



# Approach Your Email Reports with Confidence

How to measure your results and make smarter email marketing decisions



For many small businesses and nonprofits, the hardest part of marketing is measuring your results.

Your time is valuable and you want to make sure the effort you're putting in is paying off. You also want to make sure you're giving your audience the best experience possible and that you're not doing anything to drive people away.

Luckily, with email marketing software like Constant Contact, you have the tools you need to measure your results and make smarter decisions available right at your fingertips.

With a basic understanding of how your email reports work and a plan to put your data in action, you'll be able to approach your reports with confidence and gain the insights you need to become a smarter marketer.

Best of all, you'll be able to make simple improvements to get more people opening, reading, and acting on the emails you send out!

### In this guide, you will learn:

1. [How to read your email reports](#)
2. [How to apply your email data and improve your results](#)
3. [How to put your email reports to use](#)



## Understanding Your Email Reports

*If you're sending email out through Constant Contact, you have access to helpful reports that show you how your emails are performing, what's working for you, and where you can improve.*

*Here are the six most important areas you should focus on, and what these metrics are really telling you:*

### **Opens (Open rate)**

Open rates let you know how many of the people who receive your emails are actually taking the next step to open and view the content you send out. The more people you get to open your emails, the more opportunities you'll have to drive business results.

You can view the percentage of contacts that opened your email, as well as a specific list of everyone who opened each message.

### **Clicks (Click-through rate)**

Click-through rates show you how many people are engaging with your content and taking a desired action by clicking on links within your email.

Within Constant Contact, you can view your overall click-through rate, a breakdown of clicks per link, and a list of contacts that clicked each link within your email.

### **Bounces (Bounce rate)**

An email bounce signifies that your email was not delivered to someone on your contact list.

Emails can bounce for a number of reasons, including invalid email addresses, a full inbox, or out of office statuses. Keeping an eye on your bounces will help you to remove any addresses with ongoing issues and maintain high deliverability rates.

You can view the total number of bounces and the reason that the email bounced. You should also export a list of any non-existent email addresses that we recommend removing from your contact list.



**Tip**

Every year we gather and examine over 200 million emails from Constant Contact customers to give you a sense of how your results compare with others in your industry.

[See how you compare in our Comparison-By-Industry Chart.](#)

## Spam report

If an individual on your email list reports your email as unwanted or unsolicited, it will be marked as spam.

The best way to ensure a low spam rate is to practice permission-based email marketing. By giving people the ability to opt in to your email list, and never adding new contacts without their permission, you'll have more people looking forward to your emails and less spam reports.

## Opt-outs

An opt-out occurs when one of your contacts no longer wants to receive your emails and unsubscribes from your list. A few opt-outs are normal from time to time — as your audience's interests may change and they decide that your emails are no longer relevant to them, but you should pay attention to this number to make sure your emails are not turning people away often.

Constant Contact manages unsubscribes for you. When someone clicks to unsubscribe from your emails, we automatically move them to your *Do Not Mail* list. You don't have to worry about accidentally importing or sending to them again by mistake.

## Forwards/Social Shares

A forward occurs when someone receives your email and clicks to share it with a friend or colleague. Within Constant Contact, you can view how many and which contacts forwarded your email with the "Forward email" links and buttons inside your Constant Contact email.

If you're using Constant Contact's Social Share Bar tool — which makes it easy for contacts to share your emails on their social networks in just a few clicks — you can also keep track of how many shares your email has received on social networks like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.



Tip

Keep a close eye on your opt-outs and spam reports. If you notice these numbers spike, it may be time to reevaluate your email content and sending frequency.

# How to Apply Your Email Reports

*In this section, we will take a look at some of the important questions you'll need to answer when creating a successful email marketing strategy and how your email reports can help answer them.*

## 1. Is my audience engaged?

### Focus on: Opens

A high open rate shows that you're on the right track and providing useful information. If your open rate is lower than your goal, it might be time to make some tweaks to your strategy.

Start by looking at your overall sending schedule. It's important to find a balance so that you're able to stay top-of-mind without crowding your reader's inbox. You should also look at your initial sign-up process and make sure that you're setting the right expectations when someone signs up.

It's important that people can easily recognize your name when you land in their inbox. Pay attention to details like "from name" and "from email address." Catch your audience's attention with an engaging subject line — it's the first impression your emails have on your readers.

### Next steps:

Look at the open rates for your past few emails. Are there any that stand out? Is there something unique about that email that you could apply to your next newsletter or announcement?

Spend some extra time on your next email and try adding something new. Then, check back with your open rates to see if more people opened this email than usual.

### Learn more:

[Improve Your Open Rates with One Simple Tweak](#)

[Improve Your Open Rates with These 12 Subject Line Tweaks](#)

[Help, My Contacts Aren't Opening My Emails!](#)



Tip

If you're not sure what your email audience is interested in, consider sending an online survey. Constant Contact's survey campaign makes it easy to collect feedback from your email audience and can help you better understand what makes your customers tick.

## 2. Are my emails inspiring people to take action?

### Focus on: *Clicks*

Getting people to open your emails is an important first step; inspiring them to take action is even more important.

Design can play a major role in whether or not people interact with the emails you send out. This is especially important for readers on mobile devices who will be less likely to engage with emails that are difficult to read on a smaller screen. Keep your message as focused as possible, with one clear call to action.

If people aren't engaging with your emails, it may be because they aren't connecting with the content you send out. Take some time to look through your click reports to see which links are getting the most attention. This is a great way to see what your readers are most interested in. You can also create separate email lists for people who click on a particular link and follow up with a more targeted email.

### Next steps:

Create an email with a goal in mind and provide a clear way for readers to take the next step. After sending, look at your reports to see if people are clicking on links and engaging with your business beyond your email. You can even look at which contacts are clicking on your links and target them in future messages.

### Learn more:

[7 Things You Can Do to Significantly Improve Your Email Click-Through Rates](#)

[How to Figure Out if Your Email Marketing Campaign is Working](#)

[5 Ways to Make Sure Your Email Marketing Moves the Reader to Action](#)



Always think about what action you want people to take before sending your email. Provide a clear call-to-action and make sure your readers have the information they need to take action.

### 3. Are my emails reaching the right people?

#### Focus on: *Bounces, Spam*

Once you send an email, you want to check back to make sure your emails are reaching your contacts in their inbox. Part of having a healthy and responsive email list is paying attention to your bounce rate. Look in your reports, keep track of email addresses that consistently bounce, and remove any with ongoing issues.

Also, be sure to keep an eye on the number of spam reports your emails are receiving. Remember that the only people on your list should be those who have given you permission to add them. This includes any new contacts added using Constant Contact's online sign-up tools. If you're still seeing spam complaints, review your email content and sending frequency to make sure it reflects the expectations you set when people sign up.

#### Next steps:

Don't ignore high bounce rates or spam reports. Use your reports to remove contacts that continually bounce.

Review your email sign-up process to make sure people understand what they are signing up for. Also, look at your welcome email to make sure you're making the right impression when people join your list. Your welcome email should re-affirm their decision to join your list and remind them about what they're going to receive.

#### Learn More:

[6 Mistakes that Can Get Your Emails Marked as Spam \(Even if You're Not a Spammer\)](#)

[Everything You Need to Know About Managing Your Email Bounces](#)

[4 Things Your Welcome Email Must Do \(and Probably Doesn't\)](#)



Tip

Constant Contact provides information about why your emails bounce. Look at the reason why an email bounced and determine if it is a temporary or permanent issue.

If the issue is permanent, like "Non-existent," double check to make sure the address you added is spelled correctly.

## 4. Am I doing anything to turn people away?

### Focus on: *Opt-outs*

An opt-out from time to time is nothing to be too concerned about. However, if your reports indicate a large number of unsubscribes, you'll want to make some adjustments. Look to see if a certain email had a large number of opt-outs or if you're consistently receiving a large number of unsubscribes.

If you're consistently seeing a high number of opt-outs think about what might be turning your contacts away. Are you sending emails too frequently? Are you providing value in your messages? Opt-outs can give you a helpful hint that your approach needs to be adjusted.

### Next Steps:

Check in with your reports to make sure your opt-outs are down to a minimum. If your opt-outs are higher than you'd like, consider sending a survey to your contacts to get some feedback on how frequently they want to hear from you, and what kind of content is relevant to them.

### Learn More:

[Do You Know Why People Are Unsubscribing From Your Emails?](#)

[How to Make People Hate Your Email Newsletter](#)

[Should I Survey My Email Contacts to Find Out If They Liked My Email?](#)



Tip

Don't take opt-outs personally. While you never want to see a large number of people unsubscribing from your list, it's important to give people the ability to opt out so that you're only sending to people who are excited to hear from you.



## Put your email reports to use

Identify one area of your email marketing you'd like to improve.

Use the tips we've outlined in this guide and make sure to revisit the worksheet after your campaign goes out. What worked? What didn't? How can you continue to improve your results?

With this worksheet, you'll be on your way to better email marketing results and more opportunities to grow your business with email marketing.

Set a Goal	What metrics will define success?	Results	What worked?	What didn't?

## Get started today!

Once you've mastered your email reports, you'll be able to make smarter marketing decisions and create a strategy that drives meaningful business results.

From there, you'll want to look beyond opens and clicks to see what impact your emails are having on your business.

What business results are you looking for? Do you want to increase traffic to your website, bring more people into your store or office, or generate new and repeat business?

Whatever your goal is, email marketing can help you reach it. With a strong plan in place, the ability to track your results, and insight into what's really working, you'll build powerful customer relationships and get better business results than ever before.

**Log in to your Constant Contact account and review the results of your most recent email marketing campaigns.**

**Not a Constant Contact customer? Visit [ConstantContact.com](https://www.constantcontact.com) or call 1-866-289-2101 to start your free 60-day trial.**



### Have questions?

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