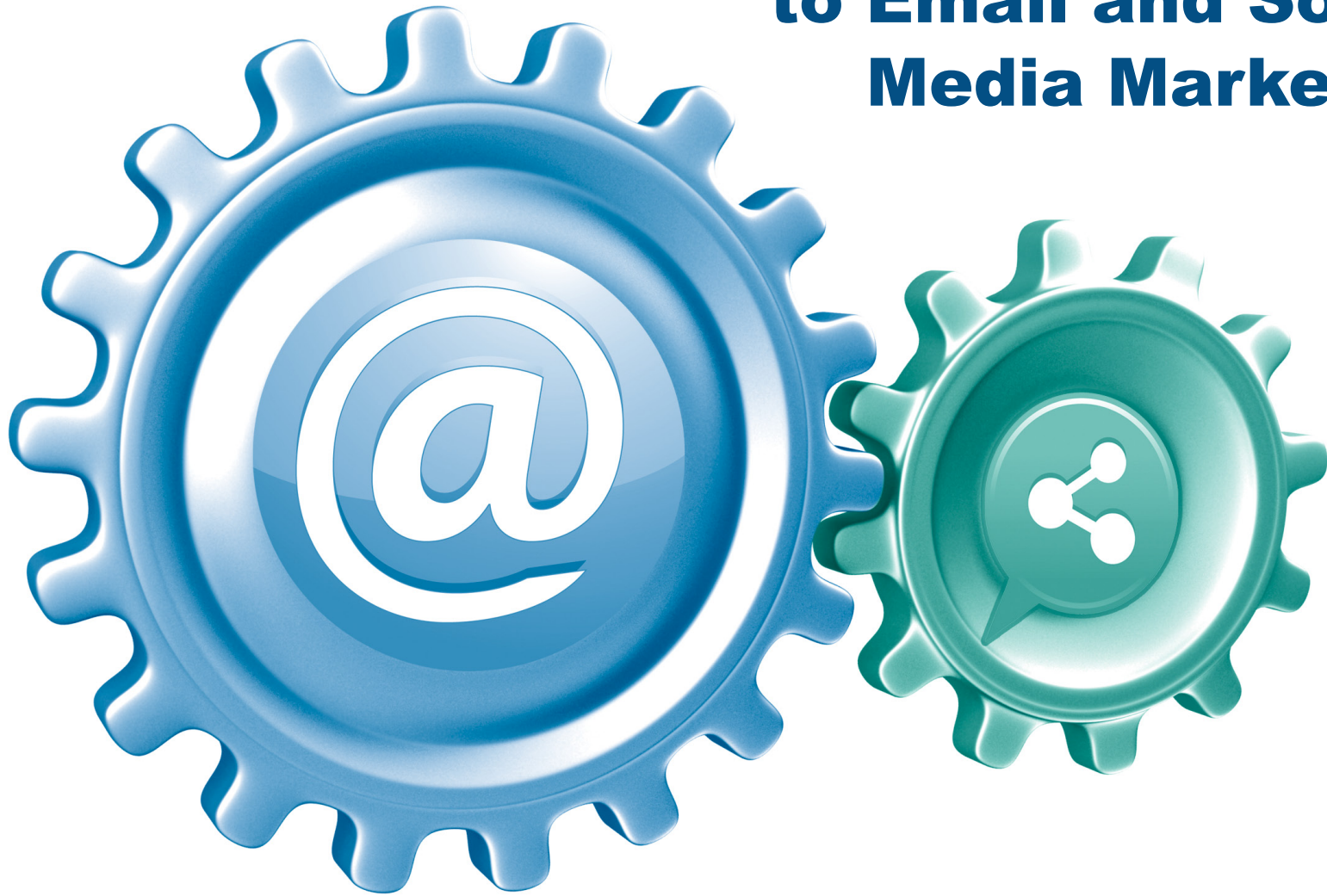


# The Definitive Guide to Email and Social Media Marketing



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## Executive Summary

*Integrating email with social media channels is imperative for marketers today. By effectively blending the unique strengths of these two media channels, marketers gain actionable and relevant insights into their customer and prospect bases. This how-to guide provides a best-practices overview to help marketers tie the most effective medium for transactional messaging—email—with social media’s ability to drive more clicks and conversions by customers.*

### Introduction: Email and Social Media Are the New Dynamic Duo

Lewis and Clark. Abbott and Costello. Masters and Johnson. John and Paul. Black & Decker. Batman and Robin. Ben & Jerry.

Dynamic duos have flourished almost as long as human endeavor itself. Nearly 2,300 years ago, the Greek philosopher Aristotle noted that “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

Current evidence suggests that it is time to welcome another valuable duo to the partnership pantheon: email marketing and social media marketing.

As a growing number of modern marketing philosophers have learned, the integration of email and social media channels creates an offering with a value that is much greater than the

sum of its parts. Blending email and social media marketing utilizes the strengths of each channel, and also strengthens the capability and value of each individual channel in ways that cannot be achieved by managing these capabilities distinctly.

Roughly 80% of marketers indicated that social sharing “extends the reach of email content to new markets” and “increases brand reputation and awareness.”<sup>1</sup> Figures like these help explain why integrating email with social media channels has quickly become imperative for marketers today.

Besides, given the effectiveness of email marketing and the explosive growth of social media (among consumers and businesses), this integration seems practically inevitable. Not surprisingly, both activities represent growing priorities within marketing functions as well as increasingly important components of overall business strategy.

#### The iContact Library of Email and Social Media Marketing Resources

- [Email Marketing Guide](#)
- [Social Media Marketing Guide](#)
- [Live and Recorded Webinars](#)
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- [How-To Articles](#)
- [Blog](#)

<sup>1</sup> “2010 Email Marketing Benchmarking Survey,” MarketingSherpa, <http://www.marketingsherpa.com/EmailMarketingReport2010ESum.pdf>.

A recent study of global chief marketing officers identified the following priorities as the most important determinants of marketing success right now:<sup>2</sup>

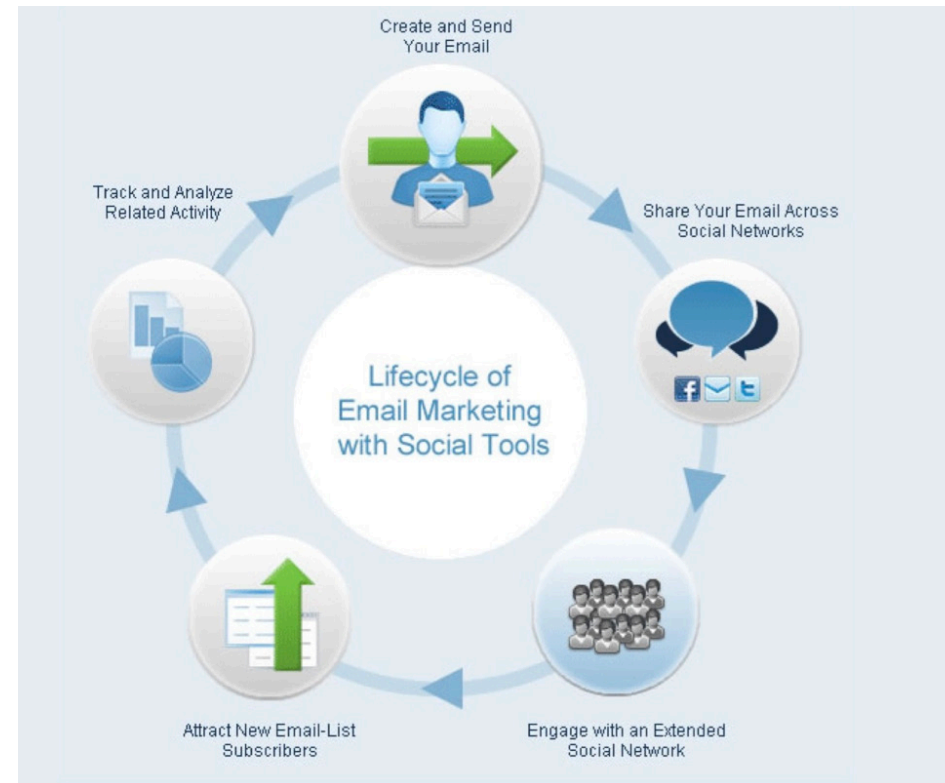
1. Delivering value to empowered customers
2. Fostering lasting, meaningful connections with customers
3. Capturing value by measuring the results of marketing initiatives

One of the world's leading risk-management consulting firms identifies "customer loyalty" as the most important challenge—more important than supply chain risk, privacy and information security, and regulatory risk—confronting businesses today.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, in IBM's most recent comprehensive study on global CEO priorities, responding CEOs indicated that they consider "getting closer to customers" as one of three prerequisites for business success in the twenty-first century.<sup>4</sup>

If Aristotle were to transport magically from the third century BC to the present, he might refer to the integration of email and social media marketing as a "virtuous

circle." Why? Because this partnership, perhaps more so than any other set of marketing activities, can help companies deliver on the marketing priorities identified above while also fulfilling the strategic mandates of "getting closer to customers" and strengthening customer loyalty.

***Here's how this virtual partnership works:***



<sup>2</sup> "2011 wIBM Global CMO Survey," IBM, <http://www-03.ibm.com/press/us/en/presskit/35631.wss>.

<sup>3</sup> "Major Business Challenges in 2012," Protiviti, <http://www.protiviti.com/2012TopChallenges>.

<sup>4</sup> "Capitalizing on Complexity: Insights from the 2010 IBM Global CEO Survey," IBM, <http://www-935.ibm.com/services/us/ceo/ceostudy2010/index.html>.



Social networks can quickly extend the reach of email marketing in an incredibly efficient manner: You email a promotion to a high-value customer and, with the click of a button (ideally, a button embedded in your email), your customer disseminates the same promotion, with her credible endorsement, to dozens, hundreds or even thousands of individuals in her social network.

This how-to guide briefly reports on the growing importance of this integration and then provides a best-practices overview to help marketers tie the most effective medium for transactional messaging—email—with social media’s ability to drive more clicks

and conversions by customers. The guidance—which includes case examples, tips and checklists—looks at the marketing impact of email and social media marketing, the drivers behind the need to integrate, key measures, examples of insights and actions the integration produces, important questions to consider and the overall return on investment (ROI) impact.

Perhaps most important, this guide shows why the integration of email marketing and social media marketing no longer qualifies as a *philosophy* among leading marketers but rather as an integral component of a successful business *strategy*.

## Part One: Sizing Up the Growth of Email and Social Media Users

As the entire world knows, the growth of social media use has been swift and overwhelming. That said, the use of email marketing—as well as the return on email marketing investments—has been even more noteworthy from a business perspective, even if email no longer garners the type of headlines and fanfare currently reserved for social media.

As a marketing magazine recently noted, “With 129 million Americans who use the Internet also using social media, this new channel has developed a considerable presence, becoming an essential, complex marketing tool for companies and brands

looking to connect with customers on a more personalized level.”<sup>5</sup> Most companies have yet to integrate social media marketing into their capabilities. The following figures suggest that companies that commit to this integration will be well positioned to leverage the most valuable aspects of both channels while delivering tangible results:

- ◆ An average of 30 billion emails (excluding spam and viruses) was sent out each day in 2010. A healthy percentage of those messages helped attract and retain loyal customers.

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<sup>5</sup> Anna Papachristos, “Social Media Adoption Spans the Ages,” *1to1 Magazine*, October 25, 2011, <http://www.1to1media.com/view.aspx?docid=33201>.



- ◆ Approximately 74% of customers prefer to hear from companies via email—far more than those who prefer to be marketed to via telephone (4%), social media (2%) or text (1%).<sup>6</sup>
- ◆ Approximately 83% of companies leverage email as a core marketing tool (a rate 54% higher than companies that used social media as a marketing tool in 2011).<sup>7</sup>
- ◆ Among companies that use email marketing, the top-performing organizations generate 25% of forecasted sales from email-generated leads, enjoy 21% year-over-year improvement in revenue generated from email marketing campaigns and gain an 11% average year-over-year improvement in click-through rates from mass email campaigns.<sup>8</sup>
- ◆ Of Internet-using adults, 91% access social media at least monthly. Among this group, 98% of those aged 18–24 and 82% of those aged 55–64 access social media. Roughly 75% of seniors, those 65 and older, use social media. Nearly 20% of all visits to any social networking site are followed by a visit to another social network, while 16% of all visits are followed by a visit to a search engine.<sup>9</sup>

**To learn more about Social Media Marketing, read the following iContact article:**

[Social Media Marketing – An Introduction for Email Marketers](#)

- ◆ Approximately 58% of all online adults visit Facebook monthly. Twitter has 200 million registered users, and the number of Twitter users logging in every month has increased by 82% since January 2011. As of November 3, 2011, LinkedIn operates the world’s largest professional network on the Internet with more than 135 million members (with an average of two new members joining every second) in more than 200 countries and territories. Google+, which opened to the public in September 2011, enjoyed roughly 15 million visits during its first week of existence—a figure that immediately made Google+ the eighth largest social network.<sup>10</sup>
- ◆ According to the Pew Internet Project, 35% of U.S. consumers own smartphones, which enable them


<sup>6</sup> “View from the Digital Inbox 2011: Digital Marketing Insights from the Annual Consumer Attitudes and Usage Study,” Merkle, <http://www.merkleinc.com>.

<sup>7</sup> Chris Houppis, “Email Marketing: Customers Take It Personally,” Aberdeen Group, <http://www.aberdeen.com/Aberdeen-Library/6785/RA-email-marketing-automation.aspx>.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> *The 2011 Social Media Consumer Trend and Benchmark Report*, Experian Marketing Services, <http://www.experian.com/assets/simmons-research/brochures/2011-social-media-consumer-report.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.



to read emails and visit social media sites wherever and whenever they have a cellular connection.<sup>11</sup> Of social media users, 20% access their social networking accounts from a cell phone in any given month, up from 11% in 2009. Of these social networkers, nearly one-third have downloaded a social networking app to their phone.<sup>12</sup>

- ◆ Within businesses, the average budget spent on social media nearly doubled from 2009 to 2011, leaping from 9% to 17%. And Forrester Research forecasts social media marketing to grow at an annual rate of 34%—a faster rate than any other form of online marketing—over the next three years. Forrester estimates that \$716 million will be spent on social media marketing this year, growing to \$3.1 billion in 2014. At that point, social media would figure as a larger marketing channel than both email and mobile.<sup>13</sup>

Social media's use within organizational marketing is ripe with potential; email's use has already demonstrated impressive returns—particularly at a time when marketers must do more with less. In fact,

despite an uncertain economic environment, 60% of companies increased their email marketing spending by 1% or more in 2011.<sup>14</sup>

“Marketing executives are striving to have their programs and campaigns heard by speaking in a manner that can leverage historical interactions with customers and prospects in ways that utilize individual preferences and historical activity,” notes a recent Aberdeen Group study. “There are few marketing channels that can deliver on this desire more effectively than email, and Aberdeen’s findings verify that of all the digital marketing outlets available to marketers, email campaigns are a basic building block for the vast majority of companies.”<sup>15</sup>

Compared to the returns email marketing already generates, social media does not rate highly as a company-to-customer marketing activity (not yet, anyway); however, social media’s marketing value resides elsewhere—namely, in its ability to enable customers to relay marketing and brand messages to their own social networks.

<sup>11</sup> Aaron Smith, “Smartphone Adoption and Usage,” Pew Internet Project, <http://www.pewInternet.org/Reports/2011/Smartphones.aspx>.


<sup>12</sup> *The 2011 Social Media Consumer Trend and Benchmark Report*, Experian Marketing Services, <http://www.experian.com/assets/simmons-research/brochures/2011-social-media-consumer-report.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> Adam Ostrow, “Social Media Marketing Spend to Hit \$3.1 Billion by 2014,” Mashable Business, <http://mashable.com/2009/07/08/social-media-marketing-growth/>.

<sup>14</sup> Chris Houpis, “Email Marketing: Customers Take It Personally,” Aberdeen Group, <http://www.aberdeen.com/Aberdeen-Library/6785/RA-email-marketing-automation.aspx>.

<sup>15</sup> Chris Houpis, “Email Marketing: Customers Take It Personally,” Aberdeen Group, <http://www.aberdeen.com/Aberdeen-Library/6785/RA-email-marketing-automation.aspx>.





In this way, email can act not only as a valuable lead-generation and revenue driver, but also as an important enabler. On a grand scale, this role is evident in the way email marketing has served as a primary enabler

of several notable and highly successful new business models (we're talking about you, Groupon, Google Offers, and LivingSocial, among many others).

## Part Two: Maximizing the Impact of Messaging

Email marketing's value stems from its ability to target specific messages to specific customer segments and then—with the right enabling technology—to track and analyze the effectiveness of that targeting so that marketers can refine and improve it.

Social media's marketing value resides in its ability to engage customers and potential customers in a two-way conversation, and in its ability to greatly expand the reach of email marketing. Research conducted by iContact indicates that email marketing messages with integrated social media marketing functionality reach 24.3% more recipients.

We are hardly alone in our conclusion that the integration of email and social media marketing produces compelling results:

“The use of email in social networks will be one of the biggest challenges for direct marketers,” David

**To learn more about the connection between email and social media, read the following iContact article:**

[Email + Social = Engagement – Deploying Social Tactics to Deepen Your Subscriber Relationship](#)

Daniels, coauthor of *Email Marketing: An Hour a Day* and a former Forrester analyst, asserted two years ago. “Over the next five years, marketers must bridge the gap between social and traditional inboxes with social sharing tools.”<sup>16</sup>

Many companies already have bridged this gap, as the following cases illustrate:

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<sup>16</sup> “Forrester Forecast: US Email Marketing Spending to Reach \$2 Billion In 2014,” Forrester Research, <http://www.forrester.com/ER/Press/Release/0,1769,1286,00.html>.



### Email/Social Media Case Example: *craftsUprint*

craftsUprint, one of the fastest-growing arts and crafts UK websites, offers thousands of downloadable craft projects and printables, tutorials, videos and forums to assist customers with crafting projects. With no physical storefront, craftsUprint's success is largely tied to how effectively it uses email marketing to drive traffic to its website. A few years ago, the company's email delivery rates were less than 50%, and sales were declining quickly. After upgrading its processes and technology via an integrated email and social media marketing solution, craftsUprint increased its subscribers from 8,000 to more than 70,000 in 24 months. The improvements focused on upgrading email templates, optimizing subject lines, and creating a diverse email and social media marketing strategy. By integrating Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, craftsUprint created a "surround-sound" approach to driving email response and web site traffic. As a result, craftsUprint's site now averages 2,500 to 3,000 unique visits each day from customers in the United Kingdom, and roughly 1,000 unique visits per day from customers in countries such as the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. This reflects an upsurge of 120% in each of those areas.

### Social Media Case Example: *L.L.Bean*

Social media's marketing value derives from the insights customer conversations produce and the actions companies take based on these insights. For example, U.S. mail-order retailer L.L.Bean Inc. recently discontinued selling an Oxford shirt—in part because sales were lagging a bit, and the product seemed a touch out of step with current fashion. But customers didn't think so; in fact, they sent the apparel and outdoor equipment company a surge of emails as well as comments via the company's ratings and review functionality (another social media channel). Customers begged the company to return the Oxford shirt to the catalog, a request L.L.Bean approved. The following year, the company earned more than \$1 million in Oxford shirt sales, a significant increase over Oxford shirt sales in the past. When discussing this positive social media / email experience, L.L.Bean Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer Steve Fuller asserted that the true power of a conversation with a customer comes from the specific actions a company takes in response to what customers express.<sup>17</sup>



<sup>17</sup> Eric Krell, "Voice of the Customer's Million-Dollar Payoff: L.L. Bean and Others Transform Customer Conversations into Action," 1to1 Media, <http://www.1to1media.com/view.aspx?docid=32913>.



## Part Three: The Need for Integration

As Daniels and others note, marketers must bridge the gap between social media and traditional inboxes. To achieve this integration, marketers can start by focusing on engagement.

Email marketing and engagement have often been considered synonymous with one another; however, this is not necessarily the case. Many marketers do not fully leverage the power of email throughout all stages of the subscriber relationship. Social media can be used to fully harness email marketing's power and effectiveness.

Building loyalty can be accomplished by creating a cohesive email marketing and social media marketing program that increases relevance and improves targeting effectiveness. By allowing customers to share

thoughtful content throughout their network, companies also equip their customers with the ability to express their voices.

Here is a quick rundown of key components of this integrated capability—along with pitfalls to avoid:

◆ **People:** A marketing team, or in many cases, an individual marketer, should focus on creating compelling content, optimizing email marketing,

managing social media channels, and analyzing the segments and performance the company requires to execute its strategy.


◆ **Technology:** Having the correct tools in your arsenal as a marketer or business owner is essential to efficiency. Whether it's an email marketing solution that enables strong cohesion between email and social media, or an analytics tool that measures viral reach, finding solutions that automate key marketing processes while producing user-friendly measures represents a crucial component of an effective integrated capability.

◆ **Pitfalls:** One of the most common email marketing missteps—the assumption that an email marketing program can run on autopilot—can zap integrated email and social media marketing programs of their effectiveness. To truly engage a customer base, a company and its marketers need to continually evaluate how subscribers respond to different content, products, services and other factors (including external influences, marketplace changes and trends).

The internal engagement required to produce the most effective integrated marketing can be challenging: It requires a willingness to initiate conversations—easy or difficult—with customers in an effort to deepen the

**To learn more about email integration, read the following iContact Blog post:**

[Seven Tips for Integrating Email and Social Media](#)



relationship through better understanding. This deeper understanding should result in the creation of more thoughtful and relevant messaging.

Above all, the effective integration of email and social media marketing requires an ongoing process and commitment. As one of the most notable modern

philosophers of social media, Clay Shirky, has pointed out, “A Wikipedia article is a process, not a product.”<sup>18</sup>

The same holds true for email and social media marketing.

## Part Four: Measuring Across Channels

A significant part of email marketing’s allure is its measurement-friendly nature. Open and click-through

rates are standard, highly effective metrics organizations use to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of their email campaigns. (Of course, while opens and clicks are useful to track, the most effective measurement approaches also incorporate additional considerations, such as whether subscribers who click links are buying a product or service, whether open rates equate to more white paper downloads and the extent to which a

campaign incentivizes readers to engage as opposed to simply browse.)

Companies with the best email marketing capabilities measure the effectiveness of their email campaigns more frequently than companies with average and lagging email marketing capabilities, according to Aberdeen Group research.<sup>19</sup>

Measurement also qualifies as a crucial, yet complex, component of any social email deployment strategy. When developing this type of strategy, it is important to consider business objectives and how the measures of social email success directly link to overall business success. It’s also important to consider several tips when initiating—or improving—a presence on a specific social media platform, such as Facebook (see Facebook Tips).


### Social Media Strategies from iContact

- **ARTICLE:** [Calculating Your Social Media Marketing Return on Investment - A How To Guide for New Social Media Marketers](#)
- **VIDEO TUTORIAL:** [Email and Social Media Reports](#)
- **BLOG:** [10 Social Media Marketing Tips for Facebook](#)
- **BLOG:** [10 Social Media Marketing Tips and Tricks for Twitter](#)

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<sup>18</sup> Clay Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations* (New York: Penguin Press, 2008).

<sup>19</sup> Chris Houpis, “Email Marketing: Customers Take It Personally,” Aberdeen Group, <http://www.aberdeen.com/Aberdeen-Library/6785/RA-email-marketing-automation.aspx>.



Measurement depends on a company's unique business objectives. That said, common key performance indicators deployed to measure the impact of social email commonly include the following:

- ◆ Number of shares;
- ◆ Number of customer conversations within specific social channels;
- ◆ Increased click-through activity (for the email campaign);
- ◆ Adoption of features and products within the customer base; and
- ◆ Increased sales.

Additionally, one of the most important activities within social email measurement consists of source identification. In other words, from where are your likes and tweets coming? This tracking can get complex quickly, but it represents a key to effective social email measurement.

For example, suppose a company distributes an email to 100 people while posting the same email message on its Facebook page and Twitter account. Three people who receive the email like it on Facebook, causing their friends to then see the like and link on their Facebook walls. Now, suppose six friends of those three individuals tweet the email message from there, and two more like it as a result.

This tracking quickly becomes more difficult—almost exponentially so—due to the viral nature of social media; however, no matter how complex these relays become, an effective social media measurement program should source and track all likes and tweets.

### Facebook Tips

When marketing a brand or service on Facebook, consider the following guidance:

1. Give your audience reasons to like you.
2. Stay focused on your brand and your offerings.
3. Engage wisely. (Questions are smart—as long as you can answer them.)
4. Don't spam (ever).
5. Use trends to your advantage.
6. Use contests.
7. Encourage check-ins.
8. Schedule your posts in advance.
9. Publish photos and videos. (They boost engagement.)
10. Be responsive.



## Part Five: Cross-Channel Insights and Actions

Customer insight is raw material, a natural resource, if you will. To harvest this resource, companies and their marketers need to take appropriate actions. L.L.Bean's realization that customers liked its Oxford shirt more than their buying patterns suggested had only potential value—until the company acted by swiftly reintroducing the product (and enjoying an additional \$1 million in revenue as a result).

Social media marketing budgets are soaring because of the almost inexhaustible supply of customer insight social media marketing can produce. This production of insight represents a central theme in a recent collection of *Harvard Business Review* articles focused on social media branding:

Use social media primarily for insight. Companies can and do sell things via social media, of course, but their real value at this stage lies in learning about customers. Facebook in particular has such tremendous reach that it can provide detailed quantitative analyses of communication flows between consumers. Increasingly smart natural-language-processing technology will, over time, help marketers extract further insights from the content of those discussions. At the other extreme, company-sponsored online

brand communities can generate immediately applicable insights from direct, smaller-scale interactions.<sup>20</sup>

Leading social media marketing programs also track trends on the Internet and use them to the company's advantage. Trends on the Internet have become easy to access, and the ability to see what's trending—for example, via Google Trends or Facebook's Gross National Happiness application<sup>21</sup>—has never been more powerful.

**To learn more about social media marketing, access the following iContact webinar:**

[The 5 Dos and Don'ts of Social Media Marketing](#)

Consider the actions that monitoring Facebook can trigger: If happiness tends to trend up on Fridays, for instance, a savvy social media marketer would earmark that day for asking for favors or participation from a fan base. Or, if happiness is trending negatively, our savvy marketer might post content that helps cheer up fans.

<sup>20</sup> Patrick Barwise and Seán Meehan, "The One Thing You Must Get Right When Building a Brand," *Harvard Business Review*, December 2010.

<sup>21</sup> Available from [http://apps.facebook.com/usa\\_gnh/](http://apps.facebook.com/usa_gnh/).



## Part Six: Key Questions to Consider

When it comes to the challenges of integrating social media marketing into existing email marketing capabilities, many marketers could use some good cheer.

A recent survey of 414 iContact customers identified challenges that prevent companies from developing more mature social media marketing capabilities. Two of the three most commonly cited obstacles included lack of time and lack of knowledge about social media.<sup>22</sup>

**To learn more about social media publishing and marketing, access the following iContact resources:**

- **BLOG:** [Introducing Social Media Publishing from iContact](#)
- **WEBINAR:** [Social Media Marketing with iContact](#)

These obstacles are understandable given the constantly evolving nature of social media as well as the time constraints confronting most marketing departments.

There may be another issue as well: selecting an appropriate social media channel. “Should we use Twitter or Facebook?

What about LinkedIn—is that for companies or just for individuals? And what’s Google+?” These questions, while important, are often asked too early.


Companies intent on leveraging the benefits of an integrated email and social media marketing capability

should start with some more fundamental questions first. Once they address these issues, they will be better equipped—and informed—to select the most effective social media channels for their needs. These questions include the following:

- 1. How easy is it for us to join social media conversations?** If your current email system does not allow for the smooth integration of social media capabilities, consider improvements or an upgrade. These social media marketing capabilities include quick links to social platforms as well as ways to track and analyze your social media messages and ensuing conversations.
- 2. How convenient is our social media marketing capability?** An effective email-social media marketing tool should not look much different from a traditional email marketing tool; accessing the social media realm should be as easy as clicking a single button.
- 3. How flexible is our capability?** Most companies, especially small businesses, have limited time and resources to invest in expanding email marketing into the social realm. Additionally, most businesses also need to be able to adjust their marketing messages on the fly; this is especially important in social media, where the effectiveness of two-way,

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<sup>22</sup> Peter Ghali, “Calculating Your Social Media Marketing Return on Investment: A How-To Guide for New Social Media Marketers,” iContact, [http://www.iContact.com/static/pdf/Calculating\\_Social\\_Media\\_ROI.pdf](http://www.iContact.com/static/pdf/Calculating_Social_Media_ROI.pdf).



company-customer conversations hinges on a company's ability to respond to customer insights and attitudes with concrete actions.

**4. How easily can we track results?** Tracking and evaluating social media marketing performance is different (and often more qualitative) than tracking email marketing effectiveness (which

relies on a relatively standard set of quantifiable measures). That said, social media marketing can be measured—and therefore managed. Companies that employ social media marketing should be able to see at a glance how many likes, comments and clicks (among other measures) their messages receive.

## Part Seven: ROI Impact of Integration

Tracking the results of social media marketing is important on two fronts. First, doing so can help marketers improve the relevance and effectiveness of their messages. Second, tracking helps determine the return on social media marketing investments; the importance of this activity will continue to increase as social media marketing budgets continue their steady climb.

Unfortunately, there is not a universal definition of social media ROI. Fortunately, leading practices are emerging, as discussed in the new report *[Calculating Your Social Media Marketing Return on Investment: A How-To Guide for New Social Media Marketers](#)*.<sup>23</sup>

Like email marketing—for which some folks calculate ROI by opens or clicks, while others look at revenues or a click-to-open ratio—social media marketing ROI also means different things to different people.

However, leading social media marketers tend to determine social media ROI using a goal-based approach. For example, if your goal is to acquire more contacts on your social networks in an effort to build awareness and educate potential customers, then you might measure the number of Facebook fans or the number of Twitter followers you have. Alternatively, if your goal is to drive traffic to your website, you may want to measure the impact of social media on your site traffic rather than the number of fans you have on Facebook.

**To learn more about the basics of social media marketing, access the following iContact blog post:**

[Introduction to Social Media Marketing](#)

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.



## Social Media Webinar and Video Tutorials from iContact

- **WEBINAR:**  
[Adventures in Social Media Marketing](#)
- **VIDEO TUTORIAL:**  
[Enable Social Media Settings](#)
- **VIDEO TUTORIAL:**  
[Share Email via Social Networks](#)
- **VIDEO TUTORIAL:**  
[Add Email Sign-Up Form to Facebook](#)
- **VIDEO TUTORIAL:**  
[Create a Facebook Post](#)
- **VIDEO TUTORIAL:**  
[Create a Twitter Tweet](#)

The top three social media goals identified by a recent survey of 414 iContact customers include the following:<sup>24</sup>

1. Strengthening brand
2. Generating sales
3. Acquiring contacts

With each of these goals, there are several types of metrics available to measure progress and adjust marketing activities to drive better results. For example, if your goal is to strengthen your brand, you can evaluate how your social media content engages your audience by tracking retweets (on Twitter) or likes (on Facebook).

As social media ROI calculations evolve and as the pressure to demonstrate social media ROI intensifies, keep in mind that the goal of this measurement process is to foster deeper understanding of these marketing initiatives.


## Part Eight: Getting Started

One of the most valuable returns an integrated approach delivers is the ability to extend your brand beyond your network to the social network.

There are numerous ways to achieve this access to “THE network.” American Eagle Outfitters allows subscribers who like its email to spread the word

about the email’s content. When a customer selects “like,” it creates a link (in this case, a discount offer from American Eagle Outfitters) on the customer’s Facebook page that friends can click. When they do, they are taken to a web version of the email, from which they can make purchases with the offer and/

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.



or share the email with their own networks. Urban Outfitters, Saks Fifth Avenue, Gap and many other leading brands have embedded social media links in their emails that enable similar types of sharing.

This type of sharing marks an effective first step in integrating email and social media; here are seven steps, including sharing, to get you started:

- 1. Share it:** Don't just put links in your email for Facebook and Twitter and expect people to share your content. Ask for retweets. Ask, "Did you find this content useful? Please share it with your followers." As our mothers taught us, the word "please" goes a long way.
- 2. Widen the net:** Ask questions and start a conversation. Encourage participation with your content. Use the feedback you get on your Facebook wall as the basis for the content in your blog.
- 3. Extend the life:** Most web content has no shelf life; it does not expire or grow stale. Information praising your product or service can be a great thing for your business because it can be promoted continually (and in future email marketing messages). There is no need to restrict content like this to the day it came out; instead, promote it throughout the rest of the month or even the rest of the quarter.



- 4. Offer unique benefits:** Tell your customers why they should follow you on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and other platforms. How will it benefit them above and beyond being email subscribers? Do you post content on Facebook that you don't post anywhere else? Are there promotions via Twitter that don't appear on your Facebook wall and in your emails? If so, share that news.

- 5. Cross-promote:** Do you have an email sign-up form on your Facebook wall? Do you tweet about signing up for your emails? Your fans may only know you via Facebook; give them the opportunity to subscribe to your emails, too.

- 6. Be relevant:** Make sure you are creating content people want to share. Give helpful tips, interesting stats and content that means something—to them. Don't expect people to share your content just because they are fans. Give them a real reason to share it.

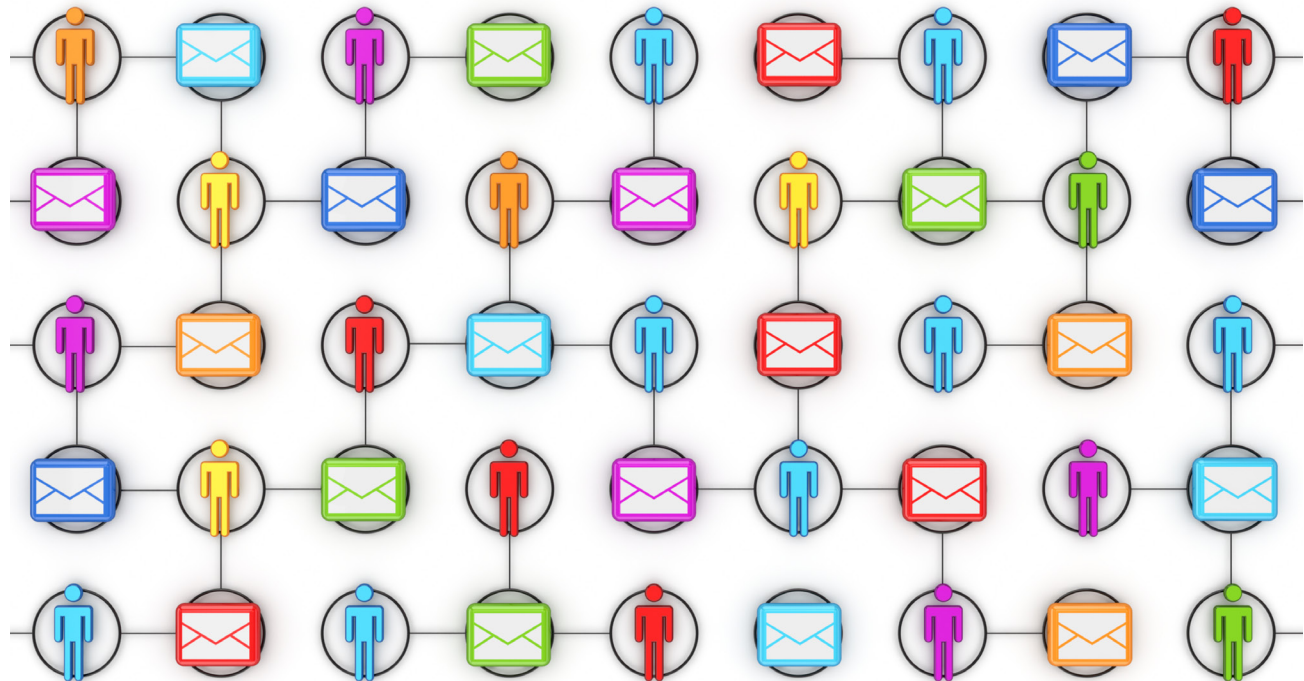
- 7. Measure:** Use the Facebook and Twitter tools to measure your influence. Some new email and social media marketing tools also include measurement capabilities. As you gather this data, you will realize the channels that perform the best and can focus your efforts on those areas.

## Conclusion

Social media is a powerful partner for email marketing. This partnership can deliver impressive returns—as long as the integrated capability is properly, carefully and continually managed.

Again, don't take our word alone. As *1to1 Magazine*'s Anna Papachristos reports, taking an initial step toward integrating social media and email can bear impressive returns:

In fact, integrating social elements with email campaigns has proven to show positive results. 60% of companies that simply put the word 'Facebook' in their email subject line saw a 27% average increase in web site traffic the week following the delivery of that email. Expanding mobile options also facilitates conversations, as a growing number of consumers increase their use of mobile to connect with social sites.<sup>25</sup>



<sup>25</sup> Anna Papachristos, "Social Media Adoption Spans the Ages," *1to1 Magazine*, October 25, 2011, <http://www.1to1media.com/view.aspx?docid=33201>.



### About iContact

Based in Raleigh, NC, iContact is a purpose-driven company that makes email marketing and social media marketing easy, so that small and mid-sized companies and causes can grow and succeed. More than one million users have signed up for an iContact account, and the company maintains B Corporation status, a certification awarded to companies meeting comprehensive and transparent social and environmental performance standards. As part of its ongoing social mission, iContact applies the 4-1s Corporate Social Responsibility Model, donating 1 percent from each of its payroll, equity, product, and employee time to its local and global communities. Visit us online at [iContact.com](http://iContact.com), on Twitter @iContact, at our LinkedIn Group, and at our Facebook page.

