

COLUMNS

## Reach the unreachable with browser push notifications and emails

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Though email offers a direct and personal channel to connect with users, it has become increasingly over-saturated in recent years and, thus, less effective for marketing.

Data from the Mailchimp Web archive for ecommerce shows that the open rate for emails has dropped from 22.2 percent to 16.73 percent in the last four years. Clicks have also decreased from 2.9 percent to 2.3 percent. The unsubscribe rate has nearly doubled from 0.12 percent to 0.23 percent.

It is apparent that users are simply ignoring or unsubscribing from what they identify as spammy or irrelevant emails.

Emails are dead?

Not yet. And emails will continue to be an important marketing channel for a while from now. This is because nothing beats email in terms of overall reach and scalability, and marketers are missing out on enormous opportunities when their emails lie unread by customers.

But these "unreachable" users are not a lost cause.

By combining emails with newer marketing channels that offer high performance, novel techniques, better messaging and timing optimization, marketers can encourage user engagement and recapture their lost audience.

One of the most useful approaches to this are browser push notifications, which allows you to reach your Web site users even after they have dropped off your site.

Similar to mobile app push notifications, browser notifications are sent from your Web site directly to your subscribed user's browser. This means that, even when a user has left your site, he or she can still receive notifications on desktop or mobile.

When compared to email, browser push drives 60 percent of users to view content in their browser versus the 15 percent of users who will even open an email.

## Going mobile

Browser notifications are not restricted to desktop. They can be sent out from mobile Web sites on Android devices as well. And if you already have a mobile application, mobile browser notifications are still advantageous.

Quixey, a mobile app search company, revealed that 32.6 percent of United States mobile device users prefer to use both a mobile app and a mobile browser at different times.

Nearly 74.8 percent said they like that mobile browsers provide access to all the content that they are looking for in one place. Additionally, 23.2 percent said that there is no need to install anything new on their device.

Data shows that mobile browser usage is growing faster than apps, delivering larger audiences for most publishers.

Morgan Stanley points out that only 12 of the top 50 mobile assets have more traffic coming from apps than the browser. The discussion argues for the primacy of the mobile browser for most publishers, brands and marketers.

Chrome, Firefox and Safari are winning the market with approximately 82 percent of the total share.

By using a dual strategy of browser push notifications and email marketing, ecommerce marketers can create the added edge necessary to improve user engagement and drive revenue.

The key to doing so is to understand when to use browser push versus when to use email, and optimize the balance between the two tactics.

### Push comes to shove

Browser push notifications are great when you want to communicate time sensitive and immediate messages.

For instance, if a user is browsing your site and drops off, you can initiate a personalized notification that includes the last-seen or added-to-cart product.

This can be done at an interval closely following drop off such as 10 or 15 minutes when your user is still engaged with his or her device.

You could also send a personalized price drop alert for a product of interest, or take advantage of holiday sales by keeping users engaged with time-based offers and personalized discounts.

Emails, on the other hand, can be used to nurture users in the purchase cycle on a more long-term basis.

If a user has not visited your site for a certain period of time say, two weeks or has been unresponsive to browser push in the recent past, it is worthwhile to try sending them a personalized email.

Email would also work for users who do not spend too much time on your site, and need deeper engagement methods.

WITH SO MANY different channels and a sensitive audience, it is important that marketers are careful with the choice of channels to execute specific marketing strategies.

A combination of emails and browser push notifications serve as the perfect duo when you want to build hyper-personalized customer conversations without worrying too much about additional ad spends.

Just remember to keep your conversations relevant, engaging and evolving along with your users and their interests.

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