Designing the **Perfect Email** Newsletter

How to create email newsletters that look great and deliver real results

Constant Contact

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First impressions matter— especially in the inbox.

If you're still using a personal email account (like Gmail) to send your email newsletter, you're missing out on key design features that make your newsletter easy to read and act on.

Email marketing services, like Constant Contact, give you tools to create mobile-responsive emails that perfectly match your business brand.

Start with one of our professionally-designed email templates. Then, customize it with the right colors and fonts, images, and links to your website and social media channels.

Want more confidence in your email design? This guide will give you the advice you need to quickly create emails that look great and deliver real results.

We will cover

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Design the perfect email:
Get your email opened

Designing the perfect email isn't just about finding the right images and colors for your message. Design begins in the inbox—before someone even clicks to open. Let's look at a few best practices to help your emails stand out and get opened.

1. Choose a recognizable "From" name.

The number one reason people open email is because they recognize who it's from. Be sure to use a "From" name your subscribers will recognize. This could be your business name, the name of a person the email is from, or a combination of both. For example: Dave from Constant Contact.

2. Use a branded "Reply" email address.

Your "Reply" email address should be an email you check often, so you can see any replies from your subscribers quickly. To look the most professional, we recommend using an email address with your company domain such as info@yourcompanyname.com.

3. Invest in your subject line.

Your subject line should be eye-catching and give readers a compelling reason to open. 40 characters is the sweet spot for subject lines, but emphasize the first 32 to account for mobile device cutoffs. A good rule of thumb is 4-7 words.
Tip: Find out how to write subject lines that get your email opened.

4. Utilize preheader text.

The preheader is the line of text that appears beneath the subject line in the mobile inbox. Most mobile inboxes display 75–100 characters, but focus on the first 5-8 words to catch the reader's attention and entice them to open.

Here's how your email header should look:

From: Southside Cycling <southsidecycling@constantcontact.com>
Reply: southsidecycling@constantcontact.com
Subject: Spring models are here!
Preheader: New season, new bikes. Get out and ride!

Design the perfect email:
Get your email read

After someone opens your email, there are a number of factors that will determine whether or not they decide to actually read it.

According to a Constant Contact survey, 75 percent of people delete emails that don't look good on a mobile device. To get your readers' attention, your email template and design need to look good on any size screen.

Here are a few tips to make sure your emails get read.

1. Use a mobile-responsive email template.

With the majority of emails opened on a mobile device, it's important to use a mobile-responsive template (which means the email adapts to the size of the screen it's being displayed on.) Emails sent through Constant Contact provide a mobile-responsive layout for the people receiving your emails. Check out 14 of Constant Contact's mobile-responsive email templates.

2. Brand your email.

Branding your emails will help your business stand out in a crowded inbox. Every email should include your logo at the top of your message—that way if someone clicks to preview your email, they'll recognize it's coming from you. Also, be sure to select colors that match or complement the colors in your logo. Find out how to effectively brand your email.

3. Control your fonts.

Keep your design looking professional. Avoid using too many fonts. More than two will make your design look busy. A good rule of thumb is to use a maximum of one font style for headlines and another for body copy. Find out how to choose the right fonts for your email.

4. Find the right balance of colors.

Too many colors will make your email look disorganized and difficult to read. Other than black, restrict yourself to a max of four colors—a different color for headlines, body text, buttons, and links. For background colors, it's always best to use a lighter color background with a darker text. Find out how to create winning color schemes for your email.

Learn more: How to Make It Easier to Read Your Emails

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Design the perfect email:
Lead readers to action

Constant Contact uses data from millions of emails that are sent from our service each day to better understand what works best for driving real email marketing results. Find out how you can use this information to create emails that not only get read but also lead people to take action.

1. Don't overdue it with images.

Generally speaking, emails with 1-3 images see the highest click-through rate. Choose an eye-catching image that supports your message. Learn more about how to use impactful images in your email campaigns.

Tip: Always include an image description in case an email program disables images.

2. Keep your email copy concise.

People will quickly scan your email—especially when reading on a mobile device. Keep your email clear and concise to ensure your emails are easy-to-read and lead people to take action. On average, emails with 20 lines of text or less (or about 1,200 characters) see the highest click-through rates. Use this simple 3-step formula to keep your email short.

3. Include one primary call to action.

Your email should include one clear action for the reader to take. That primary call to action should be one of the first things people see when opening your email. Position your main link toward the top of your email so that it's visible without the reader having to scroll to read more. Find out how to format your email for small screens and short attention spans.

Tip: Adding more than 5-7 links (excluding links to social media bios) has a minimal impact on click-through rate. Emails with 1-3 links see the highest numbers of clicks per link.

4. Include relevant social media links.

Even if your email doesn't include a specific call to action, it's a best practice to include links to your other online presences (website, blog, social media) to make sure you reach your audience everywhere they are. Find out how to add social media buttons to your next email.

Learn more: How to Design Emails to Drive More Action

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Design the perfect email:
A checklist for success

1. Header

Did you use a recognizable "From" name?

Is your reply address correct?

Is your subject line 4-7 words?

2. Preheader

Does your preheader further entice the reader to open your email?

Is your preheader 6-11 words?

3. Logo & Color

Does the logo link to your website?

Do the colors of your background, headline, buttons, and dividers match your brand?

4. Image

Does your image support the message of your email?

5. Text
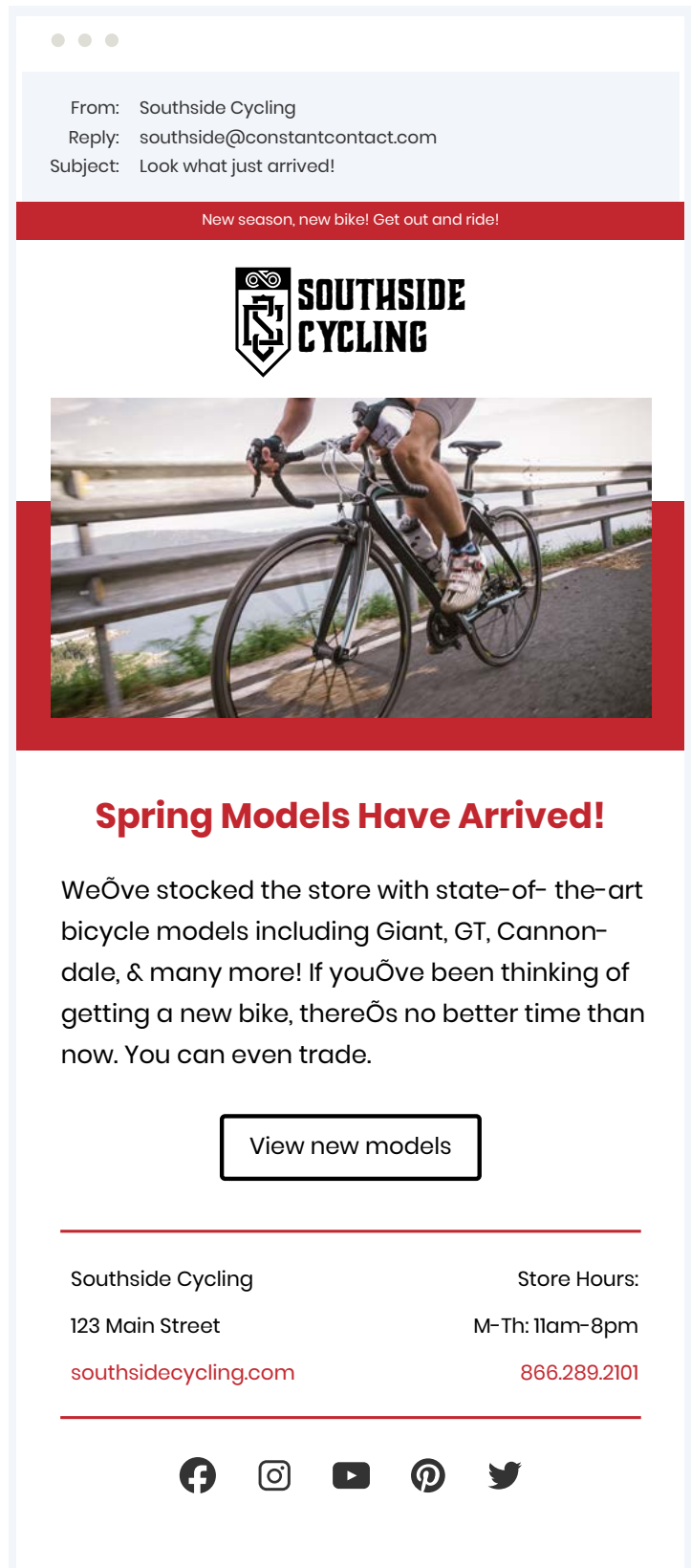
Have you used at least 21pt text for your headline and at least 14pt text for the body?

6. Call-to-Action

Do you have a call-to-action button with a compelling command?

7. Footer

Does your footer include the correct company information?

Did you add your social buttons (and double check the links)?

From: Southside Cycling
Reply: southside@constantcontact.com
Subject: Look what just arrived!

New season, new bike! Get out and ride!

SOUTHSIDE CYCLING

Spring Models Have Arrived!

WeÕve stocked the store with state-of- the-art bicycle models including Giant, GT, Cannon-dale, & many more! If youÕve been thinking of getting a new bike, thereÕs no better time than now. You can even trade.

View new models

Southside Cycling   Store Hours:

123 Main Street   M-Th: 11am-8pm

southsidecycling.com   866.289.2101

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Design Resources to Make You Look Like a Pro in the Inbox

If you want to design the perfect email, you need to make sure you have the tools and resources to help you do it.

Here are some tools you can use to put these email design best practices to work.

Customizable email templates

Constant Contact offers over a hundred different mobile-responsive email templates that make it easy to create emails that look great in any inbox.

Preview our email templates here.

Email design best practices

From picking the right template to finding the right colors and images, we have the advice you need to design emails that make your business look professial and deliver real results.

Find our latest resources here.

A free Constant Contact trial

If you're new to Constant Contact, you can test drive an account for free 60 days. Test out our editor and see how email marketing can work for your business.

Visit our website to sign up for your free trial **or call 855-783-2308 to learn more.**

Already have a Constant Contact account?: Log in to put it to work.

Helping small businesses work smarter, not harder.

Visit ConstantContact.com

or call 1-866-289-2101 to learn more.

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