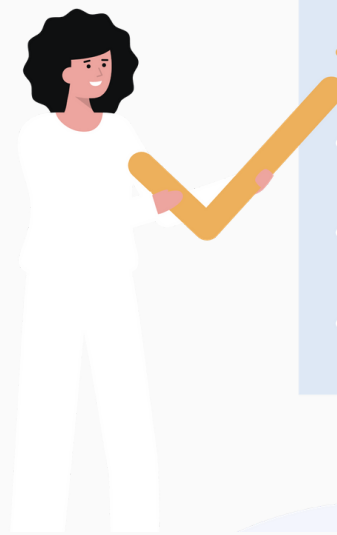
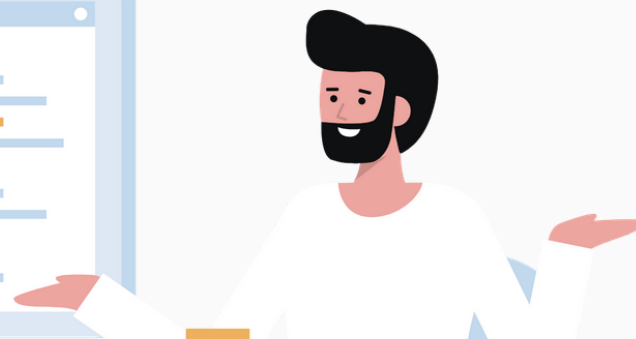
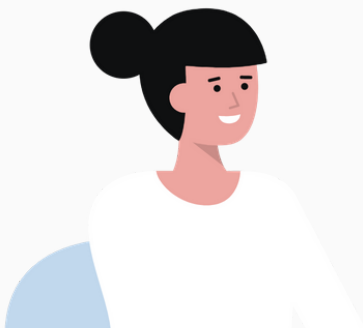


THE COMPLETE GUIDEBOOK TO

EMAIL TESTING

A comprehensive guide of every key element worth testing to send high-quality emails.

@ chamaileon



Introduction

53% of brands spend 2 weeks or more producing 1 email. 73% of email marketers follow a checklist to test their email campaigns before sending.

Clearly, email teams consider testing emails to be a crucial step in the success of their email campaigns.

And for good reason: failing to test an email means failing to detect mistakes that can be detrimental to the success of an email campaign.

A silly copywriting mistake, a missing link, a mischosen color, a broken HTML can be the reason behind the failure of an email campaign, and a loss in ROI.

When testing emails, you are testing different elements that will determine if your subscribers will receive the email, how they will see it in their email client, how they will interact with it, and what they will perceive from it.



96% of marketers test every email they send.



Why you should test every email?

Improve email delivery and deliverability

You can't evaluate the performance of a campaign if the email doesn't even reach subscribers. That's why the first goal of email testing is to make sure that each subscriber receives your email.

It's important to distinguish between testing for email delivery and testing for email deliverability.



Testing for email delivery

is testing to see whether the recipient's server will receive an email or not. An email fails to be delivered when the subscriber enters an incorrect email address, when their domain doesn't exist, when an email attachment is too heavy...



Testing for email deliverability

also known as inbox placement, is testing to see whether the email was delivered to the right placement (to their inbox) or went straight to the spam folder. The goal is to avoid being marked as spam and being placed in the right tab in the subscriber's inbox. Email deliverability depends on a number of elements, such as sender reputation, authentication, the quality of the email content, image to text ratio...

Why you should test every email?

2 Maintain brand consistency

Maintaining a coherent brand across all your digital channels is crucial. Testing your emails before sending helps you keep a close eye on different design elements and how well your email brand guidelines are being followed.

This is particularly important for **larger and distributed teams**.

In franchises, for example, headquarters usually sends detailed branding guidelines to their local marketing teams who are expected to apply them in all email campaigns. This practice guarantees a coherent look for emails across all.

3 Increase email conversions

Email conversion rate is the percentage of email subscribers who go through with your intended action after receiving your email. Every email you send should have a goal and a call to action intended for your subscribers to accomplish.

Sending a broken email that doesn't render well in your subscriber's email client or an email with a missing link will surely damage your conversion rate.

What to test in your emails?

There are two main categories of elements that you need to take into consideration when testing your emails.



Spam testing

Spam tests check if the email will be delivered to the subscriber's inbox and not be marked as spam.



Content testing

Content testing entails testing how your email will look like you in different email clients.



Spam testing

There are many reasons that an email can be flagged by spam filters. We will try to cover the most common reasons your emails are failing spam tests.

IP Address reputation

An IP address, internet protocol address, is a series of numbers assigned to devices connected to a network. In email marketing, your IP address reputation (or your sender reputation) depends greatly on your ESP of choice and its ability to protect IP addresses from dangerous senders.

You can preserve a good sender reputation by **choosing a dedicated IP address instead of a shared IP address**.



A shared IP is an address that is used by multiple senders. Shared IPs are usually used by smaller brands that send a relatively small number of emails. Sharing an IP address can be risky. That's why it's essential to ask your ESP about other users in your IP pool.



With a dedicated IP address, you become the sole responsible for your sender's reputation and can follow a clear and rigorous protocol in order to be whitelisted.

Spam testing

Domain reputation

Your domain is the name of your email sending server. **Domain reputation is a score from 0 to 100 that qualifies your domain name.**

Note that you can change your IP address. Meaning that, if you have a bad IP reputation, you can change it and reset your IP reputation. However, you can't change your domain reputation, since it is attached to your domain name.

If you are using a shared IP address, your domain reputation becomes even more important. You can improve your domain reputation by authenticating your emails. Insert a specific snippet into your email code to validate your email, making sure that ISPs recognize that your domain name has a good reputation.

This process can be tricky for email marketers, however, it's a crucial step that guarantees that your emails won't end up in the spam folder.

You can generate a pre-authenticated code after designing your emails in Chamaileon.



Spam testing

Spam testing

Spam filters examine a detailed list of criteria when assessing the spamminess of an email. They judge every element in your email and assign you a spam score. If your email spam score exceeds a set limit, your email will get marked as spam and automatically end up in the spam folder.

Each spam filter runs a little bit differently. Spam scores are calculated by server admins—meaning that an email might pass through one spam filter yet get flagged by another.

Some spam filters will flag emails based on the content they include, such as specific blacklisted words, images, or links.

Although there isn't a golden rule or best practices regarding spammy content, there are a few don'ts that you should keep in mind :

Email spam trigger words

- You are a winner!
- Winning
- Won
- Save big
- You've been selected!
- Dear friend
- Free info
- Giving away
- No catch
- Unlimited
- Visit our website
- Free gift
- Prize
- Instant
- Limited time
- Buy
- Call



Content testing

Content testing entails testing how your email will look like you in different email clients.

Dynamic content

Email personalization can increase open rates by 30% and click rates by 5%. No wonder it has been chosen as the number one email trend in 2019. However, using dynamic content in emails can be tricky, especially if your database is incomplete.

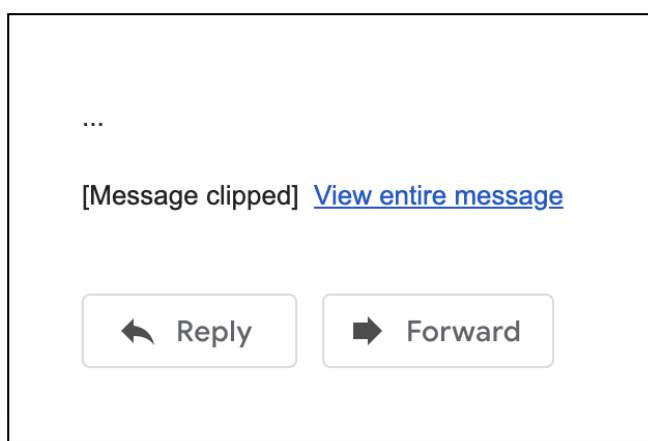
Make sure to always use relevant and generic fallback text for your dynamic content. And to insert the correct merge tags according to your ESP.

Email weight

Gmail clips large emails. Other email clients take longer to load, leading your subscribers to close the email without even reading it. Your email size is not something that you can easily calculate.

Usually, Gmail will not display the entirety of your email if it is larger than 102Kb. It will hide it behind a “View entire message” link.

That’s why you should test your email and determine how large your email is, and if it would be clipped in Gmail.



Content testing

3 Links and CTAs in emails

Testing your email links is one of the easiest and most important steps of email testing. The goal behind most (if not all) emails is to redirect subscribers towards a landing page (a product page, a blog post, a survey, etc.). If your link doesn't work or your button isn't clickable, then all the time and effort you've spent working on the email campaign would be wasted.



Add the right link

Double-check all your email links and make sure you are redirecting your customers to the right page. And don't lie! If you tell your subscribers that they will be going to a blog page, don't redirect them to a product page. This will only upset them and make them distrust you, increasing your chances of being marked as a spammer.



Make sure your links work

Click on all the links in your email and see if your page is up and running. If a link is broken, or if it's leading to a 404 page, make sure to replace it. This process can become boring and time consuming for teams who send multiple, long product emails and newsletters.

You can instead use an email testing tool that will automatically check all the links and flag the broken ones.

Content testing

Links and CTAs in emails



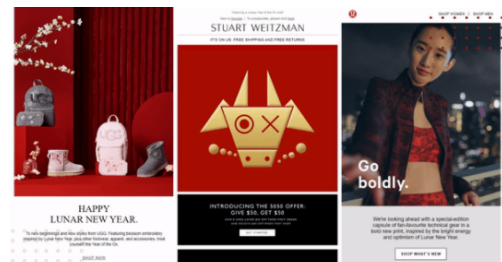
Be careful of third-party links

If you are linking to an external website, make sure that they are legitimate. One bad external link can harm your sender reputation and increase your spam score. It's important to double-check the reputation of your external links, or if possible, only link to websites that you own and control.



Change the color of your hyperlinks

Sometimes, when adding links to your email body, hyperlinks become automatically blue. As long as the blue hyperlink color doesn't go with your branding, make sure to change it, to give your email a more professional and polished look.



HOLIDAY EMAIL MARKETING

The best Chinese New Year email campaigns sent in 2021

The Chinese New Year is just around the corner. Many brands are already sending [email campaigns](#) in celebration of the new lunar year. And to help you find inspiration, we have put together a design guide for the Chinese new year email campaigns.

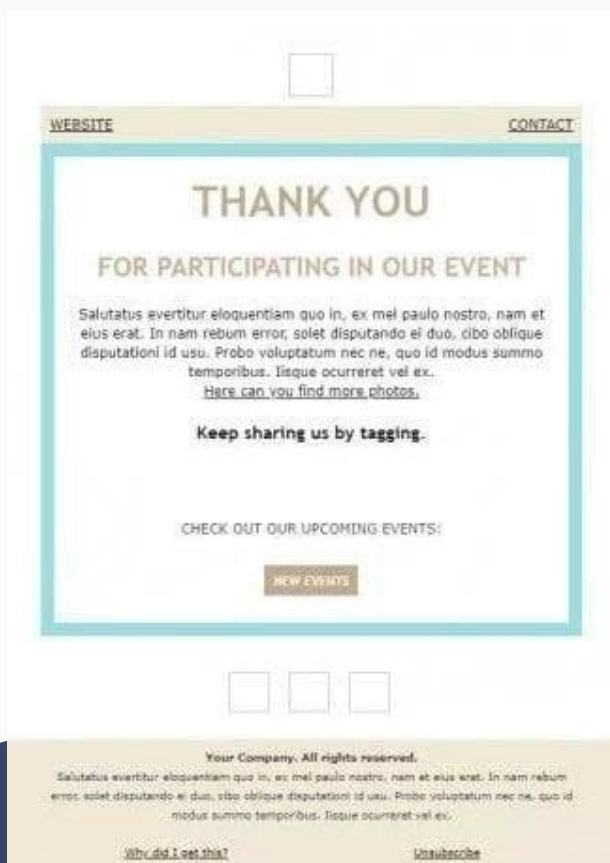
[Check them out](#)

Content testing

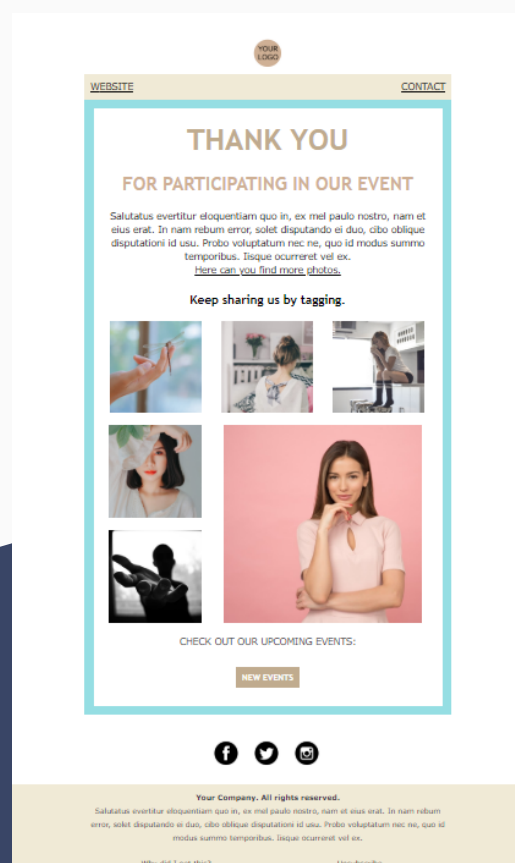
Images in email

Images in emails might not appear for all recipients. And there is no shortage of reasons that can cause that:

- Your subscribers might be blocking images in their emails by default
- The email client might be automatically hiding images
- The images are not being loaded because they are too large



How an email appears when the images blocked option is activated on Gmail



How the email appears when the images are not blocked

That's why it's crucial not to send image-only emails. Not only does it increase your chances of being flagged as spam, but it's also a big email design no-no, and can cause you to send entirely broken emails.

Content testing

Images in email

Here are a few best practices to keep in mind when embedding images into your email templates.



Don't send image-only emails

By sending an image-only email, you risk not getting your message across to your subscribers.

You should send balanced emails that contain both text and images. Images should be used to support your text, showcase products, and add a fun visual element to your email.

► [Watch our video series about image-only emails.](#)



Add ALT text to your images

Don't forget to add ALT text to all your email images. Alternative text is a description of your image, that will appear if an image fails to load.

Your ALT image text shouldn't be repetitive. It should be concise, descriptive, and should recall the content of your image.



Optimize the size of your images

Reduce the size of your images by using special tools that conserve your image properties. The goal is to optimize your email loading speed by compressing your images as much as possible while maintaining quality.

If you are adding GIFs to your email, make sure their size does not exceed 300kb.

Content testing

Images in email



Test your background image

Most email clients support background images. However, Outlook 2007 -2013 doesn't. If you want your background image to show on Outlook, you need to add the Vector Markup Language (VML) in your email code. Using Chamaileon, you simply need to switch on the VML option inside the editor.

Outlook 2007



Outlook 2016



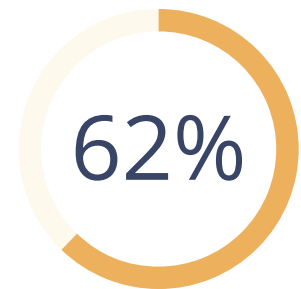
Content testing

5 Mobile responsiveness

A responsive design is a design that looks good on all devices and adapts automatically to the screen sizes and proportions.

Mobile responsive emails are emails that have been designed with mobile users in mind.

61.9% of email opens happen on mobile and 3 out of 5 consumers check their emails on mobile. Customer behavior has shaped email marketing and email design and has made mobile-responsiveness a must.



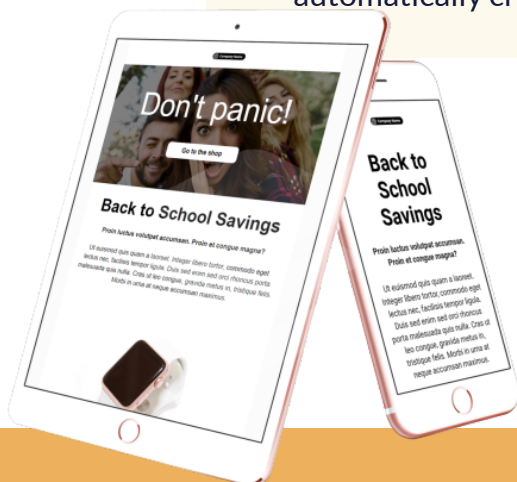
of email opens happen on mobile devices

How does mobile responsiveness work?

There are many elements of your email design that can be adapted to mobile devices. You can display and hide email blocks from mobile, change the hierarchy and layout, scale images, add padding and margins, and more.

Responsive emails use a media query that detects the screen size of the device and adapts the email accordingly.

Media queries in emails define which CSS styles to display based on the screen size. You can create a mobile responsive design in a few minutes, without thinking about media queries or CSS styles, using online drag and drop email editor. Email editors automatically create mobile-responsive email designs.



Content testing

Email fonts

Choosing the right font for your email is usually determined by your brand guidelines. If your brand font is a web-safe font, then you've got your work cut out for you.



Web-safe fonts are the fonts that have been used since the invention of the internet. Web-safe fonts are **Arial**, **Verdana**, **Georgia**, **Times New Roman**, and **Courier**. They are default fonts that can be used on all devices, email clients, and operating systems.

They are classic and safe, rendering perfectly on almost all devices, which made them popular with big brands such as Jeep, Nestle, JCPenny, and Target.

Arial

Verdana

Georgia

Times New Roman

Courier

JCPenney

Jeep®

Nestlé

Content testing

Email fonts



Web fonts are fonts that have been designed specifically for a website or to be sold under a license. Web fonts are not installed by default and don't always render properly on email clients.

@ chamaileon



HOLIDAY EMAIL MARKETING

Spread the love with Valentine's Day emails this year!

In this week's blog post, you'll find some quick inspiration to guide your next Valentine's Day email campaign, from email subject line examples to Valentine's Day emails sent by brands just a few days ago.

[Get inspired](#)

Email clients that support web fonts are:

- iOS Mail
- Apple Mail
- Android default mail client
- Outlook 2000
- Outlook.com app
- Thunderbird

Content testing

Dark mode

Dark mode for email is when your email design is switched from light mode to dark mode, following the preferred settings of your email subscriber.

How does dark mode for email work?

Let's say you design a product launch email. It looks great. Your colors and visuals appear on all email clients and devices just as you've intended for them.

Now, let's say a user switches on dark mode on their phone or email client. Your email colors will probably change and you don't recognize your design.

What happens is that dark mode inverts the background and font colors from dark to light and from light to dark. The degree of color inversion depends on the email client.

In your email code, there are CSS properties, such as Background, or color, or background-color, and other HTML attributes that are related to the color scheme of your emails (bgcolor, color).

Dark mode targets those attributes and basically inverts the color codes used.

Email clients that support dark mode:

Desktop email clients

- Apple mail
- Outlook 2019 (Mac OS and Windows)

Mobile apps

- Gmail (Android, app iOS 13, iOS)
- Outlook (Mac OS, Windows 10, app iOS 13)
- Apple mail (Mac OS, iOS 13)

Web email clients

- Outlook.com
- Orange webmail

Some email clients don't alter the emails' color scheme in dark mode, such as Yahoo mail (app and webmail) and Gmail Webmail.

Dark mode

Every email client presents dark mode emails differently. In short, there are three main scenarios that can happen when a user activates dark mode on their email client.

No changes to the email

In the case of Yahoo mail or Gmail webmail, emails don't change at all when dark mode is activated. Instead, it's the UI of the email client that shifts to dark mode.

Partial color invert

In this scenario, the email client detects the light-colored sections (text, boxes, etc) and inverts them into darker colors. (Outlook.com)

Full-color invert

Full-on color invert. Light colors become dark and dark colors become light (which is somewhat counterproductive). (Gmail app and iOS 13). This is how Gmail inverted our dark background into a lighter one.

Here's a quick recap of which email clients support dark mode, and to which extent they change your email colors.

No changes

- iOS Mail
- Apple Mail
- Yahoo Mail (app & webmail)
- Gmail webmail

Partial invert

- Outlook.com
- Outlook (iOS and Android)
- Gmail app (Android)

Full invert

- Gmail app (iOS 13)
- Outlook 209 (Windows)

How to design emails for dark mode?

Rest assured, you won't need to design two different versions of your email for dark mode. There are a few simple tips and tricks that you need to keep in mind when adapting your emails for dark mode.

Don't forget that every email client handles dark mode differently. With that in mind, here's what you can do to design emails for dark mode.



Optimize your visuals for dark mode

Your text and background colors will be automatically inverted by your email client. However, no changes will occur to your email images, regardless of the email client.

That's why it's important to prepare your images for dark mode:

- Make them PNG with transparent backgrounds
- Make your logo transparent
- Don't forget about social media icon transparency

A nice hack that adds a little something to your emails is to add a white shadow to your logo and other visual elements of your email.



Test your emails

What better way to be sure that your emails look great on both dark and light modes than to actually see for yourself. Using email testing tools like Litmus and Email on Acid, you can generate hundreds of email previews on different email clients, devices, and settings.

If you don't have the budget to pay for this, you can simply turn on dark mode on your mobile and see how your email looks. Take a look at your email subscriber list and see which email clients they use the most. And make sure to test your email template on those email clients.

What tools to use to test your emails?

There are hundreds of email testing tools out there. We have selected a few tools to help you choose the best for you.

All in one testing tools

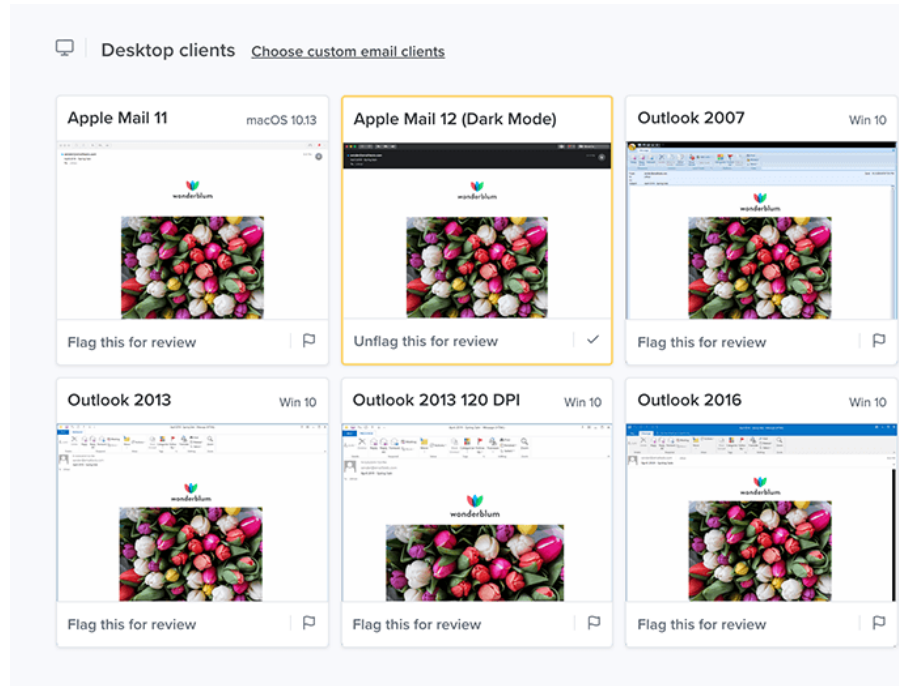
Litmus

- HTML testing
- Email previews
- Spam testing
- Validating links and images
- Testing email load speed
- Email accessibility testing



Free trial

Litmus Basic: \$99
(\$199 - Custom)



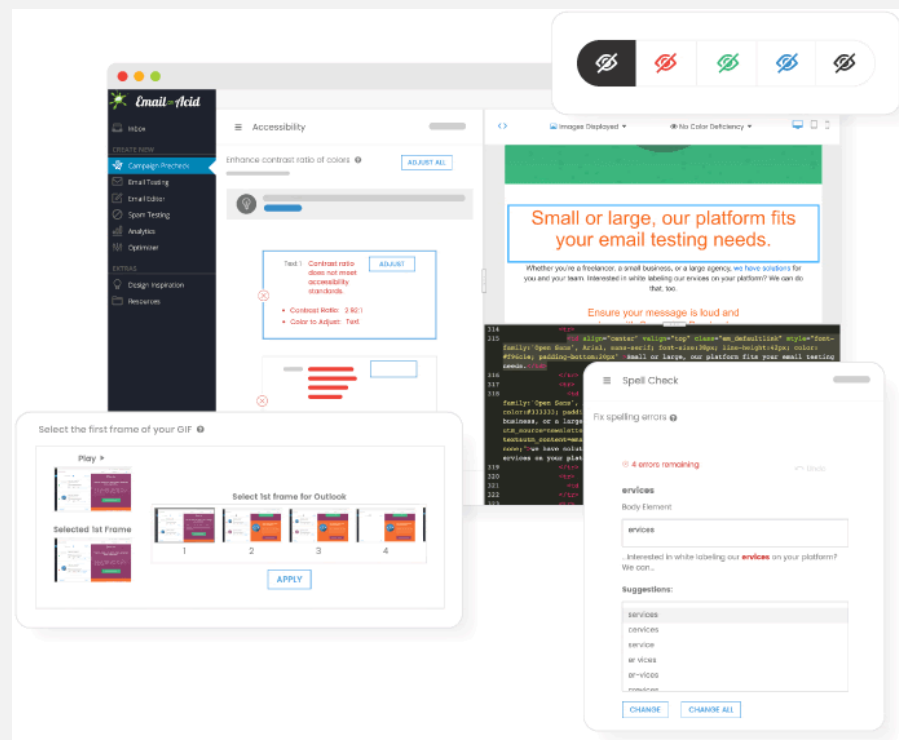
Email on Acid

- Email previews
- Inbox display
- Image, links, and spelling checklist
- Email accessibility testing
- Spam test and domain blocklist



Free trial

The basics: \$86
(\$132 - \$499 - Custom)



What tools to use to test your emails?

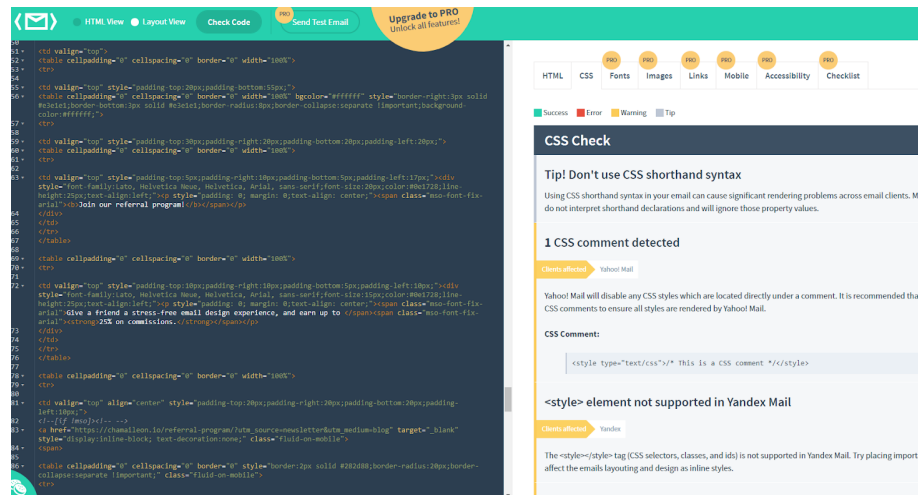
There are hundreds of email testing tools out there. We have selected a few tools to help you choose the best for you.

HTML testing tools

HTMLemailcheck.com

- Email code check: detecting HTML bugs and suggesting fixes
- Features only available in the paid plans:
 - Font validation
 - Image validation
 - Link validation
 - Accessibility validation
 - Mobile responsiveness
 - Email previews

 Limited free version

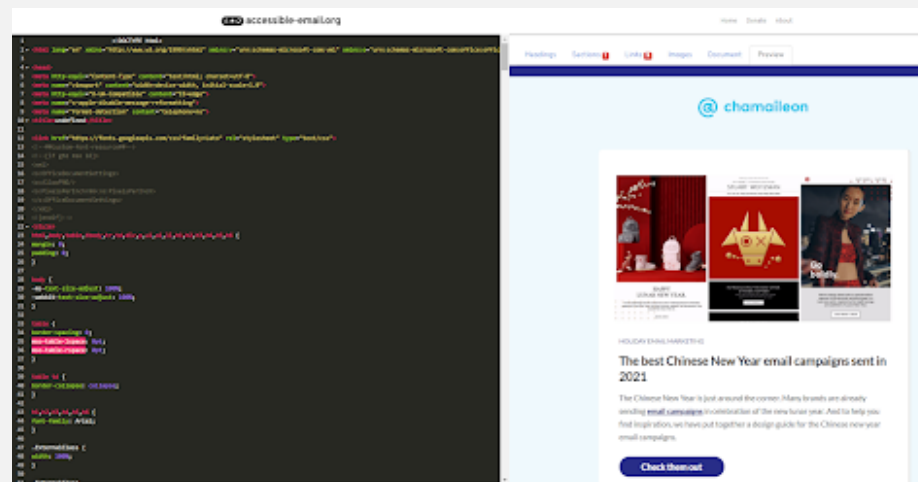


Email accessibility testing tools

Accessibility email

- Email accessibility testing
- Email preview

 Free



What tools to use to test your emails?

There are hundreds of email testing tools out there. We have selected a few tools to help you choose the best for you.

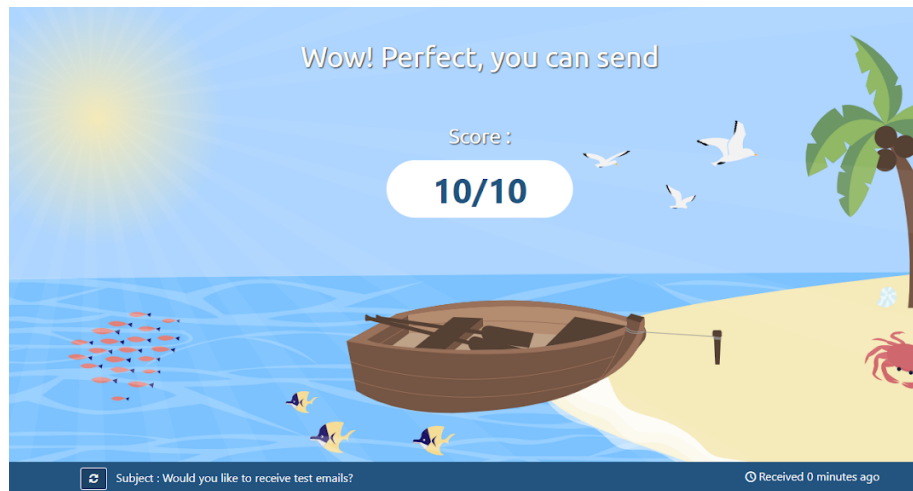
Spam testing tools

Mail-tester

- Spam score
- Analyze email server and sending address



Free

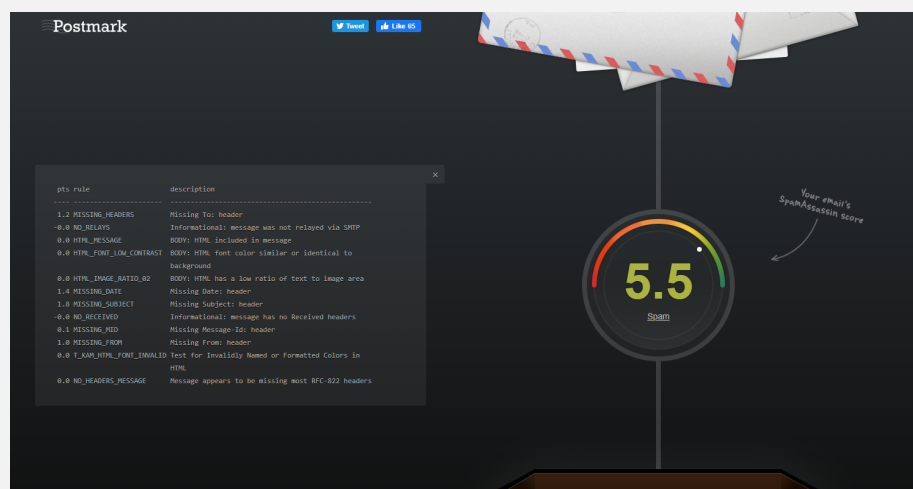


Spam check by postmarkapp

- SpamAssassin score + description of
- the issue



Free



What tools to use to test your emails?

There are hundreds of email testing tools out there. We have selected a few tools to help you choose the best for you.

Deliverability testing

Sender score

- Detailed reputation reports
- Analyze how ISPs view your email
- Provides tips to improve your sender reputation



Free



Make sure to test your templates on the email clients that your audience uses the most. You can find this information in your ESP (Example in Mailchimp).

Top email clients

Export As CSV

Desktop	85.4%	Mobile	14.6%
Gmail	64.0%	iPhone	10.4%
Apple Mail	8.1%	Android webview	3.9%
Outlook 2016	4.7%	Chrome Mobile	0.1%
Yahoo Mail	2.8%	Android	0.1%
Outlook Mobile	1.5%		

Why might iOS and Mail stats be deceptively high?

You're ready!

When experiencing rendering issues, you wonder what went wrong: images not appearing, background missing, fonts distorted, and so in. And now that you've dug deeper into the world of email testing, you have a full grasp over the many challenges to overcome in order to send the perfect email. Before you set out to create your email campaigns, we will leave you with these last pieces of advice :



Preview your email template throughout the entire email design process. Use a professional testing tool that allows you to preview your email in different email clients and devices.



Send test emails to visualize your email design in your email client and different devices.



If you are using a drag and drop email builder to design your emails, make sure to check their compatibility list. You can check out Chamaileon's compatibility list [here](#).



Always use an email service provider to send out your campaigns.

[Get started on your high-quality email campaigns.](#)

[Use our HTML email code generator.](#)

[No registration or credit card needed.](#)



EXTRA RESOURCES

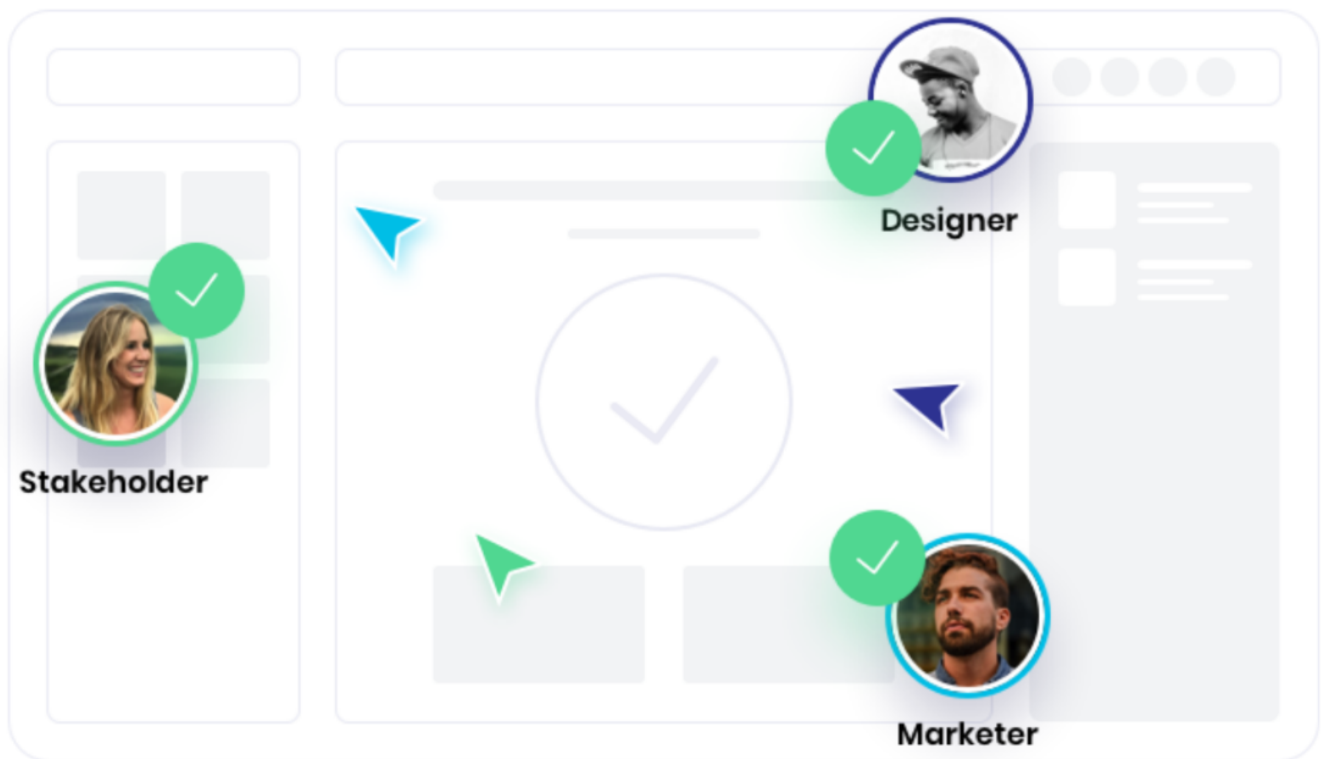
[Collection of the best online email testing tools online](#)

[Email rendering guide for \(email\) marketers](#) [blog.hubspot.com](#)

[Email Accessibility: designing and coding accessible emails](#)

About Chamaileon

Chamaileon is a drag and drop email builder and code generator, used by over 5000 email marketers across the globe. Chamaileon generates high-quality HTML email code that is automatically responsive and compatible with all email clients. Chamaileon integrates with major email service providers, such as Iterable, Salesforce Pardot, Oracle Netsuite Bronto, Braze, Hubspot and more. Visit chamaileon.io for more.



CONTACT US

hello@chamaileon.io

