

Session 2: Bootcamp Series

Five tips to help improve your email open rate



Good morning, welcome all....

Please settle in we'll get started shortly...

Let's get started, welcome to the Connecting Up/NationBuilder Bootcamp series.

This is the second webinar in the series called "Five tips to help improve your email open rate" last week we hosted "How to organise people and data to build a thriving community" so today's content will follow on from what we learned last week.

So before I go into the content of this webinar I want to do some introductions. First I want to see who's in the room and I want to familiarise you with the chat feature of this webinar software.

Since I'm not able to see you on a camera or hear your voice to a microphone the chat feature is how we are gonna be able to interact and I definitely want this to be as interactive as possible.

So if you can locate the chat box on your machine please drop in your first name the name of your organisation and what city you're in just so we can start to see who is here

(Welcome people by name mentioned cities that are listed and talk about how good it is to be connected with these people specifically.)

TRANSITION: Awesome thank you for participating in that it's so good to be connected with you now I will go ahead and introduce myself and Sasha will introduce herself as well because as we all know it's kind of important that we understand what brought us here to host this webinar.

Meet Your Hosts



Erika Avellaneda Celis

ACCOUNT MANAGER AUS/NZ



Sorcha Rodford

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC
PARTNERSHIPS

So to get us started my name is Erika Avellaneda Celis I live in Hobart Tasmania and I am an enterprise account manager for nation builder here in Australia...but that's just my job title so let me tell you a little about my background and how I came to be here today. I care deeply about community and technology and how those two things can work together to solve real-world problems. I came to Australia in 2005 I did a bachelors of science and realised what I actually wanted to do was work with people to communicate important work that was not being communicated by the scientific community so I actually got into advocacy I worked for about five years for small not-for-profit's in Tasmania that were working on environmental issues I was a communications officer and engagement officer and helped build movements out of communities. I was a campaigner for the stop the trawler campaign in 2016 which was a humble team of two people leading a national campaign and with the help of our community and ;nb we actually did stop the trawler.

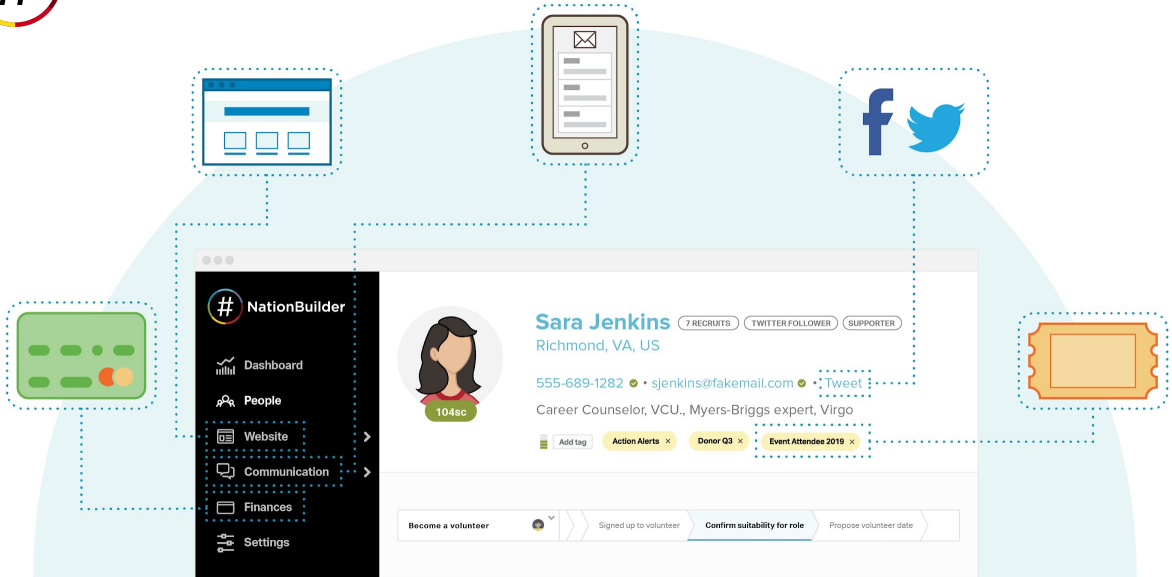
I learned about community organising during the Obama presidential election in 2008 I was a very committed volunteer in Alaska at the

time and brought the principles and the organising skills from that campaign and applied them to my work here. About two years ago I joined the nation builder team after having used the software for so many campaigns and now I get to work with dozens of organisations and associations I help them to organise and lead their communities to action.

I'm on the board of the Australian conservation foundation so I understand deeply how not for profits work and I also run my own not-for-profit with a small group of friends called the Latin American cultural Association of Tasmania.

Now Sorchu over to you....

TRANSITION: Thank you Sorchu and everyone for your introductions, There is just one more brief introduction to make and that is to the nationbuilder platform and what it actually is. This will help give you context on the content of this at this webinar. However this webinar has been designed for anyone you don't need to be using NationBuilder to learn something useful today.




NationBuilder is a community engagement platform that includes several tools required to organise a community all in one place. The platform includes a website where supporters can take action, a client relationship manager where you can organise your people, mass emailing capabilities to communicate with people one to one or by the thousands, we provide event ticketing and the ability to take donations and run memberships.


TRANSITION - click to next slide








We power many of Australia's and New Zealand's most high-stakes movements, campaigns and association efforts.

And as we build and evolve our platform, we're constantly studying the history and science of community building, always trying to figure out “What actually moves people to *action or do something?*”





INDUSTRY AVERAGES

 OPEN RATE
  CLICK-THROUGH RATE
  CLICK-TO-OPEN RATE
  UNSUB RATE
  BOUNCE RATE

| | | | | | |
|---|--------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| Advertising and Marketing Agencies | 18.00% | 2.20% | 12.00% | 0.30% | 1.10% |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting | 22.10% | 3.40% | 15.20% | 0.40% | 0.90% |
| Automotive and Aerospace | 30.70% | 3.80% | 11.80% | 0.50% | 4.30% |
| Construction, Contracting, and Manufacturing | 25.90% | 3.90% | 14.60% | 0.30% | 2.20% |
| Consumer Packaged Goods | 16.40% | 1.40% | 8.50% | 0.20% | 0.60% |
| Education | 31.20% | 5.60% | 17.70% | 0.30% | 1.30% |
| Engineering, Architecture and Design | 22.30% | 3.00% | 13.40% | 0.30% | 1.60% |
| Financial Services | 22.90% | 3.00% | 12.80% | 0.20% | 1.60% |
| Food and Beverage | 19.30% | 2.10% | 10.60% | 0.40% | 0.90% |
| Government | 30.50% | 3.90% | 12.60% | 0.20% | 1.20% |
| Healthcare Services | 24.30% | 2.80% | 11.20% | 0.40% | 1.70% |
| IT / Tech / Software Services | 19.00% | 3.20% | 16.90% | 0.20% | 0.90% |
| Logistics and Wholesale | 17.70% | 1.50% | 8.40% | 0.40% | 0.90% |
| Media, Entertainment, and Publishing | 17.40% | 3.60% | 20.40% | 0.10% | 1.00% |
| Nonprofit | 27.10% | 4.00% | 14.40% | 0.40% | 1.90% |
| Other | 28.30% | 3.60% | 12.20% | 0.40% | 2.80% |
| Professional Services | 21.70% | 2.80% | 12.60% | 0.20% | 0.90% |
| Real Estate, Design and Construction Activities | 19.80% | 3.50% | 17.30% | 0.20% | 0.90% |
| Retail | 14.60% | 1.60% | 11.00% | 0.10% | 0.50% |
| Travel, Hospitality, and Leisure | 16.50% | 1.40% | 8.70% | 0.20% | 0.70% |
| Unknown | 20.30% | 3.10% | 15.00% | 0.30% | 1.30% |
| Average | 18.70% | 2.80% | 14.90% | 0.20% | 1.00% |

So let's get stuck into the content of today. Five tips to help improve your email open rates.

Now to get started we actually need a benchmark on the screen in front of you I've highlighted the not-for-profit industry standard this is the average open rate for not for profits in Australia in 2019. The average is 27.1%.

Based on that number how are you feeling about your current open rate?

We're going to through up a poll and we'd love to see where you land. Take your time

Poll: On a scale of one to five how are you feeling about your email open rate. 1= not so good, 5=amazing

You can also say you're not sure what your open rate is

Interesting, well, no matter Where do you landed on that scale we can help you today.

TRANSITION: Here are our 5 tips to improving your email open rate



FIVE TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL OPEN RATE

Overview - The 5 tips are:

- 1. Segment your list
- 2. Think about timing & Send the right call to action
- 3. Personalise the email
- 4. Write in plain English
- 5. Keep your email list healthy

This is a summary of the tips that we are going to cover today
number one segment your list
number two think about timing and send the right call to action
number three personalise the email
number four writing clean English
and number five keep your email list healthy.

TRANSITION:



FIVE TIPS TO HELP IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL OPEN RATE

Segment your list

- Your email list is diverse! Think of it that way
- Segmenting allows you to cluster people together by things that are similar
- How can you target your outreach accordingly?

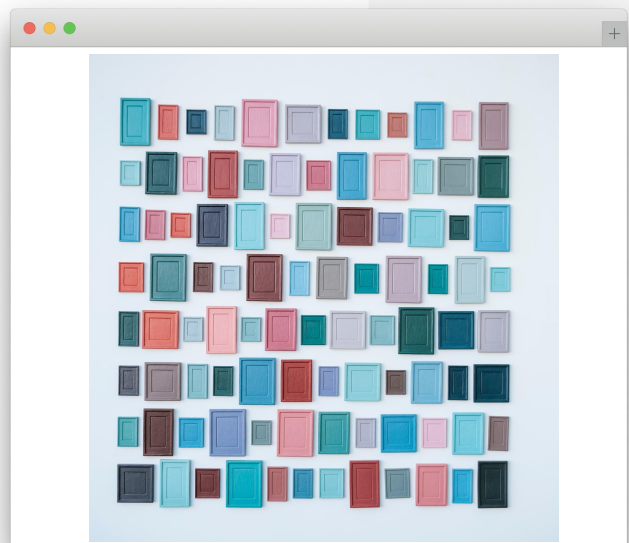


Photo by [Markus Spiske](#) on [Unsplash](#)

So the first tip to talk about builds on what we learned last week if you were with us. First fact is that your email list is diverse and you need to think of it that way the people that are on your email list came there from different ways they've been on the list for a different amount of time they interact with your organisation in a different way and therefore segmenting will allow you to cluster people together with things that are similar so that you can target accordingly

Let me tell you a story of an organisation that was not segmenting and how that affected me

Here in Tasmania we have a few natural resource management organisations they are government entities that help care for the environment. There is one in the north of the state and one in the south of the state. They allow you to sign up for their newsletter without asking where you live and so somehow I had received their newsletter and had entered to win a pair of gumboots in summer.

It turns out I actually won the gumboots and it wasn't until I received an email congratulating me and giving me the address right to pick up my gumboots which was four hours away from my house that I realised I had actually won the gumboots from the northern organisation the southern organisation where I live. I reflected and thought they must not be storing geographic information about me and I must be on both lists but from the newsletters it's not clear which newsletter is coming from the north or the south organisation. So what I had to do was give them a call and let them know that I was in the south part of the state and that they should redraw a winner

from the northern part of the state. I also asked them to add to my profile that I live in Hobart so that in the future I only get emails about things that are relevant to my part of the state.

This is an example of not using geographic information to segment a list. If they had my postcode they could have sent the original invitation for the competition to only people in the north of the state. This would be a Simple geographic segmentation

So let's talk a little more about segmentation what kinds are out there

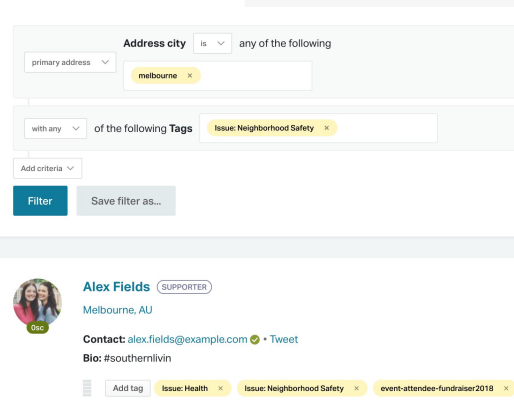
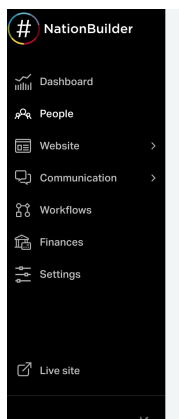
NRM North gumboots story



FIVE TIPS TO HELP IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL OPEN RATE

Segment your list

- By persona
 - Issues that the person cares about
 - Geographic
 - Preferences
- By behaviour
 - Actions taken
 - Ex. major donors suppressed from small asks
- By life cycle
 - Are they new supporters
 - Have they opened emails recently?



You can segment your list by a few different types of segments. First up, persona this kind of segmentation includes things that are specific to that person like issues that they care about maybe or their geographic location or preferences. Let's focus on the screenshot on the right this is a screenshot of nation builder where we are using a filter to look for people whose primary address city is Melbourne and who have an issue tag of neighbourhood safety this the results give us Alex fields now We know that Alex is in Melbourne and she cares about neighbourhood safety. In the nation builder example we are using tags to save this persona information and the database itself saves her location information and everything is searchable by a filter. In a larger database there could be hundreds or thousands of people like Alex that are both in Melbourne and care about neighbourhood safety.

Click to reveal next dot point

Now we can also segment by behaviour so this includes actions people have taken for example Alex also has a tag that says event attendee fundraiser 2018 and that means that Alex came to our fundraiser in 2018. She would be an ideal person to invite to this year's fundraiser event. Another example might be if we had all of our major donors tagged with major donor, we would probably exclude them from a small donation ask especially if they gave recently. Can you imagine how it would feel if you gave \$500 dollars to an organisation one week and the next week they are asking you for \$10? It might feel like they don't know you at all despite your investment in their cause.



FIVE TIPS TO HELP IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL OPEN RATE

Segment your list

| Email blast size | Open rate by email blast size | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--------|
| | 2019 | 2020 |
| i. 1-10 | 61.92% | 64.76% |
| ii. 10-100 | 51.55% | 52.26% |
| iii. 100-1,000 | 37.11% | 38.37% |
| iv. 1,000-10,000 | 26.47% | 28.08% |
| v. 10,000-100,000 | 21.85% | 23.50% |
| vi. 100,000-1,000,000 | 24.72% | 14.40% |

Larger emails see lower open rates [NationBuilder 2020](#)

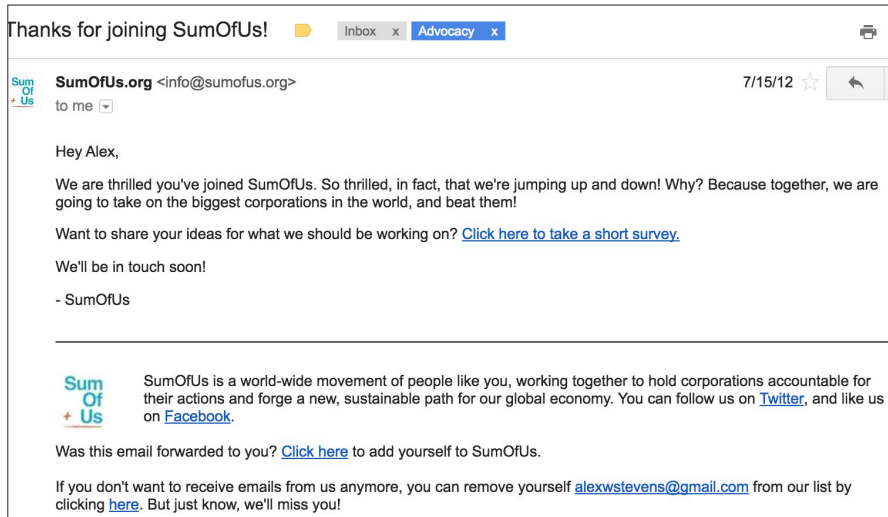
Here's another reason to segment your list...recently we analysed open rates of different size email blasts. We found that the larger the email blast, the lower the open rates in particular in 2020 and this work was done taking into account our current global pandemic. Where people are getting more email not less. There's a steady decrease from 64 - 14 % as the list increases in size.

I show this graph because often I hear that engagement or comms professionals are told by their management to "send to everyone" now you know that this advice is based on an assumption that So when an executive director says to email everyone, that emailing everyone will result in more people reading the email but this is actually the opposite of what we've found to be true.



FIVE TIPS TO HELP IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL OPEN RATE

Segment your list



Lastly, I'm going to briefly touch on segmenting by life cycle. I'll focus on this one email. This is the first email that Alex received after signing up to this organisation. It does 3 important things

1. It acknowledges Alex as someone new who has joined and how this makes them happy.
2. It asks Alex to fill out a short survey - if he does this more information about the particular things he cares about will be saved so that the organisers can keep sending him targeted emails
3. It says they'll be in touch soon - leaving the expectation that he will receive more email from them, it's no surprise.

Pause for questions

Now we've gone over a lot of information already today. I'd like to pause for a minute to digest what we've heard and answer any questions or thoughts that have come up.



FIVE TIPS TO HELP IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL OPEN RATE

Think about timing

- Send email at a time where the person is able to check their email - this helps your email stay at the top of the inbox.
- There is no ONE answer for when or what day to send. Take any advice with a grain of salt
- There is no hard cap on the number of emails that you send. Sending monthly may reduce unsubscribes but lead to less engagement and sending more may strengthen good relationships but result in more unsubscribes.
- Consistency is key, let people know how often they might hear from you, and let them know if you'll be emailing more often so they're aware.

Think about timing

So there are two parts to this tip the first one is about actual time of day or the day of the week when you would send an email. As you all know you are competing with lots of other news stories and emails in a persons inbox so What do you want to do here is to think about when the people that you are emailing are most likely to read that email. Reason being the longer that email sits in the inbox the lower it moves down and others pile up on top of it so you want to send the email in a moment where they are very likely to read it soon so that it stays at the top.

Think about.... Are they office workers who work 9-to-5 and are likely to be checking work emails but you have their personal email address possibly it might be better to send them an email after work after dinner when they actually have time to sit and read their own emails.

Or are they students who have a lot of free time during the day because they're not at work and could be checking their email in real time.

There is no one answer because Audience is unique. Be weary of advice to send at a specific time on a specific day because this is something that's ever-changing and it might take some experimentation.

The other piece of this is how much email is too much. We receive this question quite often and the simple fact is that there is no hard cap on how much email you should be sending. Some research has indicated that sending emails once a month leads to less unsubscribes but also less engagement overtime because four weeks have passed before the person sees the name of the brand or interacts with that brand again. On the other hand organisations that sent emails a couple of times a month do you have a higher unsubscribe rate but they also have a higher engagement so finding a balance of these two things is going to help you get more people to open your email.

Sending consistently is important and letting people know that you are going to be emailing them more often because a campaign is in full force is important and will reduce unsubscribes.

- 1.
- 2.
3. Send at the right time -
 - a. Timely call to action - you are competing with lots of other news stories and emails. This can be a challenge when there is so much noise. This can also be an opportunity because there is to much action. Flnd an “issue du jour”

- a. What sort of related action can I provide, an opportunity to do something about the issue they care about.
- b. What day and time to send. There is no one time and it is ever changing. However, you can think about the people that you're emailing and think about when they are available to read the email you sent them. Do they work 9-5? Will they be putting kids to bed in the evening or staring at their phone.
- c. The best way to approach this, sending email at a moment when you are NOT competing with many others. Christmas/ Easter as an example. If you
- d. How much is too much? There is no cap. A study in 2013 found that brands that were sending 1 email per month had significantly less email opt outs but. Keep a consistent volume, if you are changing the volume then recalibrate, keep it consistent to your supporters know what to expect.
- e. Median email blasts per month graph. Env and health sectors, send by far the most email blasts where as health sector sends way less. But the environmental have way less unsubscribe. Sending a high volume but keeping the relationships strong



FIVE TIPS TO HELP IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL OPEN RATE

Think about timing your CTA

SIGN THE PLEDGE
I BELIEVE AUSTRALIA SHOULD PROVIDE VITAL SUPPORT TO VULNERABLE NATIONS

First Name Last Name

Email Contact Number

California is on the verge of 100%

Inbox x

Advocacy x



Masada Disenhouse - 350.org <350@350.org> [Unsubscribe](#)

to me ▾

Sep 7 (7 days ago) ☆



Friends,

California is on the verge of committing to 100% clean energy. This is a big deal that would have repercussions across the globe.

There's a bill in the State Assembly right now, SB 100, that would speed up the transition to a clean energy economy, setting a new target of 60% clean energy by 2030 and 100% clean energy no later than 2045.

[Help California get to 100% clean energy. Can you call your State Assembly Member today and ask them to vote yes on SB 100?](#)

Because we take care of our neighbours.

The other part of being timely is having a timely call to action that's what CTA stands for in the title of this slide. Now, I bet most of you have signed a petition online using one of these platforms shown on the slide. They were kind of the pioneers of the petition a few years back. What they did was pair issues of the day with actions that could be taken immediately.

Click to reveal dot points

Pairing an email with a timely call to action about something that is happening in the world today can create a compelling reason for people to open the email in the first place and then click on a link to sign.

Click to reveal petition

Let's have a look at the petition on the right it's says as we've It reads as we've seen in Australia it's never been more important to tackle COVID-19 together well Australia has one of the worlds best health care systems many of our neighbours around the

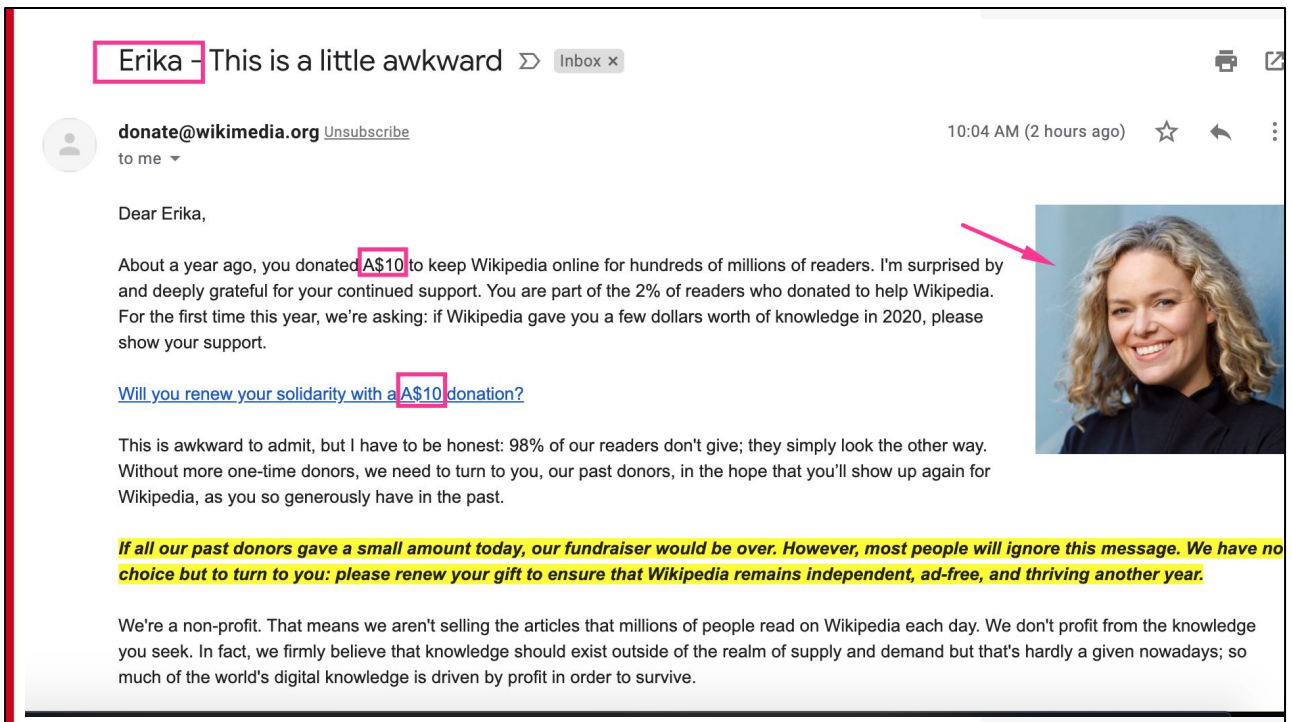
world are equipped for a pandemic we must stand in solidarity with all our neighbours been courage in your government to send vital support to vulnerable nations it's not over until it's over for everyone. This is a great example of taking an issue of the day and pairing it with an action that someone can take immediately.

Sending an email to supporters during the pandemic asking them to sign a petition like this is very likely to result in getting that email opened and getting people to click through and sign. It's timely because of what's happening in the world and gives people something that they can do right now. After your supporters have signed you also know that they care about other nations and stand in solidarity with vulnerable people.

So following on from this after signing the petition a person might even go a step further and take a further action. It's very timely to send a follow-up email with something more that a person can do. Here's an example

Click to look at email

This email was sent after I signed a petition. Its giving me an update about Clean Energy in California and asking me to call my state assembly member. This email is timely because I just took an action about getting California to 100% clean energy and now there's Even more that I can do and it's right here in front of me. I haven't left my inbox. Giving someone the opportunity while they're still engaged is likely to result in more engagement and is courteous of their time.



Lets move on to personalising email. We all like to feel heard and feel as if the person writing to us knows us even if its just in a limited capacity. Some simple ways to show that you know someone is mentioning their name in the email and adding other relevant information to the body. In this example we can see that this email is pulling in the first name of the person and their city. Most mass email blasting tools have this capability we're displaying here what we call smart fields in NationBuilder where you can add the smart field you would like to add to a paragraph with a couple clicks.

Now lets look at a good example of using the personalisation of an email to raise more money. This email was sent to me yesterday. Turns out I donated \$10 last year to Wkimedia which is the not for profit that created wikipedia. You can see all the pink boxes, those are areas of the email where they are pulling in data specific to me and it really does help. I had forgotten that I gave and after seeing the amount it doesn't seem like much of a big deal to give again.

I also like the personal touch they've added by putting the photo of the person writing me this email. It feels personal. Contrast in your mind this email with one that just asks for a donation giving me several options of amounts to donate.....really different feeling.



FIVE TIPS TO HELP IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL OPEN RATE

Personalise the email

- Get your point across in three lines
- Bold these lines in your email
- Add the detail of each line below the bold
- Insert links or buttons throughout the email but definitely before the scroll line.

Dear Sorcha,

Making people read your emails isn't impossible...

But it does require thinking about where a reader is when they're reading that email, about when they last heard from you.

But you must write for everyone.

We don't all interact with an email in the same way. We're each individuals with different habits and strategies for understanding the concepts in an email and how we take that information in.

Not just the readers...but the scanners too!

Some people like to read the whole email. They like detail and are at ease reading several paragraphs quickly.

Sign up to learn how here

But others use their eyes to scan the overall content of the email picking up bits and pieces of information in order to put the full story together without having to focus on all the detail

Great, moving on to Personalise email

- Get your point across in three lines **CLICK**
- Bold these lines in your email **CLICK**
- Add the detail of each line below the bold **CLICK**
- Insert links or buttons throughout the email but definitely before the scroll line.

Making people read your emails isn't impossible...

But it does require thinking about where a reader is when they're reading that email, about when they last heard from you.

But you must write for everyone.

We don't all interact with an email in the same way. We're each individuals with different habits and strategies for understanding the concepts in an email and how we take that information in.

Not just the readers...but the scanners too!

Some people like to read the whole email. They like detail and are at ease

reading several paragraphs quickly.

[Sign up to learn how here](#)

But others use their eyes to scan the overall content of the email picking up bits and pieces of information in order to put the full story together without having to focus on all the detail



FIVE TIPS TO HELP YOU IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL OPEN RATES

Write in plain English

- Keep sentences short
- Use the active voice
- Be personal
- Use everyday words
- Leave out technical terms.
instead link to content for those
who may be interested

It's become a fact that the reef is in trouble and has suffered significant bleaching in the last decade. It's the responsibility of everyone to take action.

The reef that you know and love is in trouble.
Take action to help save it.

One of the most powerful things we can do as individuals is get in touch with our MPs – federal and state – to urge them to support better environmental laws. We've launched a tool that can help you do this.

Are you tired of lousy environmental laws that don't protect nature? Ready to tell someone that can do something about it? Get in touch with your MP by clicking here.

Add a poll to try and rephrase a sentence in plain English

Put in the speech bubbles and help black and white text

Let's all have a go at changing one together.



FIVE TIPS TO HELP IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL OPEN RATE

Acquisition and warm up

- **Know where your list came from.**
 - Keep track of a recipient's origin
 - Be deliberate and forthcoming with your signup process
 - Tell recipients what to expect and include an “opt-in” box on signup pages

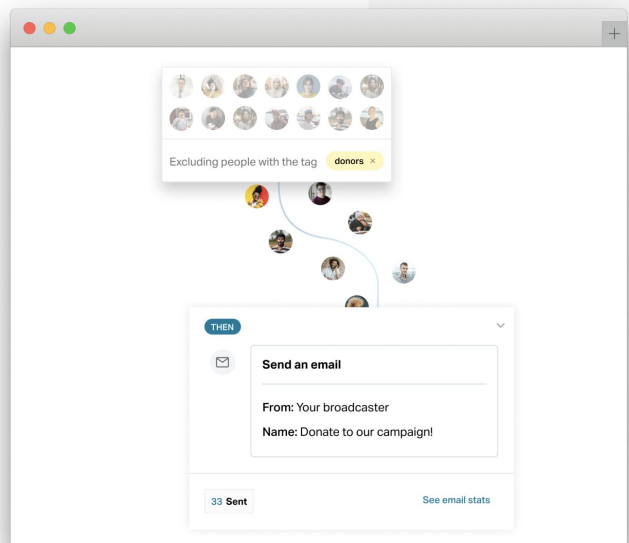
- **Carefully introduce recipients to your community.**
 - Have a “warm-up” series for new additions to your list
 - Tell recipients what to expect and ask what they want to hear about
 - Use a signup page and subscription tags to collect this information



FIVE TIPS TO HELP IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL OPEN RATE

Listening and Adjusting

- **Measure performance.**
 - A/B testing
 - Email stats
 - Filter based on how people are engaging
 - Test content on a segment of recipients



Measure performance. Trends fall out of fashion, keep experimenting and use what works.

A/B testing

Email stats

Filter based on how people are engaging

Test content on a segment of recipients



FIVE TIPS TO HELP IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL OPEN RATE

Sunsetting and Winback

- **Inactive recipients need attention, too.**
 - Emailing recipients who do not open is ineffective and hurts you in the long run.
 - Identify inactive recipients.
- **Have a plan for list decay.**
 - 22.5%* of a given email list expires over the course of a year.
 - Use a combination of winbacks and new acquisitions to maintain a healthy list.

poll - have you ever ran a sunset campaign?

Yes

No

What is a sunset campaign

Demo



Tour of NationBuilder

- Demo someone signing up, they land in the control panel and are put on an automation.
- The second email in the automation has another call to action (timing)
- Show a filter that is looking for people who had signed a petition, are in st kilda and have donated.
- Show an email blast where they are being asked to donate again
- The format of the email shows the personalisation and language in plain English



FIVE TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL OPEN RATE

Review - The 5 tips are:

- 1. Think about timing & Send the right call to action
- 2. Segment your list
- 3. Personalise the email
- 4. Write in plain English
- 5. Keep you email list healthy

This is a summary of the tips that we are going to cover today
number one segment your list
number two think about timing and send the right call to action
number three personalise the email
number four writing clean English
and number five keep your email list healthy.

TRANSITION:

Questions



In your follow up email you will receive:

Access a sand box Nation

Extended free trial for Connecting Up members



Sorcha

To live that out what we want to give you access to is two fold.

1. Sandbox - play with data, webpages, look at what is means to send an email,
2. Second thing we want to give you access to everyone who attends this webinar get an extended free period,

