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Holiday Marketing Quarterly: Second Quarter 2021 Checklist

The holiday season doesn't have an off-season. Having a successful holiday season means executing a successful year-round strategy. Oracle's Holiday Marketing Quarterly gives B2C brands a quarter-by-quarter plan for how to achieve more during the critical holiday season with their email marketing and other digital marketing channels.

Our second quarter checklist is focused on finishing your review of the 2020 holiday season and then making a range of improvements to everything from subscriber acquisition to performance reporting to campaign production. In this Holiday Marketing Quarterly, we'll cover:

- ☐ Holiday Messaging Competitive Intelligence
- ☐ Subscriber Acquisition Source Optimization
- ☐ Unsubscribe Process Optimization
- ☐ Improved Analytics & Reporting
- ☐ Experimentation & Testing
- ☐ Accelerate Campaign Build Processes

Our goal is to always be thinking at least 3 months out with our clients so they can avoid stalling out. We hope this quarterly checklist helps you stay on track with your planning so you achieve your goals. And, of course, if you'd like assistance, we're always here to help. Reach out to us at any time at CXMconsulting_ww@Oracle.com.



Clint Kaiser

Head of Analytic & Strategic Services

[**Oracle Marketing Consulting**](#)

Holiday Messaging Competitive Intelligence

In our [first quarter Holiday Marketing Quarterly](#), we encouraged you to do a holiday post-mortem to uncover the areas where you underperformed and outperformed. Now that you've looked inward, let's next look outward at what your competitors did.

- ☐ **Competitive tracking:** Look back at how your competitors used the email channel during the holiday season. Hopefully members of your marketing team have signed up to receive your competitors' email campaigns, so you can assemble key data points. But even if you did, we recommend using a service like [SparkPost Competitive Tracker](#), which not only aggregates email campaigns, but also provides some performance data. Consider pulling together the following information:
 - ☐ *Number of campaigns*, keeping in mind that this should vary by subscriber or customer segment
 - ☐ *Send volume and projected reach*, keeping in mind that many brands loosen their audience targeting criteria during the holidays, sometimes inviting deliverability problems and the negative impact those have on sales
 - ☐ *Open rate*, noting when engagement is highest and lowest, as well as any patterns in engagement
 - ☐ *Sends per day*, including the most active send days and how they map to key days like Thanksgiving, Black Friday, Cyber Monday, Green Monday, and Super Saturday, recognizing that [a hallmark of the 2020 holiday season was the de-emphasis of marque selling days](#)
 - ☐ *Most active send times*, which you can use to inform your send times, especially if you don't use [send time optimization](#) or it's not appropriate for a particular send
 - ☐ *Inbox placement*, paying attention to how volume, sends per day, open rates, and other [factors affected deliverability](#)
- ☐ *Subscriber/audience overlap* across competitive brands, so you understand the competitive landscape and how a competitor's messaging might impact your company's
- ☐ *Promotions and messaging themes*, so you can get inspired and understand how competitive your offers are
- ☐ *Commonly used words in subject lines* to inspire your subject line [A/B testing](#)
- ☐ *Most effectively used words/phrases in subject lines* to further inform your subject line testing. The Subject Line Advisor portion of SparkPost's Competitive Tracker shares such insights.



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- ☐ **Competitive intelligence into action:** Take what you've learned from your [holiday post-mortem](#) and combine it with your competitive tracking and then compile a set of...
 - ☐ Learnings that might inform your holiday planning, message cadence, email volume, etc.
 - ☐ Tactics and strategies you want to test during the upcoming holiday season
 - ☐ Email creatives and subject lines you might use to inspire your messages this holiday season

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Competitive intelligence provides valuable insights for brands to better understand relative measures, timing, cadence, and key performance outliers during the critical holiday season. Collectively, these insights present opportunities for segmentation and personalization optimizations or program expansion ideas that can be experimented and tested during the summer and into the fall to ensure holiday success.



JT Capps

Strategic Director of Analytic & Strategic Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

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SparkPost Competitive Tracker can also show you what competitors' homepages looked like on specific days, so you can see how the messaging there compares to the messaging in their emails.



Chris Wilson

Strategic Director of Analytic & Strategic Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

Need help analyzing your competitors' marketing campaigns? Oracle Marketing Consulting can help your company review your competitors' holiday campaign strategies for potential learnings to apply to your 2020 holiday strategy. Reach out to us at CXMconsulting_ww@Oracle.com.

Subscriber Acquisition Source Optimization

Selecting the right people to become subscribers is a huge predeterminer of email marketing success. Get highly interested and valuable customers to subscribe and you're golden. Get disinterested people who don't have an affinity for your brand and you're setting yourself up for hard times. Here's our checklist for how to strengthen your email list building:

☐ **Inventory your subscriber acquisition sources.**

Track down all the ways that people can sign up to receive your promotional emails. Keeping in mind that you might have multiple sources in any category, which of these sources do you use to acquire new email subscribers?

- ☐ Signup form on homepage or mobile app
- ☐ Lead collection at live event
- ☐ Opt-in during online checkout, account creation, membership signup, mobile app setup process, etc.
- ☐ Online registration form for webinar, event, etc.
- ☐ Signup form on your social media pages
- ☐ Lightbox, exit intent pop-up, etc. signup form on your website or mobile app
- ☐ Signup form on other customer-facing pages of website or mobile app
- ☐ Lead generation form for ebooks, reports, etc.
- ☐ Sweepstakes and contest entries
- ☐ Promotion of signup via direct mail, catalog, etc.
- ☐ Purchased email list
- ☐ Signups via call center scripts/interactions
- ☐ Opt-in during in-store checkout process
- ☐ Promotion of signup via in-store signage, menus, etc.
- ☐ Email appends
- ☐ Email list rental
- ☐ Co-registration
- ☐ Pay-per-signup via social media ads
- ☐ Pay-per-signup via search ads
- ☐ Sales team outreach or through partners or affiliates
- ☐ Other source(s): _____

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Generally speaking the subscriber acquisition sources at the top of this list are more common and more effective, because they're in places where your customers interact with your brand. The sources toward the bottom of the list tend to be farther from your brand, so they produce subscribers who are less familiar with and interested in your products and services.



Chad S. White

Head of Research,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

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Stay away from appends, rentals, and purchased lists. These segments are characterized by a lack of response—very low open and low click rates. And because these users never expected to receive email from the sender, the lists can generate many spam trap hits and higher bounces, unsubscribes, and complaints. That puts the sender's deliverability reputation at risk and requires a great deal of effort to restore.



Kevin Senne

Sr. Director of Global Deliverability Operations,
Oracle

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- ☐ **Measure the effectiveness of each of your subscriber acquisition sources.** How are each of them performing in terms of the behavior of the subscribers generated by them? For the subscribers of each one, figure out the average [open rate](#), [click rate](#), conversion rate, spam complaint rate, unsubscribe rate, revenue generated, etc. You may find that one or more sources are so problematic that you decide to discontinue it. In particular, identify your subscriber acquisition source that generates...

- ☐ The most valuable subscribers
- ☐ The least valuable subscribers
- ☐ The most engaged subscribers
- ☐ The least engaged subscribers
- ☐ The subscribers who unsubscribe the most
- ☐ The subscribers who unsubscribe the least
- ☐ The subscribers who complain the most
- ☐ The subscribers who complain the least

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- ☐ **Audit and optimize your subscriber acquisition sources.** For the sources that you decide are working well enough to keep, look at each one and determine:
- ☐ Is the opt-in form and related copy up to date?
 - ☐ Does the opt-in form work properly, recording the data collected accurately?
 - ☐ Are there [ways that you can optimize your opt-in forms](#) for each of these sources? For instance, are the benefits of signing up clear and is the form easy to complete?
 - ☐ If you collect preferences during your signup process, are the content, contact frequency, and delivery preference choices you offer up to date? Verify that those selections are being recorded properly and being acted on in your [welcome campaigns](#) and future messages.
 - ☐ For those acquisition sources where you deem it wise to use a [double opt-in process](#), is it streamlined to maximize confirmation rates?
 - ☐ Are the [welcome messages](#) triggered by signups for each of your subscriber acquisition sources appropriate for each of those sources and drive the actions you need them to? Are you [making seasonal adjustments to your welcome campaigns](#)?

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We highly recommend that every email capture source is tagged with an identifier on the backend so you can determine how each is performing. Doing this will allow you to invest in high-value sources, as well as to shut down poorly performing sources.



Kaiti Gary

Director of Analytic & Strategic Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

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The outcome of the email subscriber acquisition source analysis should be socialized across internal demand generation teams to help maximize return-on-investment for paid media efforts and to inform look-alike model test strategies.



JT Capps

Strategic Director of Analytic & Strategic Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

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Once a year, sign up for your own email program through your various email capture touchpoints. It's not uncommon to be surprised by what does or doesn't happen. I've had clients discover that welcomes aren't sent out, that old versions of welcome emails are sent, and that the delay in that first touch is days rather than the few minutes they were expecting.



Clint Kaiser

Head of Analytic & Strategic Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

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The signup forms that are the most friction-free are the ones where all the data is pre-populated based on previous interactions. When you're able to do that, you have the potential opportunity to turn your email signup into a one-click process.



Kaiti Gary

Director of Analytic & Strategic Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

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- **Audit your welcome campaigns.** Depending on the subscriber acquisition source, new subscribers come into your program with different levels of brand familiarity and different expectations. Consider crafting two or more different **welcome campaigns** so you can address those differences. Also, keep in mind that your welcomes are your first opportunity to acknowledge and act on any subscriber preferences you've collected.

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Welcome messages that go beyond the standard ‘Welcome to the list’ and ‘We’ll send you updates and special offers’ resonate much more with consumers. Make the subscriber feel like a part of a community, speaking to their emotions and setting out a clear path in front of them.



Brooke Dahmer

Copywriter for Creative Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

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- **Consider launching new subscriber acquisition sources.** Now that you've evaluated and optimized your existing subscriber acquisition sources, consider introducing new ones. Perhaps you've never tried a lightbox or exit intent pop-up before? Offline sources are often overlooked—just make sure you're doing digital signups via tablets or confirming via double opt-in to protect yourself from high bounce rates and verbal transcription errors.

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Plenty of brands have gotten burned trying to attract subscribers in their stores and restaurants. The problem was usually not the venue, which is packed with customers who know your brand—it was that email addresses were collected verbally or via paper forms. Scrap those error-prone collection methods in favor of digital methods and try again.



Chad S. White

Head of Research,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

Looking to increase your list growth? Oracle Marketing Consulting's List Growth & Demand Generation Services team can help you build up your digital marketing audience with engaged, high-value customers. Want to discuss your needs? Reach out to us at CXMconsulting_ww@Oracle.com.

Unsubscribe Process Optimization

Opt-ins and opt-outs are opposite sides of the same coin. Both affect your list health and list growth. For example, you can boost your list growth by **reducing your churn** by implementing a preference center and using other tactics. Here's how to make sure your unsubscribe process is working its hardest for you:

☐ Audit and improve your unsubscribe process.

Frustrating opt-out processes drive spam complaints, hurting your deliverability as well as your brand image. To reduce this risk, ask yourself:

- ☐ Is my email opt-out link easy to find and clearly identified by using “Unsubscribe” as the link text?
- ☐ Does my unsubscribe process involve no more than two clicks—one in the email and one on the unsubscribe page? If it takes more than two clicks, it's too complicated.
- ☐ Can I better understand why people are opting out by using an unsubscribe survey that appears on the opt-out confirmation page? To be the most helpful, you want to ask about issues that you'll potentially act on.
- ☐ Can I use a preference center to offer subscribers alternatives to unsubscribing that address the pain points that are driving them to want to opt-out? For example, can they be given the option to change their email address, change topic preferences, change email frequency, or snooze their subscription for a little while?

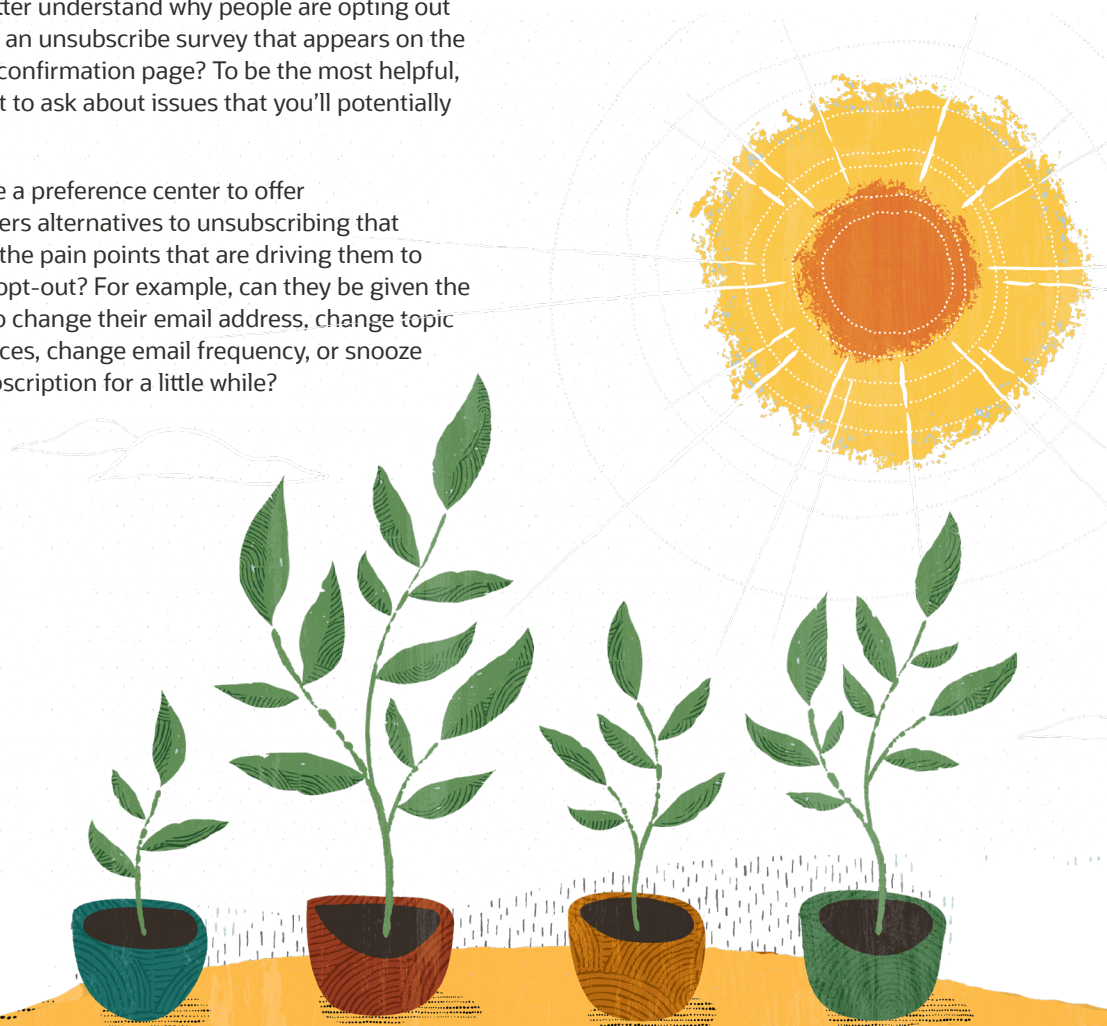
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We worked with a global retailer to change their unsubscribe page to mitigate opt-outs, which typically increase slightly during and right after the holidays. By adding the options to say subscribed and to pause emails for 30 days, we found that the average unsubscribe rate on holiday campaigns dropped 82%. The approach was so successful that we left it in place year-round.



Chris Wilson

Strategic Director of Analytic & Strategic Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting



☐ **Audit and optimize your preference center.**

First, make sure your preference center is working properly and that you're acting on subscribers' selections, and then think about improvements. Ask yourself:

- ☐ Are all of my preference choices up-to-date?
- ☐ Are my subscribers' preferences being collected and stored accurately?
- ☐ Are you acting on all of the preferences you're collecting? If not, strongly consider changing that, by either acting on them or not collecting them.
- ☐ How are my current content, contact frequency, or delivery preferences affecting subscriber retention, customer engagement, and customer lifetime value?
- ☐ Are there other preference choices that I can offer? Consider...
 - ☐ *Topics of interest*, whether it's preferred styles, shopping departments, gaming platforms, brands, destinations, or other subjects
 - ☐ *Communication frequency preferences*, which is often presented in terms of X emails per week or month, but sometimes is presented in terms of which content they want, such "Send me only the best deals" or "Send me every deal"
 - ☐ *Additional channel opt-ins*, such as getting permission to send SMS messages or directing customers to your social media pages or your mobile app download
 - ☐ *Location preference*, such as favorite store, restaurant, venue, or airport location, since it's unwise to assume that their closest location is always a customer's preferred location

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The goal of a preference center is to persuade a customer to continue receiving marketing messages—even if it's at a reduced frequency or via a lower-ROI channel—because any communication is better than no communication.



Peter Briggs

Director of Analytic & Strategic Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

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People know what they want and don't want to hear about, so let them help you fine-tune the content they'll be presented. A creative message with a call to update preferences will allow you to learn more about them. Send it periodically to gradually develop the relationship and trust without the risk of overwhelming them by asking for too much information at once.



Pradeep Mangalapalli

Director of Deliverability Operations,
Oracle

Want help retaining more subscribers? Oracle Marketing Consulting's Analytic & Strategic Services team can analyze your unsubscribe process and preference center to help you identify and roll out improvements that reduce email list churn and increase subscriber engagement. Want to discuss your needs?

Reach out to us at CXMconsulting_ww@Oracle.com.

Improved Analytics & Reporting

Every organization is striving to be data-driven. But it's difficult—and somewhat dangerous—to do that when you don't have access to reliable, meaningful performance metrics. Here's our to-do list for how to improve your performance visibility:

- ☐ **Desilo your data.** Manually exporting data and pooling it so you can do analytics is a solid first step. But long-term, having a central repository where you have one version of the truth is key. With the silos broken down, you have much better visibility into customer behavior and trends across your engagement touchpoints.
- ☐ **Centralizing your data governance.** Centralizing your data isn't just a technological change. It's an organizational change. Create accountability for your data's accuracy, privacy, and governance by naming a head of data. The exact title doesn't matter—we've seen a huge range of titles!—but having someone be responsible for your data management is key.
- ☐ **Build better performance dashboards and reports.** Get the deep, impactful data that you need to make wise strategic decisions. Here are some metrics that our clients are asking for:
 - ☐ **Conversions.** Whether it's sales conversions or any other action you're asking your customers or subscribers to take, it's important to measure this bottom-of-the-funnel event.
 - ☐ **Velocity.** Is engagement with your email program accelerating or decelerating? This will naturally ebb and flow over time depending on where the customer is in their lifecycle. Acceleration implies the subscriber is likely in-market. Deceleration can mean they are exiting a buying phase or are disengaging with your brand.
 - ☐ **Email list health.** Is your list growing or shrinking in terms of the number of subscribers and average time on list? How is your list churn trending? What percentage of your list has opened at least one of your emails in the past 30, 90, 180, and 365 days? Is your deliverability improving or declining? What are those various metrics when looked at across subscriber acquisition source or across inbox providers?
- ☐ **Return on investment.** Whether for a project, your email program, or your whole marketing program, knowing the return you're getting on your marketing investments allows you to make better decisions about where to invest next. It also allows channel owners to make stronger budget arguments.
- ☐ **Lifetime value.** In the age of customer-centricity, lifetime value is an increasingly important metric. If you're growing lifetime value, you're either getting customers to increase their rate of spending or keeping them engaged longer—or both. If it's falling, then customers are investing less money and time in your brand—a trend that you'll want to reverse.

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Clients are pushing the boundaries with reporting and are no longer satisfied with simple metrics like click and open engagement. Companies are working toward reports and dashboards that highlight conversion, velocity, lifetime value, and ROI in order to show value in their marketing efforts.



Ferris Boyd
Principal B2B Consultant,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

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Due to the current economic turmoil, brands will be strained to do more than ever with less than usual. Leveraging analytics data and modeling will allow marketers to better understand how the past year has affected both email and customer value. This updated view will be key as companies decide how to evolve their strategies and programs to obtain the most value from their marketing efforts.



Bryan Moreci
Account Director,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

☐ **Create better customer models for targeting.**

Using your analytics to better understand your audience for segmentation and targeting purposes can boost engagement, increase sales, and improve deliverability. Here are three models that we often use with our clients:

- ☐ **Subscriber engagement models.** Keeping your email engagement rates high is critical for good deliverability, especially at inbox providers like Gmail and AOL. To avoid trouble, you will want to suppress subscribers who haven't opened or clicked recently, and send fewer emails to those people prior to suppressing them. However, "recently" will vary for every business, depending on a variety of factors such as email frequency, engagement rates, and complaint rates. Modeling can help you find the right cutoffs to protect your sender reputation.
- ☐ **RFM modeling.** Recency, frequency, and monetary (RFM) modeling allows business to understand relative customer value based on when their last purchase was, how often they make purchases, and the value of their purchases. It has been around for a long time, but now it's easier than ever to calculate and put into action. In fact, [Oracle Responsys offers native RFM modeling for targeting.](#)
- ☐ **Predictive activity modeling.** What are the chances that a particular subscriber will buy this product if we promote it in an email to them? Predictive activity modeling can answer that question across your entire subscriber database so you can target only those who are likely to convert.

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Models don't have to be laborious and complex to create. The hardest part oftentimes is thinking about which data inputs to include to ensure maximize effectiveness of the model. For example, one predictive model we regularly use includes the date of the last site abandon trigger as a data value input. Seems obvious, but it's often overlooked.



Clint Kaiser

Head of Analytic & Strategic Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

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- ☐ **Embrace design analytics.** If you're disappointed with the results of your analytics efforts, it may not be the execution. You might be asking analytics to solve the wrong problems. [Design analytics can help you properly identify root causes of problems,](#) so your analytics solutions work harder for you.

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Once you get the hang of it, design analytics will help you come up with better solutions and avoid wasting time on misdirected projects that address symptoms and non-problems.



Kaiti Gary

Director of Analytic & Strategic Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

Want to improve your reporting?

Oracle Marketing Cloud Consulting's Analytic & Strategic Services and Performance Reporting Services teams can help you with all of your dashboard and modeling needs, including predictive activity modeling. Want better visibility into how your digital marketing is truly performing? Want better audience insights? Reach out to us at [CXMconsulting_ww@Oracle.com.](mailto:CXMconsulting_ww@Oracle.com)

Experimentation & Testing

The second and third quarters are a great time to experiment with different tactics and strategies in a lower-stakes environment. At the same time, selling seasons like Mother's Day, Memorial Day, Father's Day, Independence Day, back to school, and Labor Day offer opportunities to test seasonal messaging, designs, and tactics.

☐ **Infuse AI into your email program.** Artificial intelligence and machine learning can help marketers identify trends in a sea of data that they otherwise wouldn't be able to see. Here are some AI implementations to consider:

☐ *AI-powered content recommendations.* Ideal for companies with lots of SKUs or content, AI can help you personalize your emails with product and content recommendations that are tailored to each individual subscriber.

☐ *Send-time optimization.* Picking an email send time based on aggregate subscriber response is good, but picking send times based on individual subscriber responses is better. Learn more about [the best time to send emails](#).

☐ *AI-powered email copywriting tools.* Using the most effective words in your subject lines and email copy to connect with your audience can make a significant difference. AI can help you uncover better word choices, but you'll want to [avoid the risks associated with this technology](#).

☐ *Predictive activity modeling.* AI can help you choose better audiences for your sends, allowing you to reduce email frequency to those who are unlikely to respond and increase frequency to those who are likely to engage. Learn more about [achieving the best email frequency](#).

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Sending the right message at the right time is increasingly important in order to drive engagement. Organizations across a variety of industries are extremely excited to start using send time optimization.



Ferris Boyd

Principal B2B Consultant,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

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AI is the buzzword in the industry—really, in the world—at the moment. Anything that can make data-driven decisions that the client can trust and not waste time on themselves is a big asset.



Jarrod Browning

Project Manager in APAC,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

☐ **Experiment with some promising email trends.**

In a survey of Oracle Marketing Consultants, the following were all rated as [low adoption-high impact tactics and technologies](#), making them competitive differentiators:

- ☐ *Dark-mode optimized emails.* Instead of the usual dark text on a light background, dark mode features the reverse: light text and a dark background. It's a major trend in user interface experiences across a wide range of apps, including email clients, where it's particularly troublesome to design around. Learn [how to optimize your emails for dark mode](#).
- ☐ *AI-powered subject line and copywriting tools.* This software can help you see performance patterns of word and phrases choices that might otherwise be invisible to you. Just make sure that you're [taking precautions to ensure success with AI-powered copywriting tools](#).
- ☐ *Live or real-time content.* Most email content is determined at the time of send, but live content is determined at the time of open. [The best use cases for live content](#) involve content that changes rapidly, such as countdown times, sports scores, weather forecasts, and poll results.
- ☐ *Inclusive design and email accessibility.* Digital marketing campaigns perform better when you design for a spectrum of visual, hearing, motor, and cognitive abilities. Learn more about [fulfilling your legal responsibilities and expanding your reach with inclusive design](#).

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Dark mode is something a lot of clients have ignored and they're now realizing just how terrible their email renderings look, especially in Outlook and Gmail apps. Many brands are seeing a major need for email design modifications to accommodate dark mode.



Lauren Castady

Associate Creative Director for Creative Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

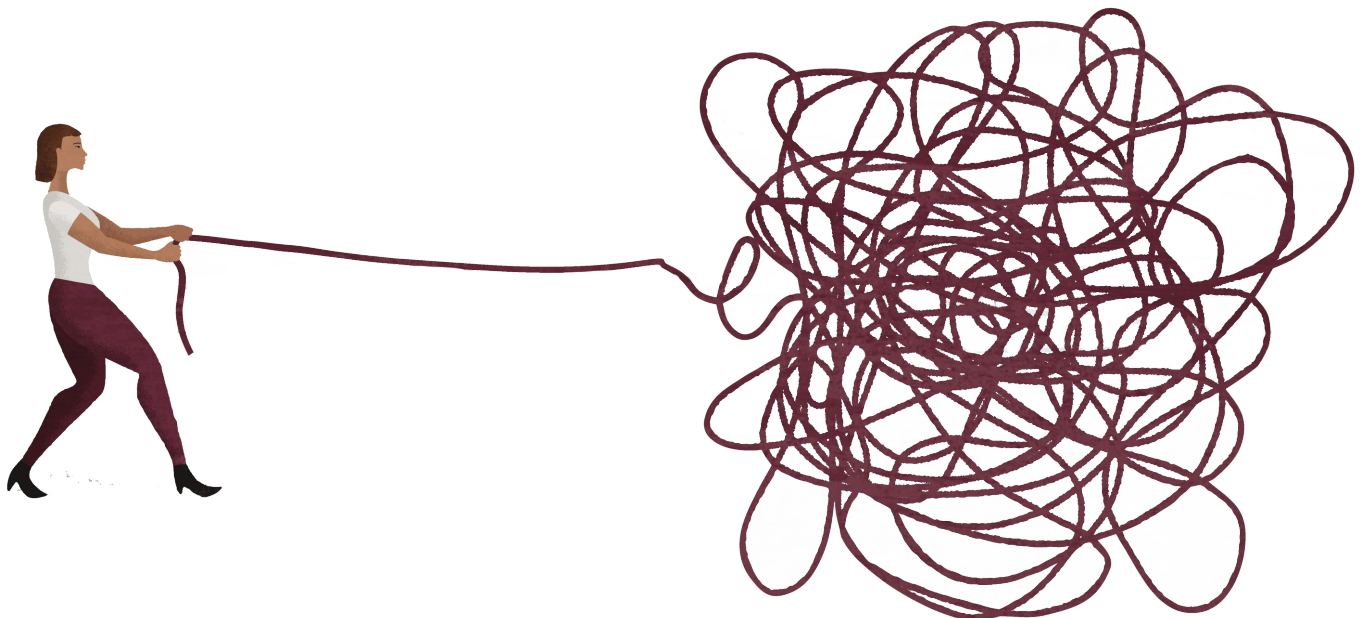
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As people's attention spans decrease and content volume skyrockets, the timeliness of an email can have a significant impact on the message's overall effectiveness. Real-time content can help email stand out and stay relevant.



Jessica Sung

Senior Copywriter for Creative Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting



☐ **Make your customer experience more seamless.**

Your typical customer engages with your brand through multiple channels before making a purchase. That makes it essential that you're able to see customer activity across channels and respond across those channels to [create a seamless and smooth omnichannel customer experience](#). That's the ideal, but it's challenging. So set small goals to start to connect everything together. Here are two ways to do this:

- ☐ *Omnichannel orchestration.* Instead of trying to boil the ocean, focus on improving your cross-channel functionality with one channel. For instance, can you [make your curbside pickup more efficient](#) by integrating it into your SMS marketing or mobile app? Or can you [boost the effectiveness of your direct mail campaigns](#) by coordinating it with your email marketing program? How can you improve visibility across one additional channel? How can you better synchronize your message across channels while leveraging each channel's unique strengths and weaknesses?
- ☐ *Personalized landing pages.* Personalization in email is a massive, powerful, and well-established trend. Personalizing landing pages so that tailored experience is seamlessly continued is also powerful, but less established. [Learn about Oracle Maxymiser](#), our website personalization tool.

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Vendor consolidation and integration across vendor suites is helping our clients and other brands operationalize a unified customer experience across channels like they never could before.



Celestina Chu

Director of Campaign Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

- ❑ **Ramp up your A/B testing.** Listening to your customers is vital, and A/B testing is just one more way that you can listen to what your customers are telling you that they prefer. Just make sure you [avoid these A/B testing pitfalls](#) so you don't waste your time, miss out on golden opportunities, or—worst of all—confidently come to the wrong conclusions. Some to-dos:
 - ❑ *Create an A/B testing calendar.* Avoid randomly testing things. Create a schedule so you can not only take advantage of every opportunity, but also build on past learnings and periodically confirm past findings.
 - ❑ *A/B test your triggered emails.* Most companies A/B test their promotional broadcast and segmented emails, but relatively few test their triggered emails. This is unfortunate because automated emails typically produce the biggest returns. That means that [the A/B testing opportunity for triggered emails is bigger](#), too. Plus, improvements in triggered campaigns deliver better subscriber experiences over a longer period of time because they're ongoing campaigns.
 - ❑ *Consider multivariate testing.* If your email sends are big enough, consider doing some multivariate testing. Besides being able to test more than one variation at a time, [multivariate testing](#) allows you to test the interplay between different element combinations.
 - ❑ *Socialize your A/B testing learnings across channels.* Knowing what works and doesn't work in one channel can be helpful in guiding your company's efforts in other channels. So, be sure to share your learnings with your colleagues.

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Without clearly defined processes, marketers run the risk of testing just for the sake of testing, which leads to discrepancies in methodology, lack of purpose, ambiguous results, and wasted resources.



Reed Pankratz

Sr. Strategic Consultant for
Analytic & Strategic Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

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Testing isn't just for one-off promotional emails. Set up audience lifecycles like welcome, nurture and reengagement programs with testing options built in. Then you can frequently, and easily, update your content to test your offer, subject line, and other elements for weeks at a time and get statistically significant results.



Helen Lillard

Principal B2C Consultant,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

Need help taking advantage of the latest trends? Oracle Marketing Consulting more than 500 consultants can help with AI, email design, omnichannel orchestration, testing, and much more. Want to discuss your needs? Reach out to us at CXMconsulting_ww@Oracle.com.

Accelerate Campaign Build Processes

Holiday production volumes are generally considerably higher than your baseline the rest of the year. That's reason enough to invest in reducing your campaign production times, but the pandemic, social unrest, and rapidly changing customer behaviors has many of our clients urgently looking to reduce the number of days it takes them to build and launch a campaign. Here are some to-dos:

- ☐ **Adopt a modular email architecture.** Classic email templates are becoming obsolete. They are difficult to maintain, don't offer enough flexibility, make personalization cumbersome, and take too much time to turn into a final email campaign that's ready to send. Because of all of those weaknesses, [more companies are migrating to more efficient and personalization-friendly module email architectures](#). To learn more, [watch our webinar on module email architecture](#).

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Having a modular email architecture is an important step to starting a lot of the other trends on this list. Once that is in place, A/B testing, automation, and AI-powered content are much easier to implement.



Patrick Colalillo

Associate Creative Director for Creative Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting



☐ **Streamline review and approval processes.**

Speeding up your campaign build times isn't just about your technology. It's also about your people, which can create major bottlenecks for your campaign production flow. Ask yourself:

- ☐ How many people are currently involved in reviewing and approving our campaigns?
- ☐ Do all of those people need to be involved? Do all of those people need to be involved with every campaign? Does it make sense for certain people only to be involved with certain kinds of campaigns?
- ☐ Do we have strict review and approval windows or deadlines? Can those be shortened? What happens if someone repeatedly fails to respond in time?

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- ☐ **Consider outsourcing campaign delivery.** Simplify your campaign production workflow by having an agency upload, schedule, QA, and deploy your campaigns. The right partner allows your digital marketing team to focus on more strategic efforts while reducing errors and speeding up deployment.

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Collaboration between creative, development and campaign deployment is key to an efficient workflow, especially when deadlines are tight and dynamic content is driving campaigns. Creative teams should be working in collaboration with their development partners to ensure their creative visions can come to life. Including the campaign deployment team in planning can also ensure campaigns will deploy without rendering or data issues.



Jason Witt

Senior Director of Creative Services,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

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Maintaining a strong quality assurance program takes constant recommitment because of routine changes in campaign rendering, code support, and more. Many of our clients find it a better use of their time to focus on strategy, optimization, and campaign planning rather than on day-to-day campaign staging and deployment.



Jennifer Lancaster Dana

Vice President,
Oracle Marketing Consulting

Want to cut the time you spend on email production? Oracle Marketing Consulting's Creative Services team can help you build a modular email architecture to reduce your email build times by 25% or more. And our **Campaign Deployment & Monitoring Services** team can take over campaign uploading, quality assurance, and deployment so you can focus more on strategy. Want to discuss your needs? Reach out to us at CXMconsulting_ww@Oracle.com.

Planning and running a successful holiday marketing program takes year-round effort. We can help.

Oracle Marketing Consulting has more than 500 of the leading marketing minds ready to help you to achieve more with the leading marketing cloud through...

- Implementation Services
- Platform Training & Adoption Services
- Analytic & Strategic Services
- List Growth & Demand Generation Services
- Database Management & Compliance Services
- Design Thinking & Innovation Services
- Creative Services
- Coding Services
- Campaign Automation Services
- Campaign Deployment & Monitoring Services
- Email Deliverability Services
- Performance Reporting Services
- Website Optimization & Personalization Services
- Social Media Strategy & Analytics Services

Want help? Let's talk about how we can work together to seize your opportunities and overcome your challenges. Reach out to us at [**CXMconsulting_WW@oracle.com**](mailto:CXMconsulting_WW@oracle.com).