

# 2017



## STATE OF EMAIL REPORT

The data, trends, and innovations that shape successful email programs in 2017

# Litmus makes it easy to build, test, and monitor every campaign so you can deliver a superior customer experience.

## Ensure a consistently great brand experience for every subscriber everywhere.

- ✔ Instant Email Previews in 70+ email clients, including iPhone, Outlook, and key international webmail clients, ensure your campaigns look great in every inbox.
- ✔ Catch costly errors before you send with Litmus Checklist. Decrease turnaround time, reduce errors, and improve production processes.

## Streamline your email production process with time-saving features from Litmus Builder.

- ✔ Increase your open rate by previewing your from name, subject line, and preview text in 15+ email clients before you send with Subject Line Checker.
- ✔ Reduce errors and streamline your QA process by instantly identifying issues within your code with Code Analysis.

## Get your email scanned by every major spam filter before you send so you can reach the inbox every time with Spam Testing.

- ✔ Verify your authentication and infrastructure are set up correctly.
- ✔ Receive actionable advice on how to adapt your email's content to improve your spam score.

## Send personalized emails at the right time to the right device with Litmus Email Analytics.

- ✔ Go beyond opens and clicks. Get aggregate and individual-level recipient data, geolocation, and device open insights to improve segmentation and optimization efforts.

### Improve Your Email Production and Workflow Efficiency with Litmus

Litmus helps email marketers build, test, and analyze their email campaigns. See how Litmus can help take your email marketing program to the next level.

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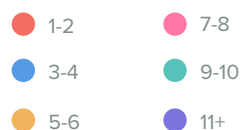
# The email industry is constantly changing.

Email marketing can be a finicky beast, with the industry landscape shifting without warning. The past year saw the launch of a new version of Apple's mobile operating system (iOS 10), merger and acquisition movement from Verizon and Microsoft, and the introduction of new privacy regulations around the world—to name just a few of the issues impacting email marketers today.

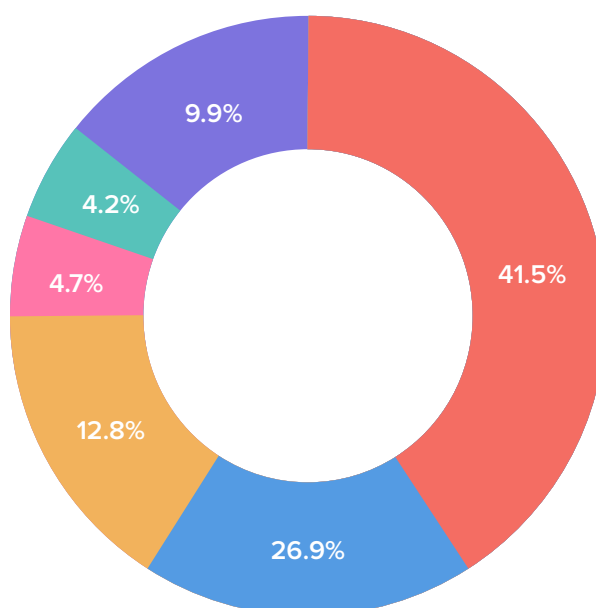
All of these changes can make building a strong email program challenging. If you're like the 41% of email marketing teams that consist of just 1 or 2 people we surveyed in the [State of Email Production](#), it can be hard to keep up with everything that's going on.

## People on team

How many people are on the email marketing team at your company? Include yourself and any of your co-workers who spend at least half their time on email marketing.



885 respondents

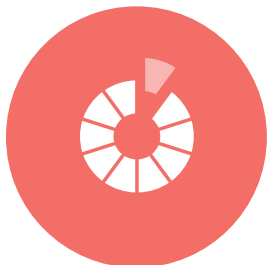


## How to use this report

We designed this ebook to give you a comprehensive look at the data, trends, and innovations that will help you build a successful email program in 2017. Arm yourself and your team with knowledge about new and updated email clients, get inspired to try new and innovative techniques in your email program, and ensure your messages reach the inbox—all while delighting your customers along the way.

# Key takeaways & action items from the State of Email Report

Email is a constantly changing landscape of email clients, support, and marketing trends. Here's our top takeaways from the State of Email 2017 that will impact your email marketing program:



## When email clients change support without warning, your brand perception is at risk.

The email client ecosystem continues to be fragmented and dynamic, and email clients can drop and add support for critical email elements without warning. Prevent costly errors, protect your brand reputation, and ensure a consistently great brand experience for every subscriber by incorporating a thorough QA and testing process for every email send. Read more on page [05](#).



## The first step to conversion: Reaching the inbox.

Consumers' definition of spam is changing, and email marketers must change their practices accordingly. Increasingly, any unwanted or poor email experience can count as spam, so be sure to evaluate your permissioning and sending practices to prevent unsubscribes and spam complaints. Read more on page [52](#).



## Surprising and delighting your subscribers is quickly becoming table stakes for email programs.

If you want to stand out, you have to drive relevant and timely email communications that align to your subscribers' interests. Read more on page [63](#).

Streamline your email workflow by automating the more mundane aspects of email creation, allowing you to focus on what matters—delivering a high performing email experience to every customer. Read more on page [64](#).

### Improve Your Email Production and Workflow Efficiency with Litmus

Litmus helps email marketers build, test, and analyze their email campaigns. See how Litmus can help take your email marketing program to the next level.

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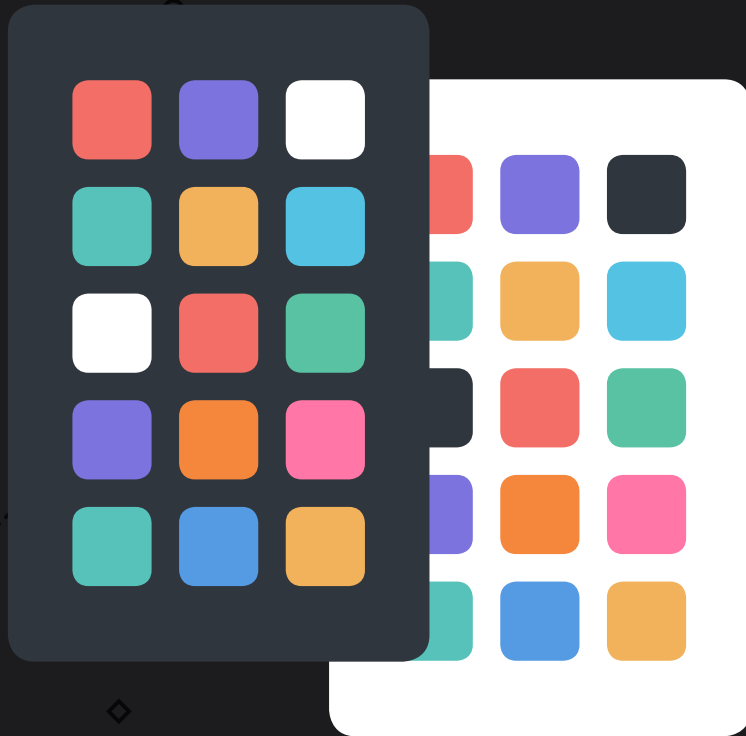
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## CHAPTER 1

# New clients, apps, and operating systems

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These brand new clients, apps, and operating systems have their own quirks email professionals need to look out for. Here's what you need to know.

# iPhone 7 and iOS 10

Launched in September 2016, Apple's iPhone 7, iPhone 7 Plus, and [iOS 10 brought new changes](#) (and a few new headaches) for email marketers. Given the popularity of iPhones and iPads, changes to Apple's mobile operating system and how it renders emails—no matter how small—can mean big changes in the email world.

## Keep in mind:

- Screen sizes for the iPhone 7 and iPhone 7 Plus remain the same as the screen sizes for the iPhone 6 family, so adjustments to media queries aren't necessary
- iOS 10 re-establishes support for HTML5 video, which allows you to embed video directly in email
- iOS 10 does not support the `<iframe>` tag or fixed positioning



## Updates to user email settings

iOS 10 made changes to how users can interact with their email settings, which may impact market share and specific user experiences.

For the first time ever, iOS 10 gives customers the freedom to delete pre-installed apps, including the iOS Mail app, meaning we may see market share shift as users replace the iOS Mail app with their preferred email client on their iPhones.

As with previous versions of iOS, users can adjust the number of lines they'd like to display for preview text or block images by default. Apple allows its users to see up to five lines of preview text, or to even disable preview text completely.

ACTION ITEM

## Keep an eye on your customers' preferred devices.

With the ability for users to delete pre-installed email apps, your distribution of email opens may shift away from the iOS 10 Mail app. Look for trends among your subscribers and be sure to stay on top of any major email client changes so you can better target your audience.

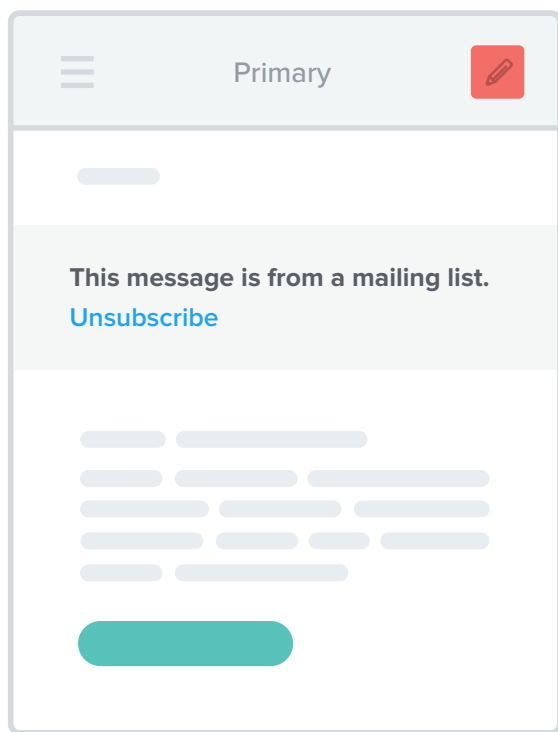


### Which devices do your subscribers prefer?

Know in what email clients and devices your subscribers open email with Litmus Email Analytics.

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Start your free trial. Already have an account? [Sign in.](#)



## iOS 10 adds list-unsubscribe

With iOS 10, Apple joined other major providers like Google and Yahoo! Mail in supporting list-unsubscribe, which enables native unsubscribe links offered by inbox providers. This means Apple's "easy unsubscribe" banner now appears prominently at the top of your marketing emails.

#### ACTION ITEM

### Enable the unsubscribe header.

Many ESPs automatically add the list-unsubscribe header to every email that is sent through their platforms, but in some cases, you'll need to add the code to the headers into your emails. While this may seem counter-intuitive, giving your subscribers an easy way to unsubscribe builds trust, reduces spam complaints, and can dramatically improve your user metrics, too.

In contrast to [Gmail](#), iOS Mail [only supports the mailto: version of the list-unsubscribe header](#). This means that each email address can unsubscribe directly in the email, without needing to move to a landing page. If your list-unsubscribe header contains a link, the unsubscribe banner will not be displayed.

```
From: josh@domain.com
Subject: [espc-tech] More info on List-Unsubscribe
Date: August 31, 2006 3:13:02 PM CDT
To: jasmine@domain.com
List-Unsubscribe: <mailto:unsubscribe-espc-tech-12345N@domain.com>,
<http://domain.com/member/unsubscribe/?listname=espc-tech@domain.
com?id=12345N>
```

Source: [List-Unsubscribe](#)

While research from Yesmail showed a [dramatic rise in unsubscribes from iOS 10](#) devices in the weeks following the rollout, there's [no reason to panic](#). You may see a jump in unsubscribes in the short term, but implementing list-unsubscribe can actually help improve your campaigns in the long term.

#### ACTION ITEM

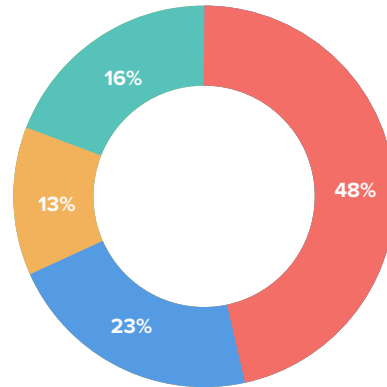
### Don't panic!

Unsubscribes help keep your list clean, tailored, and targeted to the people who actually want to receive communications from you.

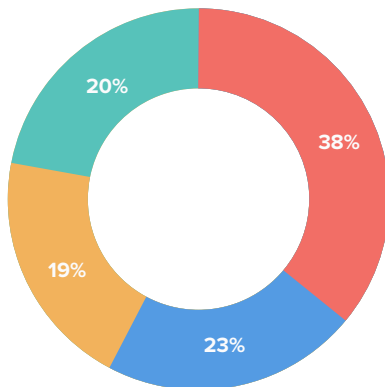
Remember: While unsubscribes don't hurt your sender reputation, spam complaints do. List-unsubscribe makes it easier for your customers to unsubscribe from messages when they're no longer interested—and helps prevent frustrated subscribers from hitting the prominent "mark as spam" button.

## While the vast majority of consumers find signing up for email easy...

How easy or difficult is it to sign up to receive promotional emails from a brand?



Very easy      Rather easy  
Rather difficult      Very difficult



Very easy      Rather easy  
Rather difficult      Very difficult

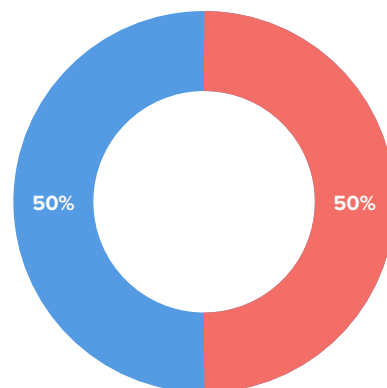
## ...many find it difficult to unsubscribe...

How easy or difficult is it to unsubscribe from receiving promotional emails from a brand?

## ...which leads to higher spam complaints.

Have you marked promotional emails from a brand as spam because you couldn't easily figure out how to unsubscribe?

1,361 respondents



No      Yes

Source: [Adapting to Consumers' Definition of Spam](#)

# Updates to auto-scaling

iOS 10 brought changes to how it auto-scales email in its email client, making even responsive emails appear zoomed in or off-centered.

## ACTION ITEM

### Disable auto-scaling.

[Apple Mail engineer James Magahern suggests](#) disabling auto-scaling completely to combat this issue. Here's how:

```
<meta name="x-apple-disable-message-reformatting">
```

## ACTION ITEM

### Directly target iOS 10.

Email developer Rémi Parmentier also found that [@supports declarations can be used in CSS to target iOS 10](#). iOS can be targeted with the proprietary property “-webkit-overflow-scrolling” as it is only supported on iOS. Using this in combination with one of the properties introduced in iOS 10's Webkit version—#RGBA color notations, for example—we can specifically target iOS 10.

Here's a media query that will target iOS 10:

```
@supports (-webkit-overflow-scrolling:touch) and (color:#ffff) {  
  /* Insert CSS here */  
}
```

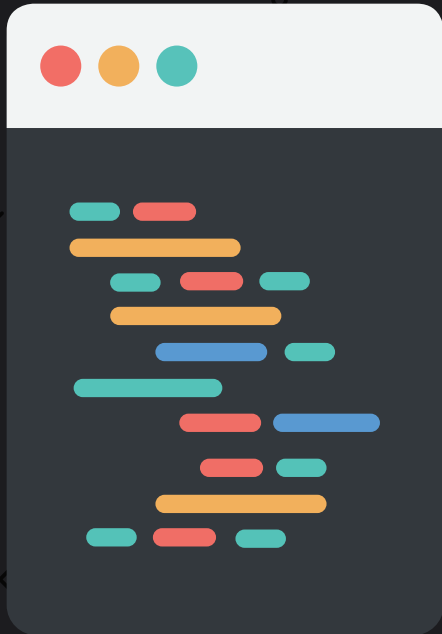
### How do your emails render in iOS 10?

Preview your campaigns in iOS 10 on iPhone 7 and iPhone 7 Plus with Litmus Email Previews.

[Sign up now](#)

Start your free trial. Already have an account? [Sign in.](#)





## CHAPTER 2

# Email client updates, changes, and farewells

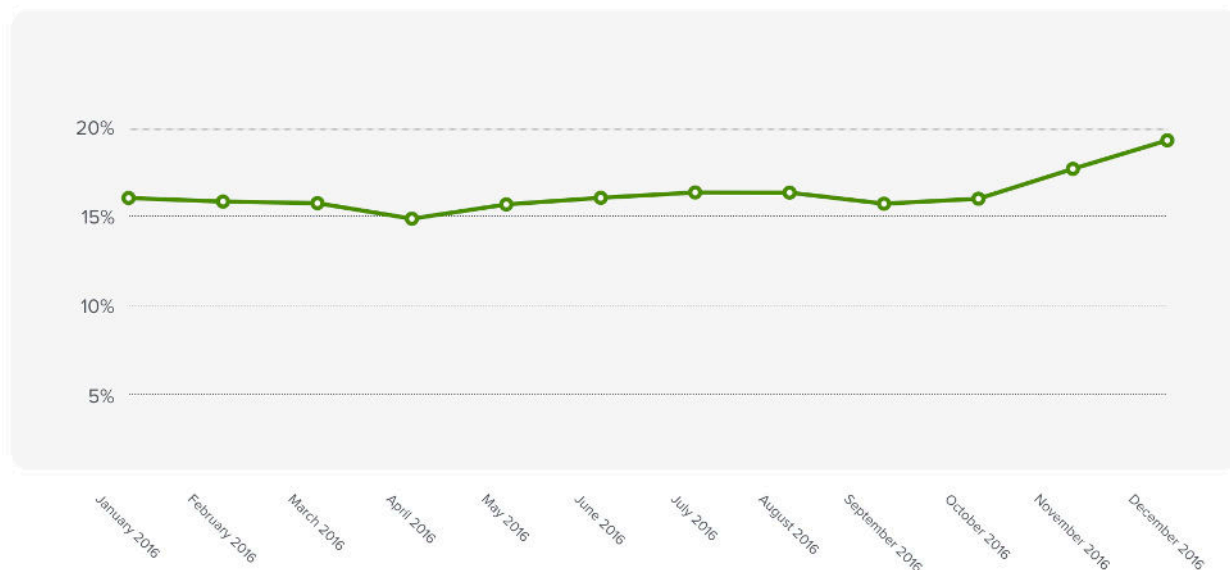
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Most of the major email clients had updates in 2016, which will have huge consequences for email design in 2017. Here's what you need to know about support, quirks, and bugs for these updated email clients.

# Gmail now supports <style>, responsive design, and display: none

In 2016, Gmail reported [more than 1 billion monthly users](#), with 75% of them on mobile devices. According to Litmus Email Analytics, Gmail holds 20% of all email client market share.

## WEBMAIL OPENS



Historically, Gmail has been difficult to design and develop for. But that all changed when Gmail rocked the email world in September 2016 by adding support for <style>, media queries, and display: none. Better support for CSS in Gmail means faster email production turnaround times and fewer bugs to troubleshoot and fix, especially for a client with so much market share.

*“This is just one part of an overall effort to expand CSS support in Gmail and to give email designers more control over how their messages are rendered.”*

— [Pierce Vollucci](#), Product Manager at Google

# Gmail now supports media queries

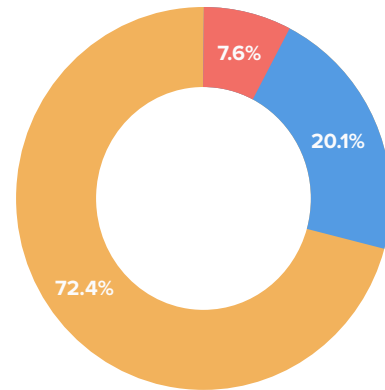
With these Gmail updates, over 75% of email clients now support responsive design. According to the [State of Email Design](#), about 75% of email marketers already use responsive design on a regular basis as part of their marketing emails.

## Design used for broadcast & segmented emails

Which type of email design approach do you typically use for your broadcast and segmented emails?

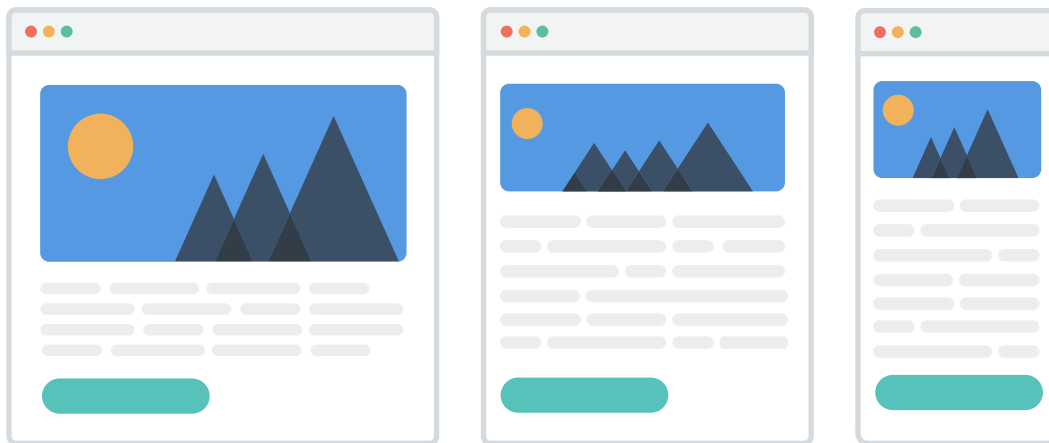
738 respondents

Source: [State of Email Design](#)



● Desktop-Centric ● Mobile-Aware ● Responsive

Now that Gmail has added support for responsive design, these numbers may start to change. Adding responsive design to your email program allows you to optimize the email experience for users on any size or type of device.



## Rendering trouble with IMAP and POP accounts in Gmail

Google allows non-Gmail email accounts (such as @yahoo.com, @outlook.com, @gmx.de, etc.) to be accessed through the Gmail app via POP and IMAP. One exception to the media query support that email designers must be aware of is that Google's improved rendering engine does not apply to POP or IMAP accounts using the Gmail app.

When non-Gmail email accounts are accessed via the Gmail app in this fashion, Gmail still relies on the old rendering engine, which lacks support for CSS and media queries. Gmail app users with a Gmail address or G Suite will enjoy responsive design and advanced CSS support—while users with a non-Gmail address, on the other hand, will not.

The significant inconsistencies in rendering for Gmail and POP/IMAP accounts have been causing lots of confusion in the email world. To clear things up, here's how Gmail rendering with a classic Gmail account compares to Gmail rendering with a IMAP or POP account:

	Gmail	POP/IMAP
<style> support in head	✓	✗
Media query support	✓	✗
CSS selector support	✗	✗
Classes	✓	✗
IDs	✓	✗

One more exception to note: Users who access Gmail web clients via a mobile browser will still experience a lack of support for embedded CSS, media queries, and responsive design.

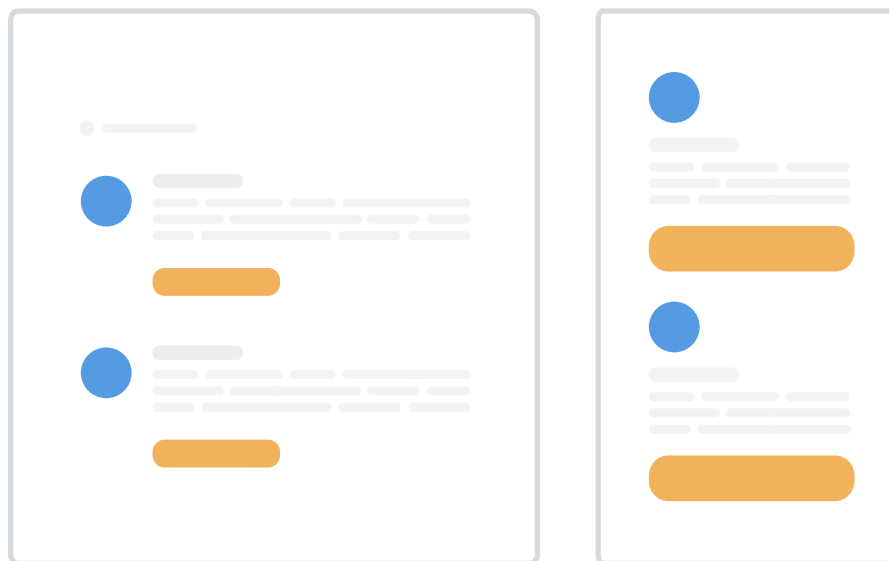
The good news? These are small exceptions to the overall rule. The majority of Gmail users will be able to experience responsive email support.

#### ACTION ITEM

### Utilize responsive design to optimize your emails for every inbox (including Gmail!).

You can perform some impressive email acrobatics using media queries. Content can be shifted, hidden, and even swapped out, providing marketers and designers with amazing control over their campaigns.

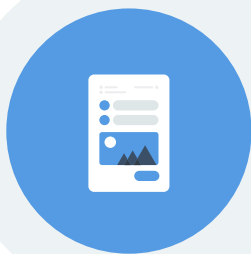
For example, you can take a complex, multi-column layout on desktop and streamline it into a single-column, easy-to-scan, easy-to-scroll design on mobile—complete with larger text and touch-friendly buttons.



#### ACTION ITEM

### Update your existing templates.

With these updates from Gmail, you'll need to take a look at your existing templates and make some adjustments. Now is a great time to try responsive design to ensure your emails look great regardless of the device it's opened in. Or, you can download our free templates to kickstart your next campaign.

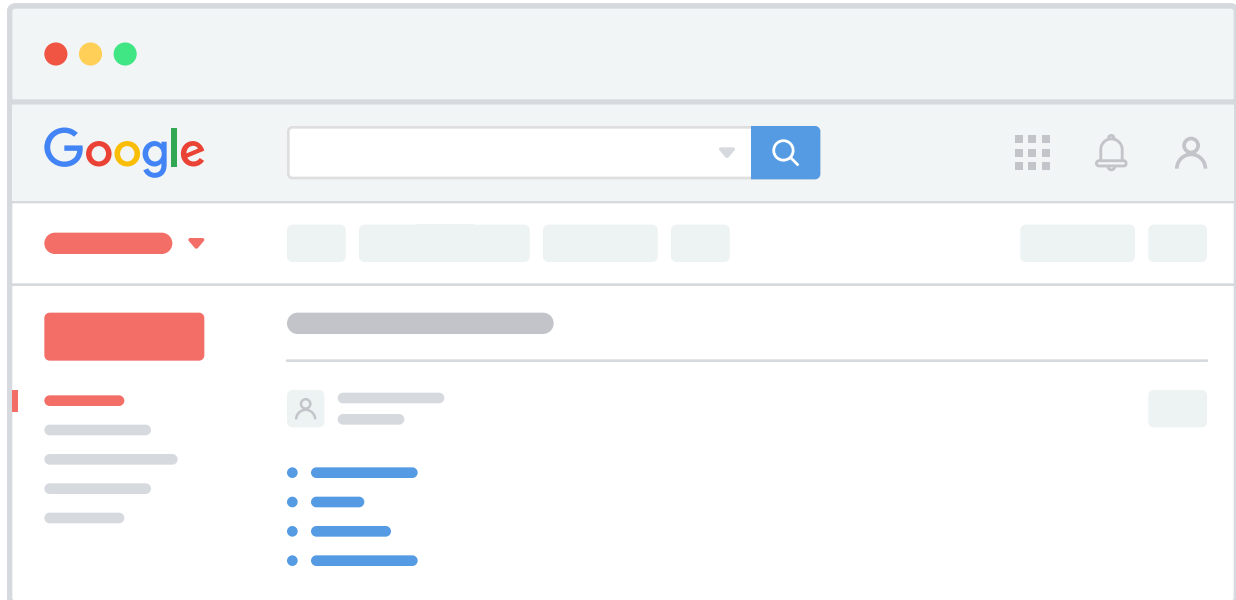


Download one of our free responsive, pre-tested templates from the Litmus Community.

[Download now](#)

# Say goodbye to inlining CSS

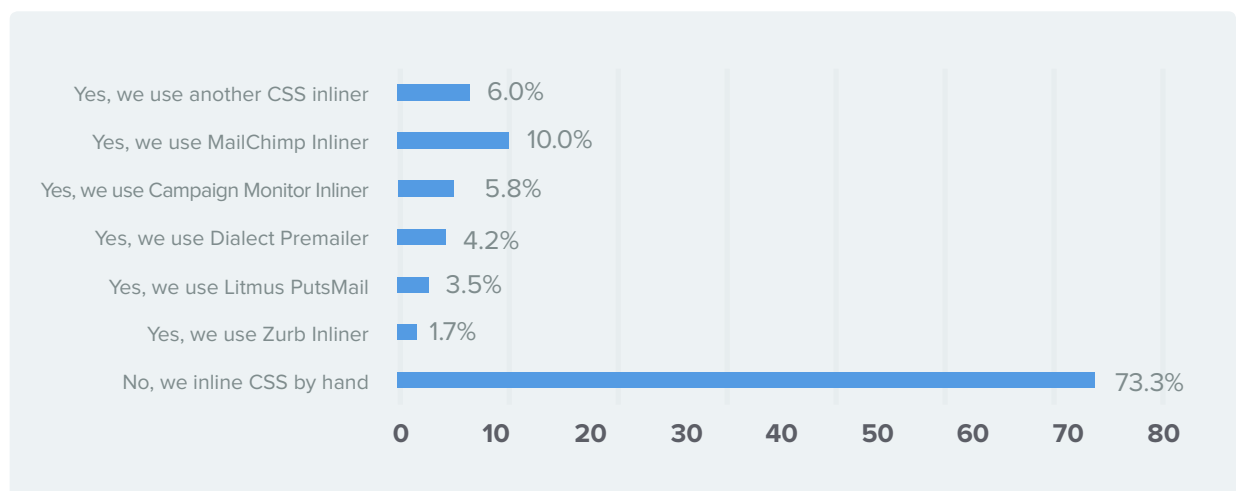
“Inlining” styles moves the CSS and associated formatting instructions from the style block in the <head> of your email into the corresponding HTML elements in the <body> of the email. Historically, if styles were not moved inline, the styling in the body of your email would not display in Gmail.



Nearly 73% of our respondents in the [State of Email Production](#) survey inlined their CSS by hand. This takes up valuable time and opens up room for error.

## CSS inliner usage

Does your company use a CSS inliner for email development?



Now that Gmail supports the style block in the <head>, inlining is no longer necessary when optimizing for Gmail.

#### ACTION ITEM

## Update your email practices with embedded CSS.

Inlining CSS will no longer be necessary to ensure a great experience for most Gmail users. Email marketing teams can now use embedded styles placed in the <head> of email HTML.

### Using embedded CSS:

- Is much faster to code, making it easier to organize and maintain your email development workflow
- Reduces your email's file size, meaning it takes less time to load
- Allows you to experiment and use progressive enhancement

Here at Litmus, we've decided to use [embedded CSS instead of inlining](#) for one of our monthly newsletters.



Note how the subscriber experience changes slightly, but remains positive both with (left) and without (right) support for embedded CSS.

#### ACTION ITEM

### Analyze your audience.

Determine what percentage of your subscribers use email clients that support embedded CSS. Lack of support for embedded CSS is limited to a small selection of mostly international webmail providers, making it an edge case for many brands. If your subscriber base favors clients that support embedded CSS, it's a good time to consider leaving inlining behind.

See which devices your subscribers open on with Litmus Email Analytics and build more targeted campaigns. See how long they spend reading, if they print or delete your email, and more.

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## Gmail now supports display:none

Gmail also [rolled out support for display:none](#), a CSS property that can hide specific parts of an email. This adds even more support for popular techniques. One example is the ability to hide preheader text, which allows more granular control over how much preview text appears in the inbox, or hiding desktop-specific content if the user is on a mobile device.

The 2016 State of Email Report [Free Download] - An analysis of every email innovation + the impact on your emails for the coming year—download the

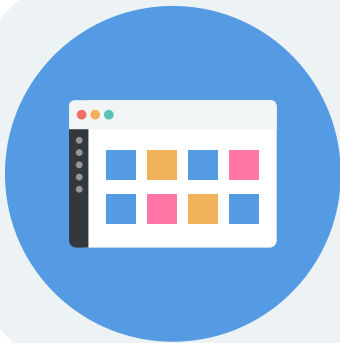


\* In this example for last year's State of Email Report, we were able to add more information about the report without sacrificing any design elements of the email.

Here is the code you can use to hide your preheader text like we did in our email example.

```
<!doctype html>
<html>
<head>
  <meta charset="utf-8">
  <title>Gmail display: none;</title>
  <style>
    @media screen and (max-width: 2000px) {
      * [summary~="hide"] {display:none;}
    }
  </style>
</head>
<body>
  <div style="display: none;">I will not show</div>
  <div class="hide" summary="hide">I will not show in Gmail</div>
  <a href="https://litmus.com" style="display: none;">I will not
  show in gmail</a>
  
  <table style="display: none;">
    <tr>
      <td>I will not show in gmail</td>
    </tr>
  </table>
  <input type="checkbox" style="display: none;">
</body>
</html>
```

Taken together, these Gmail updates are just the start of building better email experiences for your subscribers without turning to hacks and workarounds.



### Re-test your templates in Gmail

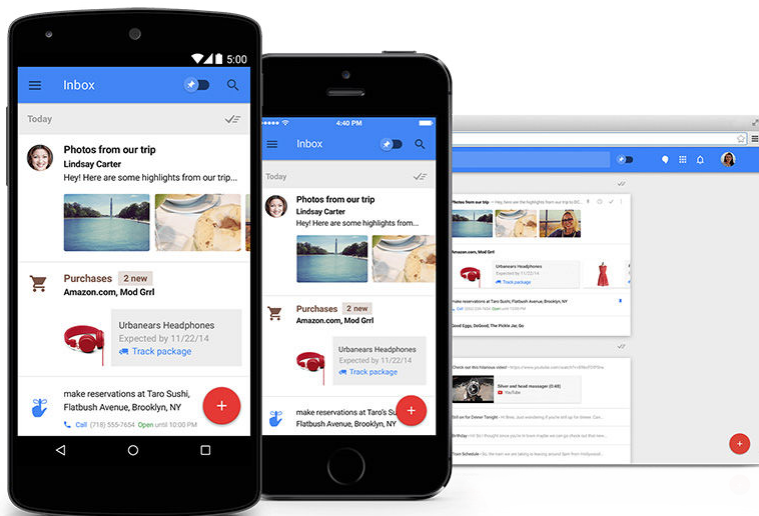
Use Litmus Email Previews to see how your emails render with Gmail's most recent updates.

[Sign up now](#)

Start your free trial. Already have an account? [Sign in.](#)

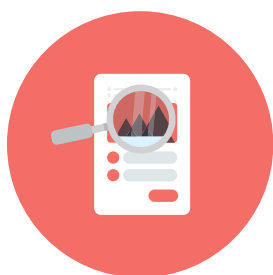
# Inbox by Gmail debuts glanceable newsletters and more

Inbox by Gmail, built by Google, launched in October 2014 as a way to streamline the email experience. The Inbox app is more experimental than Gmail, building [in new technologies like machine learning](#). In 2016, Inbox by Gmail updated several features, including better search functionality, streamlined events, the ability to save links, and a new feature called glanceable newsletters.



## Additions to Inbox by Gmail

Here's what you need to know about Inbox by Gmail:



### Better search functionality

Inbox by Gmail bubbles up important information like frequent flier numbers, a friend's address, or a link to pay a bill. Inbox now displays this information at the top of search results, similar to Google Search's snippet functionality.



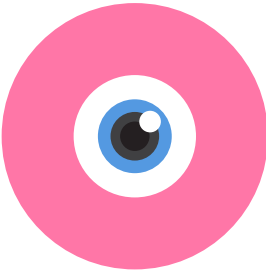
### Streamlined events

With [streamlined events](#), Inbox gathers emails from a single event and shows you what's changed at a glance. If you tap on an event, you'll see a full overview—including time, date, location, a list of attendees, and all corresponding emails about the event.



## Saved links

Rather than email yourself an article you'd like to read later, Inbox added a ["Save to Inbox"](#) feature. On mobile, you can use the OS's built-in sharing dialog to save links, or share them via email with others. Using Inbox by Gmail in Chrome, you can use the new [Inbox by Gmail Chrome extension](#) to save and share links.

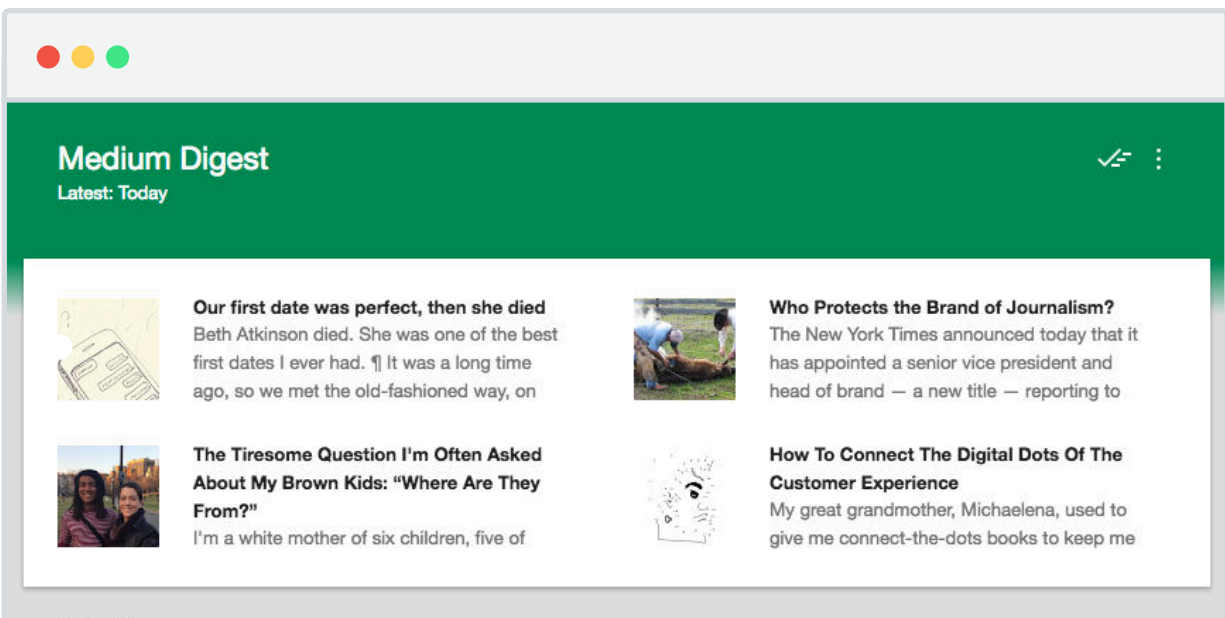


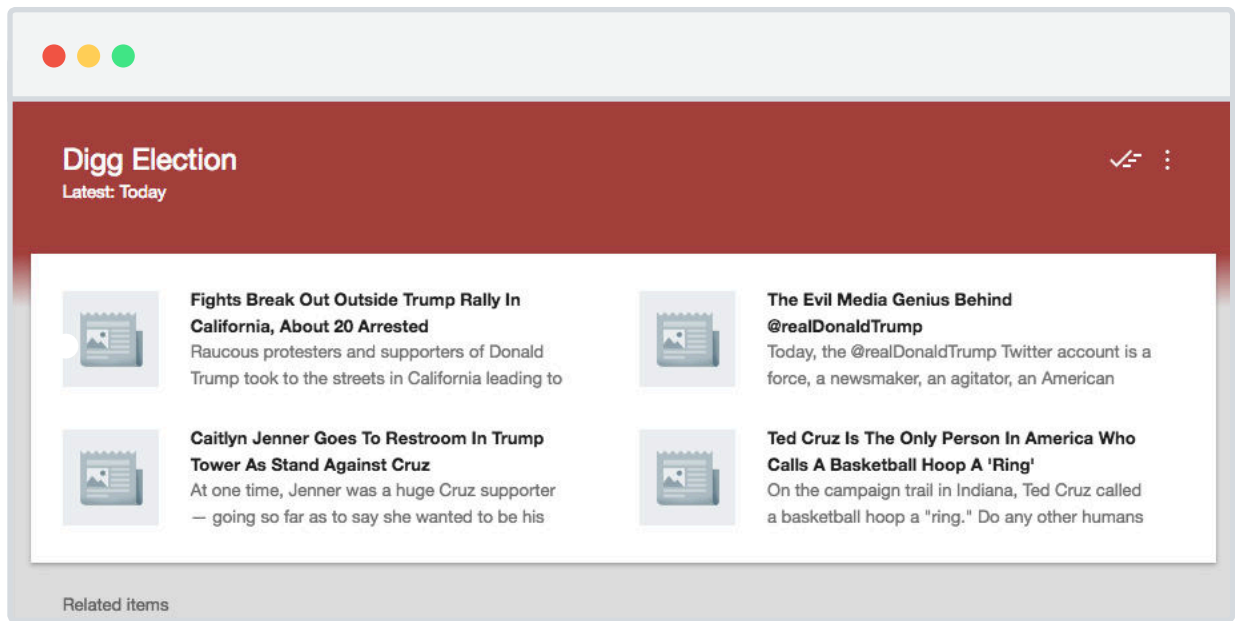
## Glanceable newsletters

This new feature most directly impacts email marketers. Glanceable newsletters will change the way subscribers read your communications. It shows a preview of the links in a newsletter, as well as links to previous newsletters, without subscribers having to open the email.

For email marketers, that means that if a newsletter works with the glanceable newsletter functionality, a bulleted list of three articles will display underneath the subject line. However, it's a limited subject line—it only displays the name of the newsletter.

If any part of the email is clicked on—from name or image, subject line, or any of the articles—the email will expand to include a visual representation of the three articles from the inbox view, plus an additional article.





Clicking these links opens the article in a web browser. To open the actual newsletter, you have to click the first email under “Related items.” The emails in this section are ordered from newest to oldest.

#### ACTION ITEM

### Optimize your headlines.

With glanceable newsletters, the title of the article can stretch up to two lines, each about 50 characters. Depending on the length of the title, the description can span between 90 and 150 characters. Think of the headline as your subject line, and the description as your preview text. Be direct and succinct, and clearly state what your subscriber will learn by clicking into the article.



#### ACTION ITEM

### Provide enticing imagery.

Be sure to include images alongside articles in your newsletter, so they can be pulled into the glanceable section and entice your subscribers to click. In addition, ensure that the images correlate well with the topic of the article they’re associated with.



ACTION ITEM

## Set a Google+ profile picture.

The sender image is pulled from your company's verified Google+ profile. If you haven't created one, now might be a good time to set one up. For senders that don't have a verified Google+ profile, the logo portion of the message is the first letter of your from name in a sans-serif font.



ACTION ITEM

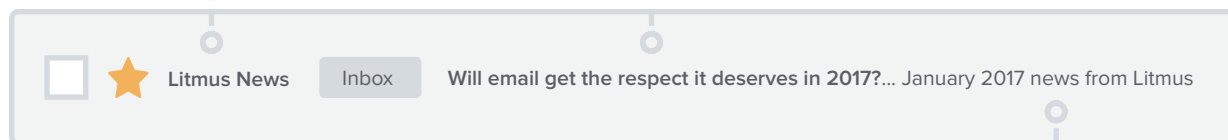
## Optimize your envelope.

Not everyone has access to glanceable newsletters, and while Google continues to add support for more, the rollout strategy is unclear. If you do get access to glanceable newsletters, optimizing your from name, subject line, and preview text is essential.

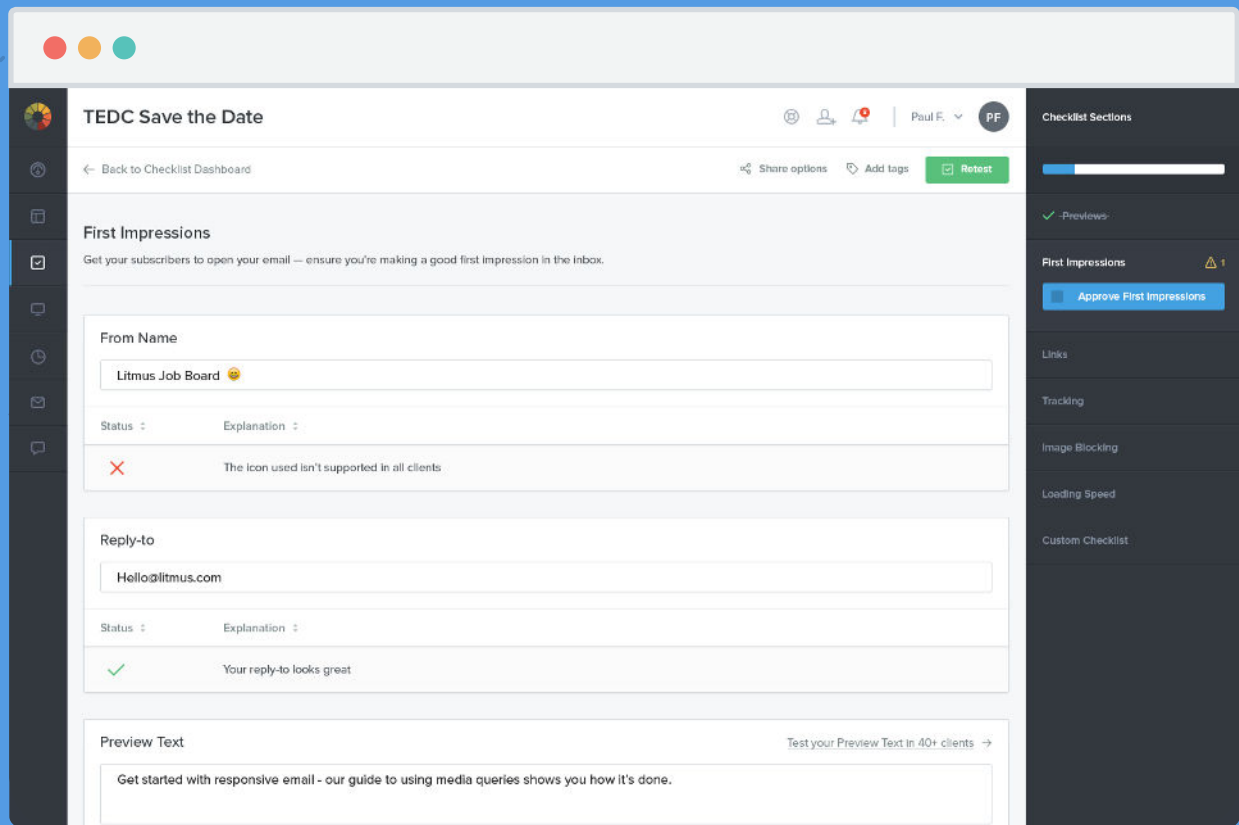
The email “envelope” is a term that encompasses all the elements subscribers see before they open an email—much like the envelope for a letter. The email envelope includes your from name, subject line, and preview text. To encourage your subscribers to open, make sure each element of your envelope is optimized.

**From name:** Ensure your from name is recognizable and straightforward.

**Subject line:** Hook your subscriber with a clear subject line that captures what your email is about. [Never use misleading subject lines.](#)



**Preview text:** Complement your subject line with helpful preview text. Be sure to hide text that you don't want to be pulled in automatically, such as “View in a browser.”



## Optimize the inbox experience with Subject Line Checker.

Preview your from name, subject line, and preview text in 15+ popular email clients.

[Sign up now](#)

Start your free trial. Already have an account? [Sign in.](#)

# Yahoo! Mail Android app drops support for responsive design

Just as the email community began to rejoice about Gmail supporting responsive design in September 2016, Yahoo! Mail dropped [media query](#) support from their Android app. (Note that <style> still works in Yahoo! Mail on iOS).

Media queries are a component of CSS that act as a switch for triggering styles for different screen sizes based on a set of rules. Media queries need to be included within a <style> block which is typically located in the <head> of your HTML. With this change, the <head> is stripped from emails in Yahoo! Mail for Android.

## ACTION ITEM

### Make your design work without media query support.

There are a few techniques you can use to make your design work across email clients without using media queries. [One is experimenting with hybrid/spongy coding](#), and the other is the [Fab Four technique](#). Unfortunately, the Fab Four technique doesn't work with Yahoo! Mail (though it's a great technique as a workaround for other email clients).

Hybrid coding still uses fluid tables and images but, in contrast to responsive emails, those tables and images are fluid by default. Instead of using media queries to trigger those fluid states on smaller screens, hybrid coding favors Microsoft conditional comments to restrain fluid tables on larger screens. [You can see a step-by-step how-to here.](#)

There's a few other quirks you should keep in mind when optimizing your emails for Yahoo! Mail:

### The align=center attribute doesn't work.

This causes tables to display to the left of the intended position.



ACTION ITEM

Add table-layout: fixed; to your outer table.

Pre-fix

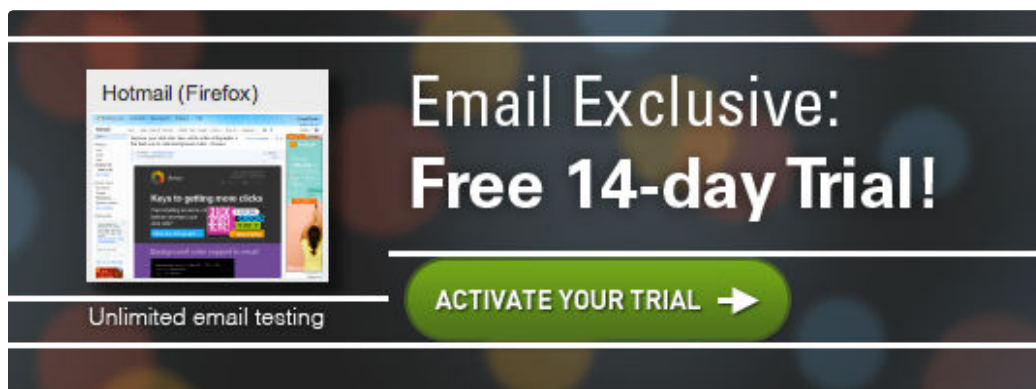
```
<!-- containertable -->
<table width="100%">
  <tr>
    <td>
      <!-- nested tables and email content -->
    </td>
  </tr>
</table>
```

Post-fix

```
<!-- containertable -->
<table width="100%" style="table-layout: fixed;">
  <tr>
    <td>
      <!-- nested tables and email content -->
    </td>
  </tr>
</table>
```

## Gaps appear under images

About 3px of space will appear underneath images in Yahoo! Mail. These gaps can be especially apparent in designs where the layout consists of several images sliced apart and pieced back together in a table-based design.



### ACTION ITEM

**Declare images as block-level elements in the image tag.**

This helps images display properly not only in Yahoo Mail, but in most webmail clients.

```

```

### Test your email in Yahoo! Mail

Catch any rendering quirks, like table alignment and image gaps, with Litmus Email Previews.

[Sign up now](#)

Start your free trial. Already have an account? [Sign in.](#)



# Windows 10 Mail

While Windows 10 launched in 2015, adoption grew considerably throughout 2016. By October 2015, [Microsoft reported](#) over 110 million devices with Windows 10 installed, and as of June 2016 that number has risen to nearly 350 million devices.

Outlook is usually the email client associated with a Windows environment, but Windows 10 has its own default email client—Windows Mail. The Windows Mail app has been included in Windows Vista, 8, and 10.

Since Microsoft launched Windows 10 Mail, market share has slowly risen, taking the #9 spot for the top 10 most popular email clients at the end of 2016.

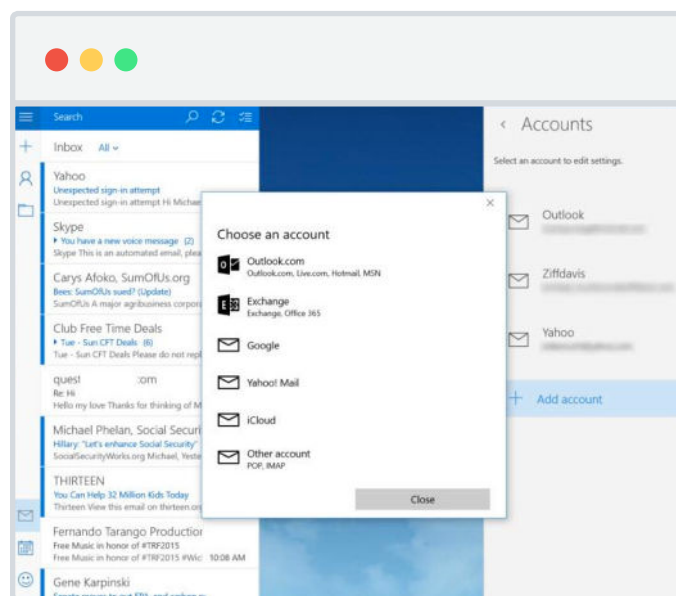
## How Windows 10 displays emails

Users can use their Gmail, Yahoo!, iCloud, AOL, and custom IMAP accounts with Windows 10 Mail—there's no need for a Microsoft account. This, combined with the fact that the Mail app is free with Windows 10, makes it an incredibly accessible email client. Here's what you need to keep in mind with regards to how it displays your emails.

### ACTION ITEM

#### Optimize for the Windows 10 inbox.

You have 34 characters each for your subject line and preview text, so be sure your subject line and [preview text](#) work together to encourage readers to open.



#### ACTION ITEM

### Prevent horizontal scrolling.

The default app setting allows for a preview pane of approximately 650 px wide. Set the max-width of your email within this limit to avoid horizontal scrolling for Windows 10 users.

#### ACTION ITEM

### Banish blue links.

Windows 10 Mail automatically links dates, times, and other “useful” information in blue, which can make your email less accessible or impact your design, depending on your color palette. To better control link colors, specify classes in the <head> of the email and then wrap the offending blue text in <span> tags with the appropriate class throughout the email.

```
<pre><code>.appleLinksWhite a {color: #ffffff !important; text-decoration: underline;}
.appleLinksBlack a {color: #000000 !important; text-decoration: none;}</code></pre>

<pre><code>&lt;span class="appleLinksBlack"&gt;866-787-7030&lt;/span>&lt;/code></pre>
```

## Unsupported elements

Like any email client, Windows 10 Mail has a few quirks you'll need to watch out for.

#### ACTION ITEM

### Include a fallback for background images.

If you are going to include background images, make sure to include a fallback background color. Background images aren't supported, and the common VML/HTML workaround supported by Outlook doesn't work in Windows 10 Mail.

For example:



```
<td bgcolor="#333333" align="center" background="bg.jpg"
style="padding: 75px 15px 75px 15px; background-color: #333333;
background: url(http://pages.litmus.com/l/31032/2014-06-
06/5p5vt/31032/23562/bg.jpg) center no-repeat; background-size:
cover;" class="section-title">
```

Our Community Digest used a background image in the header, which falls back to a solid background color.

#### ACTION ITEM

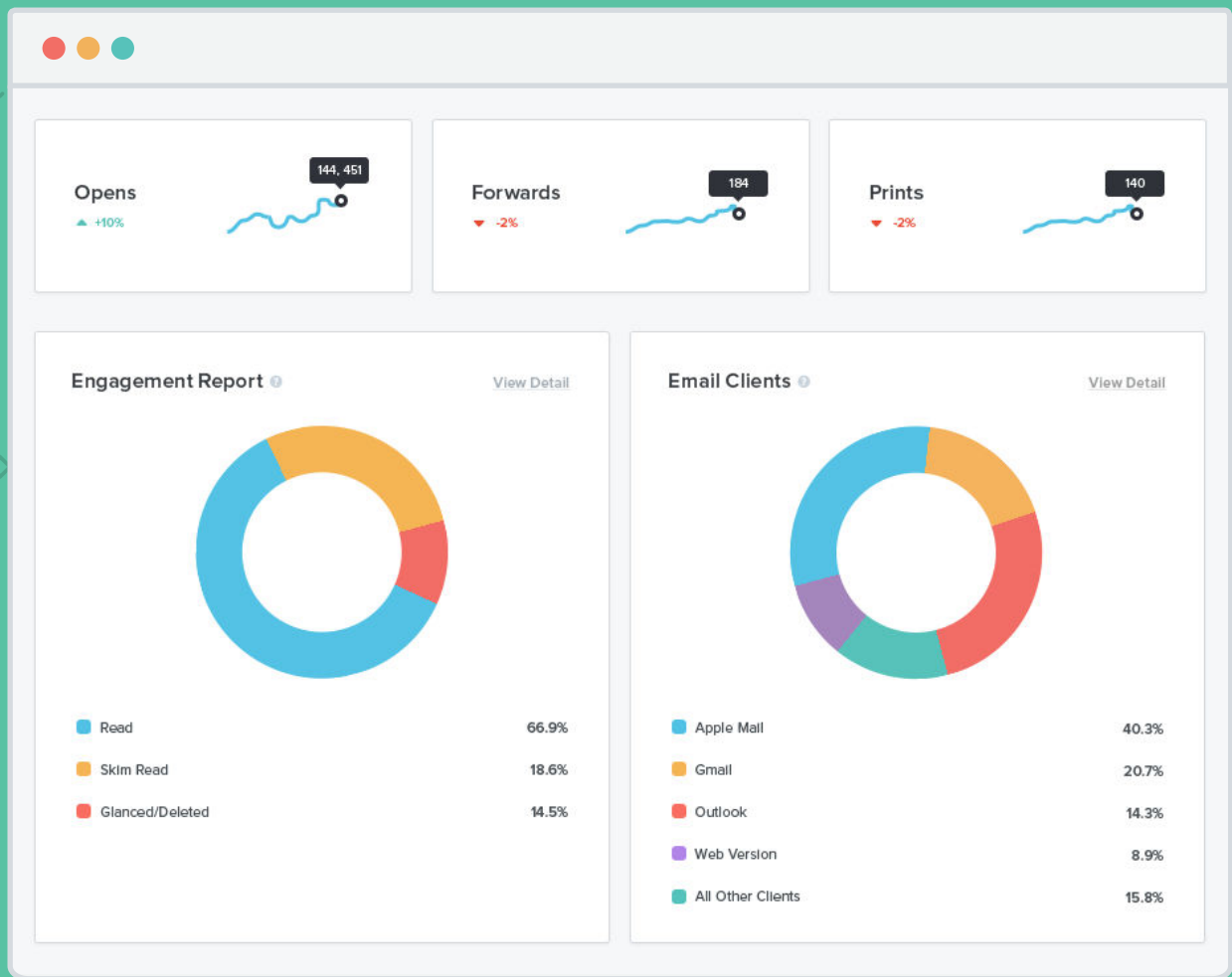
**Use a web-safe font in your emails such as Arial.**

[Web fonts](#) aren't supported in Windows 10 Mail, so be sure to use a web-safe font such as Arial in your emails to prevent a fallback to Times New Roman.

#### ACTION ITEM

**Optimize the first frame of your animated GIF.**

Animated GIFs aren't supported, which means only the first frame of the animation in the GIF will show as a static image. Since you only have one frame, make sure it counts by choosing your first frame wisely. Ensuring the static image captures the message of the GIF, such as making the very first frame a call-to-action (CTA), will maximize that space.

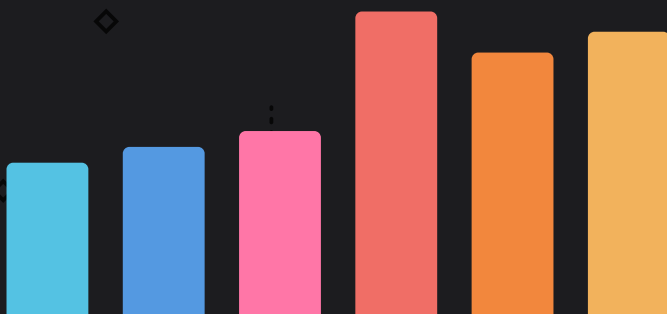


## Are your subscribers opening in Windows 10 Mail?

Use Litmus Email Analytics to discover where your subscribers are opening your emails—and where you should focus your testing efforts.

[Sign up now](#)

Start your free trial. Already have an account? [Sign in.](#)



### CHAPTER 3











# Email client market share

We tracked over 13 billion email opens in 2016. And while a few things stayed the same, we saw plenty of movement this year in terms of which email clients subscribers were using to read their emails.











### We saw a bit of movement in 2016, including:

- iPhone, Gmail, and iPad remained the top three email clients
- Android remained in the #4 position but dropped more than 2% along the way
- Yahoo! Mail dropped from #7 to #8
- Thunderbird lost the #10 spot to Windows Mail; then Windows Live Mail and Windows Mail flip-flopped to #10 and #9, respectively

#### 2015

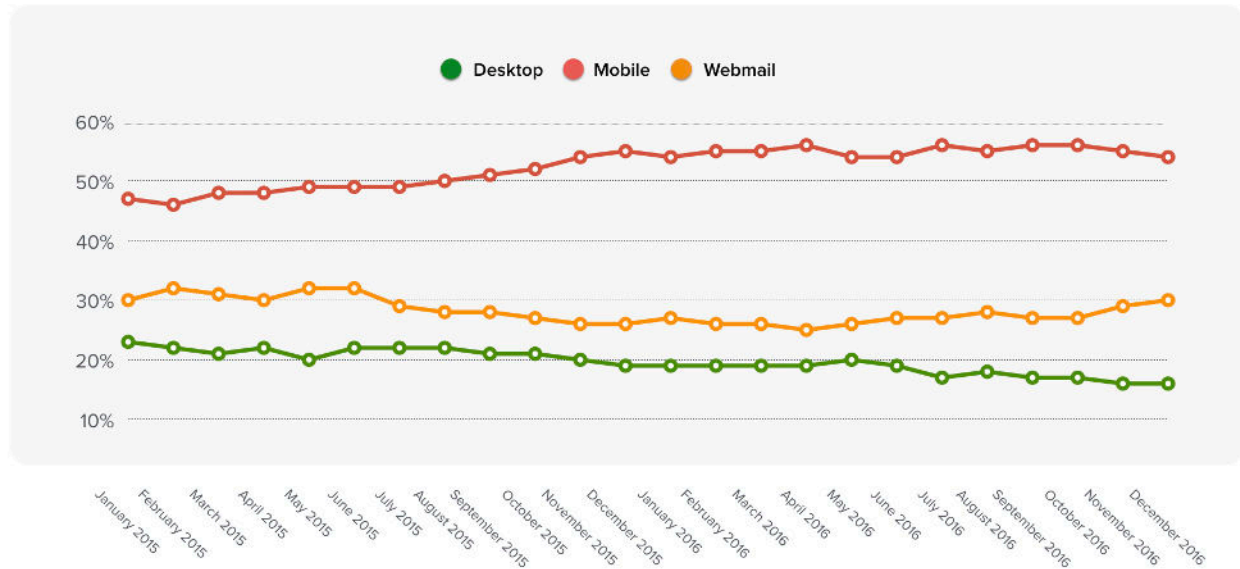
1		Apple iPhone	<b>32%</b>
2		Gmail	<b>16%</b>
3		Apple iPad	<b>12%</b>
4		Google Android	<b>10%</b>
5		Apple Mail	<b>7%</b>
5		Outlook	<b>7%</b>
7		Yahoo! Mail	<b>3%</b>
8		Outlook.com	<b>2%</b>
9		Windows Live Mail	<b>1%</b>
10		Thunderbird	<b>0.7%</b>

#### 2016

1		Apple iPhone	<b>33%</b>
2		Gmail	<b>20%</b>
3		Apple iPad	<b>13%</b>
4		Google Android	<b>9%</b>
5		Apple Mail	<b>7%</b>
5		Outlook	<b>6%</b>
7		Outlook.com	<b>5%</b>
8		Yahoo! Mail	<b>2%</b>
9		Windows Mail	<b>1%</b>
10		Windows Live Mail	<b>1%</b>

# Mobile, webmail, and desktop trends

## MARKET SHARE: 2015-2016



While mobile remained dominant, this year did see some oscillations for mobile, webmail, and desktop.

- Mobile began and ended the year at 54%, though it did jump to as high as 56%
- Desktop began the year at 19% and dropped to 16%
- Webmail began the year at 27% and grew to 30%

# Welcome to the “Mobile Era”

The “year of mobile” has come and gone—we’re now in a mobile era. Nearly all websites are mobile-friendly, [according to joint research between Litmus, Salesforce, and Fluent](#).

% of websites that are mobile-friendly

74%

June 2014

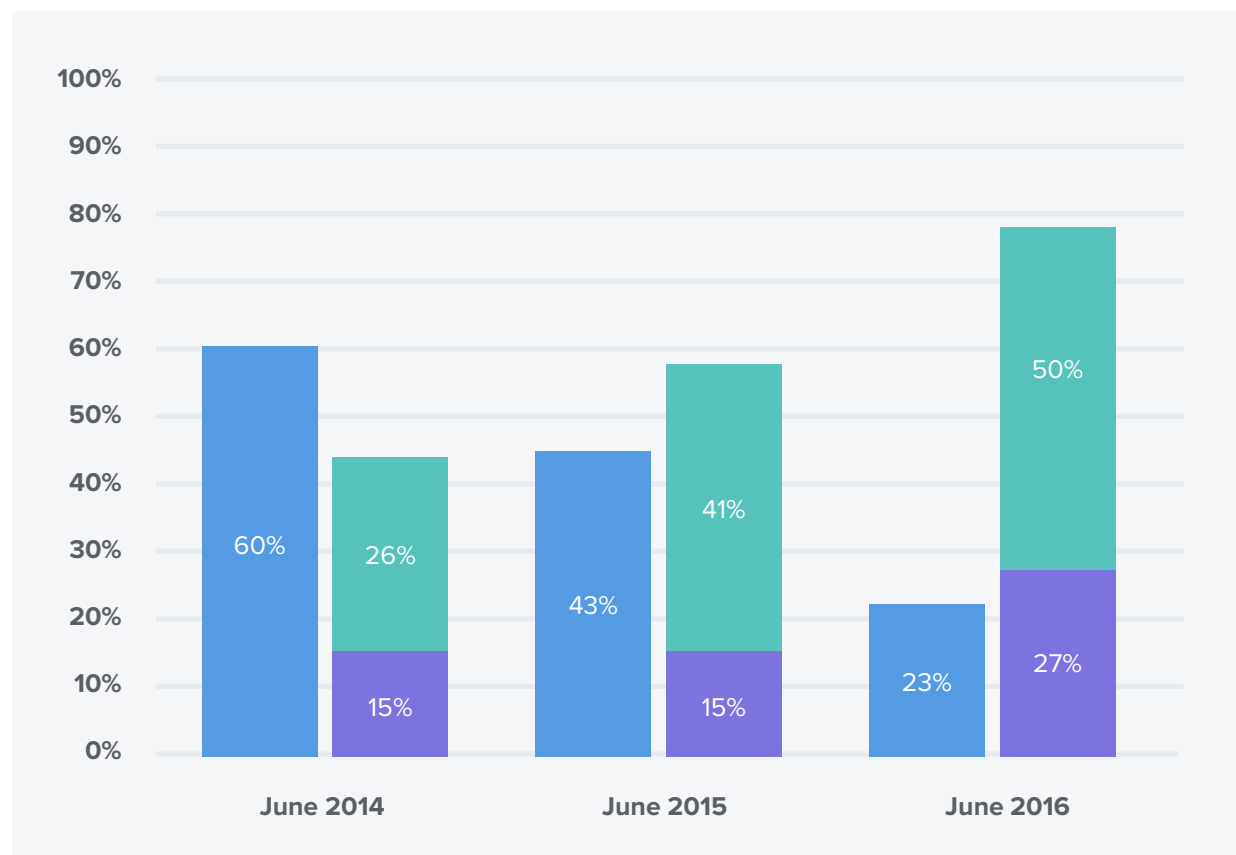
85%

June 2015

93%

June 2016

Email marketing trends have closely followed the web, with the percentage of B2C brands using mobile-friendly email designs growing 88% over the past two years.



## ● Desktop-centric design

2+ columns, small text, and small, tightly grouped links and buttons

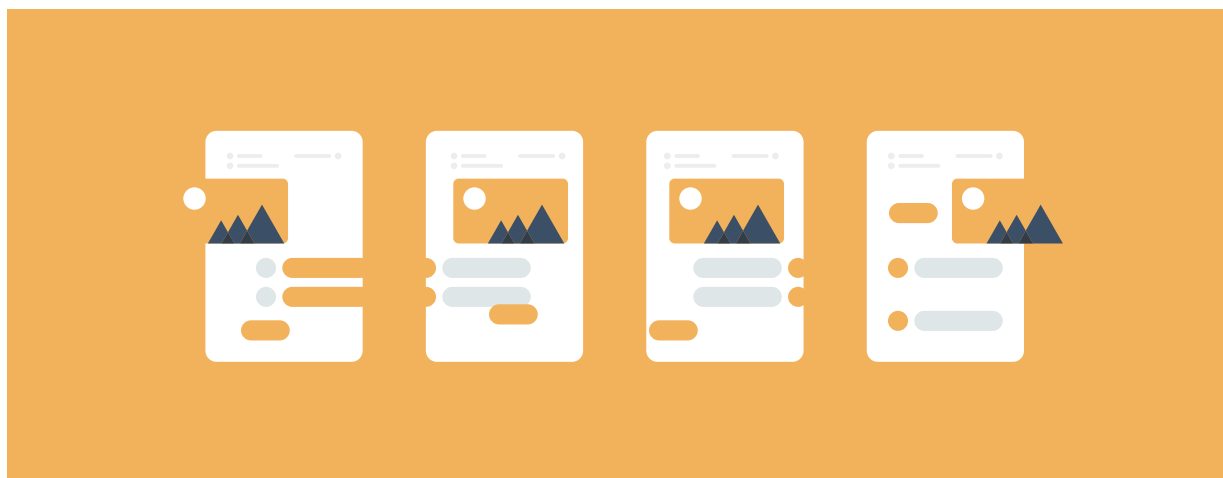
## ● Mobile-aware design

Single column, large text and images, well-spaced links and buttons

## ● Responsive design

Email content and layout adjusts to screen size of user's device

Designing your emails for mobile isn't a "nice-to-have" any longer. It's a necessity to sit at the table. Mobile-unfriendliness is a major cause of both spam complaints and opt-outs. 51% of consumers have unsubscribed from a brand's emails because their emails or website didn't display or work well on their smartphone.



51%

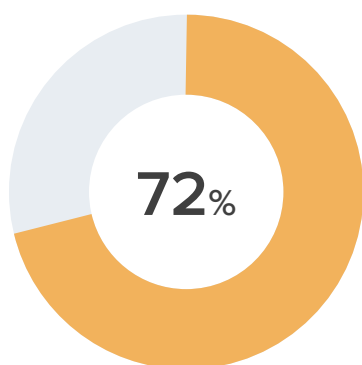
of consumers have unsubscribed from a brand's promotional emails because their emails or website didn't display or work well on their smartphone.

43%

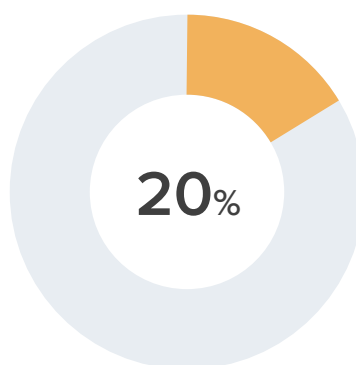
of consumers have marked promotional emails from a brand as spam because the emails didn't display or work well on their smartphone.

## Design Used for Broadcast & Segmented Emails

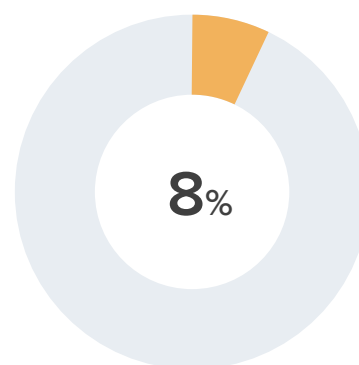
Which type of email design approach do you typically use for your broadcast and segmented emails?



Desktop-centric



Mobile-aware



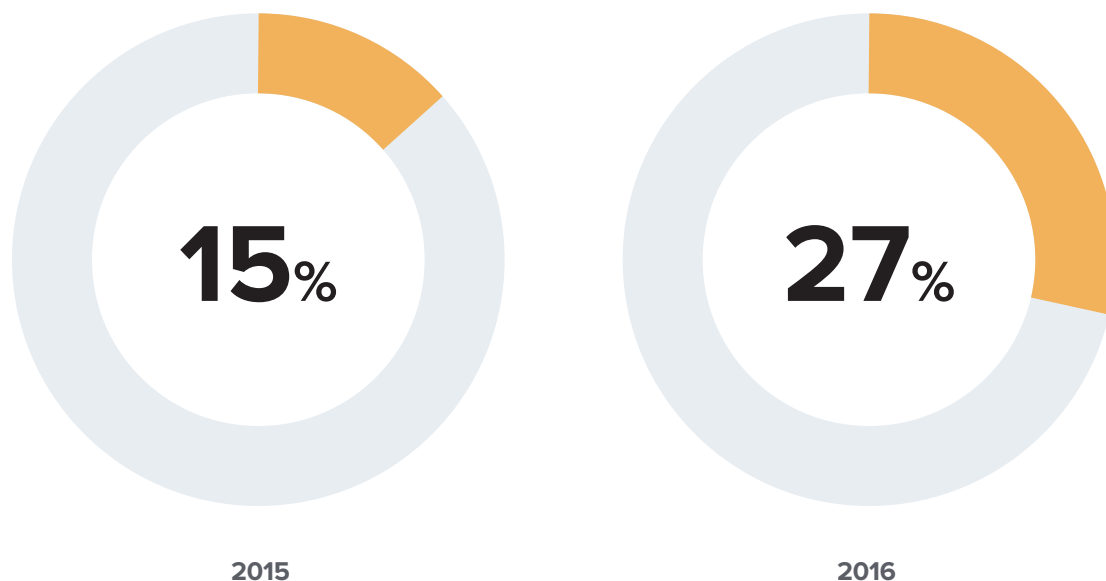
Responsive

Source: [State of Email Design](#)

# Mobile-aware design

By designing a single-column email with large text and well-spaced buttons and links, mobile-aware design allows marketers to create one email design that works across all screen sizes. This approach has risen in popularity in the last year, [according to data from Litmus and Salesforce](#).

Percentage of B2C brands using mobile-aware design approaches



There's plenty you can do to help your mobile subscribers take action on your email through [mobile-aware design](#):

## ACTION ITEM

### Think of “tapping” rather than clicking.

Are your buttons big enough for a subscriber to touch? They should be at least 44px square.

## ACTION ITEM

### Structure your email in single-column design.

Utilizing a single-column design streamlines your email and makes your content easier to read for mobile openers. Use a grid system for alignment and proportion.

## ACTION ITEM

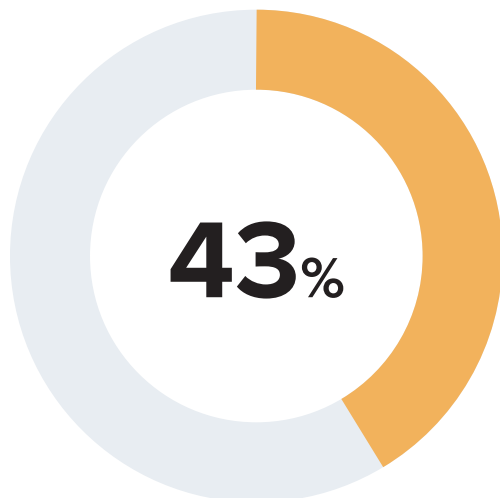
### Use large text to improve readability on smaller screens.

We recommend at least 14px for body copy and 22px for headlines.

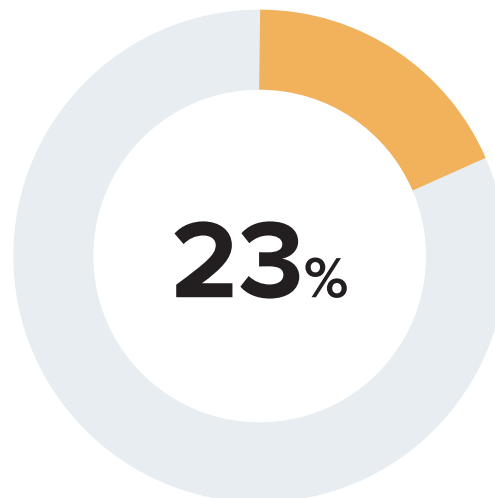
## Desktop-centric design

Desktop-centric design involves emails that don't consider the mobile experience at all, or does so in a minimal way. If the majority of your subscribers open on desktop, this could be a design approach that works best for you.

### Desktop-Centric



2015



2016

# Responsive design

Responsive design allows your email to be viewed in any device.

Responsive design involves the use of fluid tables, images, and media queries to control the layout of email so that your message adapts to any screen size or device. [How?](#) By using CSS media queries to change fixed-width tables and images on desktops into fluid ones for smaller screens.

```
@media screen and (max-width: 600px) {  
  .responsive-table {  
    display: block;  
    width: 100% !important;  
  }  
  .responsive-image {  
    height: auto;  
    max-width 100% !important;  
  }  
}
```



**Pro: The designer has a ton of control over the display of content across devices.**

Media queries are very powerful and, when used well, allow designers to target and adjust the layout and style of content at a very granular level. It's the primary way email creators can ensure their email will look the way they want it to on any device.



**Con: Responsive and responsive-aware aren't supported everywhere.**

While responsive design isn't supported everywhere, it's quickly becoming the default. Since Gmail moved to support responsive design in 2016, over 75% of all email clients now support it, making it the perfect time to add the technique into your arsenal.

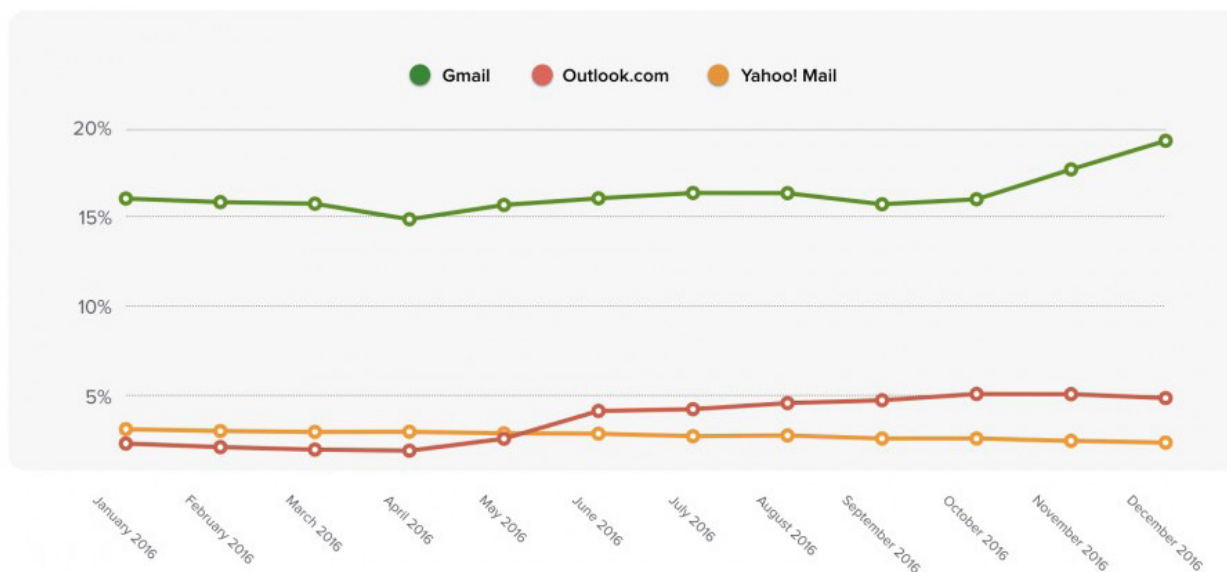


Add responsive designs into your workflow with our collection of free, pre-tested templates. Download one of our free responsive, pre-tested Templates from the Litmus Community.

[Access the templates](#)

# Gmail drives webmail growth

## WEBMAIL OPENS



## The power of Gmail

Mobile has dominated market share since 2014, but the drop in desktop (and subsequent rise in webmail) in 2016 appears to be driven largely by growth in Gmail opens. This could be because companies are moving to cloud-based solutions from desktop email applications.

*“Microsoft and Google continue to invest in cloud-based email solutions, and businesses seem to be following suit—moving away from installing Outlook on employee machines and using services like Office 365 and Google Apps instead.”*

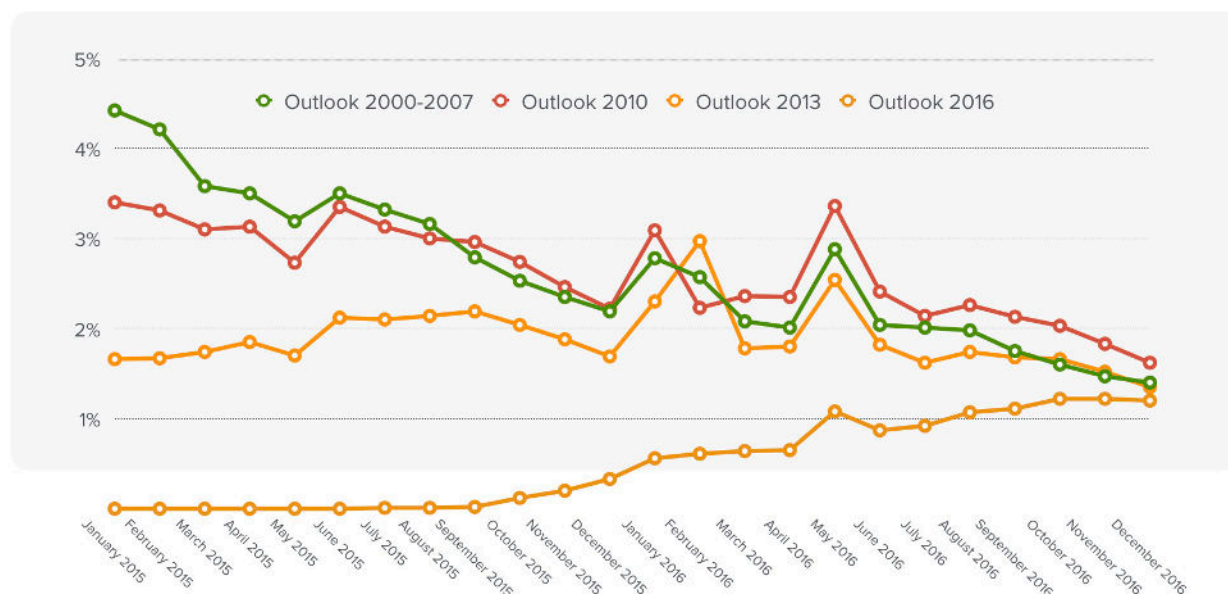
– Justine Jordan, VP of Marketing at Litmus

While iPhone, Gmail, iPad, and Android market share remained the same throughout the year, Gmail has picked up some serious growth, now commanding 20% of email opens. Gmail reports [more than 1 billion monthly users](#), with 75% of them on mobile devices, as more and more users are choosing Gmail.

## Microsoft moves

In desktop, Outlook remained fairly steady throughout 2016, dropping from 7% to 6%. For webmail, Outlook.com grew from 2% to 5% throughout the year.

### OUTLOOK OPENS JANUARY 2015-JANUARY 2016

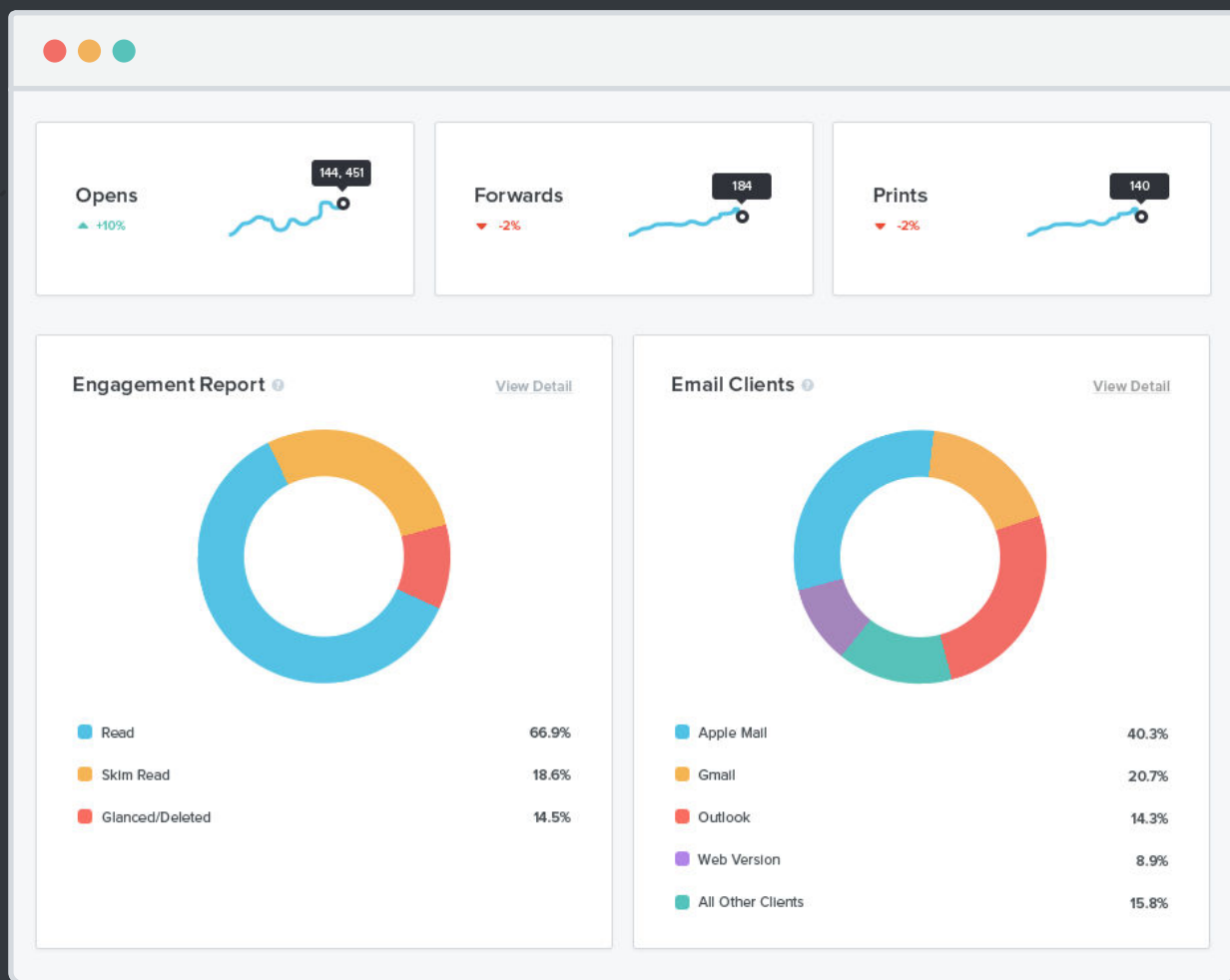


Outlook is well known for having many rendering quirks, but we're [teaming up with Microsoft to make email better](#). If you'd like to report an Outlook bug, shoot us an email: [outlook@litmus.com](mailto:outlook@litmus.com).

In addition, Windows Mail officially overtook Windows Live Mail for the #9 spot in October 2016, and its lead continues to increase, up to 1.31% over Live Mail's 1.07%. This trend will continue as Microsoft [finishes retiring Windows Live Mail](#).

## Know your audience

While general email client open data is great for looking at trends, it's your audience that matters. With the addition of a small tracking code to your campaigns, [Litmus Email Analytics](#) generates a report of where your subscribers open your emails. Use that data to focus your testing efforts, [identify opportunities for experimentation and progressive enhancement](#), and ensure your emails look great in inboxes where your subscribers are opening.



## Discover your top 10

When it comes to email marketing, it's all about your audience. Use Litmus Email Analytics to discover which email clients are most popular with your subscribers.

[Sign up now](#)

Start your free trial. Already have an account? [Sign in.](#)



#### CHAPTER 4

# Email industry movers and shakers

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It's not just email clients that change without notice. The industry does, too. We've got the scoop on major partnerships and acquisitions that will impact how email marketers do business—and we'll be keeping an eye out for what comes next.

# Microsoft partners with Litmus, acquires LinkedIn

It's our goal at Litmus to empower marketers to make better email. Through the partnership, we'll help Microsoft prioritize email rendering bugs in Outlook, identify issues faster, and announce improvements and fixes to the community.



This is big news. Microsoft is the first major email client to develop such an open relationship with the email marketing community, engaging face-to-face with the email designers in the trenches.

*“We’re excited to partner with Litmus, who has an amazing user base of passionate email marketers and developers that can provide us with real world examples of rendering bugs and errors. This will allow us to better identify and prioritize rendering issues to work on improving rendering in Outlook.”*

– **Caitlin Hart**, Microsoft

# What's happened so far

As part of this partnership, Litmus has been collecting bug reports and rendering issues from the community. These will then be prioritized and reported directly to Microsoft engineers. We'll work together to fix bugs and announce their resolution to the community.

## 54 bugs reported:

- 1 Outlook on Android
- 3 Office 365
- 6 Windows 10
- 6 Outlook.com
- 7 Outlook 2016

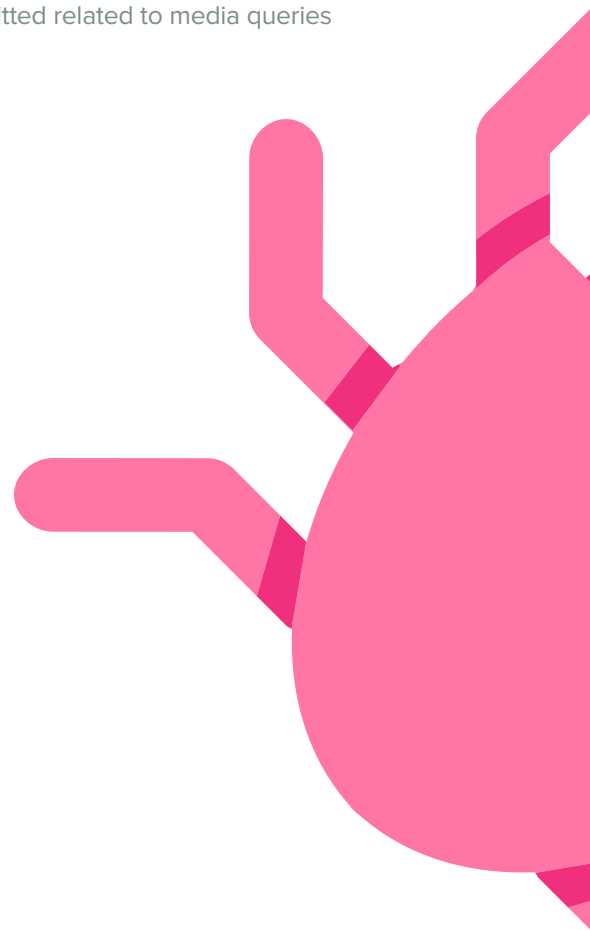
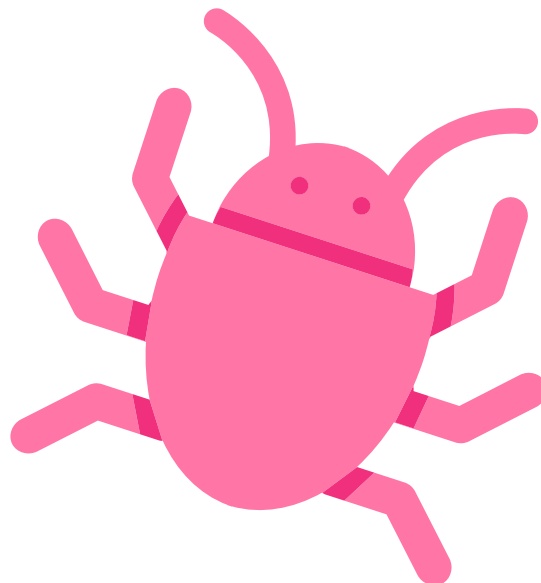
## On topics:

- 9 bugs submitted related to background or background images
- 8 bugs submitted related to fonts
- 3 bugs submitted related to DPI scaling
- 2 bugs submitted related to media queries

### ACTION ITEM

## Report Outlook bugs.

Report Outlook rendering and support bugs to the Litmus and Microsoft teams. Send HTML samples and screenshots to [outlook@litmus.com](mailto:outlook@litmus.com).



# Microsoft acquires LinkedIn

[Microsoft's announced \\$26 billion acquisition of LinkedIn](#) in July 2016 will not only net the tech giant the top business-oriented social network, but the move could have several ramifications for email users and email marketers. [Here are five possible scenarios](#), predicted by Litmus Research Director Chad White, to watch for:

## LinkedIn messaging could be replaced by Outlook 365.

Microsoft is currently consolidating all of its various email platforms onto the Outlook 365 email rendering engine, so it would make sense for them to extend this to LinkedIn as well. That would bring much more robust messaging capabilities to LinkedIn, with some of the more advanced Outlook 365 capabilities reserved for LinkedIn Premium users as an additional upgrade incentive.

## LinkedIn contacts could integrate into the Outlook address book.

Given how often people change jobs, especially in certain industries like tech, email address books can quickly become out of date. The integration of LinkedIn into Outlook's address book functionality could help solve this problem by auto-updating contact info and company affiliation.

## We could see LinkedIn and SlideShare interactivity within Outlook email inboxes.

Google has integrated Google Plus and YouTube functionality into Gmail, allowing users to confirm Google Plus connections and watch YouTube within an email without leaving Gmail.

Microsoft now has a similar opportunity with LinkedIn and SlideShare. Taking a page out of Google's playbook, these kinds of integrations would help strengthen the Microsoft email ecosystem and give business users more reasons to stick with or return to Microsoft.

## We could see better spam protection on LinkedIn.

Aggressive use of LinkedIn for prospecting has led to a significant rise in spam on the social network. Microsoft's extensive expertise in controlling email spam should help them clean up some of this behavior on the social network.

## Skype and calendar functionality could integrate with LinkedIn.

Microsoft's acquisition of Skype could enhance communications within LinkedIn. In addition to being able to send messages to contacts, users would be able to initiate calls to those contacts. The integration of Outlook Calendar into LinkedIn would make this functionality even more powerful since users would be able to schedule calls and send invites all with the same platform.

For email marketers, this union could make new inbox functionality and interactivity available that could be particularly attractive to B2B marketers. Also, this could be a catalyst for market share growth of Microsoft's webmail clients and some upcoming rendering and support changes as the integration takes place.



### How do your emails render in Outlook 365 and Outlook.com?

Preview your emails in these clients with Litmus Email Previews.

[Sign up now](#)

Start your free trial. Already have an account? [Sign in.](#)

# Verizon-Yahoo deal shakes up the email landscape

In July 2016, a little more than a year after [Verizon acquired AOL for \\$4.4 billion](#), the mobile communications giant [acquired Yahoo for \\$4.83 billion](#), driving further consolidation in the webmail space and setting themselves up to push harder into mobile email. And while there has been some talk of the deal falling through after [recent data breaches from Yahoo](#) impacted more than 1.5 million users, the deal is still on—for now.

*"Our pending Yahoo acquisition would further increase our opportunity to scale in the digital media space, with its 1 billion-plus monthly average unique viewers. We are still working with Yahoo to assess the impact of the breaches, and we have not reached any final conclusions yet."*

– **Matt Ellis**, Verizon Executive Vice President and CFO

## What this means for webmail

Yahoo! Mail has been battling it out with Outlook.com for the No. 2 spot on the list of top webmail clients. The combination of Yahoo! Mail's 225 million active monthly users with the users of AOL Mail should help it scale up to better fight for market share.

Verizon is currently in the final months of [transitioning users of its Verizon- and FiOS-branded email clients to AOL Mail](#), which it touts as being superior than its previous offerings. Now there are more transitions on the horizon.

Verizon will surely start by consolidating some backend email operations, rationalizing their AOL Mail and Yahoo! Mail server capacity, and standardizing their spam filtering platforms. Then they will likely follow in Microsoft's footsteps and standardize on a single email rendering engine. For our part, we hope that Verizon standardizes on the AOL Mail rendering engine, which we think is one of the best around. Either way, email designers and developers will applaud having one less email client to contend with.











After standardizing all the behind-the-scenes infrastructure, Verizon will then have to address whether to continue operating two major email and web brands. It will be interesting to see how long both coexist before one replaces the other or an entirely new brand replaces them both.

It will also be interesting to see if Verizon can create an email offering that appeals to businesses. Google has made huge inroads in that market with Gmail and Microsoft is rapidly moving to compete better there. Neither AOL or Yahoo have ever focused on business webmail usage. This is the market where Verizon is mostly likely to launch a new webmail brand.

## What this means for mobile

To compete in the email space with leaders like Apple and Google, Verizon will have to create a much more powerful mobile email client, a stronger ecosystem around that client, and leverage its mobile phone distribution channel to promote it. Currently, Apple- and Google-owned email clients occupy five of the top six spots in the email client leaderboard.

### Top 10 Email Clients of 2016

1	 Apple iPhone	33%	5	 Outlook	6%
2	 Gmail	20%	7	 Outlook.com	5%
3	 Apple iPad	13%	8	 Yahoo! Mail	2%
4	 Google Android	9%	9	 Windows Mail	1%
5	 Apple Mail	7%	10	 Windows Live Mail	1%

ACTION ITEM

### Watch your email open metrics as market share may shift.

With [Apple's iOS 10 allowing users to delete default Apple apps](#), Verizon (as well as Google and Microsoft) has an opportunity to potentially pick up significant mobile email app market share.

Because of this, [AOL's Alto Mail app](#) may play a bigger role. If Verizon pre-installs Alto Mail on all the smartphones it sells and helps users set it up in their stores, mobile email app market share could look significantly different in two years.

Given Verizon's mobile smarts and its potential to scale into the email space, it is in a good position to potentially disrupt Apple and Google.

How will these industry changes impact your email marketing program? Knowing your audience is the first step to finding out. See where your subscribers open, track forwards and prints, compare engagement by device, and more with Litmus Email Analytics.

[Sign up now](#)

Start your free trial. Already have an account? [Sign in.](#)



## Kevin Spacey and Dana Brunetti awarded email delivery control patent

Kevin Spacey, academy-award winning actor, producer, and screenwriter, teamed up with his longtime filmmaking partner Dana Brunetti to obtain a U.S. patent. They received the patent in May 2016.

As Brunetti told [Variety](#), "It is like having a digital doorman at a velvet rope. It allows in only the ones it knows or whoever is on the list and sends the others away with a message telling them they're not approved."

## The patent's invention screens and manages non-authorized emails

According to [Variety](#), Spacey and Brunetti came up with the idea in response to Spacey having to constantly change his email address after careless cc'ing by colleagues and friends—sending his email address to the world.

According to Spacey, the system could help agents, attorneys, venture capitalists, managers, and others stop unsolicited submissions or contact. Effectively, the system is a whitelist that lets in emails from approved senders and turns all other emails away.

Now, it just needs to be built. Only time will tell if these Hollywood heavyweights will change the email world.



### Identify spam issues before you send

Get your email scanned in every major spam filter to quickly identify and resolve issues keeping you from your subscribers' inbox with Litmus Spam Testing.

[Sign up now](#)

Start your free trial. Already have an account? [Sign in.](#)



## CHAPTER 5

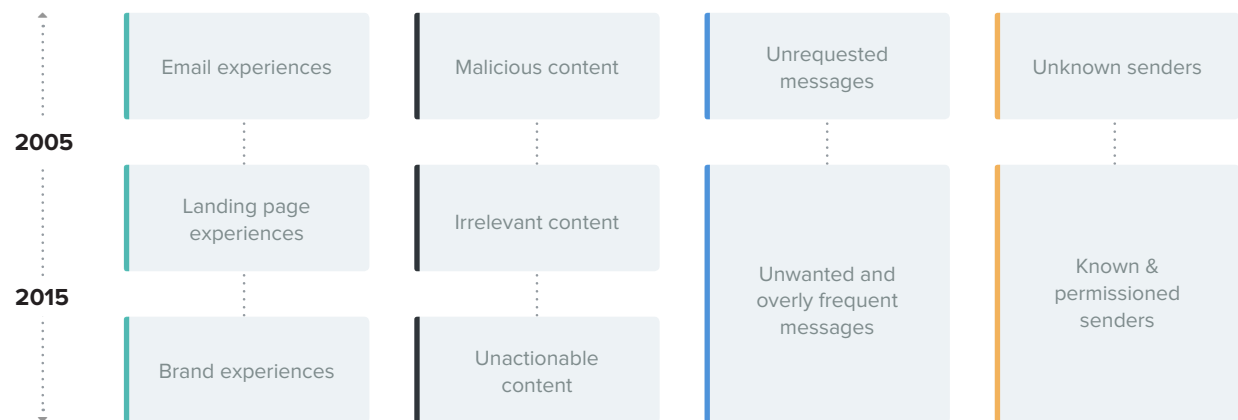
# Spam, deliverability, and security

---

Consumers' definition of spam is changing, and email marketers must change their practices accordingly. Increasingly, any unwanted or poor email experience can count as spam. Here's what you need to know about spam, deliverability, and security.

# The way subscribers view your emails is changing

Consumer attitudes toward spam continue to shift dramatically, demanding an equal shift in email marketing strategies. In the early 2000s, spam was malicious, unrequested email. By the late 2000s, inbox providers effectively blocked all malicious spam, so consumers redefined spam as email that was irrelevant and otherwise unwanted—even if they'd given the brand permission to email them.

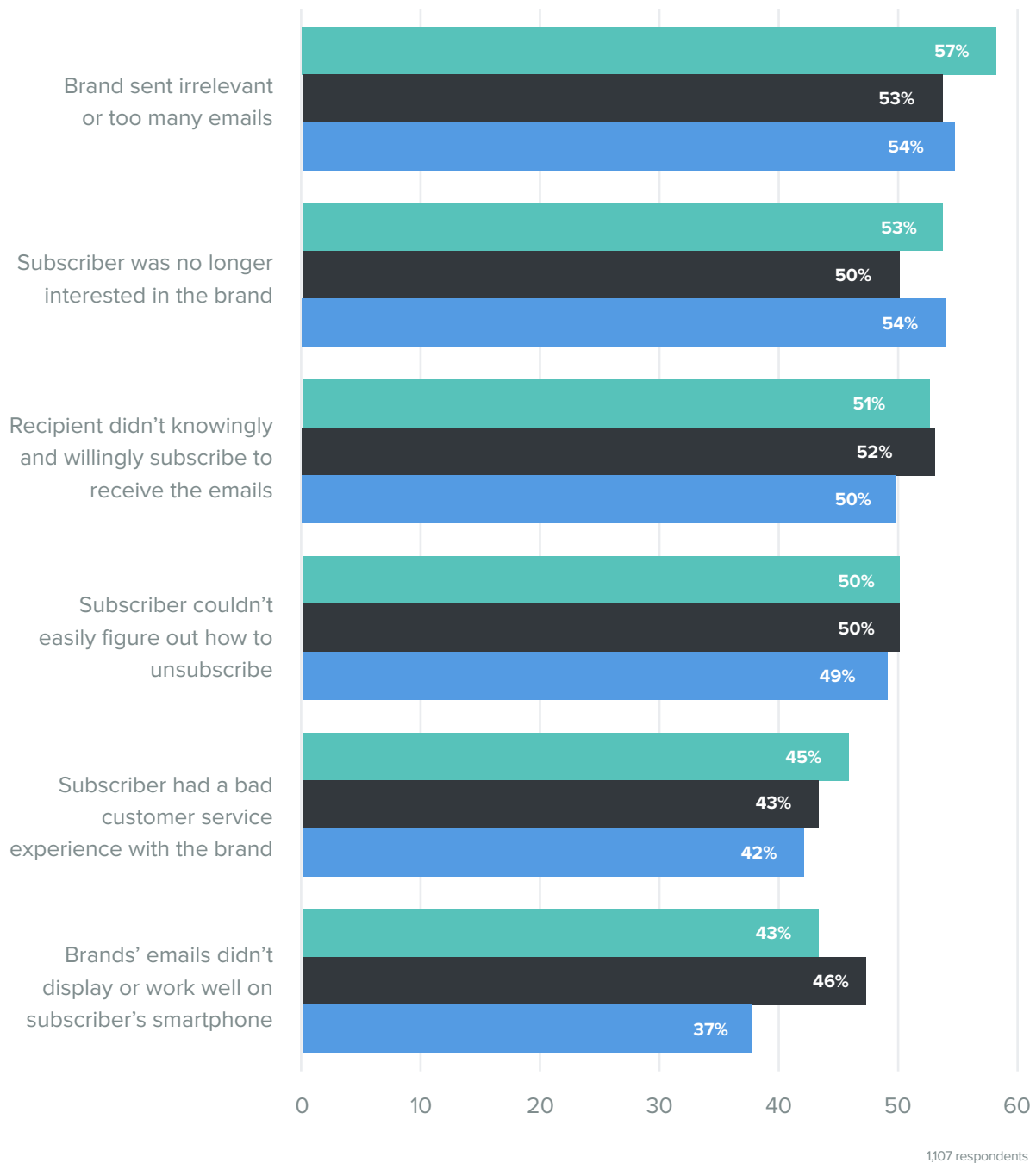


*“Whether an email user reports an email as spam is now affected by more than just by the content of the email itself. It’s also affected by the mobile app or web landing page experience, as well as the person’s recent experiences with the brand in other channels.”*

– **Jordan Cohen**, Fluent’s Chief Marketing Officer

# Top reasons consumers report spam

Percentage of consumers who have marked promotional emails from a brand as spam for the following reasons



Overall

Millennials (18-29 years old)

Middle- and upper-class households (\$50K+ income)

Source: [Adapting to Consumers' Definition of Spam](#)

# Your checklist for avoiding spam complaints & unsubscribes

## ACTION ITEM

To navigate these changes, avoid spam complaints, and extend your subscriber relationships, you should:

- ✓ Improve your permissioning to ensure that the consent to opt-in to your email program is strong
- ✓ Send relevant emails at a good cadence
- ✓ Create mobile-friendly emails
- ✓ Create mobile-friendly landing page experiences
- ✓ Make opting out easy to avoid frustrating subscribers
- ✓ Don't email subscribers who have just had poor customer experiences
- ✓ Maintain your subscribers' interest

Learn more about how consumer attitudes are changing about spam with our ebook, *Adapting to Consumers' New Definitions of Spam*.

[Download Now](#)



# Gmail flags unencrypted emails

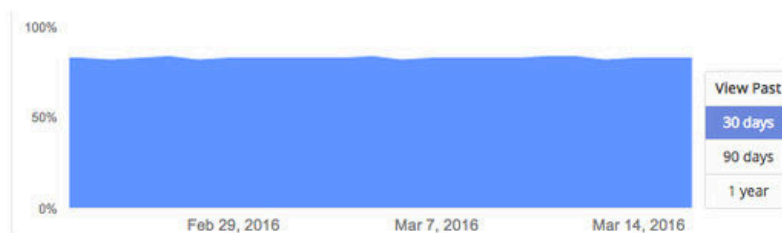
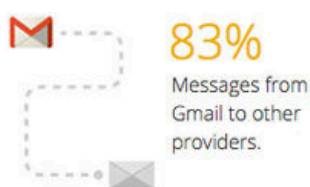
In February 2016, Gmail began to flag unencrypted emails so that Gmail users can see whether they're sending or receiving emails from providers that don't support TLS encryption.

## What is TLS?

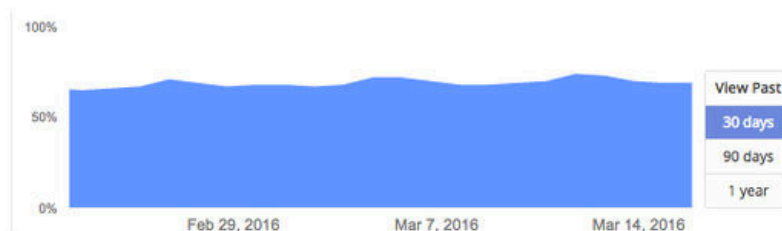
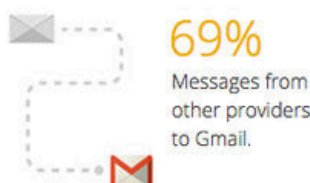
TLS, or transport layer security, gives senders the ability to encrypt email in transit. Emails sent to an inbox provider that can handle messages over TLS will be sent using secure encryption, but if the inbox provider doesn't support TLS, the sending server sends the email as normal.

### Messages Sent via TLS

#### Outbound



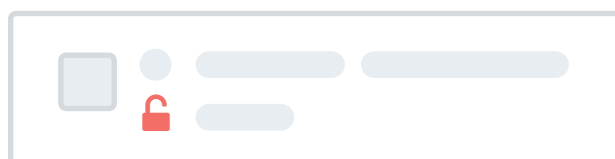
#### Inbound



Source: The Verge

In response, emails sent over an encrypted connection to Gmail users increased by 25% as providers have started to update their practices to avoid getting flagged by Google.

Gmail uses a green or red padlock to indicate to users whether an email is unencrypted or not.



#### ACTION ITEM

### Enable TLS.

Check if TLS is supported by your Email Service Provider (ESP), who can help you implement encryption.

# Changes in international legal requirements for 2017

As spam continues to become a bigger issue, governments around the world have put regulations in place to protect their citizens from unsolicited email. While email marketers are usually aware of local laws, in many cases little is known about international requirements.

The most important thing to keep in mind? To remain on the right side of the law, you must comply with international laws where your *subscribers are opening your email*, not where your company is based or where you sending from. If you're sending email to folks in Australia, the U.S., and Canada, you'll have to comply with the the Australian Spam Act, CAN-SPAM, and CASL, even if you're based in the U.K.

## ACTION ITEM

### Comply with most international laws by following these tips:

- ✓ Only send emails to people who've opted-in to receiving your messages. Keep records of those consents.
- ✓ Include a working unsubscribe link in your emails. Make unsubscribing easy and honor unsubscribe requests as quickly as possible.
- ✓ Make sure your subscribers can easily identify you as the sender. Include your brand's name within the mailing and choose a distinct from-name.
- ✓ Allow subscribers to easily get in touch with you. Include a valid postal address and contact email address in each mailing and make sure your reply-to email is working.
- ✓ Be honest. Don't hide the commercial character of your email and never use false or misleading subject lines or content.



**In 2017, email marketers will have to pay special attention to these two regulations:**

- **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):** The EU's new privacy law was adopted in spring 2016 and aims to bring order to a patchwork of privacy rules across the EU. This regulation has binding legal force and will go into effect May 25, 2018—and email marketers should use the coming months to prepare for the changes.
- The Canadian Anti-Spam Law (CASL), Canada's anti-spam law, has been around since 2014. However, certain provisions on private right of action will take effect July 1, 2017.

Are you sending to countries with strict anti-spam laws? Determine where in the world your subscribers open using Litmus Email Analytics.

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# The EU: GDPR

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will change the way email marketers seek, collect, and record opt-in consent. This includes:

## Stricter regulations for collecting consent

Brands must collect an affirmative consent that is “freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous” to be compliant with GDPR. In addition, you must make it clear that you will use their email address to send marketing messages.

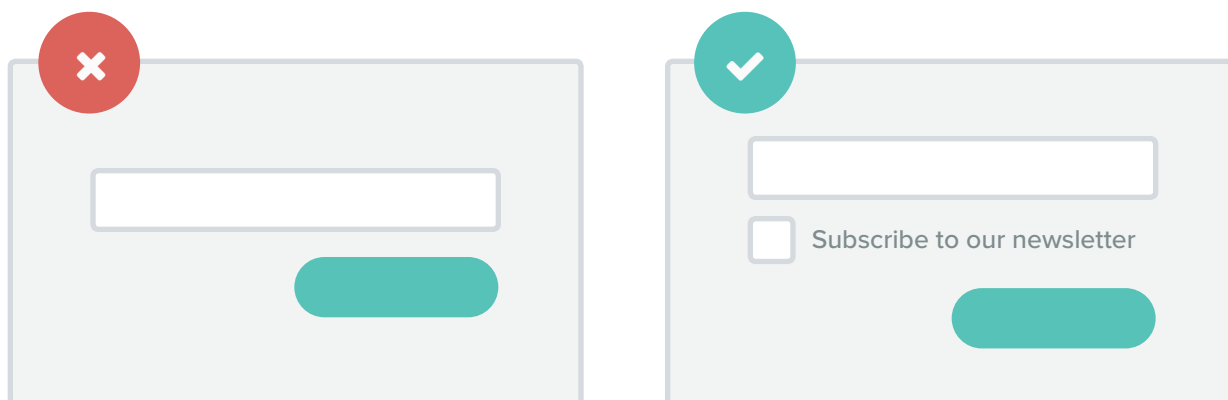
*“GDPR clarifies that an affirmative action signaling consent may include checking a box on a website, ‘choosing technical settings for information society services,’ or ‘another statement or conduct’ that clearly indicates consent to the processing. ‘Silence, pre-ticked boxes, or inactivity,’ however, is not adequate.”*

– James Koons, Chief Privacy Officer at dotmailer

### ACTION ITEM

#### Take a look at your existing opt-in process.

Adding an unchecked opt-in checkbox for emails while promoting events, webinars, whitepapers, ebooks, and contests can ensure you remain compliant with GDPR.



## New requirements for record keeping and data

Brands must keep a record of these consents, including storing consent forms.

*"Under the GDPR, the burden of proof that sufficient consent has been given lies with the company. This means that you will need to prove and show reasonable evidence that you have complied with the GDPR if you are challenged."*

– **Tim Roe**, Deliverability and Compliance Director at RedEye

### ACTION ITEM

#### Keep better records of how you obtained subscriber data.

Keep detailed records of when and how you obtained consent to send email to make sure you're meeting GDPR requirements.

### ACTION ITEM

#### Bring existing data up to standards.

GDPR also applies to existing data. If your database includes subscribers whose permissions haven't been collected according to these standards, it will be illegal to send email to them.

*"There is no allowance for data captured before GDPR. Once the GDPR comes into play, if you don't have sufficient consent, you won't be able to legally process the data. It's time to bring all of your customers' data and business processes up to the correct standard."*

– **Tim Roe**, Deliverability and Compliance Director at RedEye

### ACTION ITEM

#### Create a re-permissioning campaign.

To become compliant, prepare a re-permissioning campaign to bring your existing subscriber database up to GDPR standards.

## Canada: CASL

The Canadian Anti-Spam Law (CASL) has much stricter provisions than its American counterpart (CAN-SPAM). In order to send email to Canadian citizens, you must collect explicit consent. This can be done by requiring potential subscribers to opt-in to your messages, rather than adding them to email lists by default.

### ACTION ITEM

#### Add an opt-in checkbox to any forms, including those for checkout or purchase.

However, take note: If you use a pre-checked box for Canadian subscribers, it still won't count. (The same goes for Australia, Germany, the Netherlands, and France, for example).

### ACTION ITEM

#### Include identifying elements in your email to comply with regulations.

In each email, you must include:



An unsubscribe link



Postal address



Clear identification of sender



Information on how to contact the sender

### ACTION ITEM

#### Honor opt-outs quickly.

It's critical to keeping your lists clean—and comply with the law. CASL allows brands to take up to 10 days to process an unsubscribe.

**Note:** While the law states that you have 10 days, it's unlikely your subscribers will give you that chance. To prevent spam complaints that will negatively impact your sender reputation, we recommend honoring unsubscribes as soon as possible.

ACTION ITEM

## Make it easy for your subscribers to unsubscribe by:

- ✓ Including a prominent unsubscribe link in the footer of every promotional email.
- ✓ Using an unsubscribe process that requires no more than two clicks—one in the email and one on the unsubscribe page or in the preference center.
- ✓ Ensuring that unsubscribe pages and preference centers are accessible without requiring a login.
- ✓ Enabling the native unsubscribe links provided by inbox providers by adding list-unsubscribe functionality to the <head> of your emails.

If you don't comply, you may be eligible to be fined up to CAD 10 million...not a small chunk of change!

During this period, marketers were allowed to send messages to recipients from whom they have implied consent (for example through a product purchase), no matter when the implied consent was collected.

With CASL entering the final stage of its implementation, this will change.

Depending on the type of implicit consent, this consent is valid for a maximum of 2 years. If the subscriber hasn't "renewed" their implicit consent during that time frame—for example by buying from the sending brand again—the implied consent expires. In this case, the brand won't be allowed to send promotional messages to that subscriber anymore.

Beginning on July 1st, 2017, the law also allows individuals and organizations impacted by illegal or spammy practices to bring a private right of action in court, which allows that person to seek actual and statutory damages. Translation: *You could be sued by your subscribers.*

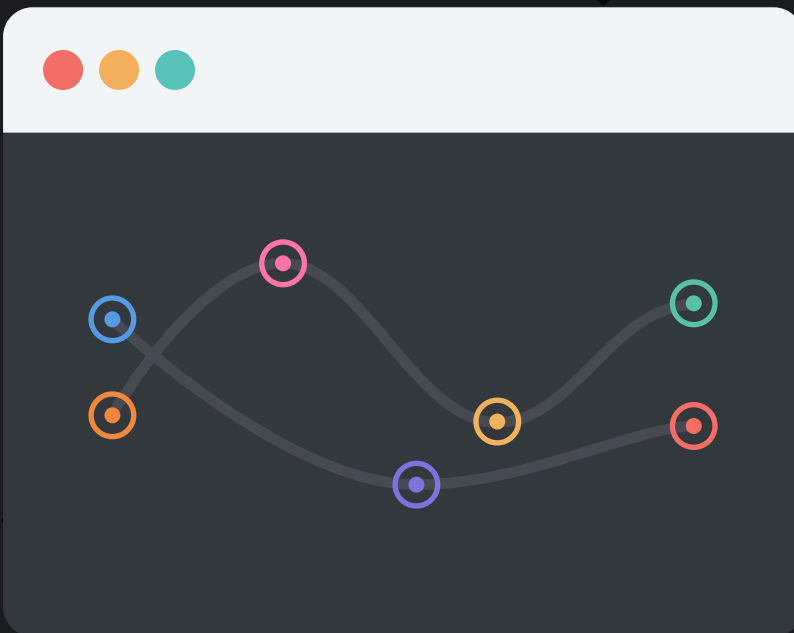
Changing your practices from potentially spammy ones to in-line with international law isn't just the right thing to do. Creating cleaner, more targeted email lists boosts your engagement and click-through metrics as you send to subscribers with much higher intent. That means, if they are receiving their email, they're that much more likely to convert.



Are you sending to countries with strict anti-spam laws? Determine where in the world your subscribers open using Litmus Email Analytics.

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## CHAPTER 6

# Email marketing trends

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From delivering relevant, personalized experiences to automating your email workflow, here's what will become table stakes in the next few years. Master these email marketing trends to be more productive and wow your subscribers.

# Automate your email workflow

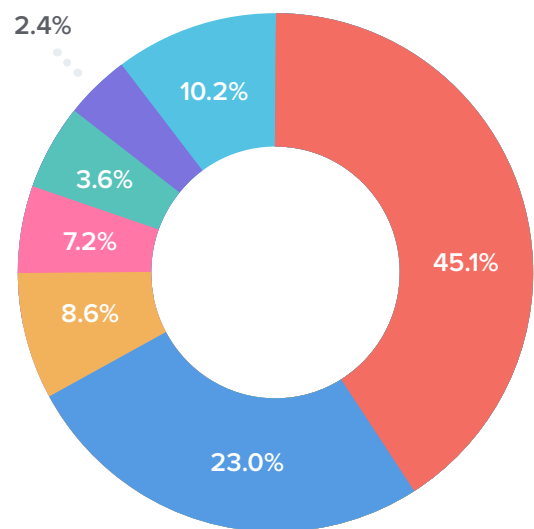
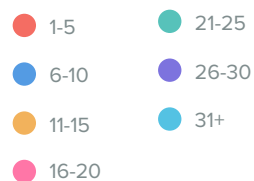
Designing and coding emails often involves manual, arduous editing processes that are not only mundane and tiresome, but can easily leave room for [mistakes](#).

It doesn't have to be that way. A variety of tools exist for email marketers, developers, and coders to streamline their email workflow, allowing you to eliminate the mundane—and catch those costly errors before pressing send.

As we found in our [State of Email Production Report](#), email programs have a lot of moving parts and production cycles.

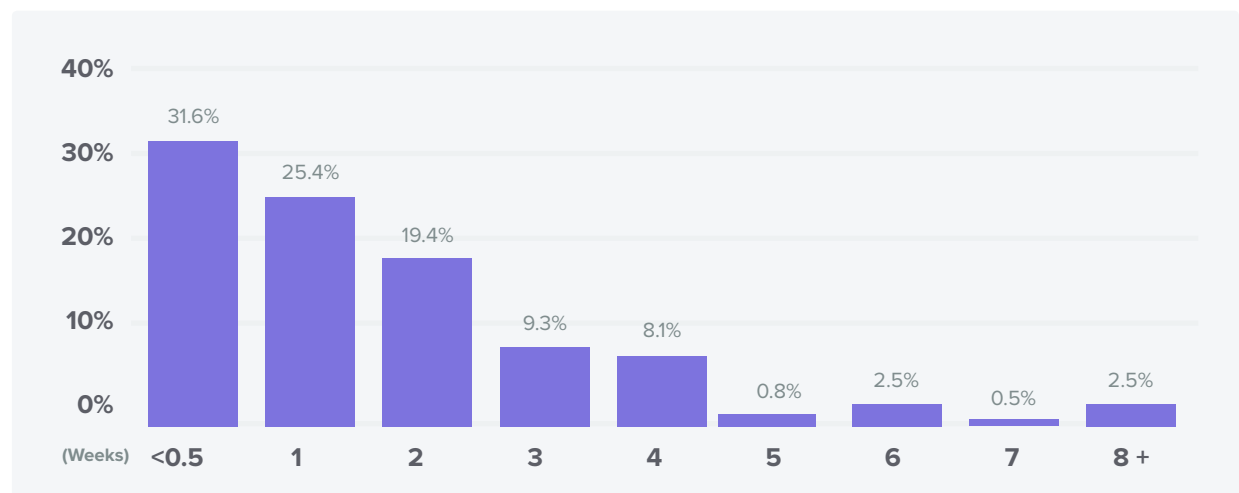
## Emails in production

At any given time, how many emails does your company typically have in production—that is, at any point between conception and being sent?



## Email production cycle

How long is your company's production cycle typically for a single email—that is, from the time conceiving begins on that email until it is sent?



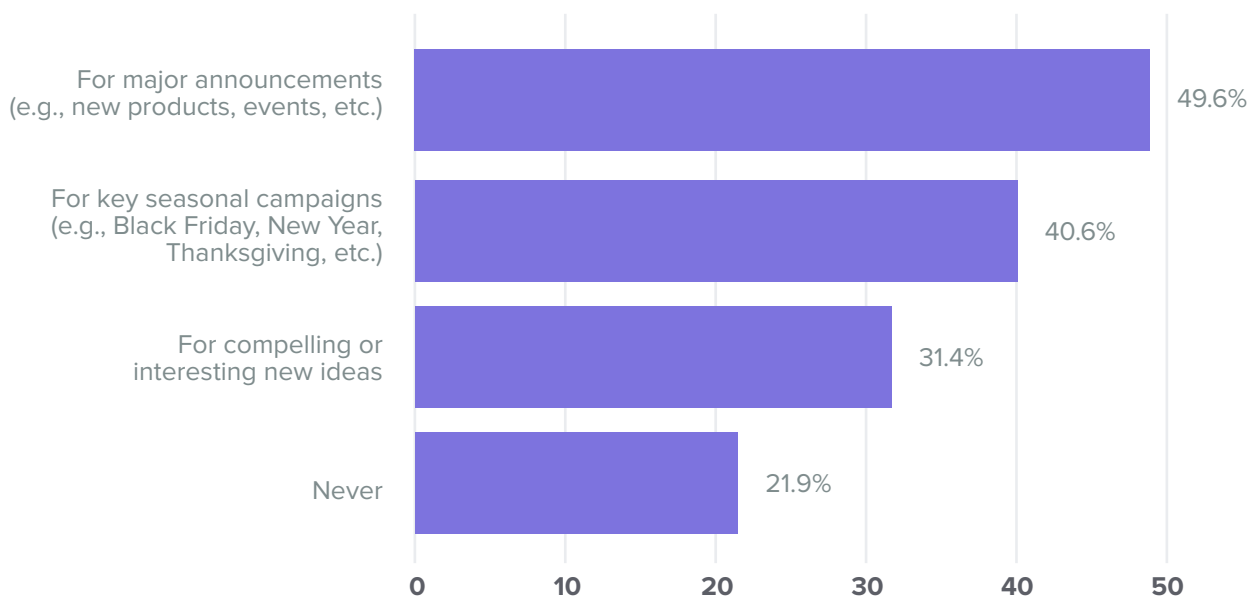
## Create standardized templates

If you're looking to streamline your workflow, a template is a good place to start. Swapping out copy or design elements, but keeping critical brand-specific pieces, can kickstart the email creation process. It can be helpful for non-coders, too.

In the State of Email Production survey, the majority of email designers reported only creating one-off email designs for big events, like new products, or key seasonal campaigns such as Black Friday. Using a standardized template the rest of the time creates great production efficiencies.

## Use of one-off email designs

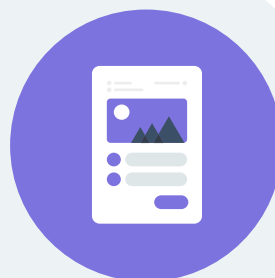
Under what circumstances does your company use a unique one-time email design, rather than using one of your standard designs? (select all that apply)



Source: Litmus poll of 1,006 visitors to its blog between Mar. 8 and Mar. 15, 2016

Download one of our free responsive, pre-tested templates from the Litmus Community.

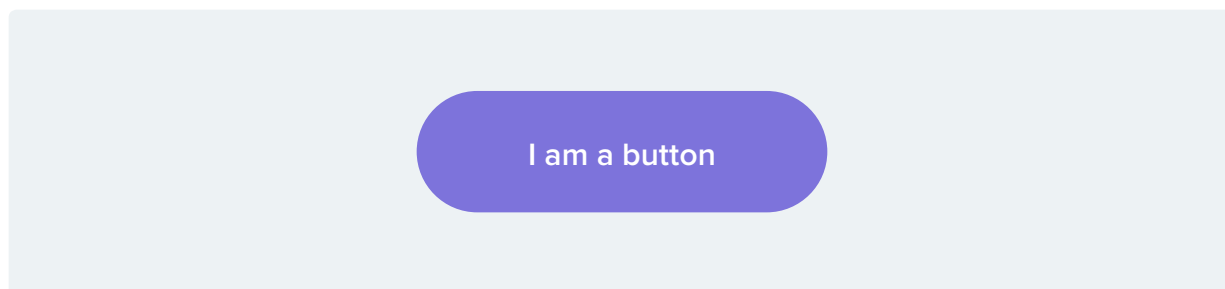
[Access the templates](#)



# Utilize Snippets

Snippets are modules of reusable code. They're ideal for elements that are commonly used across email designs, like doctype, bulletproof buttons, and links. Rather than having to re-write the code each time one of these elements is used, you can use a Snippet. This reduces redundancy and potential coding errors for common elements in your email designs.

Let's take bulletproof buttons as an example. Bulletproof buttons serve as a staple in emails for [calls-to-action \(CTA\)](#). However, each button needs customization for each individual email: Different copy, different links, and different placement. Snippets solve the problem of constantly re-creating the bulletproof button code by hand, and you can save it in a [Snippet library](#) as a shortcut trigger.

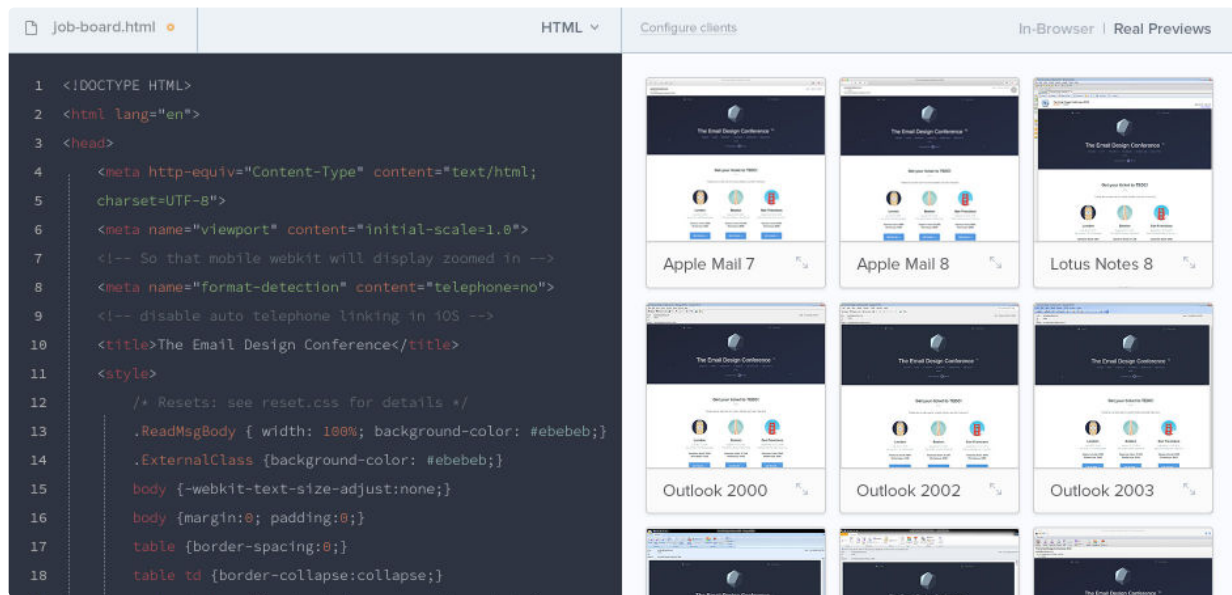


\*padding + border-based

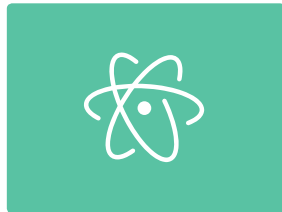
```
<table border="0" cellspacing="0" cellpadding="0">
  <tr>
    <td align="{align}" style="border-radius: {border-radius}px;"
      bgcolor="{bgcolor}">
      <a href="{link}" target="_blank" style="font-size: {font-
        size}px; font-family: {font}; color: #{color}; text-decoration:
        {decoration}; border-radius: {border-radius}px; padding:
        {padding}; border: {border}; display: inline-block;">{button
        text}</a>
    </td>
  </tr>
</table>
```

You can simply use a shortcut to generate the code. You can use snippets in:

## Litmus Builder



## Atom



## Sublime Text



## Coda



## Dreamweaver



## Want even more Snippets? Have some favorites you'd like to share?

Join the Community to search for and contribute snippets from our snippet library.

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Already have a member? [See our list of snippets.](#)



# Utilize Partial

Partials are global, dynamic, reusable blocks of code that can be used across multiple emails. Changes made to a Partial will apply to every single email where that Partial is referenced.

Partials work well for code sections such as headers, footers, reset CSS, and commonly used CTAs—anything that is repeated across multiple emails.

**For example,** at Litmus we use the same header across all of our emails:



```
<table cellpadding="0" cellspacing="0" border="0" width="100%">
  <tr>
    <td bgcolor="#33373e" align="center">
      <!--[if (gte mso 9)|(IE)]>
        <table width="500" align="center" cellpadding="0"
cellspacing="0" border="0">
          <tr>
            <td>
              <!--[endif]-->
                <table cellpadding="0" cellspacing="0" width="100%"
border="0" align="center" style="max-width: 500px;">
                  <tr>
                    <td style="padding: 15px 0;" align="center">
                      <a href="http://litmus.com" target="_blank">
                        
                      </a>
                    </td>
                  </tr>
                </table>
              <!--[if (gte mso 9)|(IE)]>
            </td>
          </tr>
        </table>
      </td>
    </tr>
  </table>
```

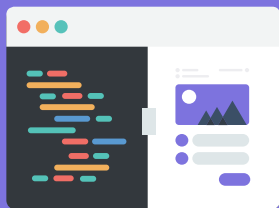
Instead of using the actual HTML and CSS of the header in the email, we use a Partial reference:

```
<table cellpadding="0" cellspacing="0" border="0" width="100%">
  <tr>
    <td align="center">
      {{header}}
    </td>
  </tr>
</table>
```

**\*Note:** The above reference is using Handlebars syntax, which is used in Litmus Builder.

Whenever changes to the header are necessary, we can avoid manually modifying each email where the header appears. Instead of updating individual emails, we simply update the Partial, which applies the change to every email where that Partial is used. Partials make managing and maintaining your emails easier, faster, and more scalable.

In order to use Partials, you need to leverage a build system and static site generator such as Handlebars, Middleman, or Assemble. We highly recommend using Litmus Builder (no setup required) or [Lee Munroe's Grunt Email Workflow](#) to use Partials.



With Partials in Litmus Builder, you get the power of task automation without worrying about setup or maintenance. Use Litmus Builder to build emails, faster.

[Sign up now](#)

Start your free trial. Already have an account? [Sign in.](#)

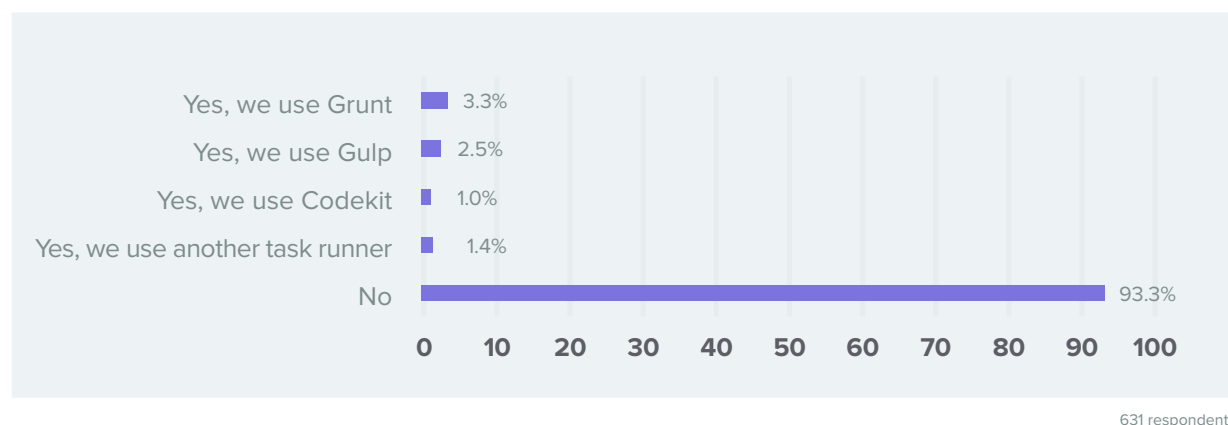
# Use a task runner

Task runners automate repetitive tasks such as inlining CSS and sending test emails.

According to our [2016 State of Email Production](#) report, 6.7% of email marketers use task runners as part of their email production workflow.

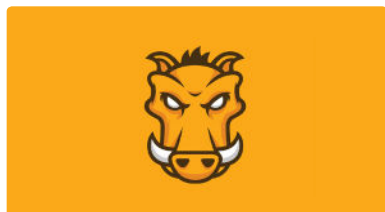
## Task runner usage

Does your company use a task runner for email development?



See if a task runner can help you by checking out these options:

[Grunt](#)



[Gulp](#)



[Codekit](#)

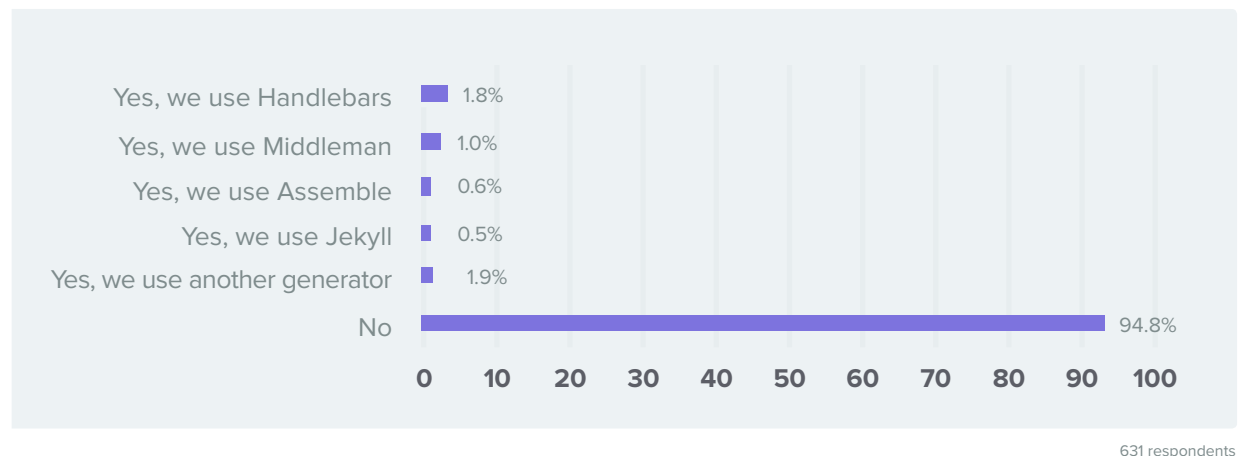


## Use a static site generator

Static site generators are build systems for flat files that allow you to templatize and break down email elements. This makes it easier for email creators to edit and control those email elements. More than 5% of email marketers are using static site generators as part of their email production workflow.

## Static site generator usage

Does your company use a static site generator for email development?



631 respondents

See if static site generators can help you by checking out these options:

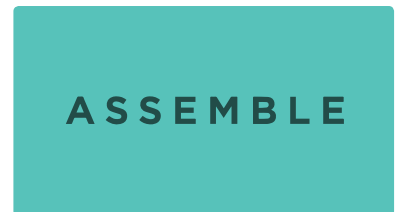
[Handlebars](#)



[Middleman](#)



[Assemble](#)



Task runners and static site generators have historically been used as web development tools, but can be used in email to set up a framework that includes layouts, variables, and Partial to help optimize your workflow from end to end.

# Preprocessors and postprocessors

A preprocessor converts code written in a preprocessing language into standards-compliant HTML or CSS that can be rendered by a browser.

See if preprocessors can help you by checking out these options:

[Sass](#)



[Haml](#)

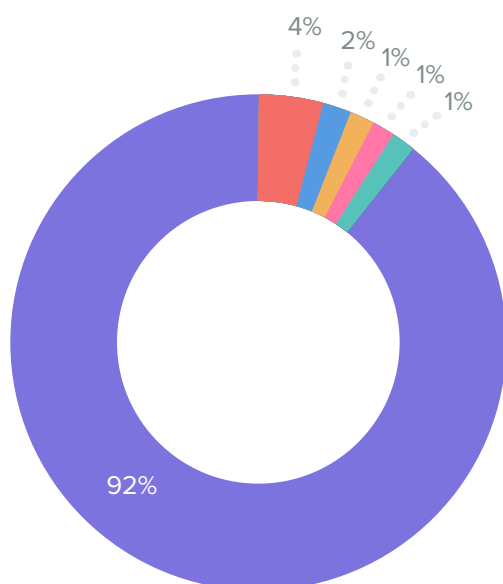


[Less](#)



## Preprocessing usage

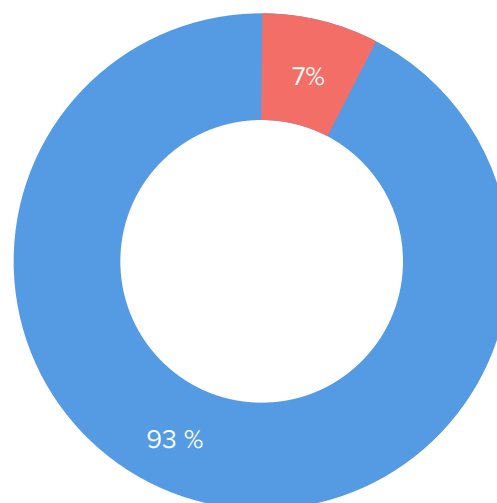
Does your company use preprocessing languages for email development?



- Yes, we use Sass.
- Yes, we use SCSS.
- Yes, we use Haml.
- Yes, we use another preprocessor.
- Yes, we use Less.
- No

## Postprocessor usage

Does your company use postprocessing for email development?



- Yes
- No

A postprocessor sanitizes your CSS and converts it into standards-compliant CSS to ensure compatibility across email clients.

# Take code shortcuts with Emmet

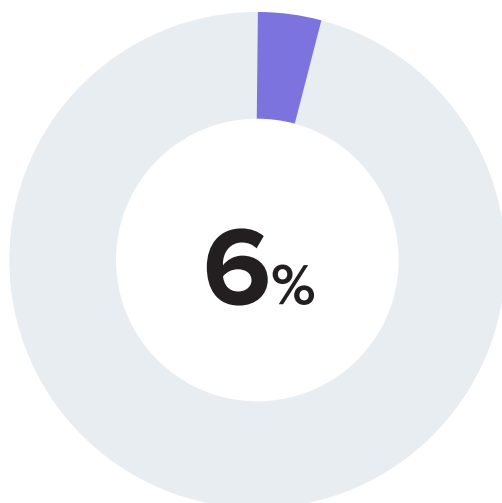
Emmet is a free add-on for your text editor that allows you to type keyboard shortcuts that are then expanded into full segments of code.

By using Emmet, email creators type less, saving both keystrokes and time when building a campaign. Also, relying on Emmet's autocompletion means fewer typos and missing tags, leading to more robust emails.

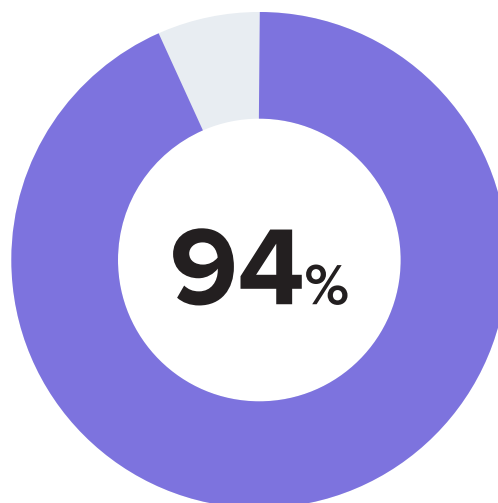
Emmet is available for a variety of text editors and is built into [Litmus Builder](#). Popular with web designers, Emmet has seen increased adoption among email designers looking to streamline their workflows, although usage is still small.

## Emmet plugin usage

Does your company use the Emmet plugin for email development?



Yes



No

The easiest way to understand Emmet is by looking at an example. Say you want a table with three rows, each containing a table cell with an image above a paragraph of text and a link.

Instead of manually typing—or copying and pasting—each row, table cell, image, paragraph, and link tag, you can condense that down to one line and let Emmet do most of the work for you.

```
table>tr*3>td>img+p+a
```

After hitting the tab button to trigger Emmet, the one line of code is expanded into full HTML.

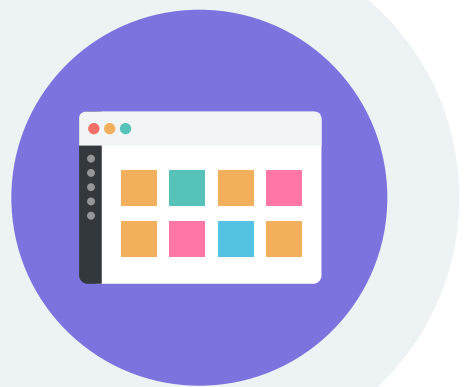
```
<table>
  <tr>
    <td>
      <img src="" alt="" />
      <p></p>
      <a href=""></a>
    </td>
  </tr>
  <tr>
    <td>
      <img src="" alt="" />
      <p></p>
      <a href=""></a>
    </td>
  </tr>
  <tr>
    <td>
      <img src="" alt="" />
      <p></p>
      <a href=""></a>
    </td>
  </tr>
</table>
```

**Get a guided check of all the critical elements that impact performance with Litmus Checklist.**

Preview your emails with images on or off, optimize your subject lines, and more.

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# Drive relevant, contextual, delightful email

When designing and creating email, it's important to get your message across in an accessible way. But that's only the first step. To truly engage your subscribers and make your email stand out, you must surprise and delight them with personalized, relevant campaigns.

In addition to creating relevant emails, you can add a little “wow factor” to your campaigns by using some emerging email tactics, including live content, gamification, and interactivity.

## Live content

Live content enables email marketers to add personalization to their campaigns in a whole new way. A subset of dynamic content, live content is image, animation, or video-based content that is conditionally displayed in email using data that isn't known until the message is opened by the recipient.

### ACTION ITEM

#### Experiment with live content for your next big email campaign.

The foundational data “building blocks” of almost all live content are the opener's location, device, and time of open.

The email is deployed as normal by the sender, but once it's opened by the recipient, the live content is requested from the live content provider's servers, which contains information used to change the content at the time of the open.

#### Examples of live content include:

- ✓ Using a countdown timer for a product launch
- ✓ Including a local map
- ✓ Embedding a video
- ✓ Showing how much inventory is still available for a given product or event

*“In my view, the purpose of live content is to drive context and relevancy. The applications enabled by live content (e.g., scratch-to-reveals, video, carousels, etc.) are there to enhance the inbox experience.”*

– Justin Foster, co-founder of LiveClicker

## Gamification

Essentially, gamification is using game mechanics to do something that is fun and engaging that otherwise wouldn't be. Think about how popular FitBit and Nike Fuel Bands have become in the running world—turning a chore like running into something competitive and celebratory can stimulate adoption and engagement. The same works for email.

Gamification can help your emails stand out, increase your reach by making your emails more shareable, and, if done right, can build an experience that will truly surprise and delight your subscribers.

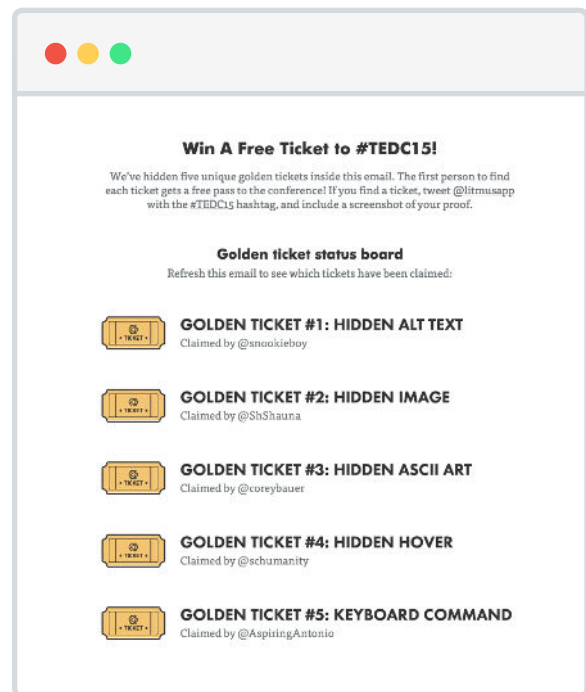
It's not for every brand or every use case. When gamifying an email, it's essential to create a strategy and define your workflow before you start coding.

### ACTION ITEM

#### Clearly define your goals before setting out to gamify your emails.

When it comes to using gamification in email, it must be beneficial for both your company and your subscribers. After all, your subscribers aren't likely to participate if there's no benefit for them. Make sure you know what you're getting yourself into, and why you want to gamify your email.

An email game can take different forms, from something as simple as asking subscribers to “choose your option” in a re-engagement email, like [AHA Concierge](#), to the more detailed gaming used in our [Litmus Live golden ticket emails](#).



# Interactive emails

Interactivity is an action taken in an email that triggers an event within the same email. Tapping an arrow on a dropdown to open that dropdown, checking a checkbox, or completing a [minesweeper game](#) within an email are all examples of interactivity at work.

## ACTION ITEM

### Plan out your interactive strategy.

Interactive emails take some serious planning, but doing so can really strengthen the quality of your email marketing program. You'll need to know exactly what your subscribers will interact with, when, and how you'll execute fallbacks for unsupported clients.

This trend will only strengthen in the coming years.

*“Expect the inbox to continue to morph into a more dynamic environment mirroring the web. Great tools and innovations will move email from a static, ‘been there, sent that’ state to a highly customized message that can adapt based on marketing and subscriber elements.”*

– **Simms Jenkins**, CEO of Brightwave

## ACTION ITEM

### Experiment with interactive email use cases for your next big campaign.

#### That could mean:

- Including a photo gallery to showcase multiple product views, dropdowns, or color swatches
- Implementing a quiz or survey directly in an email
- Adding the ability to add a review directly in the email
- Add-to-cart or in-email purchase



# Make email better

The email industry is constantly changing. But to build a successful email program, it's not enough to know the ins and outs of email design and marketing best practices. You have to be able to take those best practices and put them into action.

You have the data, trends, and innovations set to define email in 2017. You know the ins and outs of quirky email clients, what's going on in the industry, and the trends that will help you stand out in the inbox.

Now, what will you create?



## About Litmus

At Litmus, we build best-in-class tools and applications to empower marketers, designers, and agencies to achieve high levels of personalization, engagement, and ROI with every email they send.

Over 250,000 major global brands across every industry and vertical trust Litmus to help them confidently deliver a superior subscriber experience, including 9 of the top 10 eCommerce brands, 8 of the top 10 retailers, 7 of the top 10 tech companies, and 23 of the top 25 US ad agencies.



## About the Author

Kayla Lewkowicz hails from Hopkinton, MA, home of the Boston Marathon. When she's not geeking out about email at Litmus, she's off in search of the next great mountain to climb or giant bowl of pasta to eat.



## About the Designer

Amir Hamdi is the Content Designer at Litmus with a passion for doodling, good movies, nice cameras, and fast cars. 🖋️ 🎬 📺 🚗 😊