



# The Raphel Report

**Observations on marketing, advertising, sales and promotions**  
**by Murray Raphel,**  
**Chairman, Raphel Marketing**

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## How to Increase Your E-mail Marketing Effectiveness

*(Excerpt from our new book,  
“The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Winning Customer Loyalty”  
by Murray Raphel, Neil Raphel and Janis Raye)*

Here are 16 e-mail marketing rules that will help increase the effectiveness of your e-mail advertising:

**1. Sending e-mail to your own customers is much more effective than sending blanket e-mails to potential customers.**

If your own customers receive your e-mail, they will open it and read your message, the same as they would if you mailed them a letter. If the message is spam, it is usually thrown away without being read.

**2. Capturing e-mail addresses is necessary to build an e-mail marketing campaign.**

Make sure you receive permission from your customers to send e-mail to them. Customers who receive unsolicited e-mails will not be pleased. Ask your customers for their e-mail address on sign-up sheets in your place of business and in your regular mailings.

When your customer purchases from you online, include a “yes/no” item asking if they want to receive e-mail from you. Even though you have the e-mail address from the transaction, you still should get the customer’s permission to send marketing e-mails. Most will say yes.

**3. Don’t forget to fill out the “subject” and “from” lines.**

Many e-mail writers don’t fill out the subject heading to say what they’re writing about. If the reader sees nothing in this space, they might easily assume that there is nothing to interest them. Think of the subject line as the all-important headline.

The readers also want to know from whom the e-mail is sent. If you don’t tell them, they may quickly delete what you sent them without reading further.

**4. Include your name, phone, fax number, and web address.**

People want to know who is writing to them and how they can contact you.

**5. Write a headline at the start of your e-mail that promises a benefit or provokes curiosity.**

Your object is not only to stop the readers but also make them keep reading. If your copy following your headline continues to provoke their interest, great! Just like a print ad on paper, someone who reads the first 50 words of your message will probably read the next 200 words!

Asking a question in the headline is a good attention-grabber, but you must answer it fast in the first paragraph or you'll lose your readers.

**6. Know what you want to say.**

Tell the audience up front what you're writing about. Make it interesting. Make it believable. Offer a benefit. Provoke their curiosity. (Did we say that already? Good. It's worth repeating.)

**7. Write short, effective, makes-a-point copy.**

No long sentences (15 to 17 words is good). No long paragraphs (two to three is fine). The average person's attention span has decreased dramatically with the onslaught of messages received from all advertising media.

**8. Check. And double check.**

Have someone else check your e-mail message for clarity. You will be surprised how many times an objective reader will say to you, "What does this mean?" Or "You spelled this wrong." Your search engine spell-check will find words you've written incorrectly.

Once you've hit the "send" button, there's no taking those thousands of e-mails back. So be sure they are correct.

**9. Write in a me-and-thee manner.**

There is a direct-marketing credo that says, "Writing effective copy is like writing a letter to your Aunt Minnie." Your e-mail message should sound as though you're visiting your customers in their home and talking about something that interests them. Don't be afraid to use contractions because that's how people talk.

**10. Make them want to come back.**

Have the readers caught up with the message/story/offer you make so that they'll want to read your future e-mails.

**11. Keep it short.**

E-mail is not like direct mail, where the rule of thumb is, "Write as much as you

want that will keep the reader reading.” E-mails longer than one page (which means taking the time to scroll down and keep reading) are usually too much.

The exception to this rule is this: E-mail newsletters often require two or more pages that your customer will read as long as it’s interesting. (See Chapter 15 for more about e-mail newsletters).

## **12. “Free” and “You.”**

These proven two words attract readers and keep them reading, just as these two words do in other forms of advertising. This is a tried-and-true rule.

## **13. What day should you send e-mails?**

If it’s to a business, skip the weekends and Monday. The reason is that many businesses aren’t open on weekends. When people return to work on Monday, your e-mail will be surrounded by dozens of other e-mails and will not receive the same attention as if it were mailed during the week.

Senior citizens tend to read e-mail every day. It’s usually part of their routine.

## **14. What time of the day should you send e-mails?**

About half of e-mails are sent between 8 A.M. and noon. Most are opened around 11 A.M.

## **15. When will you have a response?**

Herschell Gordon Lewis, an acknowledged expert in writing excellent selling copy, says that about 25 percent will answer you right away. A total of one third will answer you on the second day, and another 25 percent on the third day. The remaining few will answer sporadically, if at all.

## **16. Give your customers the opportunity to “opt out.”**

At the end of your e-mail, include a little message saying that if they no longer want future e-mails from you, they can simply click the “reply” button and write in the subject line “Please cancel.”

Also tell them that their e-mail address or personal information they give to you is never, ever shared with anyone else (and make sure you don’t share it).

E-mail can be an effective, low-cost way of connecting to your customers. But unwanted spam is such a turn-off to people you should make sure you are only sending e-mail messages to people who want to receive them.