DEMAND GEN® REPORT

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Striking The Balance Between Mass Campaigns & Tailored Outreach For Email Marketing

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Introduction

For years, email marketing was a powerhouse in the digital marketing arsenal, but the game has changed as customer expectations reach new heights. Now more than ever, audiences crave communications that speak directly to *them* — and they want outreach that's timely, relevant and undeniably personal.

"In an era of shorter attention spans and information overload, concise and action-oriented content is proving to be the most effective in B2B email campaigns," said Ashley Topping, Head of U.S. Marketing for **Exclaimer**, a provider of email signature solutions. "Emails that get straight to the point with clear value propositions, personalized elements and direct calls-to-action (CTAs) stand out in crowded inboxes."

To meet this demand, savvy marketers are harnessing the power of data-driven personalization, moving beyond mass appeal to create tailored experiences that truly connect. However, scaling this level of personalization requires a strategic approach and the effective use of advanced tools. Throughout this special report, we'll discuss how practitioners can:

- Use performance metrics — like open rates and click-through patterns — to identify effective personalization tactics and refine strategies over time;

- Adopt AI-powered tools, such as large-language models (LLMs), to generate highly personalized content at scale that streamlines workflows while maintaining relevance;

- Balance automation with creativity to free up time to focus on strategy and innovation while ensuring campaigns maintain their personalized, human touch; and

- Embrace transformation by orchestrating new opportunities to deliver impactful, individualized experiences that foster lasting customer relationships.

Balancing Mass Campaigns With
Individualized Outreach

Email marketing used to be a batch-and-blast initiative that featured little personalization beyond calling out someone's name or company. However, several factors are contributing to the new era of email marketing, such as shorter attention spans, more content overload and an overall lack of time — and it's prompting **86% of B2B marketers** to leverage personalized 1:1 email communication.

"Marketers are re-evaluating the balance between mass email campaigns and personalized outreach," explained Topping. "While large-scale campaigns remain effective for broad reach, audiences are becoming increasingly indifferent to messages that don't speak directly to them. To address this, marketers are focusing more on segmenting their audiences to create consistent, tailored experiences. They're also leveraging CRM integrations to coordinate their email marketing efforts across multiple channels, which enables them to create highly personalized campaigns that deliver consistent, individualized experiences at scale."

As the demand for personalization reshapes email marketing strategies — **38% of consumers** indicated that personalization was one of the main factors that made them trust business emails — the challenge now lies in bridging the gap between broad campaigns and the nuanced needs of individual buyers. While segmentation and CRM-driven omnichannel efforts offer a foundation for tailored outreach, additional value is derived from understanding buyer intent and journey stages.

"The focus should be on identifying key signals that indicate where a buyer is in their purchasing journey and what type of content can support them in completing their tasks," said David Chirakal, Group Director of Marketing Operations for **Marketbridge**, a growth consulting and marketing firm. "By facilitating their research and delivering a seamless experience, we can create a more meaningful interaction. Ultimately, being smart and thoughtful in applying personalization best practices — not just intent data — is the key to striking the right balance."

By identifying the right signals and aligning them with relevant, research-supporting content, marketers can craft experiences that are not only personalized but also purposeful. This synergy between data-driven insights and thoughtful application ensures every interaction feels strategic and genuine.

For example, in **a recent webinar,** EJ Oelling, VP of ABX for revenue AI-powered ABM platform **6sense**, noted that her company moved away from generic "thank you" emails after engaging with prospects at an event. She explained that her team focuses on delivering thought leadership in their follow-ups, with personalized messaging based on who they interacted with, their pain points and anything else they learned about the account during the conference.

"This approach includes creating tailored content, such as customized landing pages or resources, and adjusting the tone of our communication to resonate with their needs," said Oelling. "While we don't apply this level of personalization to every attendee, we prioritize selected accounts to ensure the follow-up is meaningful and helps advance the conversation."

"Marketers are focusing more on segmenting their audiences to create consistent, tailored experiences."

ASHLEY TOPPING, EXCLAIMER

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Driving Engagement Through Dynamic Email Personalization

With Ashley Topping, Exclaimer

In the era of inbox overload, standing out as a B2B marketer is no small feat. Personalization has become the linchpin of effective email campaigns, and Ashley Topping, Head of U.S. Marketing for email signature management platform Exclaimer, shared her insights on leveraging dynamic elements, scaling personalization and integrating email with other channels to maximize ROI.

Demand Gen Report: How are B2B brands using personalization tactics to stand out in crowded inboxes, and what impact are they seeing on engagement?

Ashley Topping: In a world where B2B buyers are bombarded with emails, standing out requires more than a catchy subject line — it's about creating personalized, relevant moments that resonate. Personalization shifts the focus from the sender to the recipient. In 2025, savvy marketers are crafting emails specifically for the reader, addressing their unique challenges, goals and interests. This approach is especially effective in ABM activities because it doesn't just improve open rates; it sparks action — whether it's clicking a link, booking a demo or replying directly.

At Exclaimer, we've taken this to the next level by incorporating dynamic elements into our email signatures to support our ABM strategies. By tailoring signature banners and CTAs to target accounts and specific personas, we've seen:

- A noticeable uptick in email signature click-through rates, averaging 6.14%;

- 15X higher click-through on ABM content compared to display ads, with the same messaging and the same audience; and

- Improved response rates from decision-makers, with a 2.55% CTR on meeting booking links.

Brands using personalization in email, particularly through dynamic signatures, report significant gains in campaign outcomes. Personalized experiences not only grab attention but also build trust, increasing the likelihood of responses and conversions. In a crowded inbox, personalization is no longer optional — it's the differentiator that ensures your message gets noticed.

DGR: *What are the most common challenges B2B marketers face when scaling their personalization efforts, and what are some effective solutions you've seen?*

Topping: Scaling personalization is one of the biggest challenges for B2B marketers today. It's not just about resources; it's about managing data, ensuring consistency and balancing privacy with personalization. These challenges include:

- **Resourcing:** Creating personalized content and campaigns for multiple ABM accounts can be time-consuming and require significant resources;

- **Consistency:** Maintaining consistency in messaging and branding can be challenging across various touch points and channels. Personalization should enhance the brand, not dilute it;

- **Balancing personalization with privacy:** Consumers are increasingly cautious about how their data is being used. Marketers must ensure they're using data responsibly and transparently while still delivering relevant, tailored messaging; and

- **Managing data silos:** Disconnected systems lead to siloed data, which makes it difficult to execute consistent, effective personalization. Instead, practitioners need martech tools that integrate to create opportunities and efficiencies.

DGR: *How can marketers address these challenges?*

Topping: Addressing these challenges is always a work in progress, but here are some solutions we've seen work well:

- **Automation and technology:** At Exclaimer, we use marketing automation platforms to create personalized content. AI-driven tools like Mutiny help scale tailored experiences without a proportional increase in manual effort.

- **Repurposing content:** By developing a robust content library, we can repurpose and tailor existing content to fit the needs of different accounts. This approach saves time while maintaining relevance.

- **Centralized narratives and brand guidelines:** We created clear guidelines around tone, visual identity and messaging, ensuring that everyone from team members to external partners maintains brand consistency. This strengthens our brand and customer trust, contributing to a cohesive customer journey.

- **First-party data:** We shifted our focus toward using first-party data — like website analytics and email interactions — to drive personalized experiences. This first-party data allows us to tailor content based on direct customer interactions.

- **Privacy compliance:** Ensuring strict compliance with data privacy regulations, such as GDPR and CCPA, is essential. We prioritize transparency and customer consent, clearly communicating how we collect and use data.

- **Managing data silos:** Selecting martech tools that integrate, like Exclaimer with HubSpot or Salesforce, ensures our data flows seamlessly between platforms. This enables consistent, personalized messaging across channels and streamlines workflows.

DGR: **How are B2B brands balancing between automation and personalization to avoid making campaigns feel too robotic?**

Topping: Personalized email signatures add a human touch to automated campaigns. By incorporating tailored elements like personalized banners, relevant CTAs or even specific sign-offs that resonate with the recipient's industry or needs, email signatures help make automated emails more personal. These personalized signatures help maintain the warmth of 1:1 communication while the automation itself works behind the scenes — making the process feel organic, not robotic. This subtle personalization ensures that automation goes unnoticed, leaving the recipient with a genuine, human-centered experience.

DGR: **How are B2B marketers integrating email with other marketing channels, and what cross-channel strategies are yielding the highest ROI?**

Topping: B2B marketers are increasingly leveraging email as a key component in integrated, cross-channel strategies to maximize ROI. By aligning email campaigns with other marketing channels, businesses can create cohesive, personalized experiences that engage prospects and drive conversions across multiple touchpoints.

One effective approach is using email signatures to bridge connections to other channels. A well-designed email signature with personalized elements can direct recipients to relevant social media profiles, meeting booking links or campaign-specific landing pages. For instance, a signature promoting a company's LinkedIn page encourages ongoing engagement, while a banner linking to a webinar or downloadable resource connects email efforts directly to broader marketing goals.

These seamless transitions between channels help reinforce engagement, making each email an opportunity to deepen the customer relationship and strengthen brand impact. When executed as part of a coordinated campaign—where email supports paid ads, social media and content marketing — marketers can better nurture leads, measure touchpoint performance and maximize overall impact.

To maximize ROI, marketers should continuously test and refine email signature elements while tracking cross-channel metrics. By aligning email with other channels, businesses can ensure that every interaction contributes to a well-rounded, effective strategy.

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Personalizing At Scale In The Age Of AI

The expectation for marketing teams to execute personalization on a 1:1 scale is ironic given the headwinds businesses are currently facing, as most teams are operating with the "do more with less" mentality. With budgets cut and dwindling resources, the natural focus turns to artificial intelligence (AI) and LLMs to help teams optimize their time. Specifically, **more than one-third of practitioners** are implementing machine learning and AI.

"AI can summarize volumes of information, generate marketing copy and even come up with campaign ideas — all you have to do is give it the right prompts," noted **Pam Didner**, a B2B Marketing Consultant, Author and Speaker. "Don't just ask AI to write an email based on certain factors; instead, provide it with all the relevant information about your industry and customers, and your desired outcomes. That way, you'll get a plan that's tailored to your exact needs, not some generic template."

However, there is a balance to strike when working with AI, because these types of LLMs don't have the same depth of understanding as marketers when it comes to their products, industries and customers. Instead, Didner advised that marketers become active participants in the process to guide and refine outputs — "While it's a powerful tool, you still need to test and validate the output and compare it to human-generated content to ensure effectiveness," she noted.

Didner suggested setting up a controlled test by creating two types of email campaigns: One that's AI-generated, and another that's manually refined based on a marketer's expertise. By comparing their open rates, she continued, marketers can demonstrate the value of that input.

For instance, Topping explained that while automated emails and workflows can handle initial outreach, the best brands ensure that there are real people involved at critical points, such as live webinars, demos or customer support interactions.

"Customers expect personalization, but not at the cost of authenticity," continued Topping. "Too much automation can make interactions feel robotic, and people want to feel like they're engaging with real humans, not just algorithms. To get it right, B2B brands are using automation to handle routine tasks while reserving key moments for real human interaction. Displaying real faces at these touchpoints reinforces a sense of authenticity and warmth."

Redefining Campaign Success For Long-Term Impact

Time constraints aren't just restricted to marketers, either: Consumers see between **4,000 and 10,000 marketing messages** per day, and specific to emails, the average person receives **121 emails per day** — and that number is much higher for professionals. Marketers need to cut through the noise and find an angle that grabs prospects' attention in the crowded sea of attention, which, according to 6sense's Oelling, involves data.

"The key lies in using the right data, crafting the right message and targeting the right audience," she said. "For larger accounts, it's especially important to tailor information to different personas. How do you take the same insights and personalize them based on a person's role, title or geographical location? Collaboration with sales is also crucial to identify and prioritize the right accounts at the right stage of the buyer's journey."

Doubling down on Oelling's point was Marketbridge's Chirakal, who spoke to the power of analyzing historical data. He explained that this helps practitioners identify patterns from closed opportunities in the past six to 12 months, which can help uncover areas of focus.

"You can perform an analysis to help uncover which intent keywords closed accounts were engaging with three to six months before the opportunity was created or a sales conversation began," he continued. "This intelligence allows you to provide more precise guidance to sales and marketing teams, pinpointing the best times to target accounts and better-personalized outreach to lookalike accounts."

Another facet of determining what's working revolves around measuring campaign effectiveness — and in 2025, Topping noted that marketers need to move away from siloes.

"Marketers need to assess metrics that reflect broader business impact," said Topping. "Instead of focusing solely on channel-specific KPIs, it's important to measure how campaigns work together to drive engagement, conversions and long-term customer relationships."

Specifically, Topping suggested marketers focus on:

Engagement across channels, which combines tracking information such as open rates, click-through rates and replay rates with data such as link clicks, banner engagement or CTA interactions to understand how recipients engage with personalized elements.

Moving beyond lead generation by tracking how campaigns influence pipeline and revenue, which includes the use of attribution models to measure how email campaigns or signature elements contribute to conversions and analyzing metrics like content downloads, webinar attendance or video views across campaigns.

"By identifying what resonates on one channel, marketers can repurpose high-performing content for other channels to maintain consistent messaging and maximize ROI," said Topping. "For instance, if an ABM campaign sees strong engagement with industry-specific banners in email signatures, those insights can inform the creation of similar messaging for targeted LinkedIn ads. In 2025, the key to effective measurement lies in breaking down silos, analyzing metrics across functions and using data to refine strategies for greater impact."

Conclusion

As email marketing continues to evolve, the key to success lies in combining the precision of data with the power of automation and creativity. By embracing advanced tools like LLMs and refining personalization strategies through data-driven insights, marketers can deliver campaigns that don't just capture attention but build meaningful connections. The brands that strike this balance will not only keep pace with rising customer expectations but also set the standard for what truly impactful email marketing looks like.

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Exclaimer is the industry's leading provider of email signature solutions, empowering businesses to unlock the potential of 1:1 email as a marketing channel. With its award-winning platform, organizations can simplify the management of email signatures to deliver consistent branding, deliver marketing campaigns and company news, gather real-time customer feedback, and much more.

Over 65,000 organizations in 160+ countries rely on Exclaimer for their email signature solutions. Its diverse customer base includes Sony, Mattel, Bank of America, NBC, the Government of Canada, and the BBC.

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