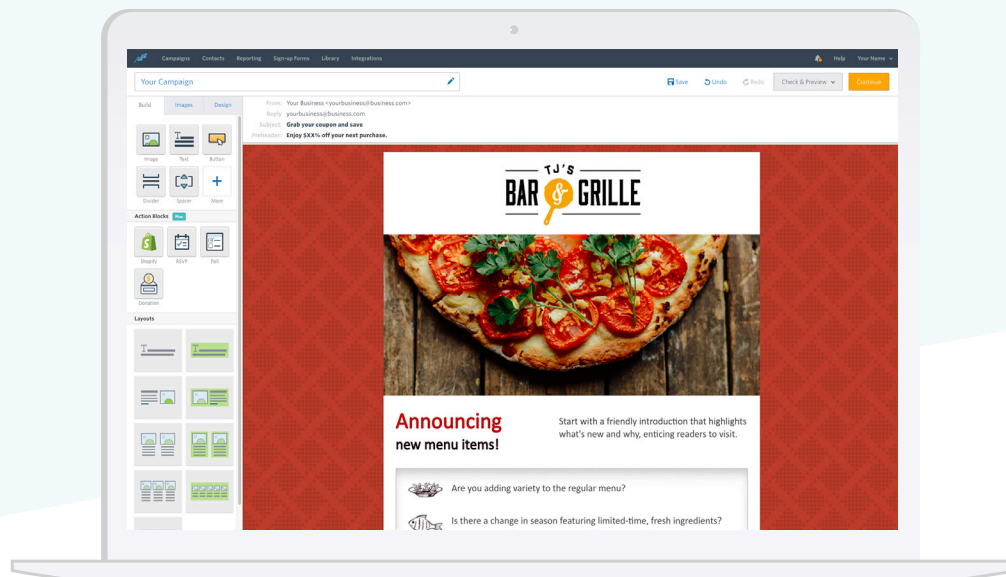




# Email Marketing Roadmap for Restaurants, Bars, and Cafés



## Restaurant/Bar/Café Email Marketing: Best Practices

Email marketing brings new and repeat customers to your door and makes it easy for them to share your message so you can expand your reach to new potential guests.

This email marketing roadmap provides inspiration and time-saving tips to get the best results from your next email campaign, including:

- The five keys to email marketing success
- Design tips to look great on any device
- Template and content recommendations for what to say and how to say it
- ...and more!

**Let's get started!**



# The 5 Keys to Email Marketing Success for Restaurants, Bars, and Cafés

Restaurant businesses that do the following five things have great success with email marketing and use their time most efficiently.



## Plan for Success

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Let's take a closer look.



# Plan for Success



A plan keeps you on track. Without a plan, email marketing can often fall by the wayside. As with any form of marketing, consistency is key to keeping your business top of mind.

The good news is there's no need for an extravagant plan. It's as simple as writing down key moments throughout the year for your business.

### **What are those key moments for your restaurant business?**

Here are a few ideas for moments you'll want to consider:

- Share promotions and menu items that pertain to **upcoming holidays** (i.e. National Guacamole Day, Mother's Day).
- Share **new promotions and specials** (i.e half off appetizers, half off drink during happy hours).
- Share **news** happening at your restaurant or in the area (i.e local events, new décor, new staff).

The ideas above are typically **time-based promotions** as they have a date or time associated with them. You should also consider sending informational emails to keep customers engaged.

Here are a few ideas for **informational emails**:

- Announce **new menu changes** to food and beverages.
- Share cooking **tips and recipes**.
- Ask customers to **review your restaurant** to encourage new business.

Now that you have ideas for moments you'll want to communicate about, use the worksheet to stay on track with an overview of your email marketing for the year.

# Email Marketing Opportunities

Write the important holidays and special events for your business in the spaces below. You can use these entries to plan out your email marketing for the year.

**January**

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**July**

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**February**

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**August**

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**March**

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**September**

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**April**

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**October**

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**May**

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**November**

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**June**

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**December**

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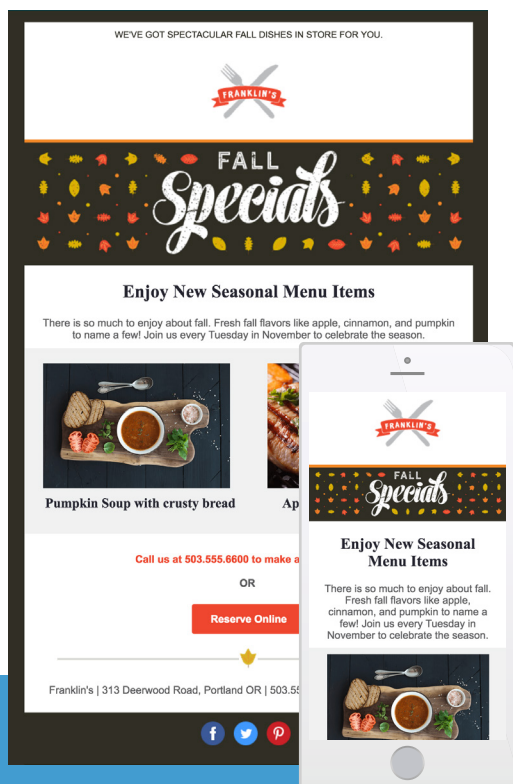
Next, you can add a mailing schedule to your calendar based on the type of email you're sending.

If you're sending a time-based promotion, we recommend you consider sending a series of three emails: an **announcement** (two weeks out from end date), a **reminder** (one week out from end date), and the **last chance** (one or two days before end date).

On the following pages, you can see more detailed suggestions for mailing schedules and upcoming holidays you may want to take advantage of.

Informational emails can be scheduled as one-offs month-to-month.

## Email Content Ideas, Suggested Mailing Schedules, and Holidays for Restaurants



### Seasonal Menu Change Announcement

Announce changes to your menu on a seasonal basis (e.g. Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter)

#### Subject Line:

We're cooking up something new! Find out what.

#### Recommended Template:

Restaurant Menu Changes

#### Call-to-Action:

- See full menu
- Make a reservation

#### Business Result:

- Give your existing customers a reason to come back & easily share your new menu with friends
- Book more reservations

#### Suggested mailing schedule:

**Week 1:** Announce the start of the new menu availability

**Week 2:** Highlight a special appetizer or signature dish

**Week 3:** Offer a special on one of your signature dishes or appetizers



## Fill Slow Nights

Encourage customers to come by on nights you know typically to be slow by proving a special offer like half off appetizers or a free appetizer with purchase of entrée.

### Subject Line:

Act Fast – this great dining deal is only for [TODAY/THIS WEEK/MONTH]

### Recommended Template:

Restaurant Flash Special

### Call-to-Action:

- Make Reservations
- Come on in

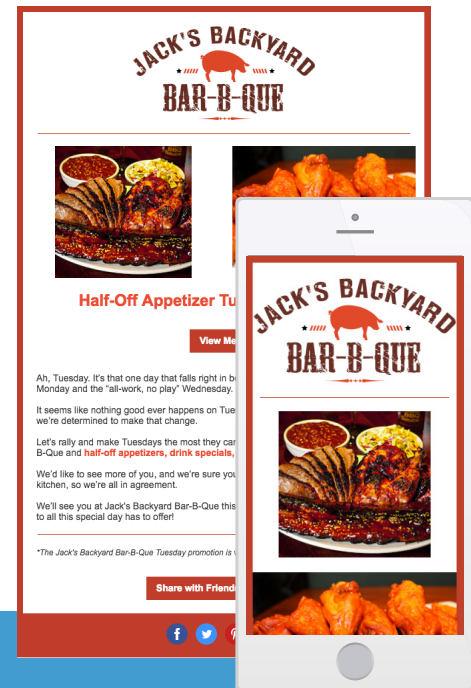
### Business Result:

- Increase reservations
- Fill empty seats
- Increase revenue

### Suggested mailing schedule:

(Consider sending one or all three)

- Send one week before slow night
- Send night before
- Send reminder on day of



## Seasonal/Holiday

Remind customers of upcoming holidays Mother's Day, Easter, graduation season, Thanksgiving – offer advanced reservations, gift certificate ordering, special offers and/or remind them of your holiday hours

### Subject Line:

We've got the best dish for you this [VALENTINES DAY, THANKSGIVING, ETC.]

### Recommended Template:

Sale Event

### Call-to-Action:

- Make Reservation
- View Menu
- See Holiday Hours
- Order a Gift Certificate

### Business Result:

- Increase revenue
- Increase online and/or in-store traffic

### Suggested mailing schedule:

- Send 2 to 3 weeks in-advance of holiday
- Send week of if reservations are not full or to remind patrons of hours, if changed.

## Recommended Restaurant/Café/Bar Templates

Entice customers to visit, share your emails and expand your reach to new customers.

You know it's important to regularly communicate with your audience. We know there are times when you need some inspiration of what to send out. Here you will find a few content ideas for inspiration, the link or button to design the email around so it meets your primary goal, and recommended Constant Contact templates that are a great fit for that email so you can create quickly.

CONTENT IDEAS	LINKS AND BUTTONS	TEMPLATE IDEAS
Announce changes to your food and beverage menu to drive visits and email sharing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>See the full menu</li><li>Make a reservation</li><li>Share with friends and family</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Restaurant Menu Updates</li><li>Customer Product/Service News</li></ul>
Share special promotions and menu items for an upcoming holiday (i.e., national guacamole day, mother's day) to drive visits and email sharing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Mark your calendar</li><li>Make a reservation</li><li>Share with friends and family</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Restaurant Specials</li><li>Restaurant News</li><li>Banner Promotion</li></ul>
Share local community news and your commentary to stay connected with customers and drive email sharing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>See the full story</li><li>Share with friends and family</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Restaurant News</li></ul>
Share cooking tips or recipes from you or your staff to stay connected with customers and drive email sharing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Download recipe</li><li>See more recipes</li><li>Share with friends and family</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Restaurant News</li><li>Product/Service Showcase</li></ul>
Share news happening at your restaurant (i.e., new décor, staff, reviews, popular items).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>See more pictures</li><li>Leave a review</li><li>Share with friends and family</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Restaurant News</li><li>Product/Service Showcase</li></ul>

[Login to your account](#) and try these ideas for your next email campaign

Take advantage of the upcoming seasons by sharing new menu items, specials, gift ideas and tips related to:

#### WINTER

Suggest coming in to get comfort from the cold and feature heartier entrées, soups or drinks. Help customers with the busyness of the holidays by offering takeout holiday meals and dine in specials. Offer your space for family and company holiday parties.

##### December

- National Egg Nog Month
- National Fruitcake Month
- National Pear Month
- Hanukkah
- Safe Toys and Gifts Month
- Bartender Appreciation Day
- Chocolate Covered Anything Day
- National Maple Syrup Day
- Christmas
- National Sangria Day

##### January

- Hot Tea Month
- New Year's Day
- National Thank You Month
- Be Kind to Food Servers Month
- International Creativity Month
- International New Year's Resolution Month for Business
- Oatmeal Month
- Shape Up US Month
- National Soup Month

##### February

- Hot Breakfast Month
- Cherry Month
- Bake For Family Fun Month
- Heart Month
- Family Day

#### SPRING

Promote new menu items that focus on lighter fare like salads, new vegetables and fruity drinks or desserts. Offer your space for special occasions happening like weddings, high school proms and college graduations

##### March

- National Nutrition Month
- National Peanut Month
- Red Cross Month
- National Craft Month
- Music in Our Schools Month

##### April

- Earth Awareness Month
- National Grilled Cheese Month
- World Party Day
- Easter
- National Coffee Cake Day
- National Caramel Popcorn Day
- National Beer Day / New Beer's Eve
- National Blueberry Pie Day
- National Shrimp Scampi Day
- National Oatmeal Cookie Day
- National Siblings Day

##### May

- Military Appreciation Month
- National Barbecue Month
- Mother's Day
- National Hamburger Month
- National Strawberry Month
- National Waiters and Waitresses Day
- Victoria Day

#### SUMMER

Promote new fresh summer menu items like frozen drinks. Let your audience know of local festivals or other community events you're participating in.

##### June

- Country Cooking Month
- Lemon and Mango Month
- National Candy Month
- National Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Month
- National Frozen Yogurt Month
- Father's Day
- National Iced Tea Month
- National Soul Food Month
- National Steakhouse Month

##### July

- National Berry Month
- National Blueberries Month
- Independence Day
- National Grilling Month
- National Hot Dog Month
- National Ice Cream Month
- National Picnic Month
- Canada Day

##### August

- National Sandwich Month
- National Catfish Month
- National Panini Month
- Family Meals Month
- International Beer Day
- National Soft Ice Cream Day
- National Lemonade Day
- Franchise Appreciation Day

#### FALL

Share new fall menu items like pumpkin pie or ginger beer. Let customers know what you'll be doing for fall happenings like Halloween and football.

##### September

- Better Breakfast Month
- National Chicken Month
- Labor Day
- National Honey Month
- Random Acts Of Kindness Day
- National Cheese Pizza Day
- National Chocolate Milkshake Day
- Stand Up To Cancer Day

##### October

- National Caramel Month
- National Chili Month
- National Cookie Month
- National Pizza Month
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- National Taco Day
- Do Something Nice Day
- National Dessert Day
- Take Your Parents To Lunch Day
- National Chocolate Day
- Halloween

##### November

- Banana Pudding Lovers Month
- Georgia Pecan Month
- Peanut Butter Lovers Month
- Vegan Month
- National Sandwich Day
- Thanksgiving
- National Eating Healthy Day
- National French Toast Day
- Small Business Saturday

#### WINTER THEMED TEMPLATES

- Valentine Hearts
- Valentine Roses
- Boxing Day - Canada
- Christmas Card
- Family Day
- Holiday Berry
- Holiday Card
- Holiday Elegant
- Holiday Snowman

#### SPRING THEMED TEMPLATES

- Happy Victoria Day
- Easter
- St. Patrick's Day Card II
- Earth Day

#### SUMMER-THEMED TEMPLATES

- Happy July 4th
- Happy Independence Day

#### FALL-THEMED TEMPLATES

- Happy Halloween
- Happy Labor Day
- Labour Day - Canada
- Thanksgiving
- Thanksgiving - Canada





# Design for Today's Audiences

When it comes to design you'll want to create emails that match your brand, communicate your message effectively, and look great on any device.

Professionally designed email templates from Constant Contact are easily customizable and mobile-responsive, which means your email adapts to the device it's being read on.

With the majority of emails being opened on a mobile device, we've found emails that focus on a singular purpose often have the best results.

Use the following checklist to design an effective email with these seven essential elements.



**Tip: Save time creating emails in the future.**

Once you customize a template, keep it in your account as a draft, and name it *Master Template*. Make a copy to start your next campaign and you'll just need to update the content.

# Email Design Checklist

## 1. Header

- ☐ Did you use a recognizable "From" name?
- ☐ Is your reply address correct?
- ☐ Is your subject line 4-7 words?

## 2. Preheader

- ☐ Does your preheader further entice the reader to open your email?
- ☐ Is your preheader 5-8 words?

## 3. Logos & Colors

- ☐ Does the logo link to your website?
- ☐ Do the colors of your background, headline, buttons, and dividers match your brand?

## 4. Image

- ☐ Does your image support the message of your email?

## 5. Text

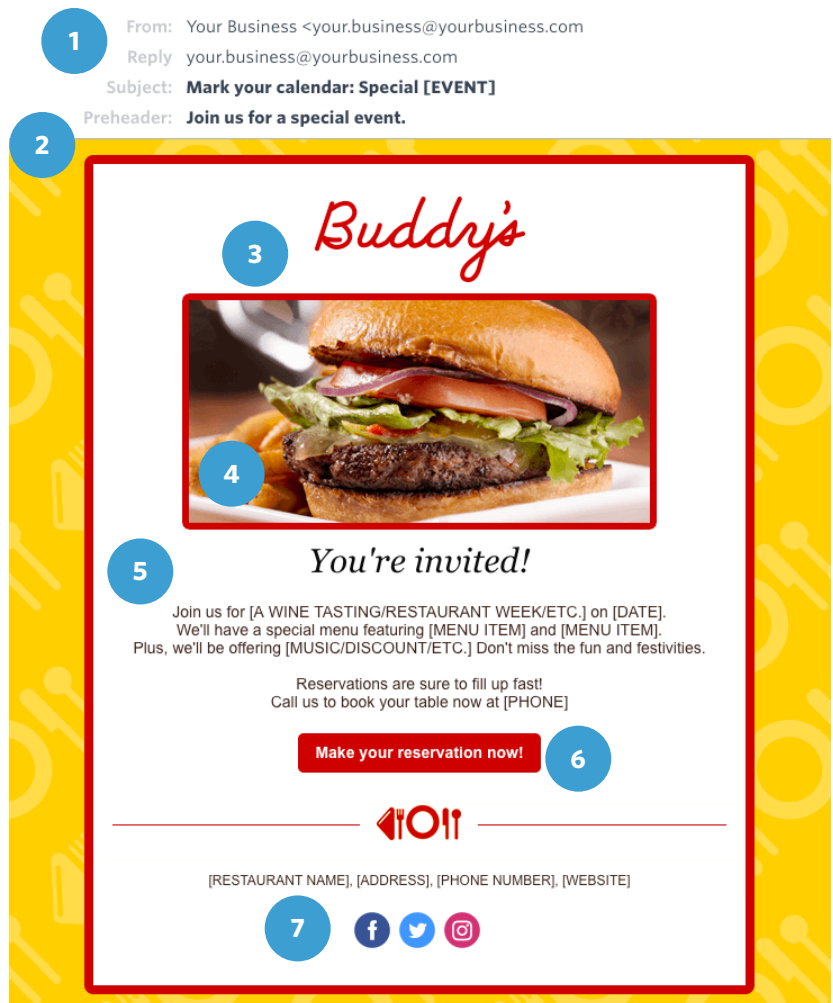
- ☐ Have you used at least 22pt text for your headline and at least 14pt text for your message body?

## 6. Call-to-Action

- ☐ Do you have a call-to-action button with a compelling command?

## 7. Footer

- ☐ Does your footer include the correct company information?
- ☐ Did you add your social buttons (and double check the links)?





# Recommended Restaurant/Bar/Café Templates

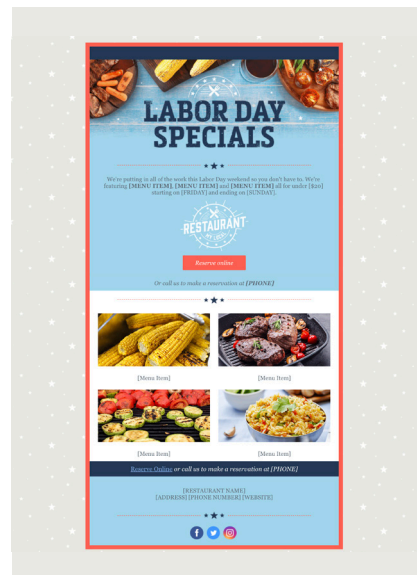
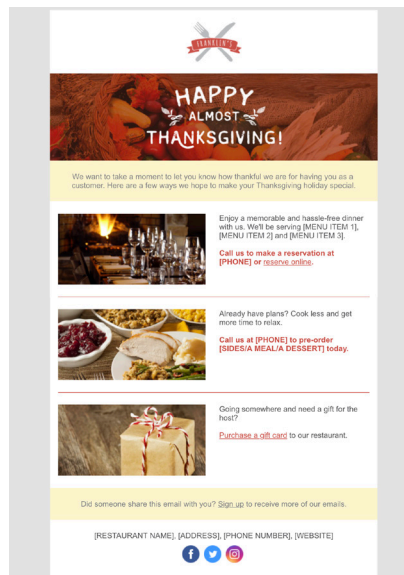
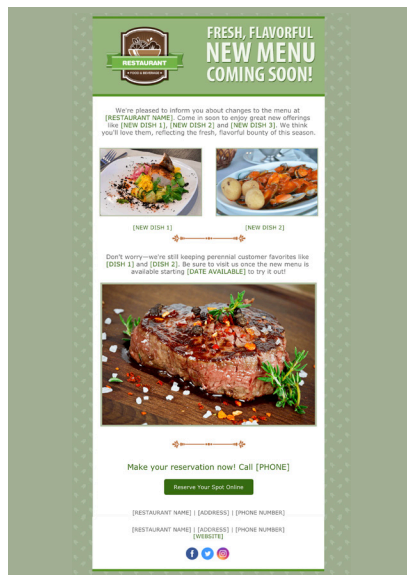
Use one of our [mobile-responsive restaurant templates](#) to create your emails quickly. Just update the pre-written content to your needs.

## General

- Contest
- Facebook review
- Flash Special
- Fundraising Event
- Menu Changes
- Menu Update
- Special Event

## Holiday/Seasonal

- Summer Specials
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day Specials
- Fall Specials
- Thanksgiving
- Valentine's Day Specials
- St. Patrick's Day
- Easter
- Easter Specials
- Spring Specials
- Cinco de Mayo
- Mother's Day Specials
- Memorial Day Specials
- Father's Day Specials





# Create Emails to Drive Action

Before someone reads your email, they'll need to open it.

Once readers recognize who the email is from, they'll look to the subject line to help them make that decision. As a rule of thumb, the best subject lines are clear on what's in the email.

Here are some other tips for standout subject lines:

- **Stay short and sweet.** Use four to seven words.
- **Avoid anything spammy.** Avoid ALL CAPS and excessive punctuation.
- **Ask a question.** Questions can pique your reader's interest.
- **Include a deadline.** Create a sense of urgency by showing your message is timely.

## What should you say in your emails?

Just answer three simple questions for your reader. Use this persuasive formula to make your writing process fast and effective at driving action. Then consult the creative writing prompts for when you need some extra inspiration.

1

### What are you offering? (Headline)

State clearly what your restaurant has to offer right in the headline.

2

### How will it help the reader? (Message body)

Below your headline, write a few sentences to elaborate on your offer. Provide the important details and explain why they matter to your reader. Keep your message clear and concise.

3

### What should they do next? (Call to action)

What action are you driving people towards? Your call to action should tell readers what they need to do to take the next step.



Previewing your email on a **mobile device** for quality ensures maximum reach and engagement.

**From email address** that professionally represents your organization.

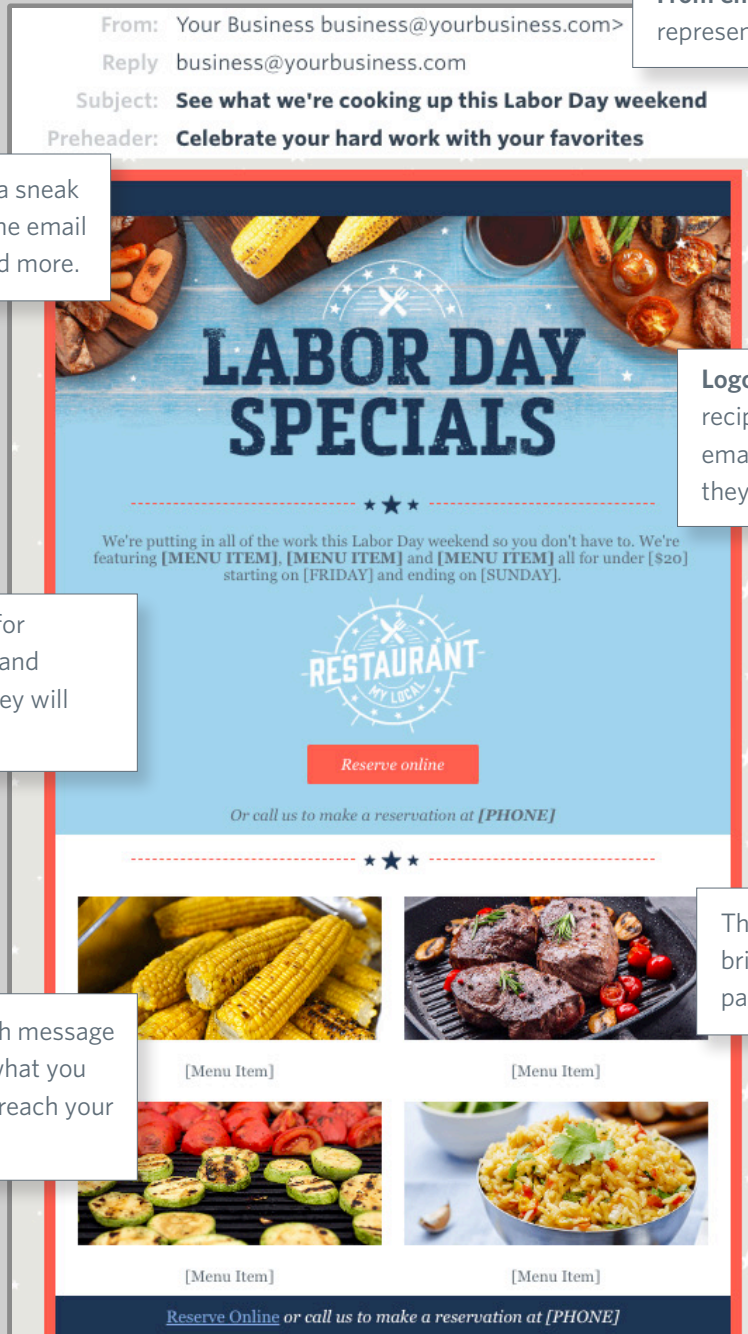
A **subject line** that provides a sneak peek at the best content in the email encourages recipients to read more.

**Logo and brand colors** lets recipients quickly recognize the email is from a business or person they know and trust.

**Short copy** makes it easy for recipients to gain interest and increases the likelihood they will read the whole email.

One **call-to-action** for each message telling recipients exactly what you want them to do will help reach your marketing goals.

The use of a **few small images** brings order and visual appeal to the page, making it easy to read.





# Measure the Business Impact

Your email reports provide valuable information about how your email marketing efforts are performing. Don't forget to go beyond opens and clicks to get to the business impact.

If you want to accurately understand the impact of your emails, you'll want to do three things: **Analyze, Assess, and Adjust.**

### 1. Analyze your email reports

Look at the numbers to see what they're saying about your marketing efforts. What are your open, click, bounce, and unsubscribe rates? How do they compare with previous campaigns? How do they compare with others in your industry?

#### TIP



[Update your Business Profile](#) to get industry comparison stats, tips, and tools.

### 2. Assess how your emails are supporting your business goals

Are people doing what you wanted them to do after receiving your email? Did you want people to make a purchase? Did you want people to call you? Visit your website or store? This is where you may need to look at other business systems to see the true impact of your email campaign.

### 3. Adjust your strategy accordingly

Use the information in the first two steps to help you make adjustments to get better results in the future. Over time you'll also start to see the types of campaigns that have been most beneficial to your business.

#### TIP



Did you know you can compare the results of multiple email campaigns? Use the [Campaign Comparison Report](#) to select up to five campaigns.

Use the worksheets on the next page to help you measure the business impact of your email marketing efforts.

# Measure the Impact of Your Time-Based Promotions

Promotion Name \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Announcement

Total Sent: \_\_\_\_\_  
Send Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Open Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Click-through Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Bounce Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ %   Unsubscribes: \_\_\_\_\_ % ( \_\_\_\_\_ )  
Business Result: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Reminder

Total Sent: \_\_\_\_\_  
Send Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Open Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Click-through Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Bounce Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ %   Unsubscribes: \_\_\_\_\_ % ( \_\_\_\_\_ )  
Business Result: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Last Chance

Total Sent: \_\_\_\_\_  
Send Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Open Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Click-through Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Bounce Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ %   Unsubscribes: \_\_\_\_\_ % ( \_\_\_\_\_ )  
Business Result: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**What is the goal of your promotion?**

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**How will you measure your success?**

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**What were your total business results?**

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**Did you meet your goal?**

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**What will you do differently next time?**

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# Measure the Impact of Your Informational Emails

Email Name \_\_\_\_\_

Total Sent: \_\_\_\_\_

Send Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Open Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ %

Click-through Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ %

Bounce Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ %   Unsubscribes: \_\_\_\_\_ % ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

Business Result: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

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**What is the goal of your email?**

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**How will you measure your success?**

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**What were your total business results?**

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**Did you meet your goal?**

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**What will you do differently next time?**

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# Grow Your List to Grow Your Business

It's simple. The more people you have in your contact list, the more people you can encourage to do business with you. But few people wake up each morning hoping to receive more emails. Focus on the value a potential subscriber will receive from your emails, and more people will join your list.

Here are three questions to answer to grow your email list:

### 1. Why would someone subscribe to your email list?

Here are some reasons why someone would subscribe:

- To receive promotions and discounts
- For details on the latest menu changes
- To get free food items

Plan on delivering this value to your subscribers based on what they're looking for above.

### 2. Where should you ask for email addresses?

There are three ways to collect email addresses: **in person, in print, and online.** [Use all of the tools available to you in your Constant Contact account](#) to collect email addresses with each of these methods.

**If collecting in person,** feature a sign-up sheet at checkout that invites customers to subscribe for VIP benefits. Or you can use the [ListBuilder app](#) to automatically add new contacts to your Constant Contact account.

**To collect via print materials,** use the [Text-to-Join](#) feature on signage around your restaurant. You choose a keyword that people can text to a set number, resulting in contacts being able to easily add themselves to your email list with their mobile phones.

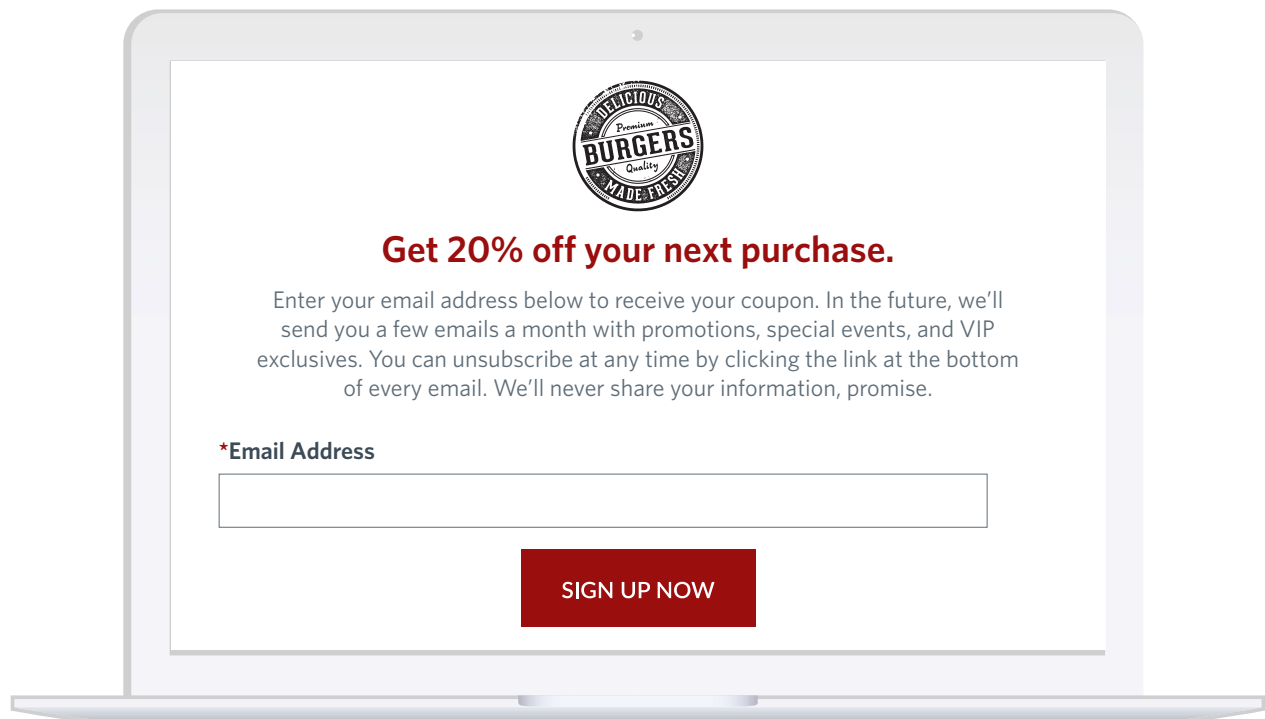
**When asking for addresses online,** link to your sign-up form in your social media posts/profiles. Be sure to use embeddable forms and [pop-up forms](#) on your website.


### 3. How should you ask people to sign up?

The key to a good list-building script is answering four key questions.

- 1. What's in it for them?** Explain the value they'll receive in exchange for their email address.
- 2. What objections do they have?** Address any potential concerns including the frequency you'll be sending emails and how easy they can unsubscribe.
- 3. How can they sign up?** Make it painless and foolproof. Guide them through the signup process, doing it for them if possible.
- 4. What should they expect next?** Explain what happens next and what types of emails they should expect to receive in the future.

Here's an example sign-up form you can use for inspiration:





**Get 20% off your next purchase.**

Enter your email address below to receive your coupon. In the future, we'll send you a few emails a month with promotions, special events, and VIP exclusives. You can unsubscribe at any time by clicking the link at the bottom of every email. We'll never share your information, promise.

\*Email Address

**SIGN UP NOW**



## Make Even More Impact with Your Next Email Campaign

Now that you're armed with a proven approach to email marketing, you'll be on your way to increase sales by enticing customers to eat at your restaurant and spread the word about your business while expanding your reach to new customers.

Get started by logging into your account and using the [Flash Special template](#) to announce a new sale or promotion. Implement the tips within this guide to get great results. You can do this!



# DO MORE FOR YOUR BUSINESS WITH EMAIL MARKETING

Armed with how to plan your email marketing strategy, design emails that drive action, create better email content, measure your email marketing's impact, and continually grow your email list, we hope you'll be able to achieve real results for your business with email marketing.

**Constant Contact®** 