

Email metrics that matter

Introduction

The open rate, click-through and unsubscribe rates have become the main metrics of email marketing. However, they won't tell you if your campaign truly was successful or not.

Most email-specific metrics are "process" metrics rather than "output" metrics which measure the goals you want to achieve.

Process and output metrics measure different factors in your email campaign.

Process vs. Output Metrics

Top 7 Process Metrics

Process metrics focus on the email message itself such as the open rates, click-through rates, unsubscribes and bounces. Think of them as diagnostic tools. If you aren't seeing the results you want from your email campaigns, these metrics might help you spot problems with delivery, opt-in procedure or reader engagement.

Process metrics include:

1. **Open rate:** The percentage of delivered email messages opened by recipients - measures customer interest or engagement.
2. **Bounce rate:** The percentage of sent emails that failed delivery - measures deliverability and list quality.
3. **Unsubscribes:** The percentage of email messages that generated removal from your list, usually by recipients clicking an email link or a link to a Web unsubscribe page - measures customer engagement.
4. **Click-through rate:** The percentage of recipients that who click on one or more links in the email - measures customer interest, offer quality and engagement.
5. **Delivery rate:** The percentage of total emails sent minus undeliverables - measures deliverability and list hygiene.

6. **Spam complaints:** Complaints that the message is spam, sent automatically by ISPs or manually by recipients - measures customer 'engagement'.
7. **Referrals/forwarded messages:** Expressed as a total number or a percentage of delivered emails, the number of times recipients clicked a forward-to-a-friend link in the email - measures customer interest, word of mouth and offer quality.

Top 7 output metrics

Output metrics measure the results of an email message. If you set goals for your campaign - say, a 15% increase in revenue per email or 500 new mailing-list subscriptions - these metrics will measure those against your targets.

Output metrics include:

1. **Total revenue generated:** The total revenue generated from the campaign.
2. **Revenue per email delivered:** Total revenue divided by number of emails delivered. This is used to compare different campaigns and their effectiveness.
3. **ROI per email:** Measures return per email delivered - compares results between campaigns.
4. **Total orders per email:** Total number of orders generated by email message.
5. **Order size per email:** Total number of orders divided by number of delivered emails - measures progress toward goal or to compare campaigns.
7. **Leads generated:** Total number of customer referrals or self-referrals generated by the email or over a period of time - measures offer quality and customer engagement.
8. **Site registrations, contest entries, subscriptions:** measures customer interest and engagement.