

Web Ministry: E-mail and E-blasts



Almost everyone these days has at least one email account. But just in case you don't, you can sign up for a free email account with one of these popular services:

- [Google \(gmail\)](#)
- [MSN \(hotmail\)](#)
- [Yahoo](#)

Email has become the preferred method of communication for personal and professional use in the 21st century digital age. So why not harness the power of this easy and quick Internet tool to boost your church or organization's contact with members and visitors?

The key to successful email communication is knowing your target audience and sending one clear, key message. Digital Impact conducted a user study to determine how people interact with their inbox. They found 80% of those tested opened their inbox, read the "from" line and then subject line and then hit delete. They then opened the emails that were left in their inbox. There are a few simple things you can do to insure your email messages are read and don't end up in the delete, Spam or junk mail folders.

1. Include the most important content towards the top of the email, "above the fold."
2. Use brief, consistent subject lines. Avoid general Spam trigger phrases, such as "click here, go here, free, unsubscribe, ..." and avoid the use of CAPS and excessive punctuation marks (e.g. \$\$, !!!, ...).
3. Provide your physical mailing address and phone number, as well as a link to your website.
4. Send emails early in the week. Tuesday morning works best.
5. If possible, try to keep images smaller than 200 x 200 pixels at 72 dpi, particularly header images.
6. Use "confirmed opt-in" (aka "verified opt-in" or "double opt-in") practices to ensure subscribers want to receive mailings as well as easy-to-follow unsubscribe information in each mailing.

An e-blast is an email message sent to a list of people simultaneously, such as an announcement about a meeting or event. Using something as basic as Microsoft Word and an Excel spreadsheet of names and email addresses, you can create a custom message for each recipient delivered via email, similar to the way you would use these tools to generate a mail merge letter only it is delivered electronically. You can also set up different groups for e-blast delivery using Google or Yahoo groups.

Uses for Web ministry:

There are many ways to use email and e-blasts to enhance your communications as well as benefit your Web ministry. Consider these effective, efficient and low-cost suggestions:

- Instead of mailing postcards to remind people of committee meetings and other church events, send an e-blast to everyone.
- Use email to send a follow-up message to visitors (remember to collect email addresses along with other information when they visit your church on Sunday).
- Send an email message to next Sunday's worship leaders, ushers, greeters, communion servers, Sunday school teachers or other leaders to remind them of their responsibilities.
- Create a weekly, brief message from the pastor or other church staff member or ministry leader announcing what will be happening in these next week's services and other ministry gatherings. This is ideal for music ministries, children's ministries (sent to parents) and youth ministries.
- Use email to develop a list of prayer ministers and send the weekly prayer concerns electronically to this designated group.

Learn more:

- [A Few Good Broadcast Email Tools](#)

- [Fourteen Email Do's and Don'ts](#)
- [Promote Your Organization with an Email Signature](#)
- [What? My Reputation Has a Score Now?](#)
- [Five Tips for Effective Email Design](#)
- [Five Tips to Write Effective Email Copy](#)
- [How to Program Your Email to Improve Its Functionality](#)
- [How to Enter Through the Back Door to Your Readers' Inboxes](#)
- [Must Church-based Organizations Comply with the CAN-SPAM Law?](#)