

Consumer Email Tracker

2020

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Customer Engagement

DM
Data &
Marketing
Association **A**

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/ Introduction

The technological world that we live and work in continues to evolve, seemingly offering new ways to engage customers at every turn. But this excitement over what's new should not distract marketers from the central channel that still resonates with consumers. Whether they're considering a purchase, have just made one or need some help, these latest figures highlight email's ability to help brands engage across the customer journey.

We also see new behaviours and technologies within the channel that will be interesting to track over the coming years; from the continuing trend for consumers to have an 'other' email account for all or some of the marketing emails they receive, to the growing use of smart devices like watches, and even speakers, to engage with emails.

However, there are still areas that should be of concern to the data and marketing industry. We're a year and a half beyond the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) coming into force, but levels of consumer reassurance that these new laws mean their data is being handled safely remain static since last year.

In addition, a focus on discount and offers may be the source of the continued feeling among UK adults that the marketing emails they receive are not useful. This is a long-term trend that we don't seem to be able to turn around as an industry, despite this year's survey pointing to a clamour among consumers for more personalised and relevant experiences.

As an industry, we must address these key areas to retain email's position as the central thread around which a multi-channel experience can be built. That means using the data available to us, to think strategically and ask "why?" a little more often, and a dash of creativity to execute campaigns that will fully engage. It's in this mix that truly intelligent marketing is born.

This report would also not be possible without the support of Pure360 and the DMA's Email Council and Research Hub. Their knowledge throughout the research process is invaluable, so I'd like to thank them all. You'll find some of their expert views within this year's report.

In conclusion, this report highlights the power of email to be at the heart of brands' communication with customers, but also some of the key challenges we face as marketers in an increasingly connected world. Read on to discover consumers' latest thoughts about the emails they receive, their preferences and behaviours, and to learn how to better manage this key part of any customer-centric marketing programme.

Tim Bond

Head of Insight, Data & Marketing Association

/ Foreword – Pure360

This report looks to track consumer sentiment towards email, uncover areas of improvement for the data and marketing industry and reinforce email's ongoing ability to help brands engage with customers along their journey. As part of this, we draw attention to the aspects of email consumers like and dislike, alongside new behaviours and preferences for content.

What's clear is that email marketing remains core to the multi-channel experiences available to brands. These latest figures highlight how consumers believe email to be the best channel in a range of different contexts, and as a marketing communications channel, it continues to provide brands with a unique opportunity to create valuable and meaningful experiences for consumers.

To be successful, it's crucial that brands put the customer at the heart of their email campaigns. There are important nuances highlighted within this research that underline why it's so important to really understand your customers in order to create and deliver content that they will genuinely want to engage with. Good personalisation shouldn't look like personalisation; neither should it feel creepy or invasive. Done well, personalisation can create a uniquely positive brand experience and encourage future interaction.

The roll-out of GDPR in 2018 heightened awareness among consumers about the value of their personal data and the need to protect it. Whilst the legislation has been reassuring to most, some are still unclear as to how brands have acquired their details. There's a clear need for improvement here with brands providing more clarity around the opt-in process. This will be key to building trust with the consumer in the first place, before going on to create relevant and engaging content that they actually want to receive.

If the industry can tackle some of the challenges raised in this report head on, email will not only continue to be the preferred channel across the full customer journey but can also be attributed to significantly increasing brand revenue and improving customer loyalty. Offering recipients more control on top of balancing frequency and relevance could be a trend we see growing over the next few years, further cementing email's position as a powerful channel that belongs at the heart of brand communications.

Komal Helyer
VP of Marketing, Pure360

/ Exec Summary

Marketing Landscape:

- Consumers believe email is the best channel in a range of contexts, preferring it almost twice as much as any other channel: 46% compared to 26% for post, and 24% for text or face-to-face
- Face-to-face (40%) is the only channel to be clearly preferred over email (32%) for 'Advice, information or tutorials'
- GDPR continues to reassure many consumers (42%) about how brands treat their personal data, but a third of consumers (34%) still say they 'Often' wonder how brands got their email address

Email Ownership:

- The average consumer has around two personal email addresses (1.87) and one for work (0.82), but almost half (44%) still do not have any work email address
- One in five of all consumers (23%) use their additional email addresses to receive some or all the marketing messages sent to them, while 1 in 10 (8%) simply have defunct/old email addresses they no longer use

Receiving & Opening:

- Consumers believe they receive 54.9 emails on average per week to their personal inboxes, down from 73.3 in 2017
- The most important factor in opening an email is 'Recognising the brand' (55%) and 'The subject line' (48%)
- Just 13% of people say over half the emails they receive are useful, with the majority (85%) saying this is less than half of the marketing emails they're sent

Content & Actions:

- Consumers like content with a clear transactional link, such as 'Discount & offers' (65%), 'Email receipts' (59%) and 'Advanced notice of new products/services & sales' (43%), although over a third still like non-transactional email content in a variety of different forms
- Thinking about the emails they like receiving from brands, most people cite having offers (52%) and being relevant (50%) as the reason, with liking the brand and containing useful information or news also important (both 36%)
- When they receive an interesting email, most will 'Click on a link from the email' (29%) or 'Save the email to refer to at a later date' (25%), but there is also a range of indirect actions consumers may take

- When consumers see an email on their smartphone for something they want to buy, 14% will buy straight away on their phone, over a third (35%) will go to the company's website and one in ten (13%) go to the relevant mobile app

Sign-ups & Unsubscribes:

- The main reasons given for signing up is to receive 'Discounts & offers' (48%) or simply being a 'Regular customer' already (43%), closely followed by being sent email receipts (40%) or joining some form of loyalty programme (40%)
- The main driver for unsubscribing is receiving too many emails (57%), followed by the information no longer being relevant or not recognising the brand (both 39%)
- Using the link within an email (39%) is the most common way to unsubscribe, while 28% still opt to visit the brand's website, and the number of consumers opting to mark messages as spam has decreased to 18% this year (from 27% in 2017)
- Given the option to manage the communications they receive from the brand, 33% would reduce email frequency, 25% would only receive messages about specific products/services and 20% would choose to receive more personalised emails

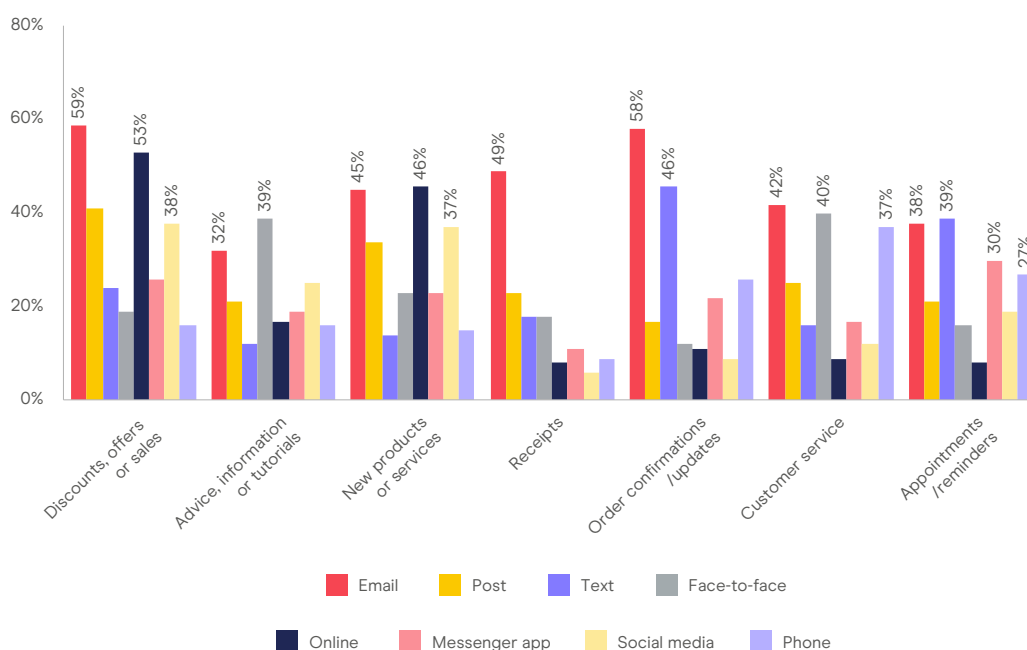
/ Marketing Landscape

This year's report reinforces email's continued position as the core channel around which a customer engagement programme should be built. It remains the preferred channel for consumers across the full customer journey from pre- to post-purchase and for customer service enquiries.

This is in spite of findings from the DMA's 'Customer Engagement: Acquisition and the Consumer Mindset' report, which found that social media had overtaken email for the first time among customers aged 18- to 24-years-old.

In fact, email is chosen almost twice as much by consumers as being the best channel across the range of contexts we asked about, with 46% preferring it compared to 26% for post, and 24% for either text or face-to-face.

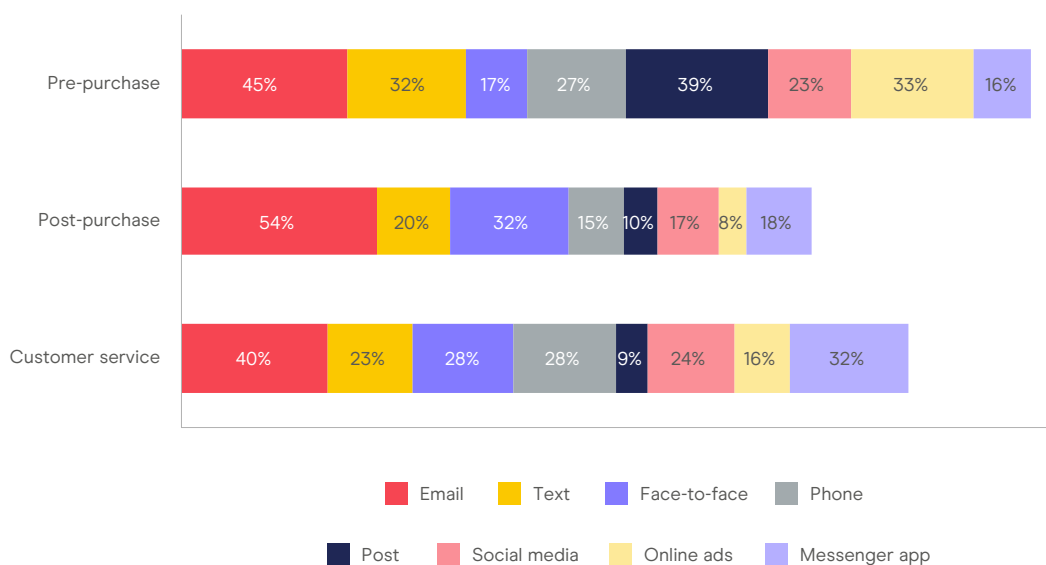
Which of these types of subject would you agree are best served by the following communication methods?



The only areas where another channel is clearly preferred to email is for 'Advice, information or tutorials', where face-to-face is preferred by 39% of those surveyed (compared to 32% for email). This mirrors a broader trend in recent years for human contact when it comes to customer engagement, particularly if there's a problem or a more nuanced conversation is required.

Online ads narrowly beat email when it comes to finding out about 'New products or services' (46% compared to 45%), as did text message when it comes to 'Appointments/reminders' (39% to 38%). But no other channel has the consistently high feeling among consumers than email does across the range of touchpoints we asked about.

Which of these types of subject would you agree are best served by the following communication methods? (Grouped into pre-/post- purchase and customer service)



Grouping these seven touchpoints into pre- or post-purchase and customer service, we see there's clearly a wider breadth of channels preferred prior to making a purchase.

Post is clearly seen as a strong performer 'Pre-purchase' (39%), as well as online ads (32%), while messenger apps come into their own in 'Customer service' scenarios (32%).

This highlights the importance of understanding the customer journey and how channel preferences may change depending on where in the purchase process they are; not to mention this may differ from one customer to the next.

GDPR Impact

This survey was conducted around 18 months after the biggest change in data protection legislation in a generation. GDPR appears to have reassured many consumers (42%) about how brands treat their personal data since it came into force.

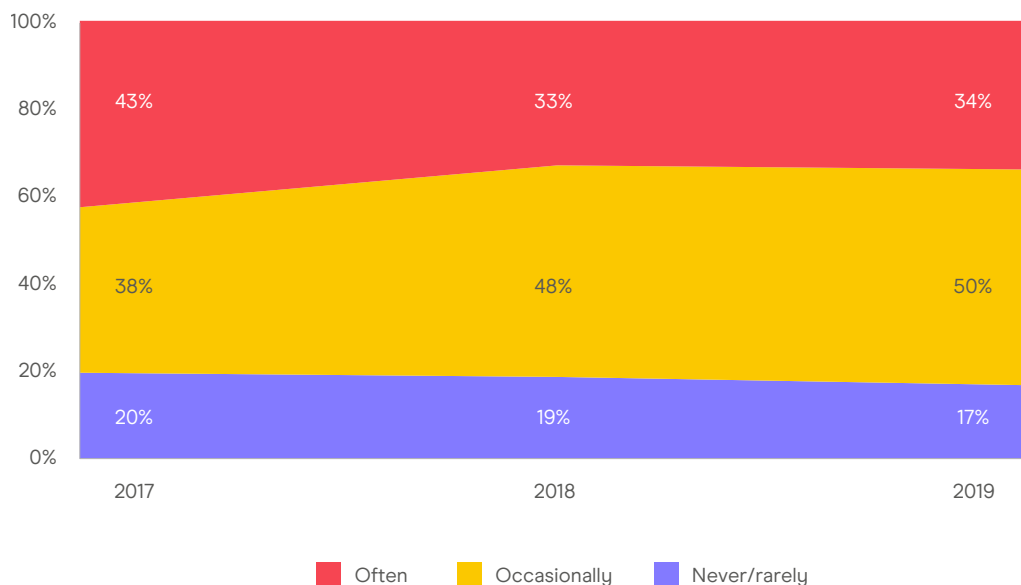
Yet it may be of some concern that this hasn't changed much since we asked the same question just six months after the new laws came into force in late 2018, when the result was 41%.

Those consumers saying they aren't more confident as a result of GDPR has also remained steady at over a third again this year (36%). The remaining one in five (22%) appear to be unsure about the impact of the new laws.

Significantly more women (45%) feel confident in how their data is being handled post-GDPR than men, who feel the opposite – with 41% saying they don't feel more confident.

This also varies by age, with those aged between 18 and 34 generally feeling more confident (49%), while those aged 55 and over say they aren't (46%).

How often do you wonder how brands/shops/sites got your email address?



When asked how often they wonder how brands got their email address, around a third of consumers (34%) still say 'Often', although this has decreased notably since prior to May 2018. It's also notable that those saying they 'Never/Rarely' feel this way has declined gradually since 2017.

Consumers aged 55+ are significantly more likely to report 'Often' wondering how brands got their email address, at 38%.

Expert Opinions



The rise in the popularity of e-receipts is one of the big stories of this report, and the growth of in-store acquisition has played an important role in post-GDPR list replenishment.

It's also going to pose some challenges, as many staff have not been properly trained to have these conversations with customers, and brands must also be careful not to include marketing content on the e-receipts themselves, as this would then make them marketing messages.

Guy Hanson

VP of Customer Engagement, Validity



It remains disappointing that 34% of consumers are still often questioning, how a brand got their email address.

This is an area for marketers to continually review in terms of whether the opt-in process is explicit, not only from a GDPR perspective but also in a clear, easy to understand language for subscribers.

Jenna Tiffany

Founder & Strategy Director, Let'sTalk Strategy

/ Email Ownership

The average number of email addresses per consumer remains around two and a half, split between their personal accounts (1.87) and work (0.82). However, it's also important to note that 44% of consumers do not have a work email address, while nearly one in five (19%) have three or more personal accounts.

How many email addresses do you have?



The majority of people use Hotmail/Outlook.com (37%) or Gmail (34%) to provide their primary personal email address, followed by one in five using AOL/Yahoo! (19%). This leaves 8% using other providers, and a minority either unsure or preferring not to say (2%). Consumers within this 'Other' group are twice as likely to be male and aged 55 or over.

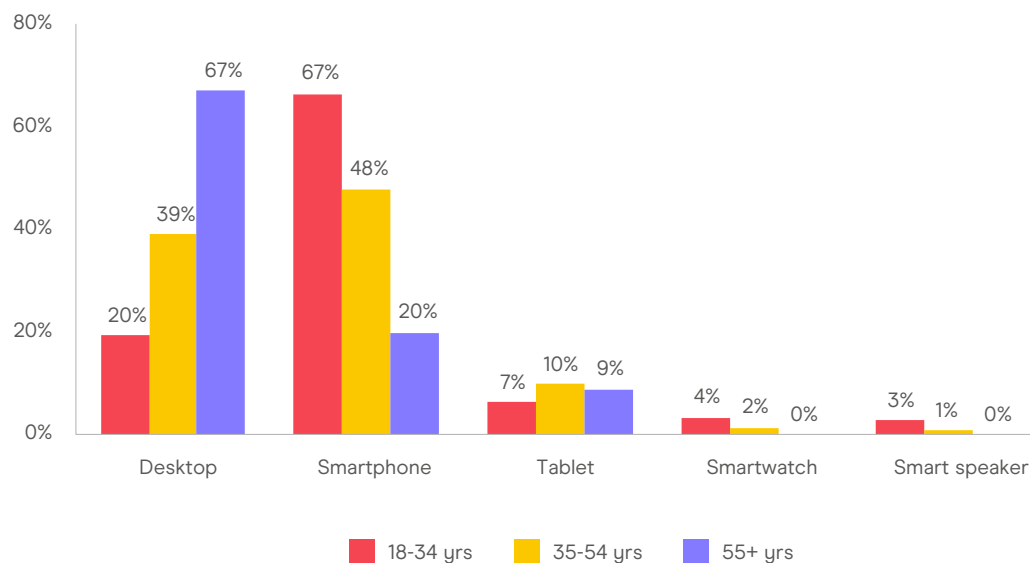
When asked about the device they use most often to access their personal emails, almost half said 'Smartphone' (45%), which was still closely followed by 'Desktop' (42%). One in ten (9%) tend to use their tablet device, with 2% now using their smartwatch and a further 1% using their smart speaker (e.g. Alexa or Google Home).

There are some notable variations in preferences of men and women, with the former preferring 'Desktop' (51%). Women, on the other hand, are more likely to prefer to use their smartphone (54%) or tablet (9%) to check their personal emails.

Looking at where consumers live, for instance, whether this is in urban/suburban or more rural areas, those living in more urban areas are more likely to use their smartphone (52%) and less likely to wait to be on their desktop (36%).

However, the most dramatic differences in device preference were found according to age, with a dramatic increase in mobile preference among those aged 18 to 34 compared to older users. This younger demographic is also driving the usage of smartwatches' (4%) and smart speakers (3%).

Please select the devices you use most often to access your personal email address to receive messages from brands/shops/sites you know.

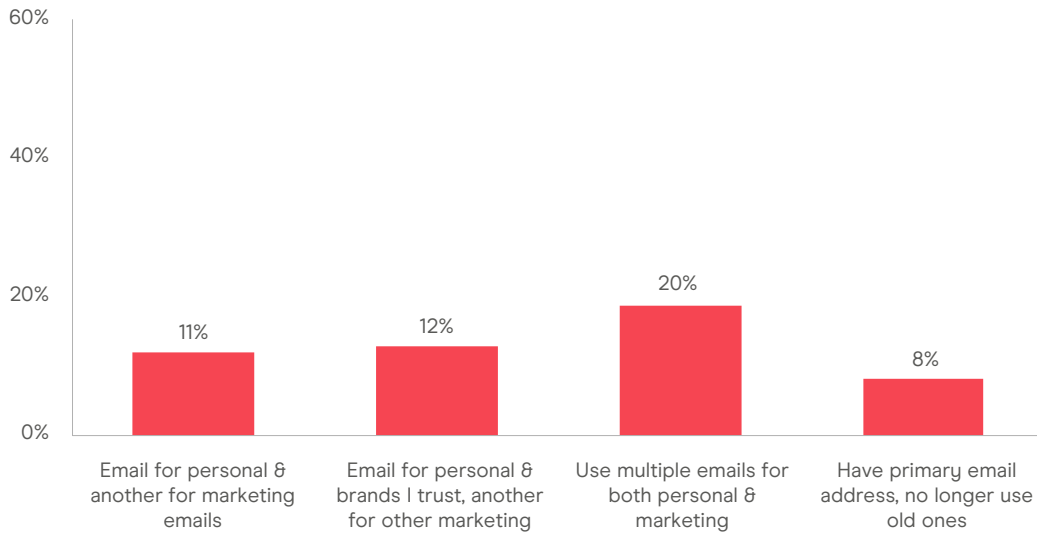


Email Account Behaviour

It's notable that one in five of all email users (23%) appears to use an additional email addresses to receive some or all marketing messages: 11% have an address they tend to use for all marketing emails they receive, while 12% only allow brands they trust into their primary personal email address, and use another account for other marketing messages.

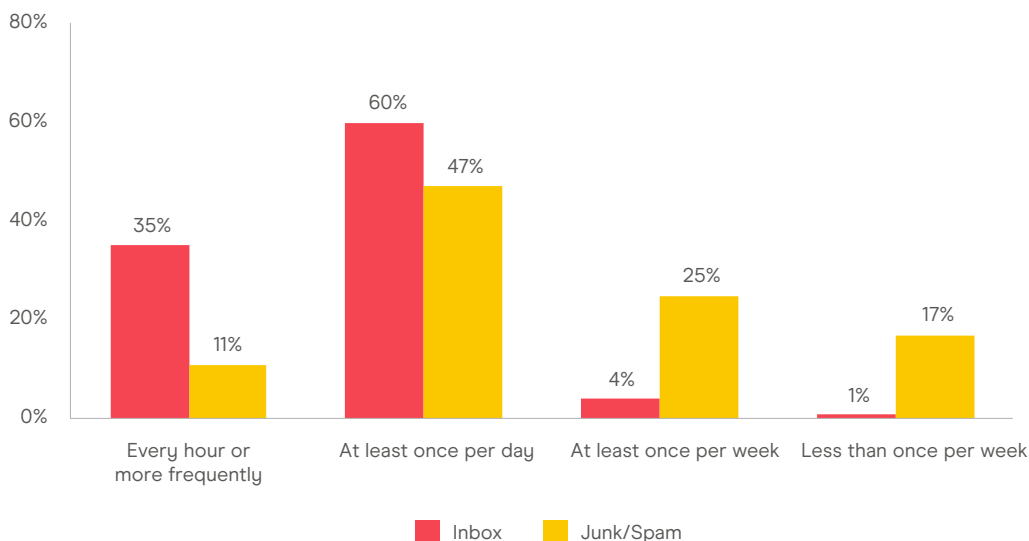
Meanwhile, a similar proportion (20%) use these multiple personal accounts to receive both personal and marketing emails, while almost one in ten (8%) simply have defunct/old email addresses they no longer use.

How do you use your different personal email addresses?



When it comes to checking their personal inboxes, the majority do so at least once a day (95%). In fact, over half (58%) even check their junk or spam folders at least daily. Those living in urban areas are more likely to check both their inbox (41%) and junk/spam (17%) at least every hour.

How often do you check the main email inbox/'Junk' or 'Spam' folder you use to receive personal messages?



The peak age group for hourly inbox checks is 35 to 44 (44%). Nearly all consumers aged 55 and over check at least daily (98%), while 18- to 24-year-olds are most likely to only check once per week (7%) or even less (2%). It's important to note that this could be for a variety of reasons, from still being a student to their preference for communication with brands through other channels (as found in 'Customer Engagement: Acquisition and the Consumer Mindset' report).

Expert Opinions



The exciting space is the start in the adoption of using smart speakers to read emails. This brings an additional dimension to email.

The email will have a voice and has the possibility of changing the customer's entire experience with the inbox. While the adoption rate appears low at the moment, there are also tracking issues for marketers to be able to uncover the 'real' number of subscribers reading emails using smart speakers.

This does provide marketers with the opportunity to be at the forefront of this technology. Test how your email marketing sounds when it is read aloud by Alexa before your subscribers do.

Jenna Tiffany

Founder & Strategy Director, Let'sTalk Strategy



The frequency of email checking has important considerations for brands that use send time optimisation. When a third of subscribers check their emails on an hourly basis, there is less point in trying to predict when they will open their emails – they will open them whenever they receive them.

It's also good news for email marketers that almost 60% of consumers check their junk/spam folders on a daily basis, requiring brands to think about what can be done to make those emails stand out when they are being looked for, as well as doing all they can to improve the likelihood of the recipient clicking 'not spam'. For instance, personalisation, use of the brand name and sending on a regular day/time can all help .

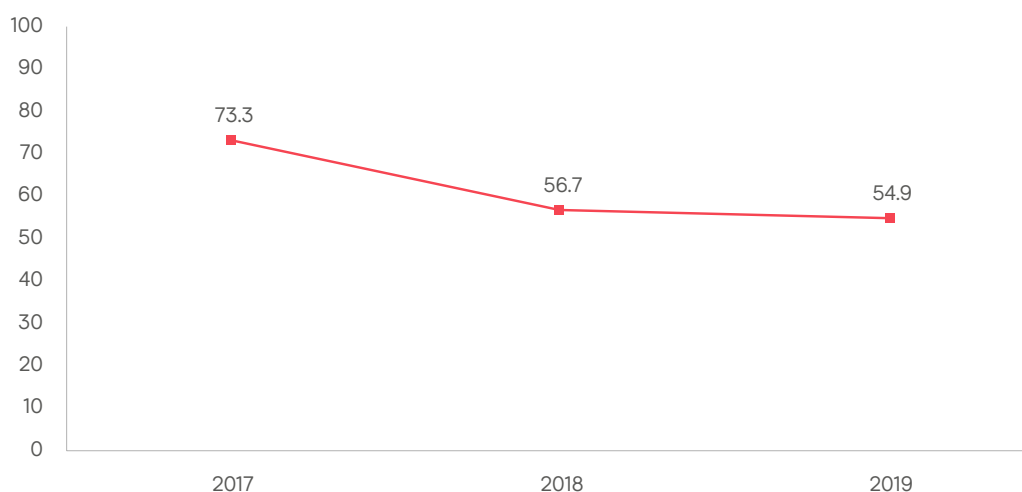
Guy Hanson

VP of Customer Engagement, Validity

/ Receiving and Opening

The number of emails consumers believe they receive (to their personal inboxes) continues to reduce year on year and since the GDPR came into force, from an estimated 73.3 in 2017 to 54.9 in 2019. This also varies significantly by age, with 18- to 34-year-olds believing they receive just 42.3 emails per week, while those aged 45 or older report receiving an additional 20 emails at 62.8.

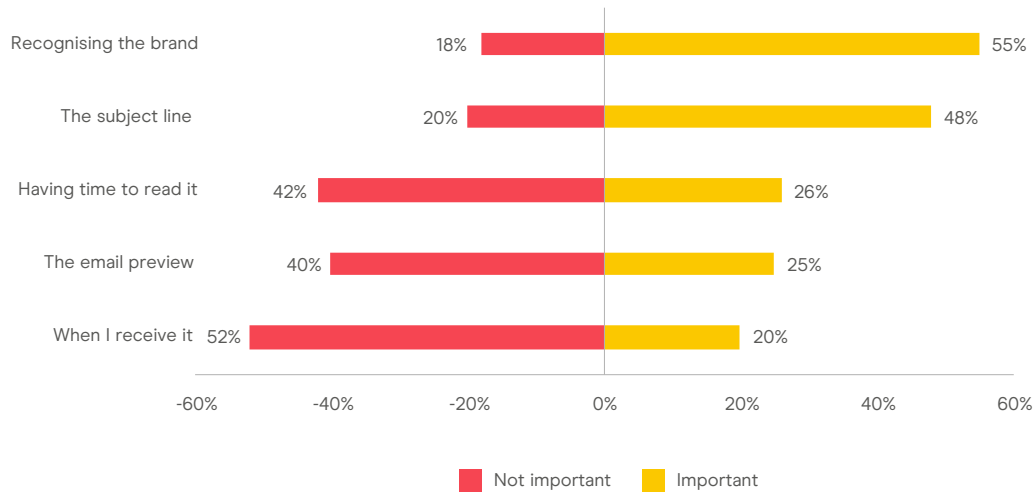
How many emails do you receive in your personal inbox(es) on average each week?



Meanwhile, the proportion of consumers who believe over half the emails they receive are marketing messages stands at 56% this year (up slightly from 55% in 2018), while 43% believe fewer than half are marketing messages (2% say they 'Don't know').

The key to consumers opening one of these marketing messages is 'Recognising the brand' (55%) and 'The subject line' (48%). Factors such as timeliness and a preview of the email being seen are ranked as less important by most people.

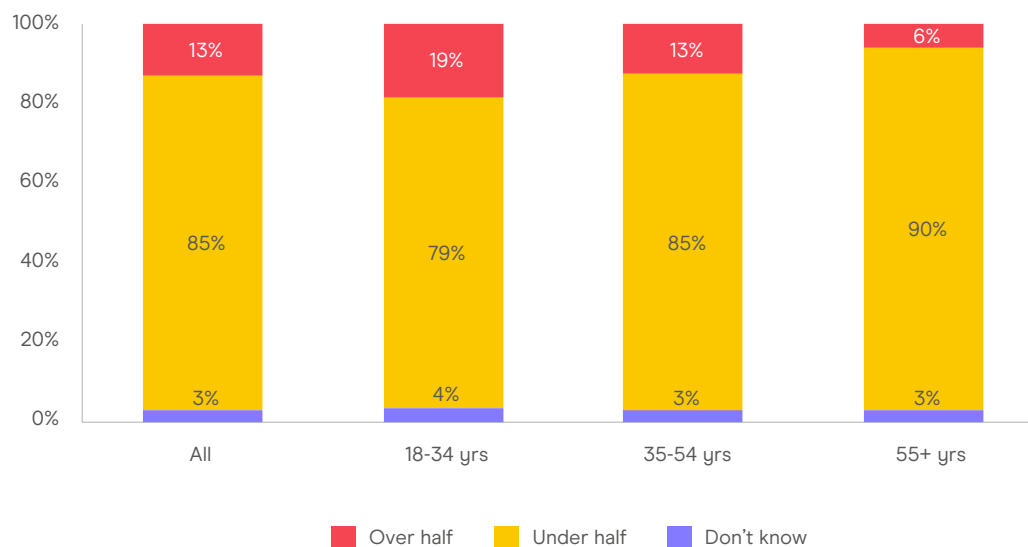
When you receive an email in your personal inbox(es), how important are the following factors for you to open it?



When consumers were asked about the usefulness of the marketing emails they receive, just 13% say over half are useful, which has hardly changed year on year (14% in 2018). The majority (85%) say that less than half aren't useful to them. While understanding exactly how consumers define 'useful' is difficult, the perception that some emails are not useful is one no marketer will be happy with. This feeling of a lack of usefulness is reinforced by the response from consumers when we asked them to name a brand they felt was 'doing emails well': 37% said they could not.

This perception does vary notably by age, with those under 35 much more likely to find emails useful and those over 55 much less likely to believe this is the case.

What percentage of those do you consider useful to you?



Expert Opinions



With 'Recognising the brand' such an important driver of opens, Brand Indicators for Message Identification (BIMI) is going to take on increased importance.

This standard has been around for a while, but it's now getting a boost with Google officially joining the AuthIndicators working group and launching a trial within Gmail in 2020. The big advantage for senders is their logos will display in their subscribers' inboxes, meaning immediate brand recognition – and trust.

Guy Hanson

VP of Customer Engagement, Validity



Consumers' perceptions about the usefulness of email marketing are disappointing, notably as this hasn't improved from last year.

Creating a clear strategy and conducting regular testing are the key starting points to improve this; two things that are consistently areas email marketers struggle to do for several reasons as highlighted in the 'Marketer Email Tracker 2019' report.

Marketers need to be cautious too, if consumers continue to not see the value in email marketing, it will become increasingly difficult to attract new subscribers and retain existing ones

Jenna Tiffany

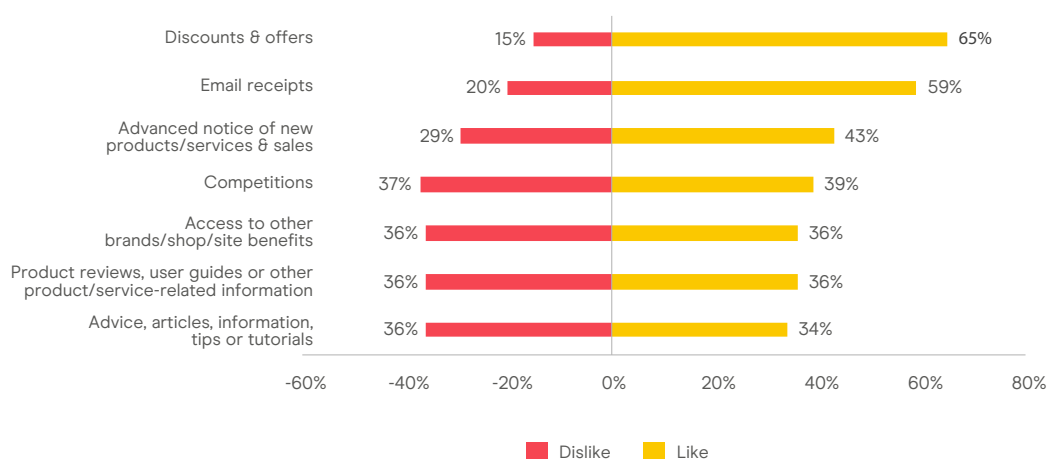
Founder & Strategy Director, Let'sTalk Strategy

/ Content and Actions

Having asked consumers about the content they prefer to receive within an email from a brand, there's a clear focus on the transactional – with the likes of 'Discount & offers' (65%), 'Email receipts' (59%) and 'Advanced notice of new products/services & sales' (43%) leading the way. All of these have a clear purpose and action to take, as well as a benefit to the consumer when it comes to money off or early access.

However, it's still important to note that over a third of consumers still like to receive 'Competitions' (39%), 'Access to other brands/shop/site benefits' (36%), 'Product reviews, user guides or other product/service-related information' (36%) and 'Advice, articles, information, tips or tutorials' (34%). This underlines the importance of understanding your customers and ensuring that you're delivering them the content they want to engage with – particularly when it's not directly related to a transaction.

How much do you like or dislike the following in emails you receive from brands/shops/sites?

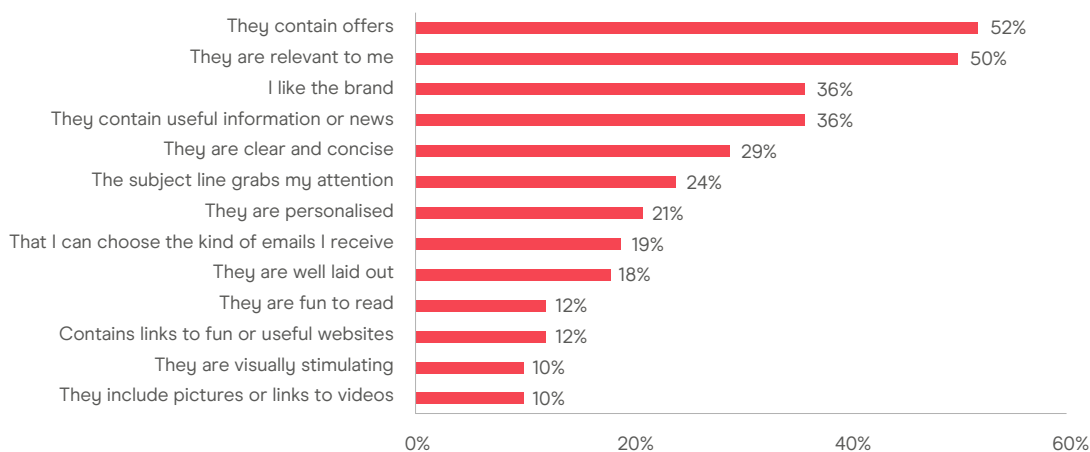


These preferences vary slightly between men and women. Women are more likely to prefer receiving 'Discounts & offers' (70%), 'Advanced notice of new products/services & sales' (46%) and 'Access to other brands/shop/site benefits' (39%). Men on the other hand, are also less likely to enjoy these types of content within marketing emails, with just one notable increase in their preference for 'Competitions' (43%).

Across almost all content types, consumers aged between 25 and 34 are significantly more likely to enjoy receiving emails. Those aged 55 and over are less likely to report enjoying any of this content, except for 'Email receipts' (55%).

When consumers were asked specifically about the emails they like to receive from brands, having offers (52%) and being relevant (50%) are clear winners, although it's worth noting that liking the brand and containing useful information or news are also important (both 36%). It's also noteworthy that women are slightly more likely to cite 'containing offers', 'being visually stimulating', 'including pictures or links to videos' and 'being fun to read' as reasons for liking these emails.

Now think about the emails you like to receive from brands/shops/sites, which of the following best describes why you like them?



Consumers aged 18 to 34 are more likely to cite 'They are fun to read' (19%), 'They are visually stimulating' (17%) and 'Contains links to fun or useful websites' (16%) as reasons that they like these emails.

The younger end of this age band (18 to 25) are less likely to report enjoying that 'They contain offers' (39%), 'They are relevant to me' (37%) and 'They contain useful information or news' (25%).

The want for more relevance and 'useful information' appears to fluctuate by age, as it's significantly less important to those under 45 (40% & 28% respectively) while being more important to those aged 45 or over (59% & 43%).

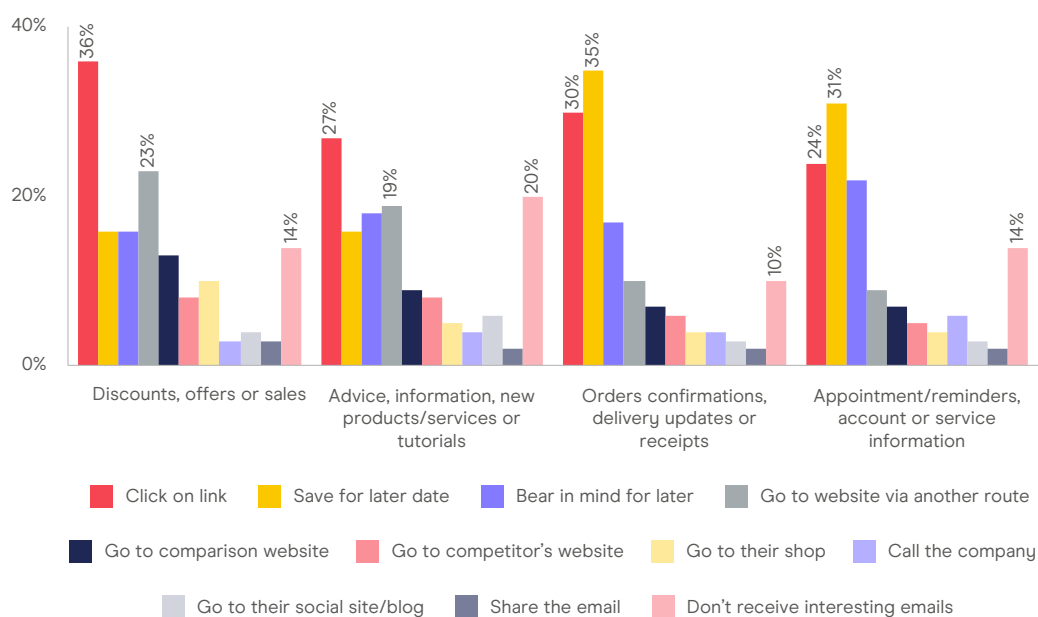
Likely Actions

Consumers' most likely action from receiving any email they find interesting is to 'Click on a link from the email' (29%) or 'Save the email to refer to at a later date' (25%). When they receive 'Discounts, offers or sales' emails they find interesting, while clicking is most likely (36%), almost one in four (23%) opt to go the company's website via another route (for example, via search). It's notable that women are more likely to click and also to visit the physical shop on receipt of an interesting email.

Similarly, getting 'Advice, information, new products/services or tutorials' via email can drive people to the brand's website via another means too (19%), although this is also the area where the highest proportion of people state they don't receive this type of interesting email content (20%).

When it comes to 'Orders confirmations, delivery updates or receipts' and 'Appointment/reminders, account or service information' most consumers tend to save the email to refer to later (35% & 31%) or click on the link when required (30% & 24%).

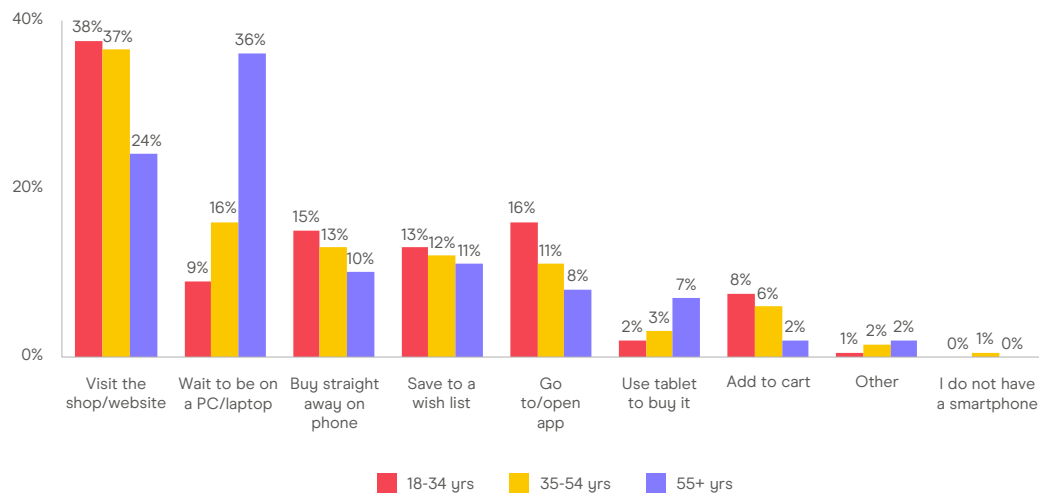
After receiving the following types of email that you find interesting to your personal inbox, which action are you most likely to take?



Taking this one step further, when consumers see an email on their smartphone for something they want to buy, over a third (35%) will go to the company's website and more than one in ten (13%) opt for the relevant app on their phone instead. A further 14% say they would buy straight away on their phone, but one in seven would opt to wait until they are on a PC (15%) or add the item to their wishlist (12%) or basket/cart (6%)

Men are more likely to wait to be on their PC before making any sort of purchase (20%), but age is the significant differentiator in behaviour. Consumers aged 55 and over are also more likely to wait for the safety of their computer (36%) and 25- to 34-year-olds significantly less likely (7%). Older consumers (55+) are also more likely to use a tablet to make their purchase (7%).

If you see something you want to buy in an email on your smartphone (received in your personal inbox), which of the following are you most likely to do?



People living in more rural areas are less likely to 'Save to a wishlist' (5%), while those living in small towns are less likely to 'Buy straight away' (9%), but more likely to 'Go to/open app' (19%). Those living in urban areas are much more likely to 'Add to cart' (9%).

Expert Opinions



Consumers preference to receive offers and discounts is a problem of our own making and our heavy use of the channel. This goes back to the usefulness of an email too.

If the email contains an offer for an item the customer has recently purchased, that is not going to be useful. So while everyone likes an offer, there is a time and a place for their effectiveness. It's also interesting to note the response to personalisation.

However, good personalisation is similar to good advertising. Done well, it shouldn't feel like personalisation. When it's overused or doesn't add any value and is being used for the sake of doing so, it will come across as creepy and invasive.

Jenna Tiffany

Founder & Strategy Director, Let'sTalk Strategy



The insights around likely actions create some important considerations for email attribution, with many brands attributing revenue to email on the basis of click generation.

Actions such as visiting the website by another route, going to their physical shop', visiting their social pages or even calling the company are all good outcomes – and added together have at least as much influence on purchase decisions as direct clicks.

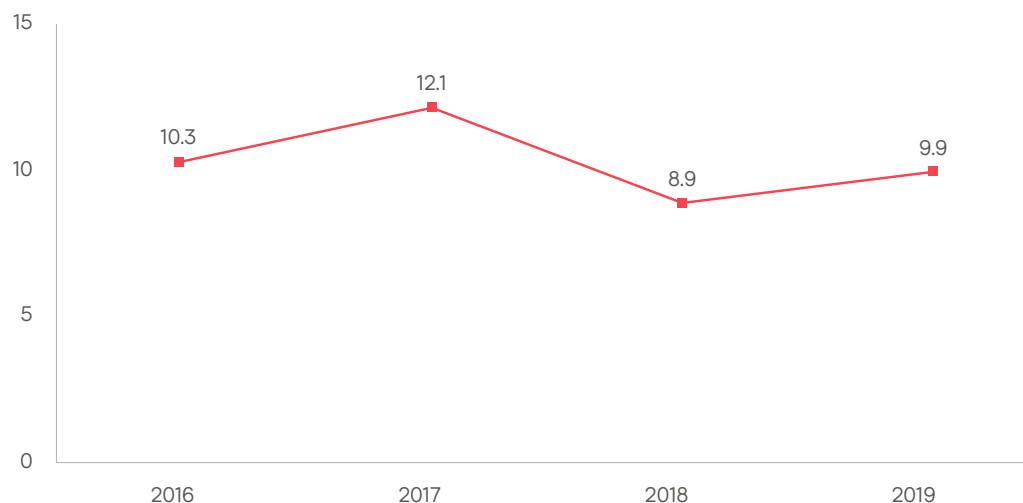
Guy Hanson

VP of Customer Engagement, Validity

/ Sign-ups and Unsubscribes

After a reduction in 2018 that is thought to be linked to the implementation date of the GDPR at that time, the number of brands that consumers believe they're signed up to receive emails from has risen to around 10 this year (9.9). Women are significantly more likely to subscribe to more brands than men (10.2 compared to 8.8). This also varies significantly by age, as 18- to 24-year-olds believe they subscribe to just 8.6 brands on average, whereas 25- to 44-year-olds believe this is higher at 10.6.

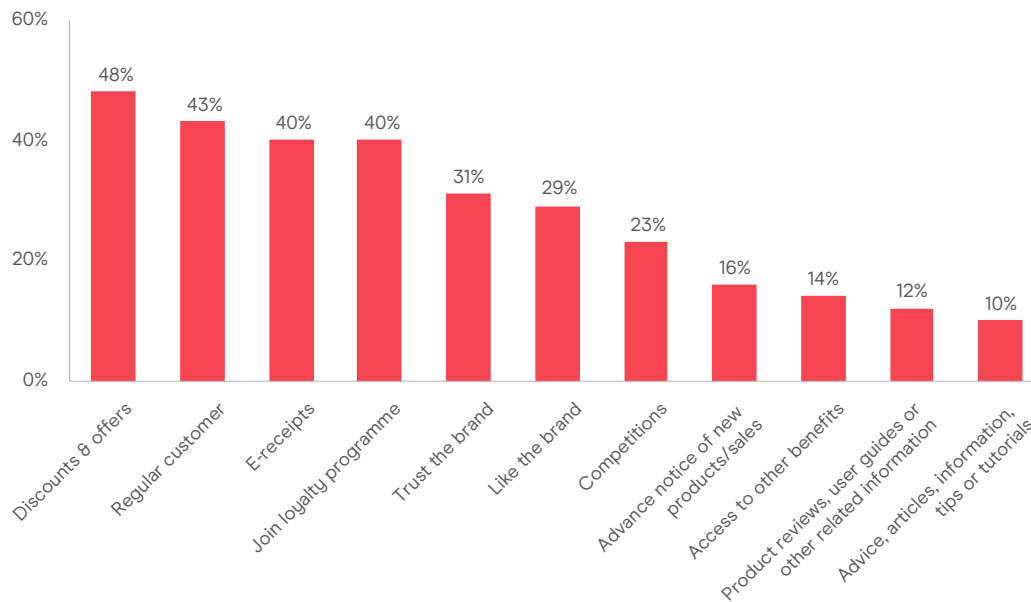
From how many brands/shops/sites are you currently signed up to receive emails on your personal email address(es)?



The main reasons to sign up to a brand's email programme are in order to receive 'Discounts & offers' (48%) or simply being a 'Regular customer' already (43%). These are closely followed by being sent email receipts (40%) or joining some form of loyalty programme (40%). Highlighting how loyalty can drive customers to sign up beyond the opportunity to receive transaction emails (as seen in the previous chapter).

Women are slightly more likely to sign up in order to receive 'Email receipts' & 'Receive discounts & offers', while men are more likely to do so because they are a regular customer. In addition, customers aged 55 and over are more likely to sign up to join a loyalty scheme or because they are a regular customer.

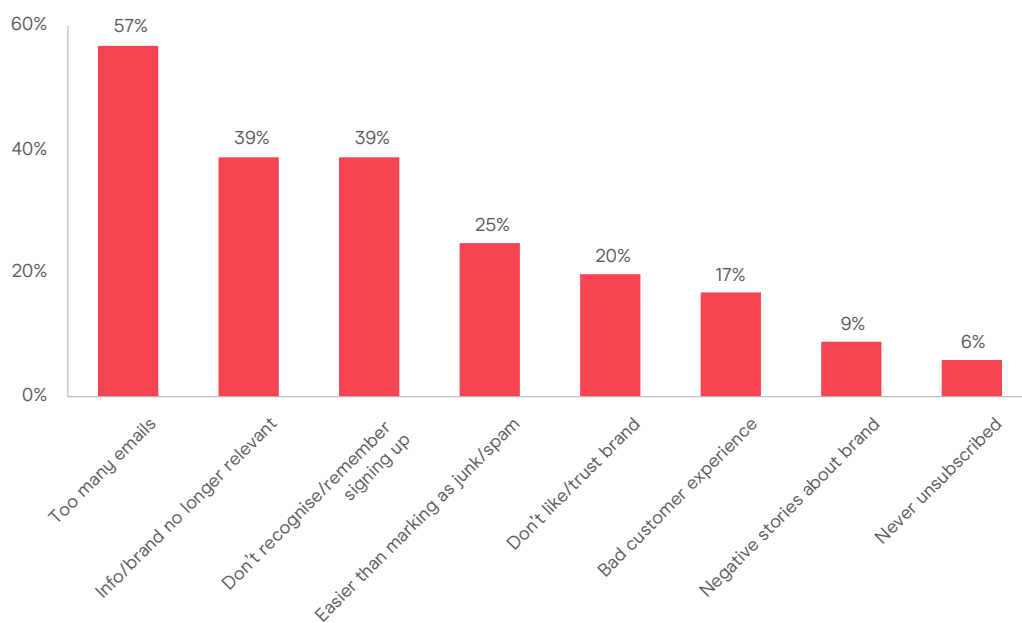
What are normally the main reasons you give your email address to a brand/shop/site?



Unsubscribing Behaviour

Consumers' main reasons for unsubscribing from a brand's emails is the feeling that they are receiving too many emails (57%), followed by the information no longer being relevant or them not recognising the brand (both 39%). Men are slightly more likely to unsubscribe because they don't like or trust the brand, the information is no longer relevant, or they've had a bad customer experience.

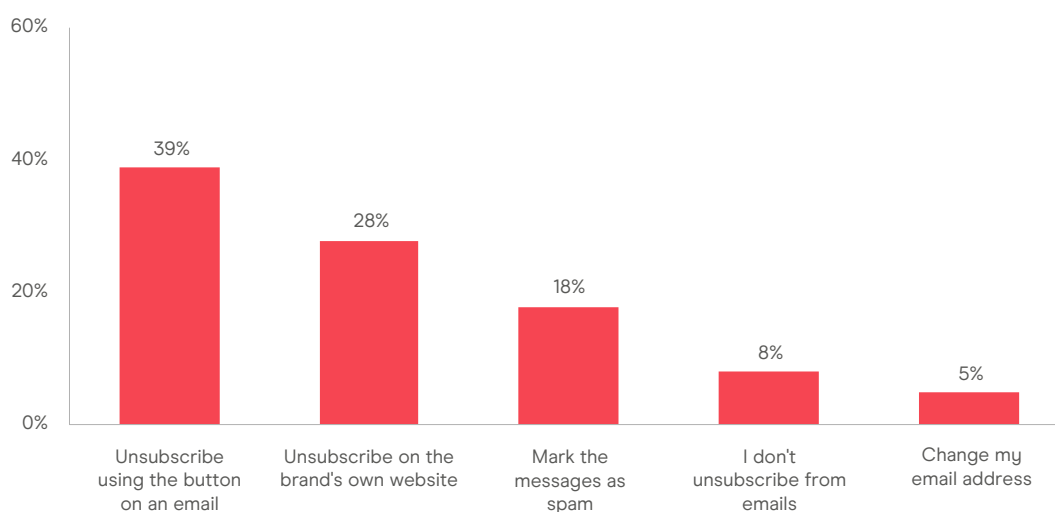
What makes you unsubscribe from a brand/shop/site's emails?



The most common way to unsubscribe is to use the link within an email (39%), while 28% still opt to visit the brand's website. The number of consumers opting to mark messages as spam has decreased to 18% this year from 27% in 2017, although that is still almost one in five. Meanwhile, those saying they don't unsubscribe from emails has doubled in two years to 8%.

Younger consumers (18 to 24) are more likely to not unsubscribe (12%) or simply change their email address (10%) if they do decide to. Those aged 55 or over are more likely to use a brand's website to unsubscribe from emails (35%) than average.

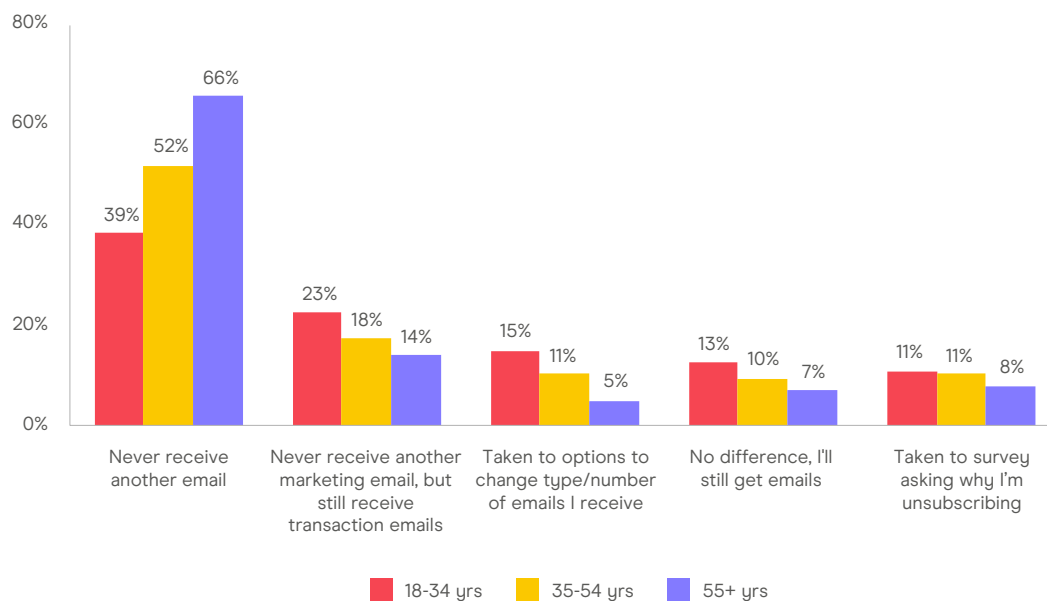
What is the main method you use to stop receiving unwanted emails?



Once they have unsubscribed, just over half of consumers (52%) would prefer to never receive another email from the brand, with just one in five (18%) understanding that they may still receive transactional emails. One in five likes to be taken to some form of an option to change the type or number of emails they receive (10%) or a survey about why they're unsubscribing (10%) – offering brands an opportunity to win the customer back or at least learn something about why they're leaving. It's also concerning that 10% believe this will make a difference and they'll still receive the emails.

The belief that they should be left alone and never receive another email is felt most strongly by older consumers (66% of those aged 55 and over), while those under 35 feel this the least (39%). Being taken to options that offer more control over the emails they receive is appreciated more among those aged under 35 (15%), with just 5% of those aged 55 or over preferring this option.

After clicking to unsubscribe from a brand/shop/site's emails, what do you typically prefer to happen?

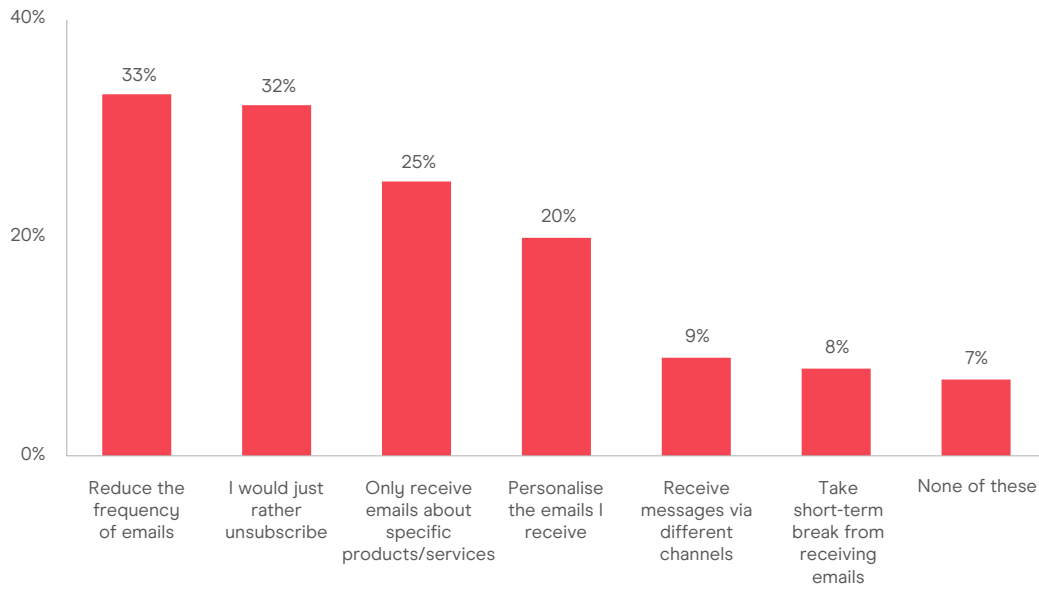


If given the option to manage the communications they receive from the brand, a third say they would 'Reduce the frequency of emails' (33%), with a quarter (25%) wanting to 'Only receive emails about specific products/services' and one in five (20%) the ability to 'Personalise the emails I receive'.

This could point to an opportunity to offer these controls to more than the one in ten who currently prefer this option. However, it's important to understand that around a third (32%) would just rather unsubscribe and not be given any of these options.

Looking at these figures by age, it's clear the want to simply unsubscribe is being driven by those aged 55 and over (45%), while consumers under 45 feel this way significantly less than average (22%). Younger consumers (18 to 24) prefer, more than most, the choice to receive messages via different methods (15%) – for instance via post, text message or social media. Those aged between 25 and 44 are more likely to be open to choosing to take a short-term break from receiving emails from a brand (12%).

If you were able to manage the communications you receive from brands/shops/sites, which of the following options would you prefer?



Expert Opinions



It's really encouraging that a quarter of people will unsubscribe because it's easier than marking an email as spam, and that twice as many respondents will unsubscribe using the unsubscribe, rather than spam button.

These are good outcomes for marketers. Making it easy to unsubscribe reduces spam complaints, which is good for sender reputation, increases trust and supports GDPR compliance.

Guy Hanson

VP of Customer Engagement, Validity



The main reasons for unsubscribing to brand emails links back to consumers not seeing the value in receiving emails. If the value exchange isn't transparent, then why would a customer remain subscribed?

This is an issue marketers need to be critically questioning, what value does my email programme provide?

Jenna Tiffany

Founder & Strategy Director, Let'sTalk Strategy

/ Conclusion

This year's insights into how consumers act, engage and feel about email are a powerful reminder of the importance of the channel, but also the challenges.

We've seen how email remains, undoubtedly, the preferred way for consumers to hear from brands across the customer journey. Although GDPR hasn't had the effect of continuing to reassure more people about how their personal data is being handled.

Meanwhile, ownership, usage and the number of emails consumers believe they see each week all remain similar year-on-year. Marketers should pay heed to the trend for people to utilise additional accounts to receive some or all the messages they sign-up to from brands though, ensuring they have the right address are sharing useful content that will engage customers beyond the transactional.

It's also important for brands to consider a more holistic approach to the success of their email programmes – and their marketing as a whole. As there remains a steady flow of customers who choose not to click the links they're offered, opting instead to take indirect actions. Without a more holistic view of marketing attribution, you may never truly understand the benefits your emails are having on other customer touchpoints.

Loyalty continues to be a key driver for customers to sign-up to receive emails from a brand too, although it's important for brands to be careful about the frequency and relevance of the messages they send. Offering recipients the opportunity for more control may be one trend we see grow in the coming years.

It's only by valuing your customers, understanding their needs and offering them relevant content that we will be able to redress the current imbalance felt by consumers. The imbalance around data, privacy, trust and usefulness we've seen in this and the other research the DMA produces.

Marketing must evolve as an exchange of value between the business, looking to prosper, and the customers, looking to benefit. As an industry, we can only achieve this by putting the customer at the heart of everything we do. Only then will businesses be able to prosperously grow to be enjoyed, prized and ultimately sustained.

Tim Bond

Head of Insight, Data & Marketing Association

/ About the Campaign

We put the customer at the heart of everything we do – especially when it comes to our Customer Engagement campaign. This campaign uses research and insight to help you maximise your engagement for the benefit of marketers and consumers alike.

If you build a rapport with your customers, and you have something they want, then they will buy from you again and again. We want to know what builds this rapport. We know creativity, data and technology are factors, but we don't know how the interplay works. This campaign aims to discover what makes brilliant engagement.

Check out our popular and [Acquisition and the Consumer Mindset 2019](#) and explore our engaging infographics which are breaking down key ideas.

We also run events to encourage better Customer Engagement.

Keep an eye on your emails or visit our [events page](#) to book your spot.

Tap into DMA research, insights, thought leadership, and networking events on offer by visiting the DMA online and discover how you can get involved with and get the most out of our [Customer Engagement](#) campaign.

Better engagement means better business.

/ About the Data & Marketing Association

The Data & Marketing Association (DMA) comprises the DMA, Institute of Data & Marketing (IDM) and DMA Talent.

We seek to guide and inspire industry leaders; to advance careers; and to nurture the next generation of aspiring marketers.

We champion the way things should be done, through a rich fusion of technology, diverse talent, creativity, insight – underpinned by our customer-focused principles.

We set the standards marketers must meet in order to thrive, representing over 1,000 members drawn from the UK's data and marketing landscape.

By working responsibly, sustainably and creatively, together we will drive the data and marketing industry forward to meet the needs of people today and tomorrow.

www.dma.org.uk

/ About Pure360

Pure360 is a marketing technology company providing multi-channel data and marketing solutions to help the UK's leading and growing brands get better results.

Providing UK marketers with an unrivalled combination of our all-in-one AI marketing platform, which enables brands to better integrate, analyse, personalise and deliver, and our industry-leading Maturity Model, we are focused on accelerating customer results across email, mobile, web and social.

We drive better email, better personalisation and better revenues, helping marketers be the best they can be.

We deliver best in class results for over 1,400 customers across the eCommerce, Retail and Travel sectors. Pure360 customers include Tetley, innocent, Park Holidays, Ultimo, Blue Bay, Patisserie Valerie, The Range and Wagamama. We are ranked as a 'High Performer' for Email Marketing by G2 Crowd and were named as finalists at the Brighton and Hove Business Awards 2019.

Born and bred in Brighton, at Pure360 we believe people are paramount. From our customers to our employees, we are passionate about bringing people together, connecting audiences like never before. Better starts here.

www.pure360.com

/ Methodology

The 'Consumer Email Tracker 2020' is an annual study undertaken by the DMA, in partnership with Pure360 and the DMA's Email Council.

The research was conducted in December 2019 via an online survey of 2,051 respondents (nationally representative of UK adults). The data was collected and collated by Dynata, then analysed by the DMA Insight department. The report was written and designed by the DMA Insight department and in-house design team.

The survey consisted of a maximum of 27 questions. These questions were reviewed by the DMA, Pure360 and the Email Council's Research Hub to ensure relevance to the current state of the email industry. Unless referenced, all data included in this report is taken from this survey.

If you have any questions about the methodology used in the report, you can contact the DMA's research team via email: research@dma.org.uk

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