Is Email Marketing still an effective way to market to potential customers?

Stuart: With the volume of email spam, is email marketing still an effective way to reach customers?

David: Well, yes. It's a good question, Stuart. There is a lot of spam out there via email and it has been an ongoing problem for a number of years. If we look at the life cycle of email marketing over the last decade, originally it was to tart up emails that were just text based, and actually give a little bit of a marketing feel to the emails that people were sending out, which was very novel at the time.

Unfortunately, people started abusing that and jumping on-board and using the email marketing systems and platforms in a bad way, thus creating the spam that we know and hate today. However, I feel that it's actually come full circle now. What people are now realising is that used in an effective and targeted way an email marketing campaign can actually be a very powerful tool, and something that I feel that every business should have as part of their collateral in their marketing strategy.

Stuart: So why would you carry out an email marketing campaign?

David: Some of the main reasons I guess that we've identified why you should carry out an email campaign are the obvious one which is promotion and sales. If you're a new company and you want to start promoting yourself via emails, then that's a great way to start. If you're selling something potentially to new or existing customers, then again, it's a great instant way to get your message across and hopefully get some conversions out of that. You've also got the general news and updates, so usually, a very effective way of marketing and giving information to your existing base, but there are news and updates that can be sent to cold people as well and be just as effective.

The third way that we've identified is just for information or informative purposes. This primarily is for example, good in the blogging field, so good articles that link to various other websites, or, existing customers that are interested in hearing what you've got to say and you're using the email in more of a content-driven way as opposed to a salesy way. They are three very good reasons why you should be using email marketing.

Stuart: Who send these emails to, is evidently very important. Who should you be targeting?

David: The whole effectiveness of an email marketing campaign is based really and solely around who you're going to be sending these emails to. Now, there are people that you can send emails to, and they're people that really should be sending them to, if you want to create an effective campaign. Who you could send them to are obviously existing customers. You can send them to people that aren't your customer but they've signed up for a newsletter, for example an email. There's obviously the very cold stage if you like which is just a database, or a list of people that really don't know you until they receive the email. Now of those three, we would suggest that you use the first two that I've mentioned there.

Start collecting a database of emails either via your site, or via promotions, via downloads, getting people to sign up. Then having them show an interest in what you've got to say and promote them that way. And obviously, your existing customers because they've obviously bought from you they're interested in your product or service. We feel that it's a good opportunity for you to send out regular, useful, interesting content that potentially would interest them and make them buy again.

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