

# Millennial shift: Young consumers drive new email habits

Consumer Email Tracker 2016

For consumers the email address is the way to access so many of the useful things available on the web, like social media accounts, making purchases, banking and so on. For marketers the email remains the most-used medium for reaching consumers. This research tracks the ways in which consumers use their inboxes to their advantage. This year consumers received more emails and more irrelevant emails than before, which could have negative repercussions for the medium. We also learn that younger people, particularly Millennials, drive the new ways in which consumers use email, particularly on smartphones. It's worth remembering that typical consumer behaviour doesn't always match typical marketer behaviour – not everyone is hyperconnected and mobile-first.

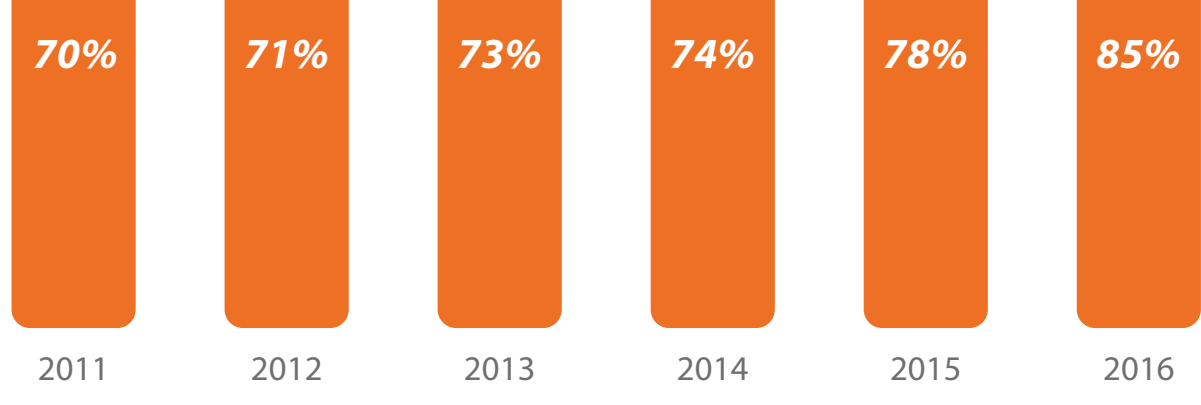
## A majority of consumers say various brand activities are 'best served' by email.



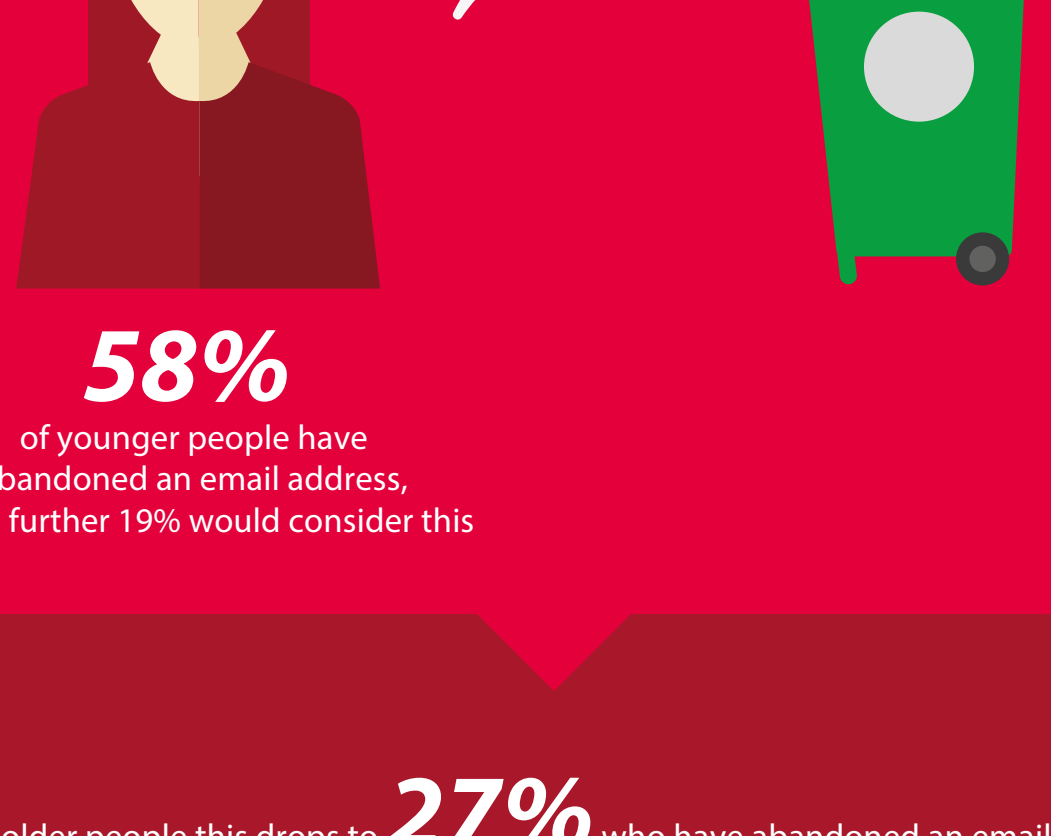
## The most attractive reasons for consumers to share their details with brands are:



But, only **16%** of consumers said more than half of emails were 'interesting or relevant'. This proportion has halved since 2011.

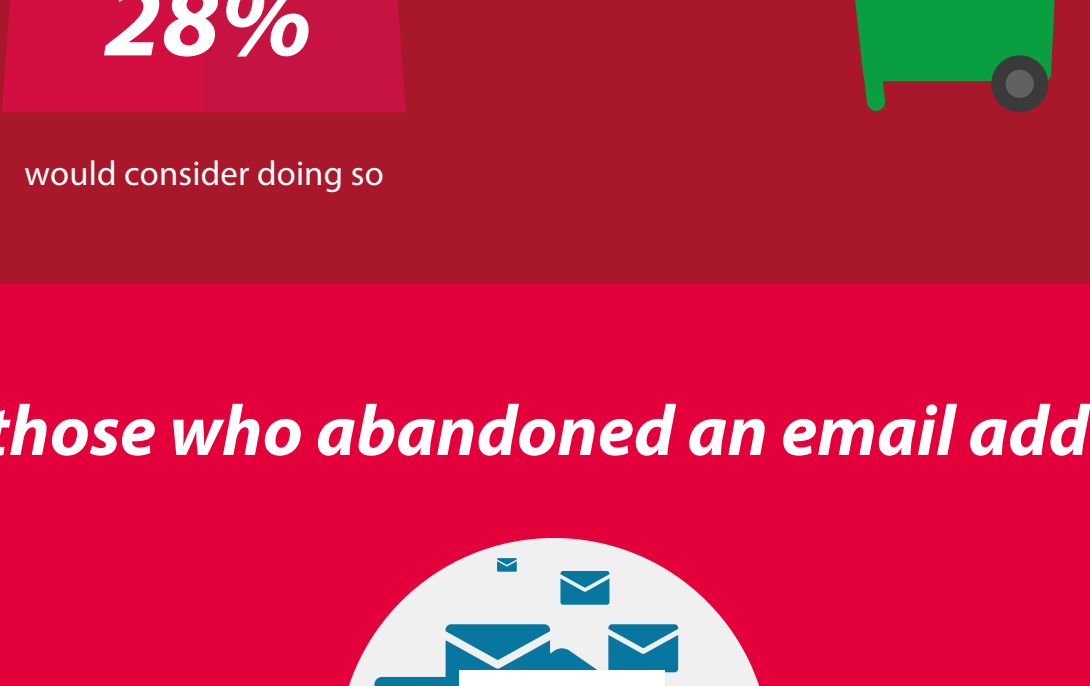


## Younger people are more likely to abandon an email address.



For older people this drops to **27%** who have abandoned an email address

But



## Of those who abandoned an email address



**57%**  
said they did because of too many emails



**45%**  
of consumers have 'ghost' accounts that are active but no longer used



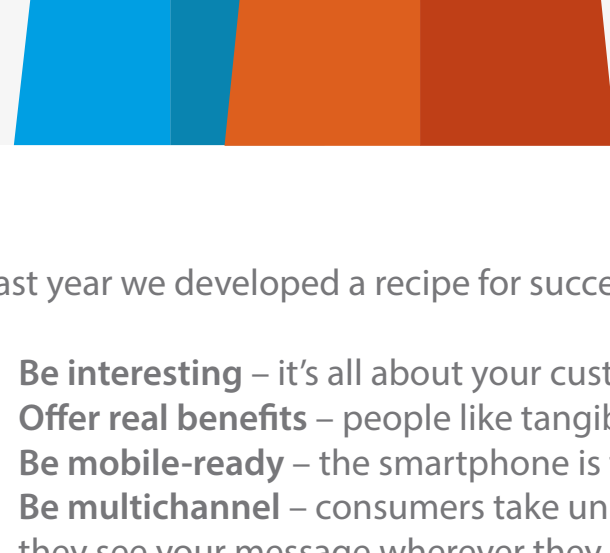
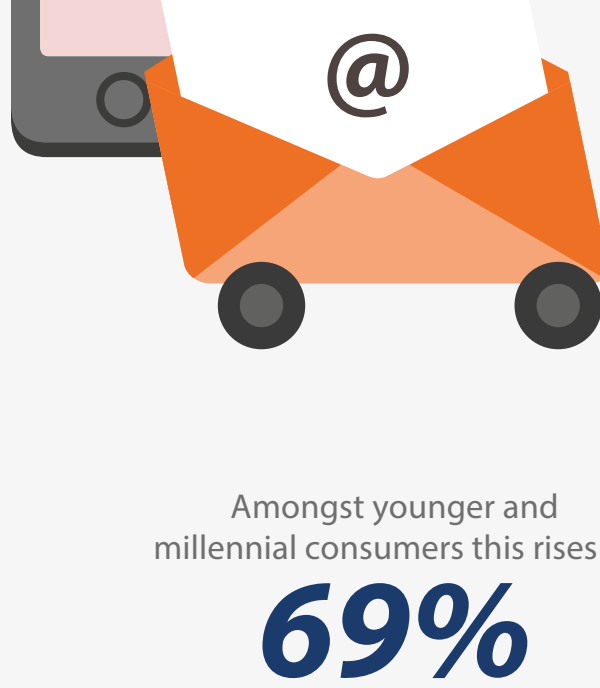
rising to **59%** of younger people and Millennials



In total, this translates to at least **19.5 million** ghost accounts in the UK alone.

**51%**

of people use email 'on-the-go' with a smartphone, up from 50% last year.



Amongst younger and millennial consumers this rises to

**69%**

- the smartphone is the primary device for email for younger consumers.

Last year we developed a recipe for successful email, which remains relevant today:

- **Be interesting** – it's all about your customer so appeal to them
- **Offer real benefits** – people like tangible benefits
- **Be mobile-ready** – the smartphone is the primary device for younger consumers
- **Be multichannel** – consumers take unpredictable routes to buy, so make sure they see your message wherever they are
- **Be creative** – present your offer in creative, engaging way

## Conclusion

While consumers like email, and feel it 'best serves' many of their needs, consumers have been hit by the double whammy of more messages and more irrelevant messages over the past year. More than two in five (41%) of the total have abandoned an email address, rising to almost three in five (58%) of younger people.

Younger people are pushing email usage into new directions, with the smartphone the primary device for younger consumers. Marketers have to respect the inbox and make their emails more relevant and more interesting for consumers or they risk losing their consumers or even the medium itself.

### Methodology

Questions for this survey were scripted in collaboration with DMA staff, dotmailer, and research suppliers. Wherever possible, questions were routed, and answer choices randomised to avoid top-box bias. In addition, an acceptable survey completion time was set and those answered too quickly were removed.

Beautiful Insights conducted the consumer survey with 1239 responses received from their YouSay customer panel. This is a closed panel which members of the public cannot voluntarily join and comprises approximately 90,000 profiled UK residents, recruited through numerous sources to demographically represent the markets based on gender and age. The online survey was then distributed to a random selection from Beautiful Insights' panel to gain a sample representative of the UK population, with a £250 prize draw as incentive. Participants were naive to the purpose of the questionnaire prior to consenting to participate.

There were 40 questions in total, results reweighted by age and gender. The panel was constantly re-qualified to ensure current background variables.

The survey opened on 23/08/2016 and closed on 31/08/2016.

DMA staff compiled the findings presented in the present report.

The findings were launched at an event on 10th November 2016.

### About dotmailer

dotmailer is a leading marketing automation platform with email at its core. Since 1999, we've been empowering marketers with the tools that enable them to think smart, act fast and scale quickly. Perhaps that's why we've more than 80,000 happy users in 150 countries, across the B2B and B2C markets.

dotmailer is part of the dotdigital Group PLC (LSE: DOTT). In 1999, dotmailer is a global company with more than 200 employees.

### About the DMA

The DMA provides guidance and support to help its members put their customers at the heart of their one-to-one communications to give them the rich benefits of a much more relevant, welcomed and effective relationship with each individual customer.

The DMA aspires to facilitate its members' marketing evolution with the opportunities, advice, support, networks and tools to be able to reach the sensitivity and sophistication of marketing to build their future prosperity – along with the success of the industry as a whole.

Published by The Direct Marketing Association (UK) Ltd Copyright © Direct Marketing Association. All rights reserved.

[www.dma.org.uk](http://www.dma.org.uk)