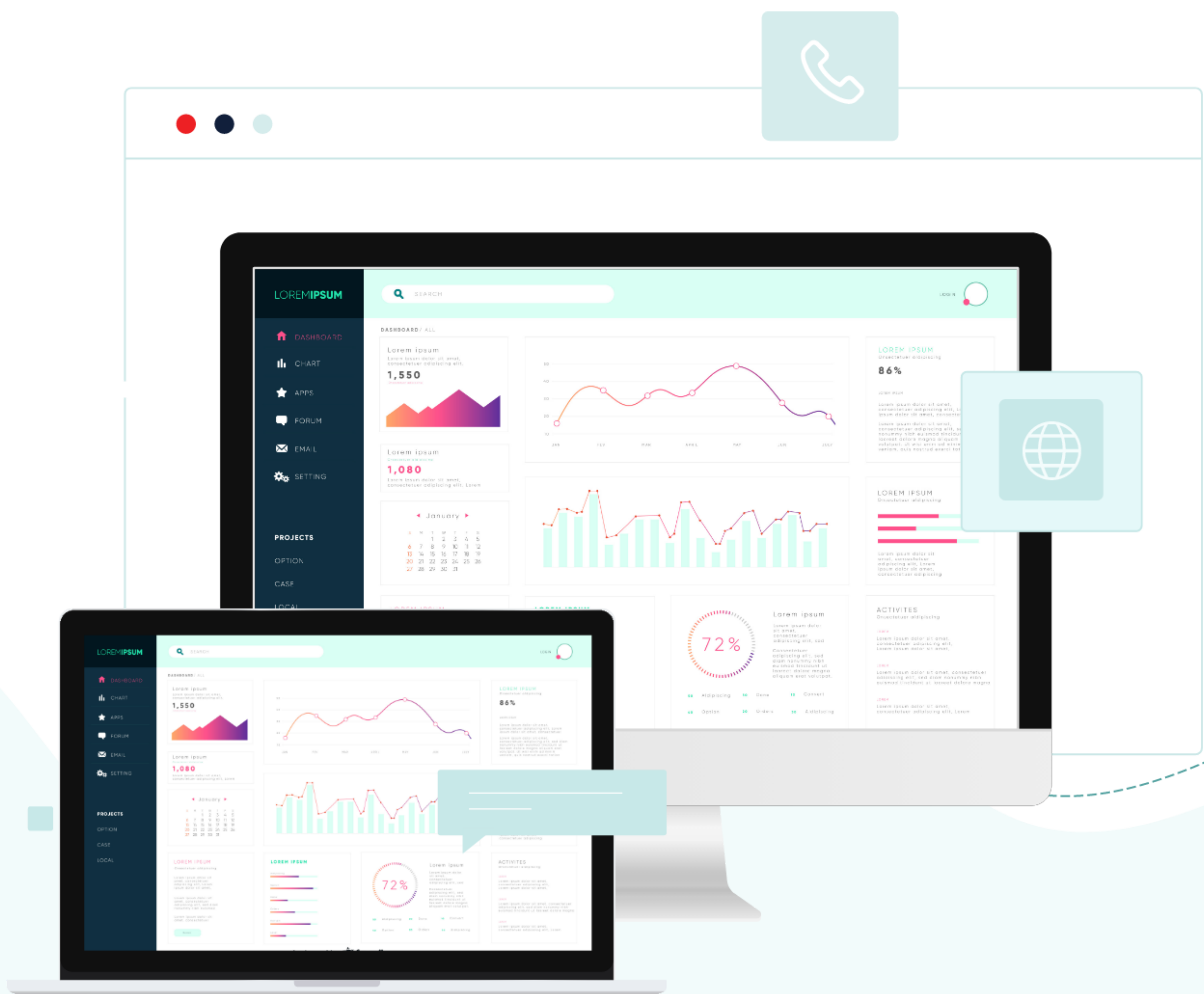


EmailSmart

Get Seen - Get Sales - Get EmailSmart

Become EmailSmart:

Get more of your emails seen, so
you'll make more sales



Maximising Email Impact and Boosting Sales:
A Definitive Guide for Businesses Using Email
Marketing to Engage With Prospects and Convert
Leads to Sales

Adrian Savage and Evan Samurin

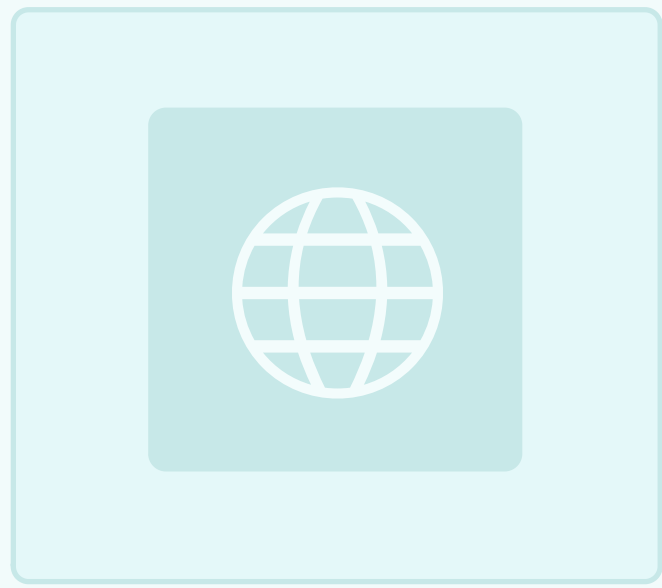
Email Marketing

Are you Hitting the Jackpot or
Losing your Shirt?



Email marketing is a game with high rewards. It's the most cost effective way of reaching your audience quickly and easily, with a return on investment of up to \$44 for every \$1 invested.

If you're reading this, you already know that email marketing done properly is a game-changer. It should be the #1 way you generate revenue and new clients.



Unfortunately, email was not designed to be a guaranteed service. When email was first developed in the 1970s, it was intended for simple communication between users on the same computer or within a limited network.

And it still isn't. Even though email has evolved over time, it remains a non-guaranteed service.

If enough of your emails aren't reaching your audience, you're literally burning thousands of dollars on hard-won leads every single month.

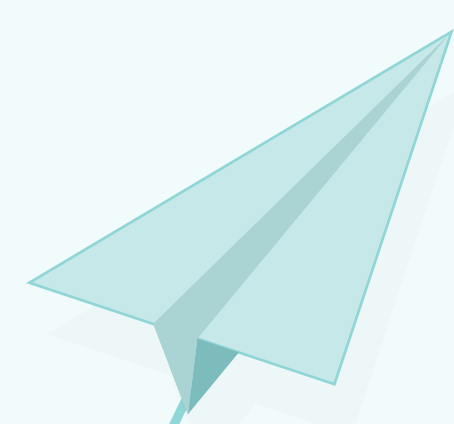
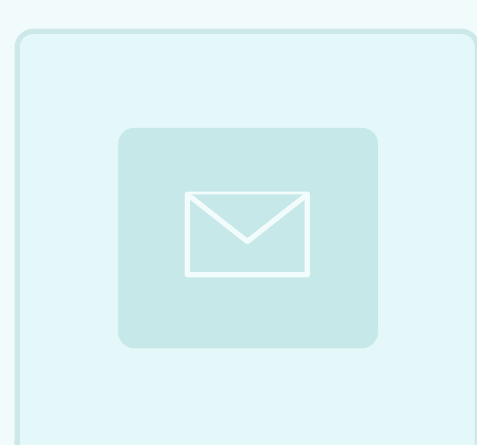
And if you don't do things the right way, you could end up in Google Jail (which is worse than being shadowbanned on social media), where hardly any emails you send will be seen by your audience.




We've analysed email performance data for thousands of businesses. And for the majority of those businesses, as many as 50% of new leads who sign up never open the emails they receive.



Imagine spending thousands of dollars a month on lead generation in those circumstances. Without realising it, it's likely that up to 50% of your paid ad spend is being wasted. Not to mention the amount of money left on the table thanks to lost sales from those people who didn't even see the offer you had for them.



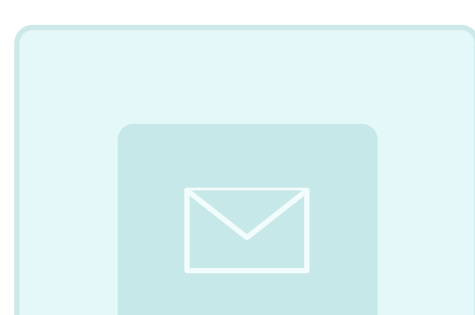


 **So, unless you're getting 80-90% of your new leads opening your emails, you're wasting a lot of money.**

If you can increase your new lead open rates from 50% to 75% and maintain the same conversion rate, you'll increase your ROI on ad spend by 50%.

The good news is that it's possible to be incredibly successful with email, as long as you follow some important, simple rules.

In truth, a lot more goes into a successful, profitable email marketing strategy than just sending the email - which is why we've written this guide for you.



The **Challenges** of Email Marketing

Don't talk about Deliverability!

You may have come across the term that strikes fear into the hearts of the most seasoned email marketers: “Email Deliverability”.

But here at EmailSmart, we do our best not to use the word “deliverability”, and here's why:

It's often seen as complex, scary and technical.

Or, worse, it's seen as someone else's problem.

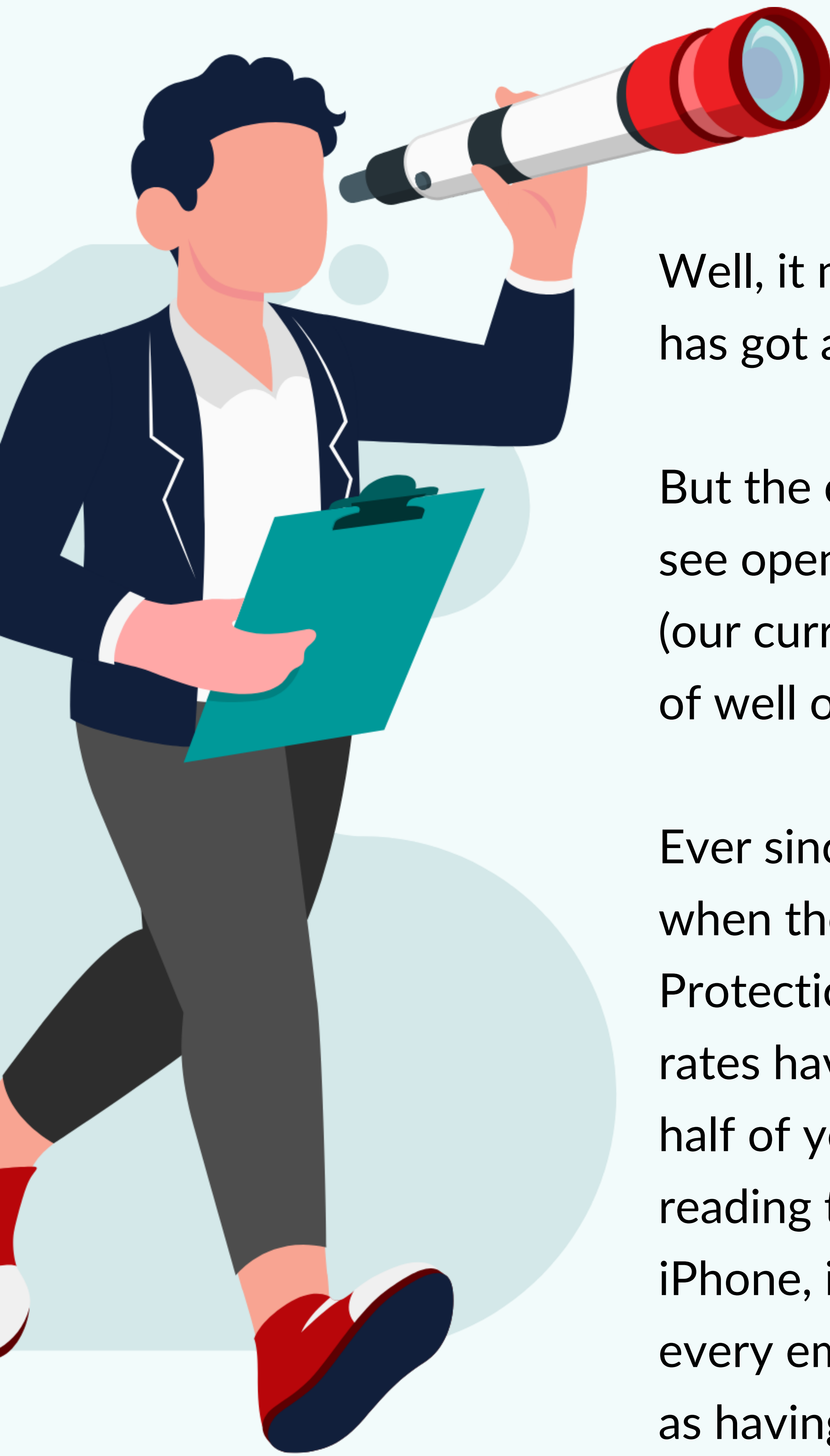


It's very common for people to say, “The email platform I use has poor deliverability”. And, with the greatest of respect to them, they're almost always wrong.

The most popular email marketing platforms have mostly excellent delivery. Their operations teams work round the clock to fiercely protect their email reputation, so their customers' emails will get delivered. They all suffer from the occasional problem (no platform is immune to this) but they almost always get things resolved quickly.

And while it's easy to blame your email marketing platform if your emails aren't getting through, the truth of the matter is that the destiny of your emails is almost entirely in your hands. You can't abdicate responsibility to your email platform.

Why 30% Open Rates Are Hurting Your Business



A 30% open rate is good, isn't it?

Well, it might be if someone else has got a 10% open rate.

But the clients we work with routinely see open rates of 50%, 60% and higher (our current record, when mailing a list of well over 10,000 people, is 87%).

Ever since Apple changed the rules when they introduced Mail Privacy Protection, open rates and engagement rates have been inflated. More than half of your subscribers could be reading their emails on an Apple iPhone, iPad or Mac, meaning that every email you send them will show as having been opened, whether they looked at it or not.

Taking that into consideration, it means that **unless you're seeing 50-60% open rates with every email campaign you send**, you're not getting the return on your investment that you should be.



Your **Reputation** is on the Line

In this guide, we'll talk a lot about your reputation. This is normally in the context of your sending reputation, as seen by the mailbox providers such as Google, Microsoft and Yahoo.

But there's another place where reputation matters: with your prospects and your customers. If your emails don't get through to them when they're expecting to hear from you, your reputation will suffer.

If you have a customer who has just purchased an online training program and they don't receive the follow-up email with their login details and password, they're not going to be happy.

In this scenario, not only could your reputation get hurt, but so could your bank account when you get hit with lots of demands for refunds.

So it really is vital that you look after your sending reputation, in order to protect your business's reputation and your personal reputation with your audience.

This brings us to the most important question:

Why don't emails get seen?



Why Emails Don't Get Seen

Unfortunately, email was not designed to be a guaranteed service. And it still isn't.

There are many points of failure that can prevent an email from getting through.

So it doesn't matter where the email comes from, - we can never guarantee that it's going to reach the recipient.

It can get lost along the way (bounced) or, even worse, filtered out by a well-meaning but often overzealous spam filter.

And, of course, even if the recipient sees it in their inbox, there's no guarantee they'll open it.



So, why do mailbox providers filter email?

More than 85% of all email sent every single day is considered spam.

The mailbox providers want to save their users from that spam. They've spent millions developing software (artificial intelligence / machine learning) to identify the spam and filter it out, so their users never get to see most of the garbage sent out by the spammers.

Unfortunately, no software is perfect. And many of the legitimate emails we send out get caught in the crossfire.


Why do emails end up in the spam folder?




Poor domain reputation: If your domain has a bad reputation (because of your previous sending behaviour), mailbox providers will be more likely to route your emails into the spam folder.




No email authentication: If you haven't set up SPF, DKIM, and DMARC for your domain, mailbox providers might not trust your emails and send them to the spam folder.




Low engagement: If your recipients aren't opening or interacting with your emails, email providers might assume they're not interested and start filtering your emails to spam.




Spammy subject lines and content: If your subject line or email content is too salesy, uses all caps, or has lots of exclamation points, or contains words such as “free”, “limited time”, “act now” or even “click here”, it might trigger spam filters and send your email straight to the spam folder.




High bounce rates: If you're sending emails to invalid addresses and experiencing high bounce rates, this can hurt your domain reputation and make your emails more likely to be filtered into the spam folder.




Too many images or links: If your emails contain a lot of images or links, this can trigger spam filters, especially if the content doesn't seem relevant or the links lead to suspicious websites.




Blocklists: If your domain or the IP address you're sending emails from ends up on an email blocklist, your emails might be blocked or sent straight to the spam folder.



Email format: If your emails have a messy format, broken images, or aren't mobile-friendly, they might end up in the spam folder.



Inconsistent sending: If you send emails at irregular intervals or in large bursts, that'll make mailbox providers suspicious, leading to your emails being filtered as spam.



Purchased or rented lists: Using purchased or rented email lists can lead to low engagement, high bounce rates, and increased spam complaints, all of which can hurt your deliverability.



How Can You Prevent Emails from Going to Spam?

In short, don't do anything listed in the previous section :-)

The more detailed answer is: do everything we share in this guide and you'll be going a long way towards achieving email excellence.

By following this guide, you can stand out from your competition, make your behaviour different to that of the spammers and get excellent results from your email marketing.

You can become EmailSmart.



How Well Are You Doing?

Ever since Apple introduced Mail Privacy Protection, it's become much more difficult to accurately track email performance.

But we've still got some simple ways of checking how well our clients' emails are performing, and you can use them to see whether you need to dig deeper into the world of email visibility.

Use this part of the guide to work out how well you're doing with your email marketing.

Open Rates

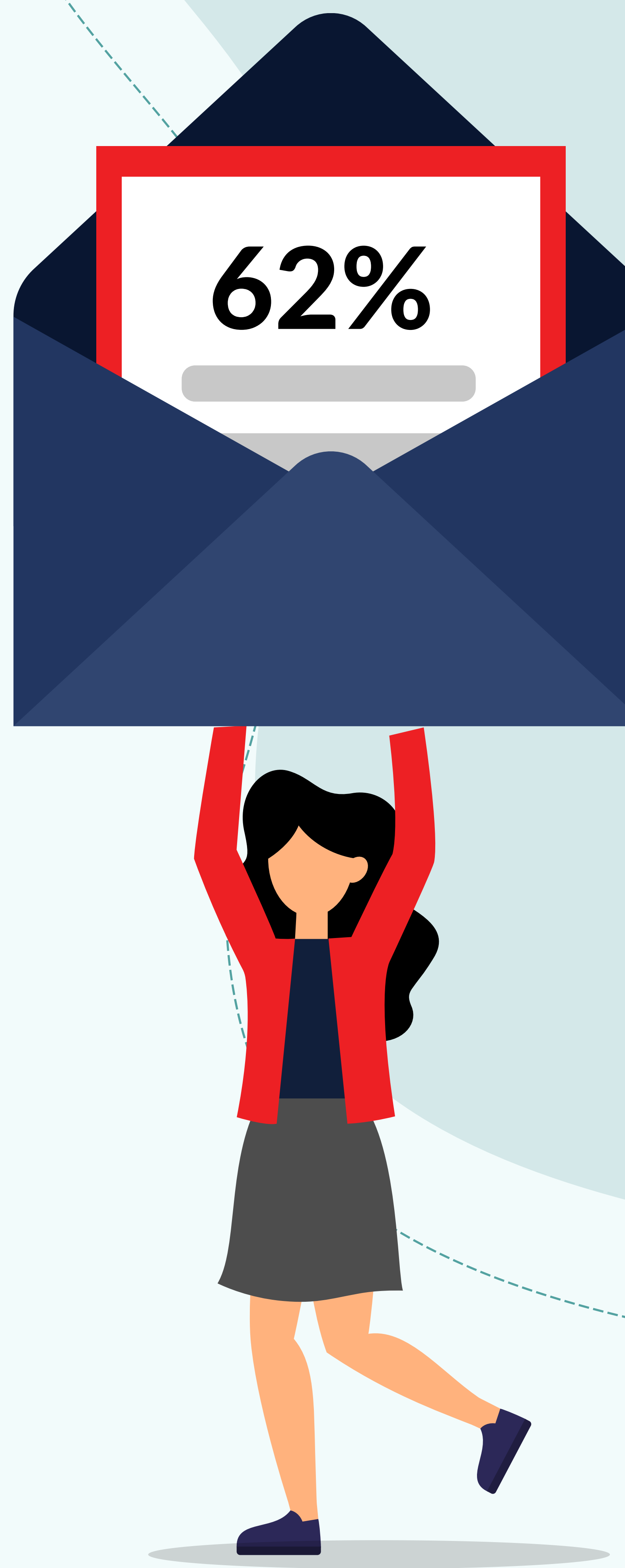
We've already talked about open rates.

Contrary to popular belief, this is almost totally within your control. As long as you're sending your emails to the people who are most likely to open them (which is what you need to be doing, we'll explain why this matters later), you'll find that your open rates are consistently higher than the "industry averages" quoted by so many experts.

For sure, Apple have confused the issue by reporting "fake" opens. So anyone who uses Apple Mail on their phone or iPad and opts into Mail Privacy Protection will look like they've opened your email, even if they haven't. So average open rates are much higher than they used to be.

That means that if you're not seeing open rates of 50-60% on the emails you're sending, you really need to raise your game. Some of our clients routinely see open rates of 60-70% or even higher.

What if you're not getting open rates that are this good? Well, keep reading and we'll explain how you can raise your game.



Open Rate	How You're Doing
Above 70%	It doesn't get much better than this. Most people don't come anywhere close to this level of open rates.
Above 60%	You're still doing really well. It's likely you can make a few improvements but you're still getting a great response from your email list.
Above 50%	There's room for improvement. This is the average open rate we see, so there's probably some room for improvement.
Above 40%	It's starting to look a little worrying. You could easily be improving your performance.
Above 30%	It's not great. It's likely that more than half the people you're mailing aren't even seeing your emails.
Above 20%	This is pretty bad. 20% used to be considered a good open rate, but Apple have changed that. Between 30 and 50% of your list will normally show as Apple "false" opens.
Below 20%	You really need help.



New **Lead** Engagement

If you're paying for new leads, you need to pay particular attention to this section.


New lead engagement is the holy grail for email marketers who run paid ads. It tells you how many of your new subscribers are actually seeing, and responding to, your emails.

If you spend a few thousand dollars a month on Facebook or Google ads and only half the people open the emails they sign up for, you're wasting half your ad budget every single month. You're literally burning thousands and thousands of dollars every single year.

Luckily, it's quite easy to work this out.

All you need to do is the following:



- Search for all the contacts you've added to your list in the last 30 days, and make a note of the number of contacts that show up. Let's call that C.
 - Out of those particular contacts, search for the ones that have opened at least one email from you, and make a note of the number of contacts that show up. Let's call that O.
 - Then work out your percentage engagement rate using this formula: $100 * O / C$
 - If you've got the maths right, you'll come up with a number between 0 and 100.
- 



New Lead Engagement Rate	How You're Doing
90%	It doesn't get much better than this. You're doing really well with your new lead engagement and getting the best ROI you can from your ad spend.
80%	You're still doing pretty well. It's likely you can make a few improvements but you're still getting a good ROI on your ad spend.
70%	There's room for improvement. You're not wasting too much money but it's pretty likely you could be converting more leads into customers if you followed the recommendations we share in this guide.
60%	It's starting to look a little worrying. You've got the potential of increasing your effectiveness by as much as 50% now.
50%	It's not great. You're wasting almost half your ad spend every month and are losing a huge amount of revenue from new leads that you're not converting.
Below 50%	You really need help. If you're spending a lot of money on lead generation, you need to stop while you fix your deliverability issues.

How Much Are You Losing?

Now let’s talk about the true cost of lost leads.

We've just talked about how much money you could be wasting on ad spend. But if you're not getting enough new leads to see your emails, it's not just the ad spend you're wasting.

You're also losing potentially tens of thousands of dollars in sales from those lost leads.



As an example, let’s say you're spending \$4000 per month on lead generation with a cost per lead of \$10. Your average conversion rate from your emails is 5%, and your customer lifetime value is \$500.

If you’re doing really well, as much as 90% of your new leads will see and engage with the emails you’re sending them. But most people don’t even get close to that figure and could be losing a lot of money, simply because they’ve not focused on their email deliverability.

New Lead Engagement rate	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%
People Opened	360	320	280	240	200	160
Wasted Monthly Ad Spend	nil	\$400	\$800	\$1200	\$1600	\$2000
New Customers	18	16	14	12	10	8
Additional Lifetime Revenue	\$9,000	\$8,000	\$7,000	\$6,000	\$5,000	\$4,000
Lost Revenue	nil	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$5,000
Total Lost per Month	nil	\$1,400	\$2,800	\$4,200	\$5,600	\$7,000
Total Lost per Year	nil	\$16,800	\$33,600	\$50,400	\$67,200	\$84,000

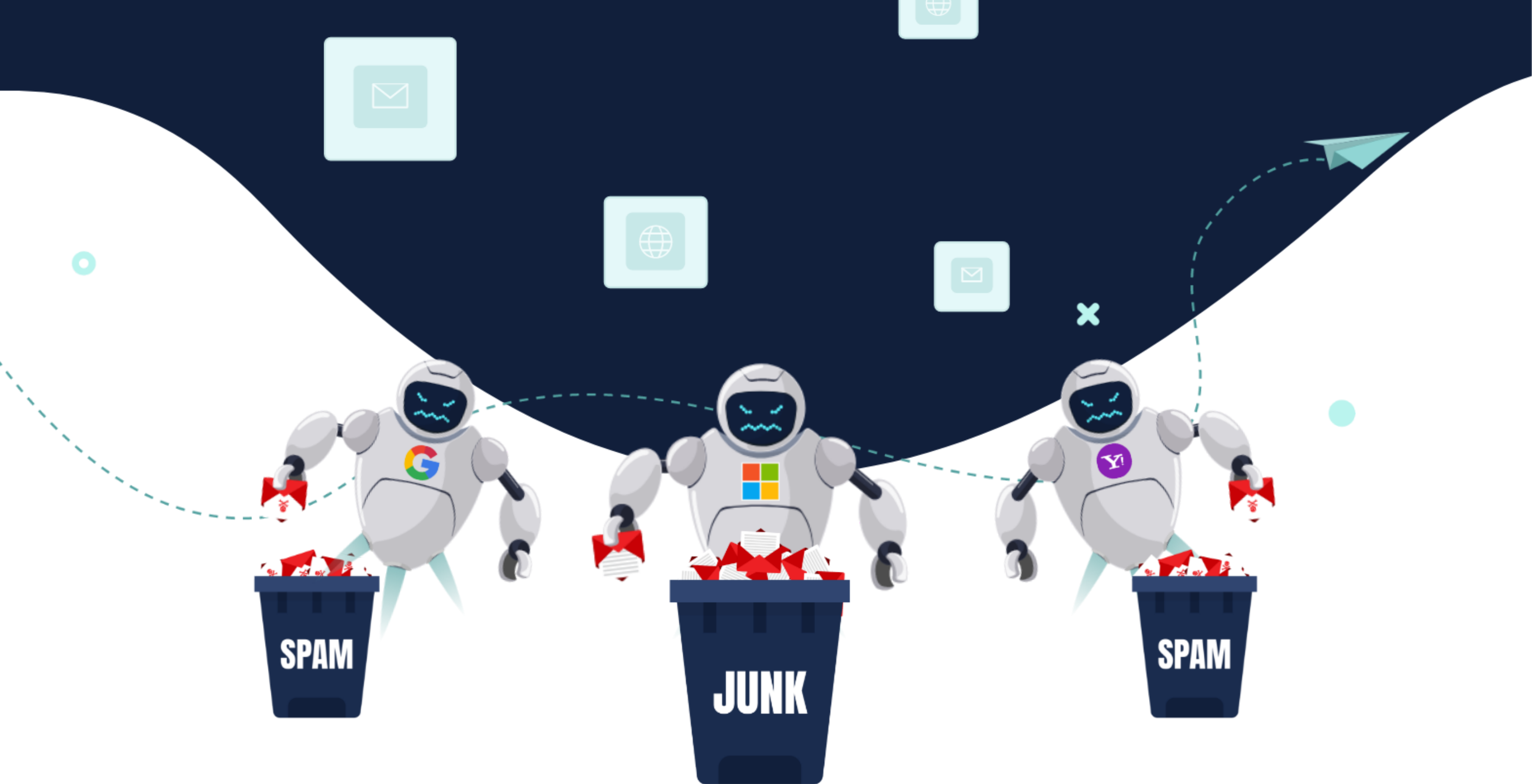
What we’re showing here is that the lower your engagement rate for your new contacts, not only will you be wasting money on lead generation for people who will never see your emails, but worse, you’ll be losing a lot of revenue from the same people who didn’t see your emails because you weren’t able to make an offer to them.

As another illustration, if you're spending \$2000 per month on lead generation with a cost per lead of \$20, your average conversion rate is 10% and your customer lifetime value is \$2000:

New Lead Engagement rate	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%
People Opened	360	320	280	60	50	40
Wasted Ad Spend	nil	\$400	\$800	\$600	\$800	\$1000
New Customers	18	16	14	6	5	4
Additional Lifetime Revenue	\$9,000	\$8,000	\$7,000	\$12,000	\$10,000	\$8,000
Lost Revenue	nil	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$6,000	\$8,000	\$10,000
Total Lost per Month	nil	\$1,400	\$2,800	\$6,600	\$8,800	\$11,000
Total Lost per Year	nil	\$16,800	\$33,600	\$79,200	\$105,600	\$132,000

So in these circumstances, you need to be aware of just how much money you're turning your back on if you ignore deliverability.





The Rules of the Game

The email world changes all the time and businesses often struggle to keep up so that their marketing emails continue to be seen by their subscribers.

Who sets the rules?

Every mailbox provider has their own set of rules that senders must follow. The problem is that most people don't know those rules, so they don't follow them - and their emails end up languishing in the spam folder, never to be read

Google, Microsoft, and Yahoo are the three most common mailbox providers, with a vice-like grip of more than 90% of a typical email list. Google alone accounts for 50-60% of most email lists.

And these three giants all have very specific rules that you must follow if you want them to deliver emails to your audience and have a successful business.

What are the rules?

Even though the three giants have their own sets of rules, there are some common themes that are very important.

To summarise the most important rules:

- ✈ **Don't be a spammer: don't mail unless they've asked you to**
- ✈ **Only mail your active subscribers**
- ✈ **Send content that they want to engage with**

If you follow the rules, you'll have a good sending reputation, and the emails you send will be more likely to land in the inbox.

If you don't follow the rules, you'll end up with a bad sending reputation, and most of the emails you send will land in the spam or junk folder.





Why Do People Struggle?

It's because they don't know - or don't follow - the rules.

Their own actions (or lack of action) and behaviours are observed and judged by the mailbox providers.

If people don't know the rules, or they aren't following the rules, then that's the greatest cause of their problems.

Vicious Circle or Virtuous Circle?

If you don't follow the rules, you can get caught in a vicious circle.

If you mail people who don't want to hear from you, or you mail people who are ignoring you, or you get lots of spam complaints, your reputation will tumble. If your reputation is damaged, you'll be more likely to be routed into the spam folder. So fewer people will see your emails. And the fewer people see your emails, the lower your reputation will get.



On the other hand, if you send good quality emails to the people who want to hear from you and who engage with you, you'll end up in what we call the Virtuous Circle.



Becoming EmailSmart

What does it mean to be EmailSmart?

We came up with the name “EmailSmart” because everybody needs to be smart with the way they do their email marketing.

And we’re passionate about helping as many businesses as we can get the very most out of the time, effort and money that they invest in their emails.

So we’re going to do everything we can to help you be EmailSmart.

Our definition of being EmailSmart is:

**“Getting as many people as possible to see your emails...
...by sending the right emails to the right people”**

If you get more emails seen, you’ll make more sales and your business will be more successful.

Simple.



The business case for being EmailSmart

By becoming EmailSmart, it's possible for 85-90% of your new leads to see the emails you send them - and for more than 95% of your entire email list to see the marketing emails you send them.

What does that really mean?

Well, depending on where you're at right now, it could be possible to:

- Double the effectiveness (and return on investment) of the emails you're sending to new leads.
- Increase the conversions on your longer term follow-up emails by as much as 50%.

So instead of losing all that money we talked about earlier, you can achieve amazing results instead.





What is the Email**Smart** Process?

To make it really easy to remember what matters, we've linked it all to being SMART:

S

Start Smart and Shift your Thinking

M

Manage your Engagement

A

Authenticate your Emails

R

Raise your Reputation

T

Transform your Content

These are the main factors that influence whether your emails go into the inbox or the spam folder. So, let's go through each step of the process.

Start Smart and Shift Your Thinking

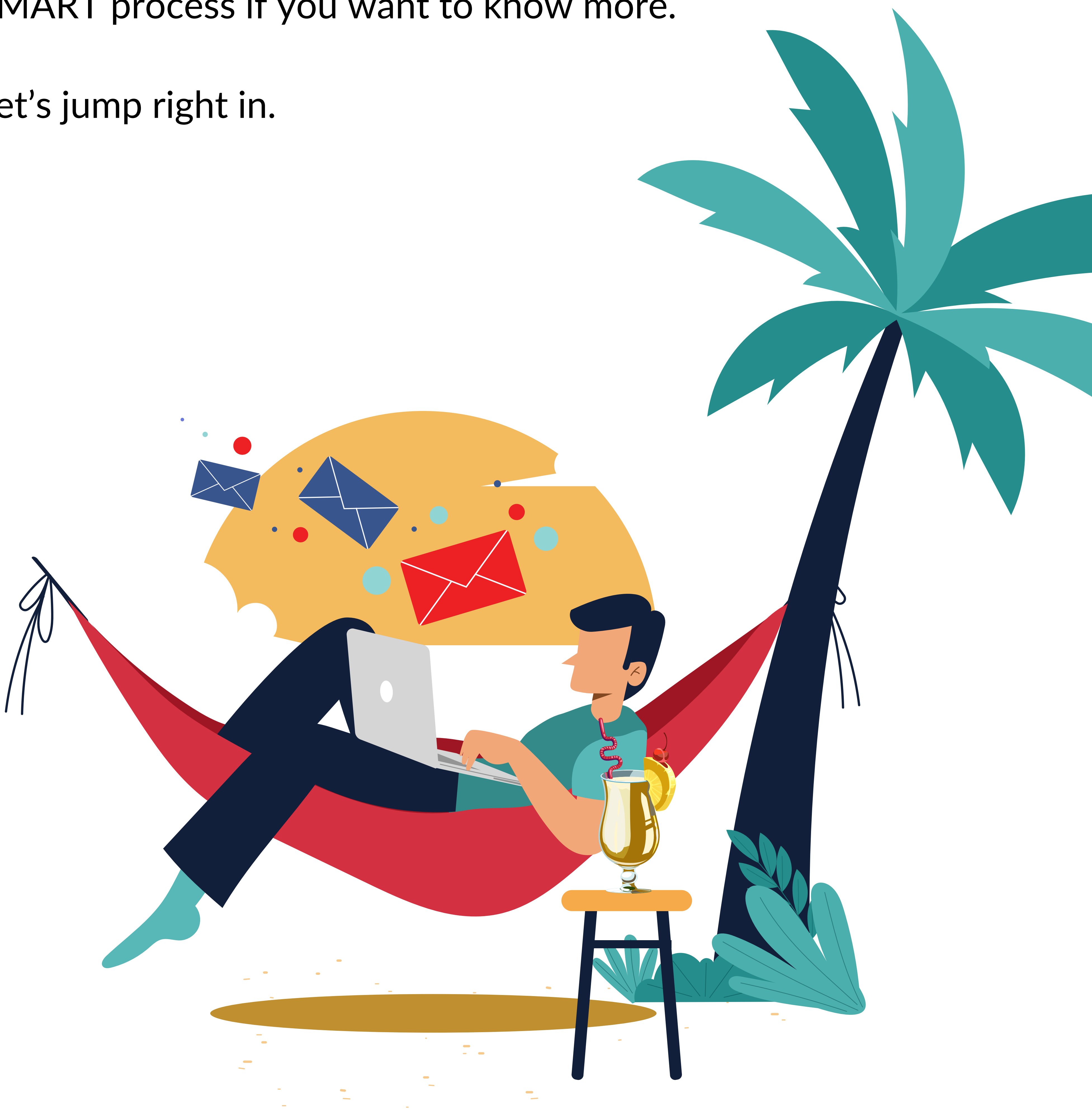
As the first step of the SMART process, this is the one to focus on to make sure you're set up for success with your email marketing.

It's a summary of the most important things that'll make the biggest difference.

Some of the steps mentioned here are covered in more detail in other parts of the SMART process.

So make sure you check out our detailed guides to the SMART process if you want to know more.

Let's jump right in.



Shifting Your Thinking

Why you need to think of your contacts as liabilities as well as assets.

We'll actually do this back to front, because shifting your thinking is THE most important part of Starting Smart, before you actually do anything.

Successful businesses who are EmailSmart think about email differently to most businesses. They understand that not everyone on their email list is safe to send email to.



They strive to create more of a two-way conversation with their list, rather than a monologue talking at their list.

They proactively manage their email list and change their behaviour to follow best practices that will maximise the chances of their emails being seen.

They understand that their email list is not just an asset - it can also be a liability. So they focus on maximising the assets on their list and removing the liabilities.

As we talk about shifting our mindset, we have to first understand the mindset of those that are in control of our inbox fate.

The reality is that anywhere from 75-90% of your list is controlled by the Big Three (Google, Yahoo and Microsoft), and they all have rules that you MUST follow if you want your emails to be seen.

Follow the rules and your messages will likely inbox, avoid those rules and in the spam folder you go!

Starting Smart

Let's start with the simplest, and most important, things you need to do.

Check your EmailSmart Score

Do this first! The EmailSmart Score tells you how well you've been mailing your audience in the last 30 days.

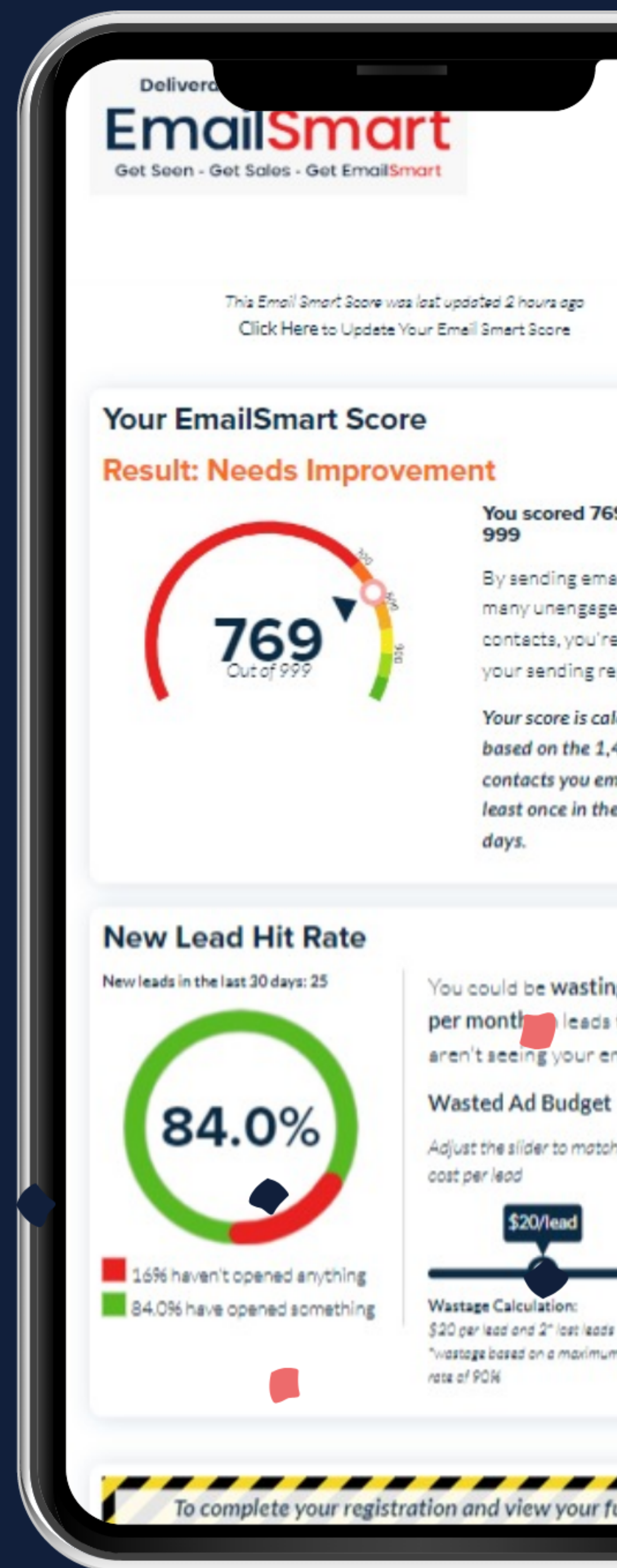
Go to <https://emailsmart.com/score> to analyse your sending.

It's a simple score that will tell you where you stand. The lower your score, the more improvements you need to make.

It tells you how many people you've been mailing are assets (and also shows how many are liabilities).

It's easy to improve your score. If you take the test and get a high score, then that's great, you're doing really well.

But even so, there's always room for improvement.



Identify your Liabilities (and stop sending emails to them!)



We've already mentioned that your list is not just an asset - it can also be a liability. The assets are the contacts that are most likely to open the emails you send. Statistically, the more recently they opened something, the more likely they are to open the next email.



There are several types of liabilities on a typical email list. There are the “dangerous” email addresses such as spam traps, but they’re few and far between unless you’ve been doing some crazy things. We’ll talk more about them when we cover list scrubbing later on.

The most dangerous liabilities of all are far more common, though. They’re the people you’re still sending emails to who haven’t opened anything for 90 days or longer (or who have never opened anything ever).

Keep sending emails to the liabilities and your reputation will drop before you can say “spam trap”.

To protect your reputation, simply identify all the contacts on your email list who haven’t opened anything for 90 days or longer, and stop mailing them. That’s it.

Send More Often! (only to the assets, not the liabilities)

One thing to remember is that the big mailbox providers (Google, Microsoft and Yahoo) reward consistency. So it's vital that you send emails to your assets as often as you can.

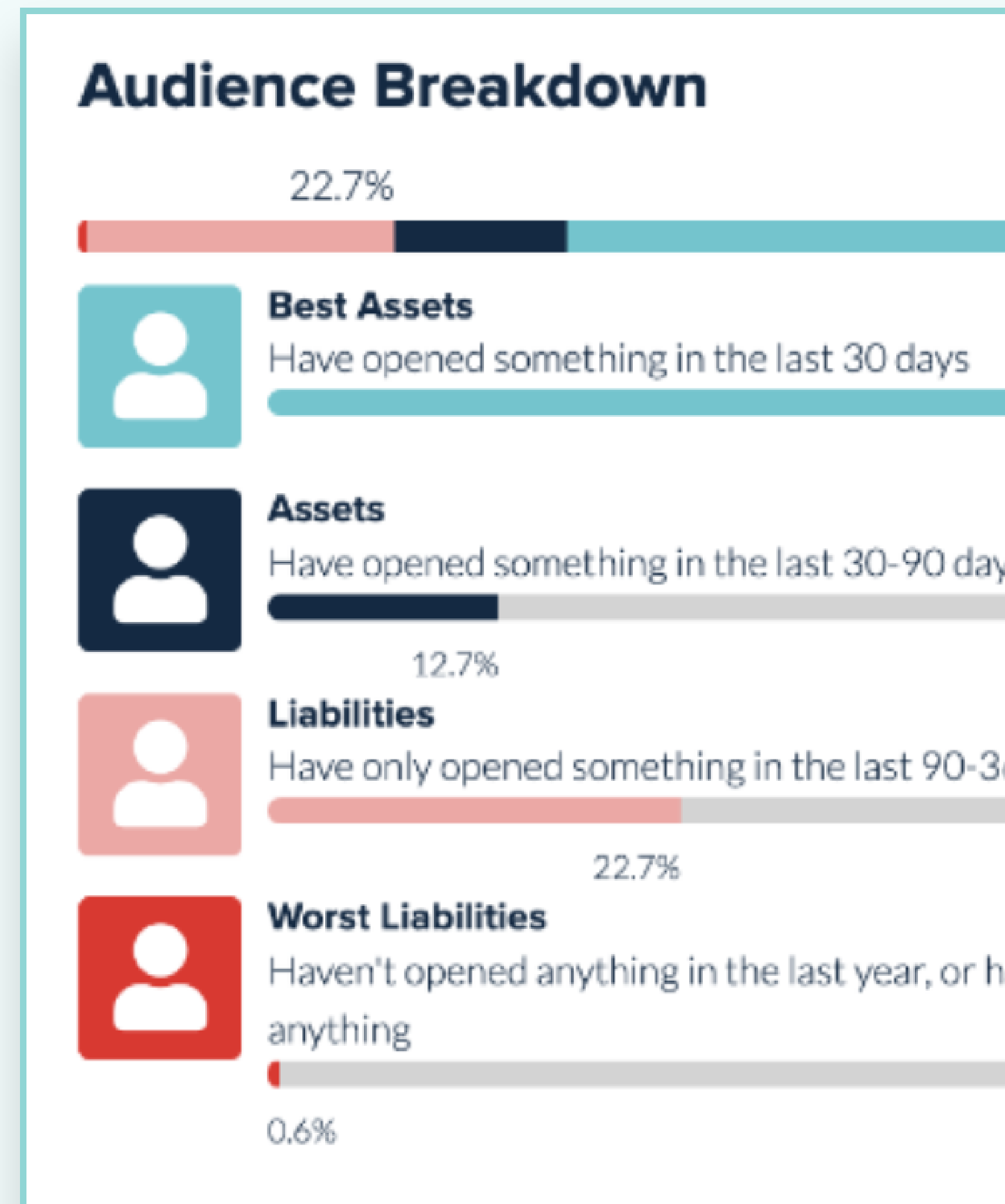
In the good old days, one "newsletter" email a month was enough.

But the world has changed.

You need to send emails to the engaged segment of your email list (your assets) at least once a week. Many people send an email every single day and they get great results. The more frequently you mail your list, the greater the chance of people opening something.

Don't pay attention to that inner voice that says, "I'll upset people if I mail them too often". In most cases, if people unsubscribe because you're mailing them too often, they are very unlikely to buy from you. Your job is to educate, entertain and inform your audience.

One thing to keep in mind though - if you suddenly start mailing your list much more frequently without letting your audience know that's what you're going to do, you may get more complaints and unsubscribes. So let them know what you're planning and then increase the frequency gradually.



Get **More** Leads!



If you're regularly identifying and removing the liabilities from your list, you'll see your list shrinking month on month.

You can expect to lose at least 10% of your email list every month, simply because of lack of interest and lack of engagement. Some people will unsubscribe but most people will just stop reading your emails.

It's vital that you replace those lost contacts with new leads. And don't forget that not all the new leads you generate will engage with you.

Let's say you're losing 1000 contacts per month and you generate 1000 new leads. Only 600 to 800 of those new leads will engage. So to be sure of keeping the number of engaged contacts consistent, you would need to add 1600-1700 new leads per month.

Manage your Engagement

What does this mean?

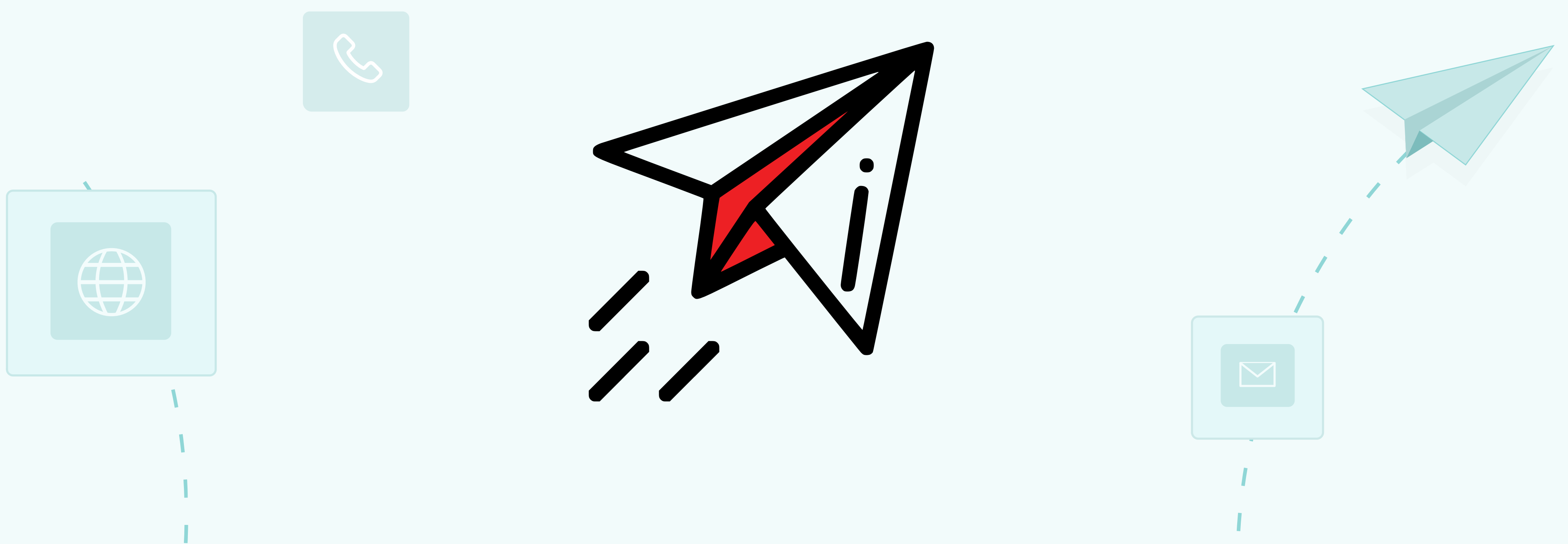
Engagement management is the practice of only sending emails to the contacts on your email list that have opened something recently, normally within a threshold of either 30, 60, or 90 days.

Why is it so important to manage your engagement?

There are two main reasons.

Firstly, the mailbox providers are very clear in their guidelines that state you should only mail your active subscribers. So by only mailing the people who have opened something recently, you'll be following the rules and boosting your sending reputation.

Secondly, by managing your engagement, you're mailing the contacts who are statistically most likely to open your emails, meaning you'll get the highest possible open rate by doing this. And the higher your open rates, the more the mailbox providers will like you, and the better your sending reputation will become. The better your sending reputation, the more likely your future mails are to be delivered (remember what we said about the Virtuous Circle?).



How do you manage your engagement?

Although mailbox providers look for lots of different signs of engagement, the only metrics we can see in our email marketing platforms are whether an email was opened or clicked.

Most email platforms let you search for how recently a contact has engaged with you, but it can be a cumbersome process to do this on a regular basis.

Our EmailSmart software makes it super easy to monitor how well you're managing your engagement. It also helps you quickly and reliably identify your assets and liabilities on a daily basis so you'll always send the right emails to the right people.

Here are the most important things that will help you improve your engagement and hence improve your domain reputation.

Be Ruthless: Only send emails to contacts who have engaged in the last 30-90 days.

Let Them Go: Any contacts older than 30 days who've never opened anything? Ditch 'em now!

Manage Those New Contacts: Get rid of new contacts that haven't opened anything in the first 14 days.

Encourage Replies: Where appropriate, ask your audience to reply to you.



Authenticate your Emails

Getting your authentication right is vital. If you don't, you're risking many of your emails going to spam, even if you're doing everything else right.

What is email authentication?

Email authentication is like a virtual ID check for your emails. It's a way for mailbox providers to make sure the emails you send really are coming from you and not someone else pretending to be you. They're like stamps of approval that help the mailbox providers confirm that your emails are legitimate. There are three methods of authentication: SPF, DKIM, and DMARC.

Why is it so important to authenticate your emails?

Authenticating your emails is really important for a couple of reasons. Firstly, the mailbox providers require it; they make that very clear in their guidelines. Secondly, it helps protect your reputation by preventing spammers from pretending to be you. Finally, it helps make sure your emails actually reach the people you want them to. Without authentication, your emails are much more likely to end up in the dreaded spam folder, never to be seen by your audience.



How do you authenticate your emails?

To authenticate your emails, you'll need to set up SPF, DKIM, and DMARC for your domain.

All three authentication methods listed below can only be set up if you have access to your DNS Control Panel, which you normally find in your web hosting or domain hosting control panel.

Authentication is a one-off task. Once it's done, you don't need to come back to it unless you change email providers. So if you're not sure how to set this up, it's the ideal activity to outsource.

If you need help setting your authentication up, EmailSmart offers a Done-For-You Authentication service that will take care of everything for a one-off cost. There's little point learning how to do this unless it really interests you, so let us sort it all out for you.



Here's a summary of the three authentication methods:

SPF (Sender Policy Framework)

This tells the world which email providers you trust to send emails on your behalf. It involves adding a single text record to your domain's DNS settings.

DKIM (DomainKeys Identified Mail)

Every time you send an email, your email provider will digitally sign it using a private key. You publish a public key as a text record in your DNS settings, and receiving mailbox providers can verify your email by checking the signature against the public key.

You'll need to go into each of your email platforms (don't forget your Google Workspace or Microsoft 365 account as well) and find the email authentication settings. You'll be given one or more entries to publish in your DNS settings.

DMARC (Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting & Conformance)

This is like the boss of email authentication. It tells the mailbox providers what to do if they receive an email from you that's not passed either SPF or DKIM authentication. You'll need to create a DMARC policy and add it as a DNS record for your domain.





Raise your Reputation

Now, let's look at reputation. The better your sending reputation, the more emails you'll get seen. If your reputation is damaged, the chances are that most of your emails will end up in the spam folder.

Why does your reputation matter?

Keeping an eye on your domain reputation is incredibly important because it directly affects your ability to get emails delivered to the inbox.

If you have a bad reputation, your emails might not make it to the inbox or could be flagged as spam. On the other hand, a good reputation means your emails are more likely to be delivered to the inbox and read by your recipients.

So, it's all about making sure your messages reach the people you want them to.

How do you check your reputation?

To check your domain reputation, follow these steps:

Check blocklists


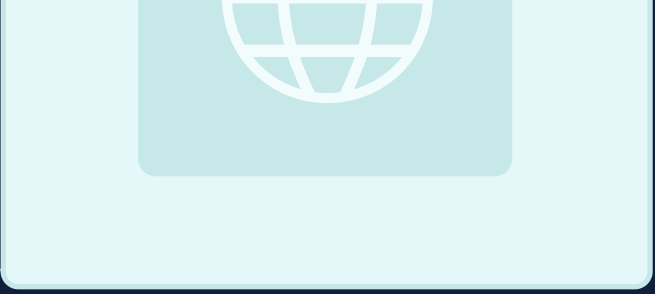
There are public blocklists that track spammy domains. You can use free tools like Hetrix Tools to see if your domain is listed. If you find your domain on a blocklist, EmailSmart can help you get things resolved.

Use the Email**Smart** tools

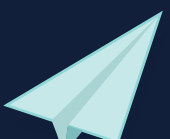

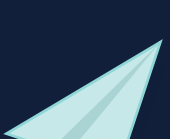
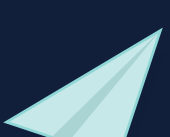
When you take the EmailSmart Score, your New Lead Hit Rate gives you a very good indication of your domain reputation. The higher your New Lead Hit Rate, the better you're doing. If you want to see more detail, you can sign up for Smart Stats, which goes into a lot more detail and also breaks down those metrics by mailbox provider.


Use Google **Postmaster** Tools

Most email lists have a high proportion of Gmail users, so it's worth signing up for Google's free Postmaster Tools to get insights into your domain reputation, spam rates, and more.

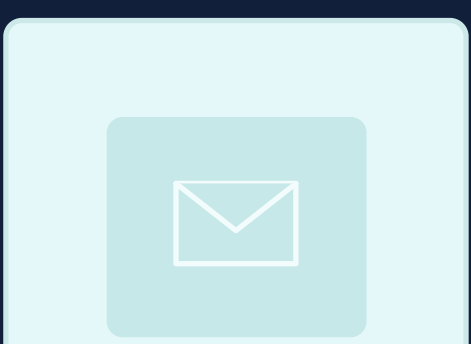


How do you **maintain** a good reputation?

- 
- Make sure you only send emails to people who have given you explicit permission to mail them.
- 
- Engage with your recipients: Make sure your content is relevant and engaging so that people open, read, and interact with your emails.
- 
- Be consistent with your sending patterns and volume: Sporadic, high-volume sending can raise red flags.
- 
- Check your bounce rates and spam complaint rates in your email marketing platform to keep them as low as possible.




Remember, maintaining a good domain reputation is an ongoing process. Keep monitoring, adjusting, and improving your sending practices to ensure your emails reach the inbox.





Transform your Content



The look and feel of your emails still plays a very important part in whether your email will land in the spam folder rather than the inbox.


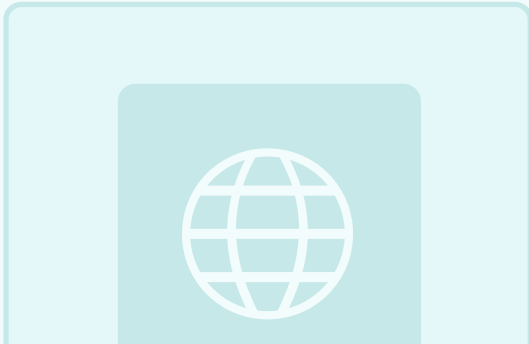
Why does content matter?

The content of your emails plays a big role in email deliverability because email providers want to make sure they're only delivering emails that people actually want to receive. If your content is seen as spammy or irrelevant, email providers might filter your emails into the spam folder or block them altogether. So, creating high-quality content is key to making sure your emails reach the inbox.

Following best practices for email content is important because it helps improve your email deliverability, keeps your domain reputation in good shape, and ensures your recipients stay engaged with your emails. Basically, it's all about making sure your emails are valuable and enjoyable for your readers.

How can you create email content that's most likely to reach the inbox?

Here's a nice handy acronym to help you remember what's important with content: it spells out the name WILF.



Words: It's not just what you say, it's how you say it.

We'd recommend that you focus on writing authentic emails that are quick and to the point.

Remember, the average reader spends just 51 seconds reading an email, so writing emails that look like a novel is not a good idea!

Bear in mind that the point of an email is not to sell (that's what your sales pages are for). Your main focus should be to capture your audience's attention and bridge them to the next step (clicking on your call to action).

Keep your language clear, concise, and relevant to your audience. Personalise your emails when possible to make them more engaging, and always include a clear call to action.

Avoid using ALL CAPS, excessive punctuation (!!!), or spammy words and phrases. Heavily used marketing phrases such as "free", "act now" or "click here" might trigger spam filters.

Images: Are you using too many images?

Use high-quality, relevant images that enhance your message, but don't overdo it. Too many images can make your email look too promotional or cluttered, and they can make the email slow to load. Be sure to include descriptive "alt text" for your images in case they don't load properly or for recipients using screen readers.

Links: The fewer the better! And be careful where you link to.

Only include trustworthy, relevant links in your emails. Avoid using too many links, as this can trigger spam filters or send you to the Promotions tab. Also, use descriptive anchor text for your links, so your recipients know what to expect when they click.

Only link to sites that are not on any blocklists and have positive reputations. You can use sites such as MX Toolbox or Hetrix Tools to check whether specific domains are listed on the most common blocklists.

Pro Tip: Never use link shorteners such as bit.ly because spammers use them too! Even if you've got your own personalised link shortener, it's pointless because you shouldn't be actually showing the URL itself in the text of your email, and your email platform will rewrite the link anyway to allow it to be tracked.

Formatting: Don't send emails that look like ads!

The more your email looks and feels like a personally written email, the better the chance of landing in the primary inbox rather than the promotions or spam folder.

So keep your email formatting clean and easy to read. Use short paragraphs, bullet points, and headers to break up your content. Stick to a simple, consistent font and color scheme.



In Summary

By following these best practices for email content, you'll improve your email deliverability and keep your recipients engaged and happy.

How EmailSmart Can Help

This guide has covered the most important points that can help you transform your email performance. We hope you've found it useful.

The Real Cost of Poorly Performing Emails

In the first few sections of this guide, we explained just how complex email marketing can be. It's not just about writing an email and hitting send. The intricacies of deliverability, the problems caused by landing in the spam folder, and the challenge of low open and click rates all have a serious financial impact on your email marketing and therefore your business.

- Every email that doesn't land in the inbox is a lost opportunity to connect with your audience and help them get one step closer to making a purchase from you.
- Every email that fails to engage your audience adds to the waste of your advertising budget, squandered on words that never get seen, much less acted upon.
- And each email that doesn't get seen, or gets left in spam, chips away at your sender reputation, making it more and more difficult to get your future emails into the inbox.

This doesn't just mean missed opportunities; it's also about the bottom line. Are you seeing a return on your advertising spend, or are those leads disappearing into the void of unopened emails? Every email that isn't read increases the waste of your ad spend and, worse, increases the amount of lost sales. It's a hidden cost that, over time, will mount up to significant financial loss.

The Potential Profits of **Effective** Email Marketing

Compare this with a future where your emails land straight into the inbox, where they're eagerly opened and acted upon by your engaged audience.

Imagine high open rates, engaged readers, and high rates of conversions translating directly into sales. That's the potential of a well-executed email marketing strategy, and it's not a distant dream. It's an achievable reality with the right guidance, expertise and support.



The **Risk** of Doing Nothing

Until you read this guide, you might not have realised you had a problem. Even if you don't have a specific problem right now, it's highly likely you could still improve your performance and, more importantly, protect yourself from future problems that would otherwise cost you a lot of time and money.

And the world of email deliverability often feels like a labyrinth, full of twists, turns, and unknowns. It's easy to feel overwhelmed, especially when you consider the potential impact of trying to improve things through trial and error, all the while losing the chance to get your emails seen by all of your valuable leads.

The truth is, improving the performance of your emails can be time-consuming, costly, and detrimental to your marketing efforts if not addressed quickly and effectively. The longer you leave things as they are, the more money you're likely to waste on ads that fail to convert because not enough people are seeing your follow-up emails.

At EmailSmart, we understand this all too well. This is why we're dedicated to offering the best possible solutions tailored to your specific needs, to help you get the best possible results.

How We Can Help

The best starting point for most businesses is our comprehensive **EmailSmart Audit**, where we'll look at your sending statistics and email performance in a great level of detail.

The Audit includes:

- A concise report showing what's working and what's not working with your email deliverability
- Personalised feedback and recommendations that will help you improve your email results
- A 60-minute, 1-on-1 Smart Insights follow-up call with one of our email deliverability experts

[You can find out more about it here.](#)

If you'd prefer us to just wave our magic wand and make everything better for you, you might be interested in our **VIP Services**. We can take the lead and implement our proven strategies and best practices to optimise your email deliverability. This means you won't have to figure it all out alone – we'll be there working with you and supporting you every step of the way.

If you'd prefer to talk to someone about our Audit or VIP Services, you're welcome to [book a brief introductory call using this link.](#)



The Benefits of Solving Your Email Challenges

Improving the performance of your emails doesn't just save time and money – it has so many benefits. By getting more of your emails seen by more of your audience, you'll enjoy vastly improved engagement, which will lead to improved sender reputation, higher conversion rates and, ultimately, more sales and greater profits

Remember, every email that lands in the inbox is an opportunity to connect, build trust, and grow your business. And every email that lands in promotions or spam is a missed opportunity to make a sale.

So let us help you get the very most out of every single email you send.

Ready to turn the tide on your email performance?

Don't hesitate – [sign up for our EmailSmart Audit](#) or [book a call with us today](#). It's time to unlock the true potential of your email marketing.

EmailSmart

Get Seen - Get Sales - Get EmailSmart



Adrian "Email Savvy" Savage is a dad, a geek, an entrepreneur and co-founder of EmailSmart.

He specialises in helping businesses get more emails seen by more of their audience.

He's helped many well-known names including Frank Kern, Stu McLaren, Neil Patel, Ryan Levesque, Shark Group and Glazer-Kennedy improve their email performance.

He's also the creator of the unique EmailSmart software, which shows how well your emails are performing and how you can get even more people seeing and opening your emails.



Evan "Email Samurai" Samurin is an email delivery expert and co-founder of EmailSmart.

He's an expert at helping his clients increase their revenues by getting their email out of spam and into the inbox and increase conversions.

Evan spends his days speaking and consulting on email deliverability. He loves helping his private clients improve their ROI by getting more of their emails seen, increasing their open and click rates and hence increasing their sales.