



**Content Engagement Report**  
**B2B Email - June 2017**

## CONTENTS

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Analysis Criteria .....	3
3. Images .....	4
Image Count.....	4
Logo Location.....	5
Showcase Image.....	5
Image Sizes .....	6
Image Content.....	6
Conclusion .....	7
4. Text.....	7
Paragraph Sizes.....	7
Font Faces .....	8
Text Size .....	9
Conclusion .....	9
5. Colours.....	10
Colour Count .....	10
Colour Theme .....	10
Colour Contrasts .....	11
Conclusion .....	11
6. Page Structure .....	12
Page Length.....	12
Content Relationship.....	13
Page Layout .....	13
Conclusion .....	14
7. Links .....	14
Link Count .....	14
Link Type.....	15
Conclusion .....	15
8. Summary.....	16

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The analysis contained within this report attempts to determine what (if any) factors affect how people engage with email marketing content, specifically click through rates.

We analysed all the B2B email campaigns conducted over a 12-month period, totalling 127 campaigns covering 600k+ emails sent and across a range of clients & industries, and then marked each one based on a certain set of criteria. Once each piece of email content had been analysed and marked, calculations were then made to determine the overall click through rates for each part of the criteria.

From these rates, we can theorise what types of content may prove to be more successful than others. Each set of criteria will be broken down in detail to cover each item in it.

## 2. ANALYSIS CRITERIA

In total, there were 5 specific sets of criteria used to analyse each piece of email content: -

- Images
- Text
- Colours
- Page Structure
- Links

These sets are broken down into specifics to analyse content based on items such as image count, image sizes and types, fonts use and how lengthy paragraphs are, whether lots of colour was used, how long the page is, and whether text or image links are used, along with a number of others in each section.

### 3. IMAGES

Image content was assessed against a number of different factors: -

- **Image Count** – The total number of images within the email, excluding any social media links usually found in the email footer as these do not encourage click throughs to the desired company or product landing page, which is the desired effect of any email marketing campaign.
- **Logo Location** – Every marketing email should contain either the corporate or main product logo situated somewhere in the email, from this we can determine whether location of that logo has an effect of click through rates.
- **Showcase Image** – We consider a showcase image to be a large image that fills the width of the main email body, usually to attract the recipients' attention as a dominating piece of content on the page. Assessing the position of a showcase image, we can determine if location affects click through rates.
- **Image Sizes** – This assesses whether there are mostly large or mostly small images within the email, or an even mixture.
- **Image Content** – Assess whether email content contains more product based images, or more brand/style images to see which has a greater effect on engagement.

#### Image Count

The following table lists each assessment item with the overall click through rate for that item. The winner is shown in bold:

2 or less images	0.80% Overall click rate
Between 3-6 images	0.43% Overall click rate
Between 7-10 images	0.64% Overall click rate
<b>More than 10 images</b>	<b>0.95% Overall click rate</b>

From the above results, we can theorise that having a substantial number of images could increase the chances of a higher click through rate, although it is clear that having a minimal number of images may also prove successful. As a result, some emails will benefit from one or two images to compliment the body text, or have a larger number of images to make up a distinct identity of the email, so long as the page doesn't look too busy or complicated to understand.

As a proportion of overall click through rates and comparing the least successful to the most successful, utilising more than 10 images can yield an **increase of over 220%** in click throughs, keeping it simple with 2 or less images can yield an **increase of 186%** in click throughs.

### Logo Location

<b>Logo located top</b>	<b>0.74% Overall click rate</b>
Logo located bottom	0.31% Overall click rate
Multiple logos	0.55% Overall click rate

This table shows that a clear logo at the top of the email, that grabs the users' attention and clearly identifies who that email is from, may yield higher click rates. Comparing the least successful to the most successful, having a logo at the top can yield an increase in click throughs of **over 238%**.

### Showcase Image

As previously stated, we believe a showcase image to be a single or a set of standout images that fill the width of the main email body, designed to capture the users' attention as they read through.

<b>Headline showcase image</b>	<b>0.66 % Overall click rate</b>
Midway showcase image	0.20% overall click rate
Bottom showcase image	-
Multiple showcase images	0.29% Overall click rate
No showcase images	0.60% Overall click rate

From the results above we can conclude that having a showcase image is not always necessary to ensure success, but if marketers are going to use them then a single image located firmly at the top could yield higher click through rates. Both with

or without have similar rates of success, but too many showcase images or locating too far down may have a detrimental effect.

If marketers do utilise a showcase image headlining their email, they could obtain an **increase of 330%** in click throughs, should they opt to exclude a showcase image they could still expect a potential **increase of 300%** in click throughs.

### Image Sizes

Mostly large images	0.57% Overall click rate
Mostly small images	0.57% Overall click rate
<b>Mixture of sizes</b>	<b>0.73% Overall click rate</b>

We can see from the analysis that having an even mixture between large and small images may lead to higher click through rates. We can theorise this is due to being a more user-friendly viewing experience, since the page isn't filled with either large dominating images that overpower the user, or very small images that just get lost amongst all the other content on the page and make it difficult to read.

By utilising an even mixture of image sizes, marketers could expect to yield an **increase of over 137%** in clicks as compared to just having one image size.

### Image Content

Mostly product images	0.60% Overall click rate
<b>Mostly brand/style images</b>	<b>0.61% Overall click rate</b>
Even mixture of content	0.56% Overall click rate

The assessment shows that a bias towards either product based images or brand images doesn't have a large effect on click through rates, so in this case the actual content of the image itself doesn't not affect campaign success.

## Conclusion

This set of criteria has shown some specific factors that could improve click through rates. Emails can benefit from either a small set of images placed well throughout the page, or a larger set to properly display the identity of the email, so long as they don't dominate the page and provide little room for text to compliment them.

Brand or product identification is also an important factor, placing a clear logo at the top of the page to allow the user to immediately determine who the email is from. Complimenting this with a single stand-out showcase image close by will also help, but is not always required and allowing the simple product identification to work on its own can be just fine.

Finally, any additional image content used would benefit from a varying range of sizes, so long as they fit correctly within the page and don't end up looking out of place.

## 4. TEXT

Utilising quality images in email marketing is not the only factor to ensure success, text often makes up the majority of what's on the page so we can assess in what ways this affects click through rates covering the following areas:

- **Paragraph Sizes** – We assessed whether emails contained long paragraphs that had a lot of detail, or quick concise paragraphs designed to get to the point quickly and may appear easier for a user to read.
- **Font Faces** – Standard fonts like Arial or Helvetica are most commonly used, but some marketers utilise decorative or web fonts to produce a unique or stand out style which may yield better results.
- **Text Size** – The size of text is always an important factor to consider when designing email content, large text makes key areas grab the users' attention but excessive use for standard paragraphs may have a detrimental effect.

### Paragraph Sizes

Lengthy paragraphs	0.50% Overall click rate
<b>Standard paragraphs</b>	<b>0.71% Overall click rate</b>
Concise paragraphs	0.69% Overall click rate
Minimal paragraphs/key descriptions	0.28% Overall click rate

The above table shows there isn't much difference between standard and short/concise paragraphs, but we can clearly see that users prefer to have some text to read as long as it isn't too much for the eyes to accommodate, or too little to have any relevant meaning.

By ensuring that marketers utilise sensible length paragraphs, by comparing the least successful to the most successful campaigns, we can see that marketers could potentially achieve an **increase of between 246% - 253%** in click throughs.

## Font Faces

We broke font selection into three key types, allowing multiple combinations of different types:

- **Standard Fonts** – This covers the most commonly used such as Arial, Helvetica or Times New Roman.
- **Decorative Fonts** – Including such font as Monotype Corsiva and Brush Script.
- **Web Fonts** – These are fonts that aren't commonly found on a users' local email device, the most common web font library being Google Fonts, covering fonts like Roboto and Open Sans.

<b>Standard fonts only</b>	<b>0.64% Overall click rate</b>
Mixture of Standard & Decorative fonts	0.52% Overall click rate
Mixture of Standard & Web fonts	0.37% Overall click rate
Web fonts only	0.23% Overall click rate

Standard fonts were the most commonly used in the email content we assessed so it could be considered natural these perform the best, but we can clearly see that Web fonts may have a detrimental effect on click through rates. One reason for this may be lack of consistency in support across email clients, where some display them correctly whilst others don't.

Ensuring that standard fonts are only used within email content, as a proportional difference they can yield **an increase of 278%** in click throughs over other types of fonts.



## Text Size

Mostly large text	0.20% Overall click rate
<b>Mostly small/standard text</b>	<b>0.63% Overall click rate</b>
Even mixture of sizes	0.40% Overall click rate

Keeping text sizes to a manageable size may yield higher click through rates, and we can see that excessive use of large fonts may not be very appealing to users. For assessment purposes, we classified small/standard as between 14px-16px in size.

Standard font sizes provide the most successful campaigns, potentially yielding an **increase of 315%** over campaigns that utilise other sizes.

## Conclusion

Clearly, we can see that keeping paragraphs to a sensible size, that utilise standard easy to read fonts of a sensible size, could result in a more successful campaign. Large text can still be used to accentuate certain descriptions or section headings, but kept to a minimum so as not to overpower the user.

We can see that email recipients like to have something decent to read, giving proper explanation and overall context to what the email is showing them. Too much text and users get lost in a sea of words, too little and users are unable to accurately understand what's on the page or get the full picture of what the email is promoting.

Font choice should be kept to those that are commonly found across a wide range of email clients & devices, utilising decorative or web based fonts can help draw attention to key parts of the page, but risk displaying incorrectly for users who can't display them correctly.

## 5. COLOURS

It's often considered that colourful emails that are more eye catching will be more successful, so the following factors were used to test if that theory may indeed be true.

- **Colour Count** – This assess the total number of colours or colour shades used.
- **Colour Theme** – Determines if the colours used represent a specific theme that emphasises certain parts of the email content.
- **Colour Contrasts** – Some colours may be contrasting, which again is used as a way to emphasise the page content.

### Colour Count

<b>2 or less colours</b>	<b>0.73% Overall click rate</b>
Between 3-4 colours	0.41% Overall click rate
5 or more colours	-

From the table above we can see that whilst utilising some colour in emails is good, keeping it to a small set of colours may be more successful than emails that use a higher number of colours, and potentially return a **178% increase** in clicks throughs.

### Colour Theme

Some email content may utilise a specific theme whereby sets of colours are used throughout to emphasise certain sections or key pieces of information, whilst others may only use bits of colour sporadically.

Single colour theme	0.53% Overall click rate
Multiple colour themes	-
<b>No specific theme</b>	<b>0.62 Overall click rate</b>

Although the results above show that having no specific theme and utilising colour sporadically may yield higher click through rates, there isn't a huge difference from having a single colour theme, but any sets of colours should be kept simple wherever possible.

## Colour Contrasts

Some email content utilises contrasting colours to make it stand out on the page, but this can sometimes be a difficult viewing experience for users.

Mostly contrasting colours	0.42% Overall click rate
<b>Mostly non-contrasting colours</b>	<b>0.62% Overall click rate</b>
Even mixture of both	-

Utilising non-contrasting colours may yield a more successful campaign, one reason for this, as stated above, could be that contrasting colours can be less pleasing for the eye and as such put some users off engaging with the email.

Marketers could expect a potential **increase of over 147%** in click throughs over contrasting colours.

## Conclusion

Assessing the colour content of emails has shown that utilising a small number of colours, which are easy on the eye, could prove to be more successful for an email campaign. Too many colours make the email difficult to read as there is no clear identity, and clearly when colour is used in the right way it could prove to be the best way to produce email content.

If marketers choose to adopt a specific theme for their emails, then utilising clean, non-contrasting colours will help to provide the best user-friendly experience possible, and may encourage an increase in engagement.

## 6. PAGE STRUCTURE

Type and quality of the content isn't the only thing that affects how users engage with the email campaign, having a properly structured page layout that proves to be a user-friendly experience, can be the difference between success or failure. However, there are a number of different ways to layout a page, so we assessed our email campaigns based on the following factors:

- **Page Length** – Does the overall length of the page have any effect on click through rates, as a lengthy page may prove too much for some users to engage with.
- **Content Relationship** – Some emails utilise a supporting relationship between the images and text, whereby they relate to each other and help to explain what the email is about, whilst others have a more segmented relationship whereby images and text don't relate to each other and just exist as specific sections on the page.
- **Page Layout** – Different emails utilise different layouts of either rows, columns or a mixture of styles, but some layouts may prove more successful than others.

### Page Length

Short/standard length page	0.54% Overall click rate
<b>Medium length page</b>	<b>0.82% Overall click rate</b>
Long page	0.67% Overall click rate

We can see that emails of a medium page length, representing about one and a half screen heights, could prove to be more successful than other page lengths. This could be due to there being more content available to entice users into clicking through on a link, as lengthy pages are more time consuming to read but short pages try to cram everything into a smaller space.

As medium page length is the most successful, taken as a proportional difference over the least successful, it could yield a potential **increase of over 151%** in click throughs.

## Content Relationship

Segmented relationship	0.62% Overall click rate
<b>Supporting relationship</b>	<b>0.79% Overall click rate</b>
Mixture of both	0.36% Overall click rate

The table shows that a supporting relationship between content, whereby the text and images work together and relate to each other, can help produce a more successful campaign. One reason may be that by working together, the content appears more enticing as well as informative, so the user feels more encouraged to click through.

Content that has a supporting relationship could return a **219% increase** in click throughs compared to the other types.

## Page Layout

The most common email layout is the row-by-row approach where sections of text are followed by images, then another section of text, etc. However, it can sometimes prove more successful to use a different layout such as columns or a grid, however these can often appear disjointed and provide a difficult user experience.

<b>Mostly rows</b>	<b>0.64% Overall click rate</b>
Mostly columns	0.31% Overall click rate
Mostly grids	0.47% Overall click rate
Mixture of styles	0.59% Overall click rate

No specific style can be seen as being clearly more successful than the others, utilising mostly rows is most commonly used as previously stated, so this may be a reason it comes top, although utilising a mixture of styles isn't far behind so this may be seen as a nice, user-friendly style rather than just continuous sections.

## Conclusion

Email campaigns that have a decent page length that are not too long, and provide enough room for the page content to fit properly and flow correctly, can prove to be most successful. If a page is the right length to hold a decent amount of content that grabs the users' attention, the overall experience becomes more user-friendly.

Utilising a supporting relationship between the different content, whereby images and text work together to create a complete idea of what the email is promoting, could help to make the email more successful.

Finally, the tried and tested layout consisting of content laid out in rows can help encourage engagement, but adopting multiple styles or one specific style with bits of others not only makes a more interesting style to the page, but can also help to encourage engagement and higher click through rates.

## 7. LINKS

All email campaigns contain some links so the user can click through to the desired landing page or product website, text links are easy to identify but can be difficult to click on mobile devices so image links can be better for these purposes, but images take up a lot more space and can be slow to download on those devices. We assessed the links content based on the following factors:

- **Link Count** – Determines whether the total number of links has any effect on how successful the email is.
- **Link Type** – Are text links more successful than images, or could a mixture of both be the best way.

### Link Count

When assessing numbers of links, we only included main links to the landing page or product website, social media links were excluded as these do not encourage user engagement in the desired way.

2 or less links	0.59% Overall click rate
Between 3-5 links	0.41% Overall click rate
<b>6 or more links</b>	<b>0.77% Overall click rate</b>

We can see that a larger number of links could encourage more engagement and click throughs, although there doesn't seem to be a clear number that is largely successful. However, compared to the least successful number of links, the larger count could provide a potential **increase of over 187%** in click throughs.

### Link Type

Mostly image links	0.40% Overall click rate
Mostly text links	0.66% Overall click rate
<b>Mixture of types</b>	<b>0.77% Overall click rate</b>

This test hasn't shown a clear overall type that proves more successful, but we can see that image only links do perform the worst. One reason may be that image links are harder to identify if not clearly designed as a call-to-action.

### Conclusion

Having multiple clear links in an email could help encourage engagement, placed in optimum locations as the user reads down the page, so a user doesn't have to scroll all the way back to the top to click through to a landing page or website.

Mixing between text & image links also seems to be the best method. Especially if they complement each other, such as a product image link accompanied by a text description link, and utilising both types at the right locations to maximise the chance of a click through.

## 8. SUMMARY

Having the right number of images is key to ensuring an email has the best chance of success. Having a few simple images or brand logos to accompany the body text will be successful, especially on a B2B campaign, as these most often resemble the standard business emails most users get through their normal daily communication with clients & colleagues.

However, some marketers may wish to adopt a larger number of images to more accurately represent the products & services they are promoting, so in this case a high level of user engagement could be possible. Anywhere in between may be detrimental to success.

Decent sized paragraphs of a clear font that isn't too large or overpowering, means that the information is clear and accurate and hopefully encourages the user to click through at a higher rate. Users need to have enough information on the page to make a decision about whether they should click through.

Keeping colours simple and low in number make a more user-friendly experience, avoiding contrasting colours that can be difficult to read for some users.

Emails that are also a sensible length that don't cut content short and provide space for all the assets on the page to fit well together, will help to ensure better engagement. Combine with this images and text that support & complement each other, and provide an easy natural flow down the page, should yield more successful results.

Finally, maintaining a good ratio of image and text links that are located at key points throughout the page should complete the package of factors that help ensure an email is more successful than others.