

HOW-TO GUIDE | EMAIL MARKETING

# How to Use Email Reports for Better Results

INSIGHT PROVIDED BY  **Knowhow**





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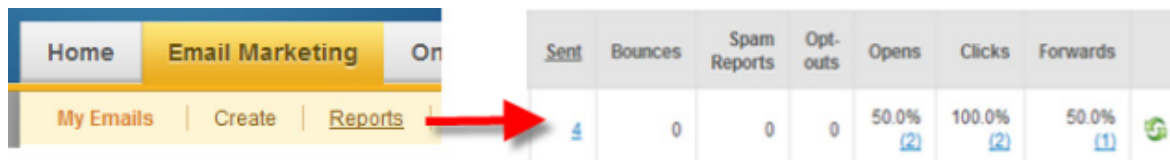
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Instant metrics are a great advantage of doing email marketing. This guide will help you understand your Constant Contact email reports and give you ideas to help you get even better results.



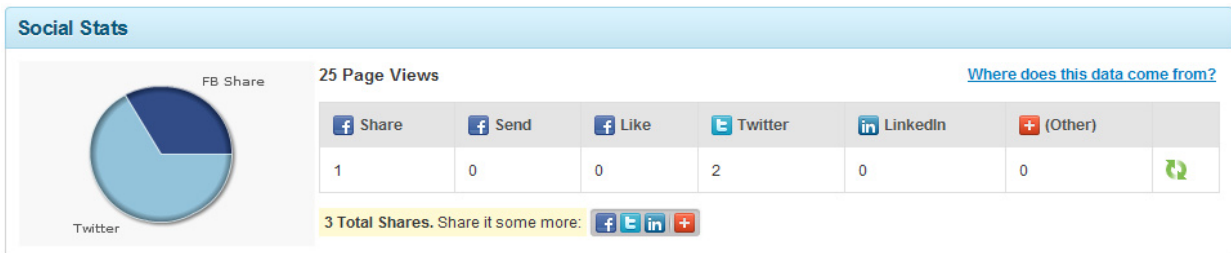
Home	Email Marketing	On	Sent	Bounces	Spam Reports	Opt-outs	Opens	Clicks	Forwards	
My Emails	Create	Reports	4	0	0	0	50.0% (2)	100.0% (2)	50.0% (1)	🔄

Click on an email report below to learn more about it:

- [Social Stats](#)
- [Forwards](#)
- [Opens](#)
- [Clicks](#)
- [Bounces](#)
- [Spam](#)
- [Opt-Outs](#)

## Social Stats

With every email you send, you should [add a Social Share Bar](#) to greatly increase the chance it will be shared on social media networks. An email's Social Stats report shows you how many times its Social Share bar has been clicked to share the email on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social media sites.



If you're not sure if your contacts are on social media or where, now you'll know! Which social media site is the most popular with your contacts?

## Improving Social Share Results

Low social share counts may mean your email content isn't share-worthy or your audience doesn't actively use social media.

### To help your emails get more social shares:

- **Provide share-worthy content.**
  - Check past emails' Social Stats, Forwards, and Click-Through Reports to see *what issues have generated high interest in the past*. Are those topics worth revisiting in your next email campaign?
  - Consider *testing your email content design* by sending one that is focused just on one topic and another featuring multiple topics. Compare their Social Stats reports to see if one design clearly gets more social shares.


- Feature *topics that spark the most comments* on your social media pages. (**Note:** For help getting started successfully with social media, attend a [live Social Media webinar](#)).
- Give your contacts *something to act upon, enjoy, or use*. How-to steps, improvement tips, polls, [coupons](#), promotion codes, contests, and particularly entertaining content often get shared.
- **Increase the email's visibility** by [sharing it](#) on your own social media pages and posting it on your [Archive Homepage](#). The more people who see your email, the more opportunities it will have to be shared.
- **Provide relevant, valuable content.** [Collect feedback](#) from contacts to find out what interests them the most. For more tips about providing relevant content, attend the [How to Boost the Response to Your Emails webinar](#).

Each audience is unique and their interests can evolve. So monitor your reports and social media pages regularly to know which topics are hot, and which are not!

**Additional Resources:** Visit Constant Contact's [Social Media Business Resources page](#).

## Forwards

Like the Social Stats report, your Forwards report is a good indication of whether your contacts think your emails are share-worthy. It shows you how many and which contacts forwarded it by using the "Forward email" links and buttons inside your Constant Contact email. Basically, it shows you which contacts are your biggest fans!

Opens	Clicks	Forwards
50.0% <a href="#">(2)</a>	100.0% (2)	50.0% <a href="#">(1)</a> 

Click the number of Forwards on an email report to see who forwarded your email and when. (**Note:** Constant Contact can't legally tell you who received the forwarded emails.)

Just because an email wasn't forwarded, that doesn't mean it wasn't shared.

- Be sure to check your Social Stats report to see if your email was shared on Facebook or Twitter.
- Your Forwards report doesn't include forwards made with an email program's Forward function.

## Increasing Forwards

Use the tips below to inspire more contacts to pass on your emails to their friends. In addition, avoid providing an incentive to contacts to forward your emails; that would be illegal under [CAN-SPAM laws](#).

### To get more contacts to forward your emails:

- **Place an extra "Forward to a Friend" link** at the top of your emails to encourage forwarding. That gets your readers in the mindset that if they find the content valuable, they should share it!
- **Provide share-worthy content.** Emails with useful instructions, improvement tips, coupons, promotion codes, and videos often get shared. For inspiration, see our copywriting [Hints & Tips](#) and [blog posts](#).
- **Follow the [strategies for improving Social Share results](#)** strategies in this guide.

## Opens

Your Opens Report shows how many unique contacts opened your email.

Opt-outs	Opens	Clicks	Forwards
0	50.0% <a href="#">(2)</a>	100.0% (2)	50.0% <a href="#">(1)</a>

Click the number of opens to see who opened the email and when. Clicking the “All Opens” link below the email name will show you every occurrence of a contact opening the email, including multiple opens for a single email address. Please keep in mind that [email opens aren't always trackable](#).

To find out if your open rate is “good,” compare it with the average [open rate of others in your industry](#).

### Increasing Open Rates

Low open rates can result from ineffective subject lines and email headers, poor timing, getting filtered into Junk Mail folders, old contact lists, and sending at the wrong frequency.

#### To get more contacts to open your emails:


- **Use a compelling and easily recognizable header area.**
  - *Subject line* – Keep it short (no longer than 40 characters or 5-8 words) and mention the most enticing topic in the email. Find guidance in a free [Subject Line Design webinar](#) or peruse the [subject line blog posts](#).
  - *From name* – Use what is *most* recognizable to the audience (organization name, sales person’s name, event name, etc.)
  - *From email address* – Use a well branded From email address and [ask your contacts to whitelist you](#).
  - *Header* – For contacts using preview panes, include a logo and background [colors that match your brand](#). Always include text featuring your organization name because email programs often blocks images.
- **[Test to see if there is an ideal time to send](#)**. Split your contact list in half. Send your next email to each half at a different [time of day or day](#) of the week and see which day and time gets the better open rate. Repeat this a few times to determine when to send your emails going forward. Remember to keep half the list at your standard send day and time so you can immediately see if any of these testing times perform better than your standard send time.
- **Make it into the inbox.**
  - Ask contacts to add your email address to their contact lists (which will keep your email out of Junk Mail folders). This is often referred to as *whitelisting your email address* with your reader.
  - [Run the Spam Checker](#) tool before you send an email and follow any recommended content and design changes to help prevent your emails from being filtered directly into Junk Mail folders.
- **Make sure you’re sending to contacts’ preferred email addresses.**
  - *Reach out to non-openers* and contacts appearing in your “mailbox full” bounce report via other means to confirm their current email address.
  - [Include the update profile link](#) in your emails to let contacts update their email address anytime.

- **Send targeted content.** Here are a few ways to divide a general contact list into new lists (based on demographics, topic of interest, preferred frequency, etc):
  - Add links to your emails and then use your click-through reports to [save contacts who clicked specific links into new lists](#).
  - [Send a survey](#) and *save everyone who selects particular answers* into new contact lists. Don't forget to [make the new lists visible](#) on your signup form!
  - Consider testing your email content design by sending one that is focused just on one topic and another featuring multiple topics. Check your Social Stats report to *see which design gets shared the most*.
  - *Customize your signup form* and [include multiple lists](#) for subscribers to show interest in. Then ask your existing contacts to click the "Update Profile" link in your email's footer. Their interests are likely to change over time.

**Additional Resources:** Attend the free [How to Boost the Response to Your Emails](#) webinar and read [Open Rates Hints & Tips](#) articles.

## Clicks

Your Click-Through Report helps you evaluate your readers' interest level in the topic of articles and other online content linked to in your email.




Opens	Clicks	Forwards	
50.0% (2)	100.0% (2)	50.0% (1)	

The Clicks value on an email report shows how many people who opened your email also clicked at least one link inside the email. Select the Clicks count on your email report to see which links (or topics) were most and least popular.

Email Link	Unique Click-throughs	Click-through Distribution
<a href="http://www.facebook.com">http://www.facebook.com</a>	0	0.0%
<a href="http://www.linkedin.com">http://www.linkedin.com</a>	0	0.0%
<a href="http://www.twitter.com">http://www.twitter.com</a>	0	0.0%
<a href="http://www.weather.com">http://www.weather.com</a>	2	100.0%
<b>Total Click-throughs</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

You can use your Click-Through Report to create lists of contacts who are interested in certain topics and send them customized emails that will get great results. Click on a number of Unique Click-Throughs, then click to save that group into a new list. You can now send this list an email featuring the topic that interests them most.

Email Link: <http://www.weather.com>

Email Address	First Name	Last Name	Company	Status	Click-through Date
<a href="mailto:example1@company.com">example1@company.com</a> 				Active	9/21/2011 2:39 PM EDT
<a href="mailto:example1@company.com">example1@company.com</a> 				Active	9/21/2011 2:38 PM EDT
<a href="mailto:example1@company.com">example1@company.com</a> 				Active	9/21/2011 2:38 PM EDT

## Increasing Click-Through Rates

Low click-through rates may mean:

- Linked text is too generic and not relevant to your readers
- Links aren't noticeable
- Content isn't interesting to your recipients
- Not enough links to click

### To get more contacts to click the links in your emails:

- **Have specific, benefit oriented link text.** Descriptive link text makes emails easy to scan and the links more appealing to click. Don't just use "click here." Where will the link take them and what are they going to get by clicking?

**Examples:**

[Watch this Bloopers video for a laugh](#)

[Purchase a bouquet to brighten her day](#)

- **Create a sense of urgency to click.** Limit offers associated with the link to a specific time period or quantity.

**Examples:**

[Get a free t-shirt when you join by May 2nd](#)


[Save 10% when you buy today](#)

- **Format the links to stand out.** Place important links on their own line and bold them instead of just putting them in the middle of a paragraph. Also, keep the standard blue color that readers will recognize most easily (unless it is hard to see with your background color).
- **Use images effectively to get clicks.** [Make images clickable](#) when they are related to your call to action. Always link your logo to your website. However, never let an image, such as a button, be your only call to action. Supplement it with a text link in case images are blocked for some of your contacts.
- **Put article "teasers" in your email.** Include only an introduction for each article in your email and post the full story on your website, blog, facebook page, or as a PDF in your Constant Contact library. Anyone who likes the article's introduction will have to click to read the rest.

**Additional Resources:** Sign up for a free, live [Promotions Planning and Design webinar](#) or read our [Hints & Tips](#) archive.

## Bounces

Your Bounce report shows how many recipients did not receive your email and why.

<u>Sent</u>	Bounces	Spam Reports	Opt-outs	Opens	Clicks	Forwards	
4	0	0	0	50.0% (2)	100.0% (2)	50.0% (1)	

To see why an email didn't make it into a contact's inbox, click the Bounces number on the email's report. To see individual bounced email addresses, check the box next to a bounce category and click **View List**.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Blocked -- the receiving server is blocking email
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mailbox Full -- email not accepted because the i
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacation/Auto Reply -- bounce due to an autom

[View List](#) [Export](#) [Remove](#) [Do Not Mail](#)

## Preventing Bounces

Your emails will bounce if:

- Your list contains misspelled email addresses.
- Your list is a little old and some contacts have changed email addresses or lost interest.
- Some contacts are on vacation and their email programs send “Out of Office” auto-reply emails.

To prevent bounces and help more contacts to receive your emails:

- **Turn on Confirmed Opt-in (COI).** When COI is turned on, new contacts who join your list through your online sign up form receive an email that asks them to click to confirm their subscription. This prevents you from collecting bad (invalid, misspelled, and “spam-trap”) email addresses.
- **Age (clean up) old contact lists.** Sending to contacts that you haven’t emailed in over a year not only leads to high bounce rates, but also causes spam complaints and low open rates. To clean your list, you could [create a Confirmed Opt-In campaign](#). You would only be able to send to contacts who confirm their interest in receiving your email.
- **Request updates.** Every so often (perhaps quarterly) send an email to ask contacts to click the [“Update Profile” link](#) to give you their latest email address where they would like to receive your emails. The average lifespan of an email address is one year.
- **Remove “Nonexistent” and “Undeliverable” email addresses.** These bounces are usually permanent failures. If you repeatedly send to the same bad email addresses, you will hurt your future deliverability (ability to reach your intended contacts overall).

**Additional Resources:** Sign up for a free [Email Deliverability webinar](#), view the [How to Manage Bounces Guide](#), or check out our [Bounce Management FAQs](#).

## Spam Reports

Your Spam report shows the number of contacts that marked your email as unsolicited and unwanted.

Sent	Bounces	Spam Reports	Opt-outs	Opens	Clicks	Forwards
<a href="#">4</a>	0	0	0	50.0% <a href="#">(2)</a>	100.0% <a href="#">(2)</a>	50.0% <a href="#">(1)</a>

Just one spam complaint in 1,000 emails sent can negatively affect the ability of your future emails to reach your contacts.

## Managing Spam Reports

Constant Contact manages spam reports for you. We automatically add each contact who reports your email as Spam to your Do Not Mail list, preventing you from accidentally sending to them again. It is illegal to identify who marked your message as spam.



## Preventing Spam Reports

Spam reports might mean that some of your contacts:

- Didn't give you permission to email them
- Forgot they gave you permission
- Didn't recognize the email was from you
- Think you are mailing too frequently

To avoid getting spam complaints, follow *all* of these strategies:

- Most importantly, **have a permission-based contact list**. Each contact must have a current, direct relationship with you (not just an organization associated with you) and be expecting your emails. To create a permission-based list, use [Constant Contact's list building tools](#) and attend a free live [Building Better Lists webinar](#).
- **Add the Permission Reminder** to every email you send. This message appears at the top of your email to remind contacts why they're receiving the email. It includes an unsubscribe link to help contacts who want to opt out to do so without clicking the Spam button on you.
- **Run the Spam Checker tool** before you send each email. It alerts you to spam-like content in your email (such as words in all CAPS, spam words like "free, pills, etc.," excessive punctuation, etc.).
- **Turn on Confirmed Opt-In**. This feature sends an email to new subscribers asking them to click to confirm their subscription. This is a sure-fire way to know that they do want to receive your emails and are expecting them.
- **Be recognizable** and consistent in the inbox. Always use the same easily recognizable name in the From and Subject Lines. Keep your email design consistent and use your logo or website's signature colors.

**Additional Resources:** Read Constant Contact's [Spam Reduction Guide](#), [list building Hints & Tips](#), or [list building best practices blog posts](#).

## Opt-Outs

Your Opt-outs report shows which contacts clicked the email's "Unsubscribe" link to avoid receiving your future emails.

Sent	Bounces	Spam Reports	Opt-outs	Opens	Clicks	Forwards
4	0	0	0	50.0% (2)	100.0% (2)	50.0% (1)

Click the number of Opt-outs on an email report to see who unsubscribed.

## Managing Opt-Outs

The law requires you to take opt outs off of your list within 10 days and not send to them again. Thankfully, Constant Contact manages this for you! When someone clicks to unsubscribe from all of your emails, we automatically move them to your Do Not Mail list. You don't have to worry about accidentally importing or sending to them again by mistake.

## Preventing Opt-Outs

Unsubscribes can happen when:

- The featured content isn't relevant enough or contacts' interests have naturally shifted with time.
- You're sending at the wrong frequency.

To keep contacts interested in receiving your email:

- **Send more relevant content** based on each contact list's demographics, topic of interest, preferred frequency, etc.
- **Only send emails as frequently as contacts expect** to receive them. [Revisit your signup form's message](#) to make sure it sets new contacts' expectations about mailing frequency.

If contacts only signed up to receive your monthly newsletter, don't start sending weekly promotions. Instead, create a new "Weekly Email" contact list and [display this new list on your signup form](#). When your existing contacts click the "Update Profile" link in your email, they will be brought to your sign up form and automatically added to the contact lists they select.

**Additional Resources:** Sign up for the free [How to Boost the Response to Your Emails](#) webinar.