the list or the list needs an overhaul or better segmentation.

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clicks/delivered * 100 = CTR%

The **click through rate** of an email is calculated by taking the number of clicks divided by the number of delivered emails. The click through rate is an important measure to gauge the viability of the list you're sending to.

clicks/opens * 100 = CTOR%

The **click to open rate** is calculated by taking the number of clicks divided by the number of opened emails. The click to open rate measures the viability of the content you're sending to a particular list.

Let me give you an example.

We have a client who owns a dozen budget and high end hotels in Hawaii. They have hundreds of thousands subscribers on their list and send weekly and monthly emails to these recipients with the latest resort updates and current deals. Their average CTR is a 3% but their CTOR is 11%.

They hired us to improve their email marketing results and at the end of the day... sell more stuff. So, after reviewing the data above, we knew we needed to take a look at their list and better identify segments that resonated with the emails being sent. It was obvious those opening the emails found the information very valuable. However, the majority of people on the list weren't the least bit interested.

So, we implemented a Resend Strategy with the overarching goal of moving recipients towards conversion. Conversion for this particular client is the booking of a hotel room. Here's how the resend strategy works, if a recipient clicks on a "Book Now" link but does not convert, an email is automatically triggered a day later asking the recipient to complete their order. The results are remarkable. The click through rate of the resend email averages 10.9%. That's a threefold lift from the previously blasted email. The moral of this story is, by segmenting an engaged audience such as those who click, and then following up with relevant communications to this segment, you are guaranteed to make a sale.

Your email marketing strategy is unique to your business, but there are general tips every marketer should keep in mind when trying to improve click rates.

Let's break it into 3 strategies.

Three steps to improve email clicks:

1. Know your audience.
2. Give them something worthy of a click.
3. Create triggered and sequential mailings.

Let's explore each of these strategies in more detail:

1 Know your audience.

Remember the Kenny Rodger's song, *The Gambler,* "You got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em" – this is an excellent comparison to email list hygiene best practices. Successful email marketers don't measure the success of their program by the volume of the list; rather, the engagement of their lists and are quick to purge unengaged subscribers. Clicks are important indicators of engagement. So, how do you get to know your audience and, therefore, increase clicks?

- Conduct annual re-engagement campaigns to ask subscribers if they want to continue receiving messages from you.
- Segment your email list into different groups. Example segments might include: buying behavior, demographics, gender, region, list engagement and so on.
- Ask them! Most email service providers, like Delivra, provide the technology to create unique preference centers allowing subscribers to pick and choose the type of email communications they want to receive.

2 Give them something worthy of a click.

If you've read this far, we're assuming you're already incorporating something for the recipients to click on in your emails (other than the Unsubscribe button!). These are called call-to-actions (CTAs). Common call-to-actions might include: check out our latest inventory, buy this product, use this coupon, schedule a demo, download this new resource, etc.

The difference between good and great email marketing is creating content and deliverables that really add value to subscribers. The only way to know what adds value is to *Know your Audience* (see how this is coming full circle!). Here are some important things to keep in mind when adding call-to-actions to your emails:

- Don't hide your call to action behind an image since most email inboxes are defaulted to not display images. If you do add an image call-to-action, be sure to include alt text behind the creative which will render when the images are turned off.

- Limit the number of unique call-to-actions. At Delivra, we recommend a primary and secondary call-to-action, but hesitate to offer more than two options in a single email.

- Provide multiple places within the email to click on the offers you provide. For instance, for each call-to-action we build in at least two (2) places for the recipient to click. These places can be an image with an alt text or hyperlinked within text.

- Over-communicate what you want the subscriber to do. Using active language like – click here, complete your order, fill out the form... don't assume the subscriber is going to take any action unless you tell them exactly what you want them to do.

- Personalize the click. Knowing your audience helps you offer resources you know will be of utmost interest. We'll discuss how you can personalize the click when we discuss triggered mailings.

In the meantime, here are three great CTA examples to get you thinking about how to construct your next email:

3   Create triggered and sequential mailings.

A triggered message is an email sent based on a certain field(s) in your database. Examples of triggered messages include: a birthday email, welcome message, renewal notice, etc. The opportunities to create triggered messages are great, so long as you are diligent about collecting the data points that facilitate relevant triggers.

A sequential message (or "targeted messages" as referred by some) is a series of emails usually based on your initial trigger. For example, our studies have shown a series of welcome emails sent over the course of a couple of weeks will outperform a single sent welcome email. When you think about it, that makes a lot of sense. Multiple emails in a series of relevant communications increase the probability of an open.

? A **triggered message** personalizes the click because you're sending an email based on known traits you've gathered about the recipient.

Triggering and creating sequential mailings based off of subscriber activity and profiles have been proven to increase clicks. For example, at Delivra, triggered and sequential mailings yield a 4% and 14% (respectively) higher click-through than "normal" sends across our entire client base. (Normal is our way of identifying any emails sent not utilizing our trigger or sequential mailing functionality.)

Imagine... 14% lift in clicks... why wouldn't you incorporate these tactics into your email marketing strategy?

Normal   3% CTR   13% CTOR   **Click Metrics by Email Type**

Sequential   17% CTR   28% CTOR

Triggered   7% CTR   12% CTOR

Increasing Clicks: A Real Life Example

At Delivra, we have an eCommerce client who sells niche country home furnishings. They were a software only client for many years. Meaning, they handled all email marketing internally until last year when they made the switch to managed services because, like most small companies, the burden of running a consistent email marketing program became too much to handle. Rather than incur the substantial expense of bringing on a full-time employee to oversee, they decided to engage in a managed service relationship with Delivra.

Managed services at Delivra means we help execute your email marketing campaigns by providing services including, but not limited to: strategy, consulting, design, deployment, list hygiene, deliverability, reporting/analytics and so on.

One of the first things we did with our eCommerce client was analyze their email list to identify possible segments, triggers and sequential mailings. Remember, *Know your Audience*. We identified some immediate areas of opportunity:

- Abandoned cart triggers.
- Welcome email sequential/targeted mailings.
- Triggers based on specific product offerings, particularly ones with the highest profit margin.

The company's general mailings yield a **7.8% CTR** and convert at less than a percent.

By adding just a few triggers and sequential mailings, the results are obvious. Triggered and sequential campaigns yield **75% of all revenue** generated from email.

The abandoned cart triggers yield the highest CTR and CTOR rate across all triggers. **18% and 47%**, respectively.

The welcome series averages a **14% CTR** and those emails yield a **5% conversion** into a sale.

Conclusion

You've likely gathered by now that increasing the click rates in your email marketing isn't tied to one single thing... rather a combination of different tactics. And, often times, you must test and adjust a few times before finding a combination that works for your organization.

We hope we've given you some immediate tips to apply to your company's email marketing efforts. And, if you're like most marketers with a mile long to-do list, stretching outside the realm of email marketing... Delivra's here to help.

We'd love to have a conversation with you about your email marketing goals and how we might be able to help execute some of the tactics you may not have the time or the resources to worry about. Give us a call at 866-915-9465 or email at info@delivra.com to learn more.