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GUIDE TO MAXIMIZING PHYSICIAN EMAIL MARKETING

With performance metrics and insights from SK&A



EMAIL MARKETING TRENDS

Email marketing has been called the “fine wine of digital channels” because of its longevity and complexity, which evolves with time. This metaphor can be understood within the context of email marketing’s trajectory. Commercial teams began utilizing email marketing en masse after recognizing its advantages, particularly span of reach, ease of delivery and high ROI. As marketers improved the relevancy of their content and the value of their offers, email marketing grew in sophistication. Where we are today, marketing analysts assert, is an advanced stage where tactics once reserved for large businesses are being used by businesses of all sizes. But what’s next for this tried-and-true digital channel? Here’s a roundup of what thought leaders are predicting for 2018 and our thoughts on how it applies to physician email marketing.

TURBOCHARGED TARGETING

The tide will turn away from mass emails and towards high-value targets, analysts say. Although high-value targets may account for far less emails in terms of volume, they account for most of email marketing revenue. Investing the time to review and improve automated programs aimed at high-value targets is the new norm – and expected to dramatically increase ROI.

How this applies to physician email marketing:

Segmenting email campaigns by physician specialty is a start, but identifying your best high-value targets requires deeper data. With so much merger and acquisition activity impacting where physicians work, marketers need intelligence on a physician’s affiliations to develop a richer understanding of decision-making structures. Additionally, examining how physicians engage with emails will reveal behaviors that can be used to turbocharge targeting.



6-7

The number of times a physician sees an email before taking action.

Source: SK&A, an IQVIA company

CONVERSATIONAL TONE

Emails will start using a less formal, “salesy” tone in order to create a more personal, genuine experience between target audiences and brands, analysts assert. Using a conversational tone to ask questions and start conversations about audience needs will help improve engagement and build relationships.

How this applies to physician email marketing:

Physicians are highly educated, intelligent professionals, but they’re also human. While we think it would be a mistake to be as informal as a consumer retailer, a less formal tone could be worth testing on a low-stakes communication.

HYPER INTERACTIVITY

Analysts see a bright future for interactive emails, which allow users to interact with emails within their inboxes rather than a landing page or a website. In action, these emails function as microsites, where users can complete forms, perform searches, navigate menus and more without leaving their inbox.

How this applies to physician email marketing:

Considering how busy physicians are, we think the easier it is for a physician to complete a desired action the better. If your email platform doesn’t include these capabilities, consider investing in a provider that does. At the very least, aim to refine and simplify the user experience as much as possible.

BETTER TESTING

Analysts predict marketers will get much better at testing emails to ensure a good customer experience in which both images and copy are viewable across all major email clients and devices.

How this applies to physician email marketing:

Creating well-designed emails with relevant, concise

content is time wasted if the recipients cannot view the emails. When emailing physicians in particular, it is essential to ensure that emails render properly across mobile devices, particularly iPhones and tablets. Most email platforms offer this capability, and it should be used each time a campaign is deployed.

IMPROVED AUTHENTICATION

While email authentication has always been a core part of email marketing, it is expected to surge in 2018 due to the emerging Brand Indicators for Message Identification (BIMI) standard. BIMI allows authenticated emails to display brand logos next to the sender’s address.

How this applies to physician email marketing:

This will be a plus for marketers who adopt BIMI, as it offers another opportunity for brand visibility. On the physician side, whether they know about BIMI authentication or not, the logo can act as a trust indicator and help improve open rates.

BEST PRACTICES

Every month, SK&A delivers an average of 100 email campaigns on behalf of customers. By using our own delivery platform and physician email addresses, we have unique insight into email marketing practices that produce. The following are insights developed from over nine years of experience emailing physicians.

What are the best days to send emails to physicians?

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
X		X	X	X		

Source: SK&A, an IQVIA company

Best Practices for Emailing Physicians

OPTIMIZE FOR MOBILE

Our analytics show that over 60 percent of physicians open emails on a mobile device.

PERFECT SUBJECT LINES

According to our analytics, subject lines that contain 61-70 characters with the most relevant keywords placed at the beginning have higher open rates.

MAXIMIZE PREHEADER TEXT

Preheader text offers the opportunity to amplify the subject line, summarize the content of the email, or include important messages that you want doctors to see as soon as they receive an email.

OFFER INCENTIVES

Offering an incentive in exchange for completing a survey can help improve response rates.

BE MINDFUL OF TIMING

Our analytics show that emails sent on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays before 6:00 a.m. EST or after 4:00 p.m. EST generate the highest open and click rates. Additionally, emails sent on Sunday afternoons performed very well in 2017.

TEST AND TEST AGAIN

Remember, physicians typically see an email 6-7 times before taking action. This allows a lot of room for testing, which is key to achieving the results you want from email marketing. The most common A/B testing variables are subject lines, headlines and images.

Source: SK&A, an IQVIA company

EMAIL PERFORMANCE

In 2017, SK&A deployed nearly 6M emails to physicians on behalf of our customers, who work in various segments of healthcare, including hospitals, healthcare consulting and research, and publishing.



Product and Service Advertisements were emailed to physicians in 2017.

Source: SK&A, an IQVIA company

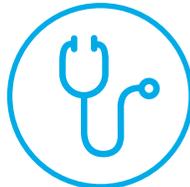
EMAIL SURVEY TIPS

The shorter the survey, the more likely a physician will respond. Offer an incentive, such as a \$5 Starbucks gift card, to improve engagement. And reminders can boost performance, especially if sent on a Sunday.

Top-Performing Email Campaign Types and Open Rates

JOB RECRUITING

8%



GENERAL STUDY RECRUITING

6.7%

MEDICAL REPORT

5.8%



CAMPAIGN TYPES



SURVEY

5.7%

CLINICAL STUDY RECRUITING

5.1%



PRODUCT & SERVICE ADVERTISEMENT

5.1%

Source: SK&A, an IQVIA company

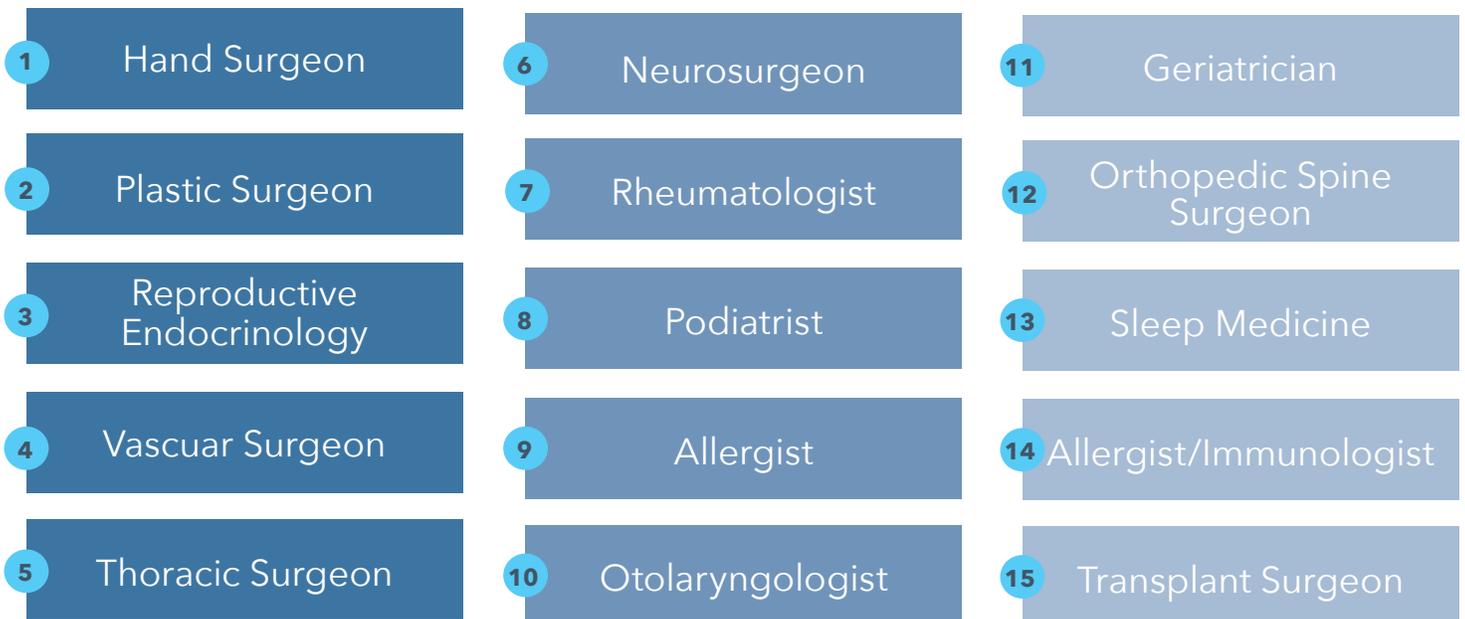
Physician Specialties with the Highest Open Rates

Out of 86 physician specialties targeted in 2017, the following 20 had the highest open rates.

Transplant Surgeon	11.35%	Reproductive Endocrinology	8.76%
Epileptologist	11.28%	Vascular Surgeon	8.63%
Oncologist	9.99%	Hand Surgeon	8.46%
Hepatologist	9.98%	Vascular & Interventional Rad	8.27%
Pediatric Hematology/Oncology	9.77%	Pediatric Cardiology	8.02%
Trauma Surgeon	9.74%	Neurosurgeon	8.01%
Thoracic Surgeon	9.26%	Child Neurology	7.64%
Plastic Surgeon	8.85%	Critical Care Specialist	7.54%
Hematologist	8.82%	Colon/Rectal Surgeon	7.41%
Pediatric Surgeon	8.77%	Gynecologic Oncologist	7.39%

Source: SK&A, an IQVIA company

Which physician specialties click the most?



Source: SK&A, an IQVIA company

THE SK&A DIFFERENCE

SK&A, now an IQVIA company, has been providing healthcare email marketing services for more than nine years. Our email solution complies with all the requirements of the CAN-SPAM Act and has been specifically designed to overcome the most common problems that customers have with many of today's most prominent providers.

	MOST EMAIL PROVIDERS	SK&A EMAIL SOLUTION
EMAIL QUALITY NON-HEALTHCARE EMAILS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most email providers use a three-step process of "ping," "dictionary," and "permission" to build and verify a physician's email address. This process does not guarantee three things: 1) there is an actual physician tied to the email address; 2) the email address is actually active; and 3) the elimination of non-healthcare emails.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SK&A data is derived from best-of-breed data collection methods, including primary research and both automatic and manual processes. These methods ensure compliance-grade accuracy that reflect the most recent changes to a physician's profile.
RELEASE OF EMAILS DELIVERABILITY RATES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most email providers will not release their emails to customers, eliminating the possibility to control your own campaign deployments. This enables providers to add email addresses to campaigns and drive up email deliverability rates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customers have the option of licensing our emails to deploy through their own system or ours.

CONTACT US

800-752-5478

2601 Main Street
Suite 650
Irvine CA 90601

IMS Health & Quintiles are now

