

Holiday Deliverability Best Practices

Your quick guide to protecting your sender reputation and maximizing inbox placement this season.



FOUNDATION: THE DELIVERABILITY MUST-HAVES

- Authentication Check: DKIM, SPF, and DMARC must be correctly configured and monitored. Investigate any failures immediately.
- Delivery ≠ Deliverability: “Delivered” just means accepted by the server. Aim for Inboxed—not Spam or Blocked.
- Key KPIs to Watch Daily:
 - Complaint Rate: <0.1%
 - Bounce Rate: <2%
 - Spam Trap Hits: 0 (Zero tolerance!)



LIST QUALITY = REPUTATION HEALTH

- Quality over Quantity: Regularly remove unengaged contacts.
- Double Opt-In: Prevent invalid addresses at signup.
- Sunset Policy: Suppress subscribers inactive for 180+ days.
- Reengage Smartly:
 - Target recently inactive users (180–365 days).
 - Send your best performing creative.
 - Stop if complaints, traps, or bounces spike.



SEND STRATEGY FOR THE SEASON

- Warm Up Early: Increase volume gradually—no more than 25% per send.
- Send to Engaged First: ISPs reward strong initial engagement.
- Off-Hour Sending: Try 9:17 AM instead of 9:00 AM to stand out.
- Unsubscribes > Spam Complaints: Make unsubscribe links visible and one-click.



STAND OUT IN A CROWDED INBOX

- Use BIMl & Apple Branded Mail for instant brand trust.
- Employ Google Annotations & Yahoo Schema to enhance visibility.
- Keep Design Balanced: ~60% text / 40% image ratio.



WHEN THINGS GO WRONG: THE CONTINGENCY PLAN

1. Assess: Is it a blocklist, spam folder issue, or volume spike?
2. Pinpoint: Check list segment, creative, and authentication.
3. Remediate: Pause risky sends, send only to highly engaged users.
4. Monitor & Resume: Track recovery in Inbox Monster before scaling back up.



AFTER THE HOLIDAYS

- Gradually reduce send volume.
- Let seasonal shoppers unsubscribe.
- Document what worked (and what didn't) to prep for next year.

Questions?

Reach out to your deliverability experts:

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