

BEST PRACTICES—FOR YOUR MOST VITAL MARKETING CHANNEL

DYNAMIC DOZEN: 12 EMAIL MARKETING TIPS YOU NEED NOW

By Jeff Penson, *Golf Channel Academy Senior Marketing Operations Manager*

This month's Proponent Group newsletter arrived the way they all do, via email. Possibly you spied it in your in-box and were prompted by the subject line to click through and download it. (We hyped last month's issue with the subject line, "28 Pages Packed with Insights for Your Teaching Business!") The idea each time is to catch a member's eye and persuade you to open the document and read it—we're pleased that a vast majority of members does so each month.

Email marketing makes the commercial world go 'round. Two out of three U.S. consumers have made a purchase online as a result of an email marketing message. According to ExactTarget research, 91 percent of consumers report checking their email at least once a day—a big reason why email is the most consistently used form of digital marketing.

And while you don't want to wear out your welcome with email recipients, don't question the basic premise—consumers are fine with commercial emails: 82 percent of them open email sent by companies. And check out the spending levels among people who do and don't respond to email marketing: Responders spend 138 percent more than people who get the idea to buy stuff from some other source.

Smartphones have exponentially increased the value of email marketing. The average person checks their smartphone 34 times a day. And one study estimated that 64 percent of decision-makers read their email via mobile devices. Oh, and back to that subject line we mentioned—a recent report found that 33 percent of email recipients open email based on subject line alone.

So let's get you as well-positioned and well-schooled as possible to take advantage of this phenomenon. Below are 12 examples of what you should be doing now to generate more teaching and coaching business from your email marketing.

1) **Not sending? Start!** Many



academies and courses do not even collect their students' contact information. Possibly they are expecting to make promotional phone calls or slip flyers under windshield wipers. That's not the way to go, here in 2017. If you already collect email addresses, great. Start emailing to those folks. If you do not collect addresses, start immediately to build a database (no matter how small) and start creating emails that make golfers enthusiastic about what's happening at your facility.

2) **Keep your current students informed.** If your students aren't reading your social-media posts or consistently checking your website, how do they know what's new at your academy? Email marketing is a highly efficient and affordable way to keep them informed. It allows you to promote everything from student success to new programs, altered pricing and upcoming events. The importance placed on driving new business can make us forget to nurture our current students, provide opportunities to re-engage them and get them coming back for more lessons, fitting sessions and special events.

3) **Create a strong mix of email types and messages.** If all you ever send is a weekly four-page newsletter, there's a chance your recipients will become bored. Make sure to mix up the content by sharing some longer emails or including video tips. These can cover more than just swing technique: think about topics like course management and



equipment demo days. Meanwhile, send out some shorter “student success” emails that get a quick, positive message out there for others to identify with.

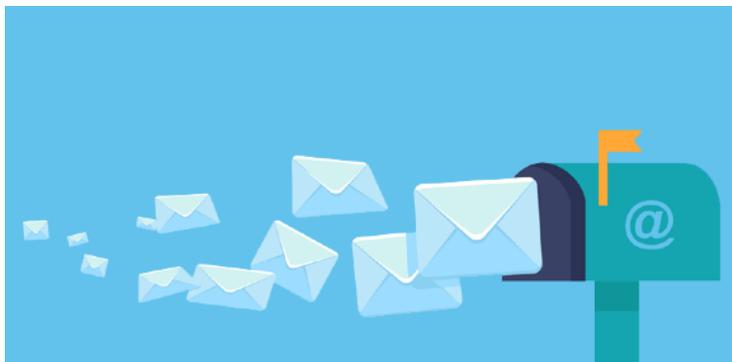
4) A-B-C (Always Be Closing) – Many coaches fall short in their marketing by putting out impressive content but failing to drive action. The goal of sending emails is not just to entertain your students, but to drive activity that leads to more revenue for your academy. If you send out an email with a putting tip, you want two results—first, people view the tip, second, they take steps toward getting instruction. In a prominent place, tell them: *“For additional putting tips that will shave strokes off your score, sign up for our Putting Clinic this Saturday, by clicking the link below!”*

5) Have a specific (intermediate) goal before you hit ‘Send’. If you are sending out emails just to send them, the effort won’t lead to much. The idea is to establish clear goals—for example, driving traffic to Youtube and Facebook pages, filling up an associate coach’s book, boosting attendance at clinics/programs or driving awareness around new technology or programs at the academy.

6) Send emails from a personalized account. In your personal life, if you receive an email from a “no reply” account you immediately know it is trying to sell you something. Boost your results by personalizing your “from” address to a real person instead of noreply@academyname.com.

7) Break up your schedule for sending outbound emails. Experiment to see which days perform the best for your audience. This may vary based on the subject and content of your emails. Over time you’ll see certain important patterns, according to what your analytics tell you. Don’t be shy about sending a blast on a Saturday or Sunday, given how likely your audience is to think about golf on weekends. Try sending out a tip on a Friday afternoon that recipients could put into use during their weekend round of golf.

8) Get creative with your subject lines. Subject lines are what people see first when your email hits their



inbox. If it’s lame, they probably won’t open the email. Create headlines for emails that you would be interested in, yourself. Some examples might be:

- **Three-Putt No More! (include a tip plus info on your upcoming putting clinic)**
- **What shots scare you the most? (include a**

Halloween theme to make it timely)

- **What’s New at (Academy Name)**
- **How good can you get?**
- **Take Your Game to the Next Level**
- **November Student Success Highlights**
- **The easiest way to drop 3 strokes**
- **Need to add power and distance?**

9) Use photos and graphics (but don’t overdo it). If you use only text in your emails, you’re losing the attention of readers. Don’t be shy about using photography or images in your emails, just don’t go overboard. Make sure the visuals aren’t taking away from the goal of your email and the action plan.

10) Have fun with it. Share your passion for golf and helping people achieve the skills they’ve dreamed of. If you create emails with passion and excitement in them, it will rub off on your audience and produce better results.

11) Reach a larger audience. Is your operation part of a resort or a busy public course? If so you’ve got an immense opportunity to gain access to a database of golfers who may not be current students. Additionally, if you are not associated with a course, think about local associations and companies that you can connect with and get your emails/information in front of.

12) Consider email automation. If you’ve been creating successful email campaigns for a few years now and are really looking to take your email marketing to the next level, you’re probably ready for email marketing automation. This involves a sophisticated system that organizes your database into different lists that get extremely targeted email messaging to move recipients through the buying cycle. Automation is for dedicated users—it can take an email marketing program that’s performing well and turn it into one that turbo-charges your teaching revenue. **PG**

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