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KEY TAKE-AWAYS
Renewd North America Leadership Council Meeting Special Guest, Email Marketing Expert Jeanne Jennings, September 2022

Renewd Co-Chair, Stephanie Williford, has written the following summary under Chatham House Rule - to share the key points from the discussion with the event participants and the wider Renewd community.

Getting in the In-Box

- How to improve email deliverability (with an emphasis on best practices and technical suggestions)
    - The # 1 way to improve deliverability is to have a 100% opt-in list; don't buy lists.
    - Put authentication in place—Sender Policy Framework (helps protect you from spammers using your domain), DKIM (verifies that a message wasn't forged), DMARK, Brand Indicator for Message Identification (BIMI: allows you to put your logo in people's inbox). See https://www.emailonacid.com/blog/article/email-deliverability/email-authentication-protocols/
    - For your B2B customers that aren't getting your emails: Contact their IT department and have them whitelist both your domain and IP
- How to avoid being pegged as SPAM (and how are spammers getting through when our own legit content can't?)
    - Make sure you list is 100% opt-in
    - Add authentication—see above.
    - See https://www.spamhaus.org/news/article/818/poor-sending-practices-trigger-a-tidal-wave-of-informational-listings
    - Pay the extra cost to get a dedicated IP address; if you're on a shared IP and someone else is using poor sending practices, it's going to affect your deliverability; the IP is only as good as the worst sender on it.
    - Don't do what the spammers do; they're using bad practices to get to your inbox, and you need to have good sending practices to protect your brand. Just ignore the spammers.

Methods for Keeping your List Continuously Clean

- Have good bounce protocols; if you get a hard bounce, remove them immediately. If you get 3 soft bounces, remove it from your list. If you don't remove hard bounces, that

will get you blacklisted very fast. Some ESPs remove hard bounces automatically; some of them have different options, and you need to Use a hygiene service, like Webbula
- Email deliverability experts will tell you to remove inactive/unopened emails after 180 days, but that will decrease your revenue/conversion. Jeanne recommends keeping the inactives on the list but sending to them less often.
- Is double opt in necessary?
  - If you don't think there's malicious intent (people adding emails to your list that shouldn't be on there), then single opt-in is absolutely fine and will get more emails on your list (because ~40% of people miss, forget, or don't bother to click the link in the opt-in email for double opt in)
- How effective do you think are the email hygiene services that clean the email lists? Would they prevent your list from having the honeypots and other seeded emails?
  - They can help if you work with a legit one. Webbula is a good one.

How to Get Messages Opened

- Subject lines that work—best practices for length, word choice, use of emojis (in B2B and B2C), etc. Are there certain terms/phrases in subject lines that work best?
  - Make them relevant and engaging.
  - The first 25 characters are the most critical; that doesn't mean the subject should only be 25 characters, but it means that the first 25 characters need to be enough to make them want to open. Same thing for your pre-header text.
  - Jeanne's website has lots of case studies about subject lines; example: a client with a 12 days of Christmas sale doubled their revenue when they put the product first. Check out https://emailopshop.com/
  - Length of the subject line is not the issue; having a relevant message is the most important thing.
  - "Free" is always a good term
  - Use "you" and "your"
  - Use benefit-oriented terms; what's in it for them if they open?
  - Emojis may work if they make sense for your brand, audience, and message. Don't use gimmicks just for the sake of it.
- Is there a best day of the week and best time of day for sending email marketing messages?
  - Yes and no. What works today won't work tomorrow.
- What metrics should you look at?
  - Open rates are not the right metric to look at. Use your outcome goal—i.e., if the goal is to sell subscriptions, then your metric for each email is revenue.
  - Comparing open rates year over year is a waste of time. Comparing open rates for recent time periods (this week to last week) can be somewhat helpful, but it's not an absolute metric.
  - Open rates are even more unreliable now with Apple's recent change. https://www.omeda.com/impact-of-apples-mail-privacy-protection/

- Sign up for Jay Schwedelson's free conference: https://guruconference.com/. Also check out www.Subjectline.com
- Note: His recommendations are quick-hit and short term; what works today, won't work tomorrow.

Misc. Q&A

- If you're a small company, where do you start if you're trying to improve deliverability? What's most important to worry about?
  - Most people don't have deliverability issues, so don't worry so much about that. If you have an opt-in list and are sending relevant content, then you shouldn't have much of an issue with deliverability.
- Is there a minimum volume for testing?
  - Ideal is 20k
- What's most important for us to know?
  - Automation is the future of email. Look at your customer journey and create an automated program to trigger the actions you want your customers to take.
  - Build triggers and automations one at a time.
  - Start by looking at what you're doing manually that could be automated. Create a list of everything you could automate and then add the amount of effort required to do it and the potential return; start with the low effort & high return automations.
  - Abandoned carts are a no-brainer automation. Play with the timing on when to send it; Jeanne sends them 3 hours later, but many wait longer. Think about your customer; in B2B, it should probably be longer because they may need to get approval for the purchase before buying.
  - Sending an email when someone browsed your store but didn't add anything to their cart.
  - Do A/B testing, even if your list is small. Consistently and scientifically improve your efforts.
  - Don't try to game the system. Use good sending practices and focus on sending relevant content. This is the key to short- and long-term success.
  - You'll get the most improvements with people and knowledge, not the technology. You don't need to spend more on a good platform; you need to spend more on a good person.
  - Focus on what will get results—like improving your subject lines.
  - Email is not dying. There's a lot of revenue potential there. Work smarter, not harder.

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