

THE CHIROPRACTOR'S GUIDE TO EMAIL MARKETING

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PerfectPatients
New Patient Website Service

The Chiropractor's Guide to Email Marketing

By Perfect Patients

Imagine an impactful marketing channel that allows you to communicate with current and prospective patients - **for free**

Email marketing is a personal way to keep patients engaged with your practice while addressing their desire for better health. This encourages regular office visits, stimulates reactivations, and leads to more referrals.

From birthday greetings to monthly newsletters to emails targeted to a specific group of patients, email marketing helps you deepen and create more influential patient relationships.

But where do you begin? In this eBook, you'll learn several email marketing strategies, some tactics to avoid, and best practices for optimizing your campaigns.

A chiropractor in a Denver suburb sends an email to 173 of her patients, introducing her new front desk CA. Within a week, five inactive patients call to resume care.

A Florida chiropractor collects 46 email addresses at a spinal screening. He sends two follow up emails that result in three new patients.

A practice in Queensland, Australia sends an email to their 205 patients announcing their new associate doctor who has advanced training in sports injuries. Six reactivations are traced to that single email.

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Types of Email Marketing Campaigns

Staying connected with your patients is one of the most important ways to build a sustainable practice. After all, one-time patients may not be your ideal patients.



To encourage patient loyalty, it's imperative to be proactive.

Email marketing is a simple, low-cost way to be proactive. By reaching hundreds of people with a single message, email is a way to increase top-of-mind awareness and stimulate reactivations.

Use email to:

- Announce an upcoming event
- Introduce a new service you offer
- Present a special offer
- Stimulate reactivations
- Get feedback from patient surveys
- Introduce a new staff member
- Supply helpful information



While you have plenty of options, the following email campaigns are particularly effective for encouraging repeat appointments and stimulating more referrals.

Monthly Newsletters

You might have a good amount of loyal patients who maintain a frequent and consistent appointment schedule. However, you probably have even more who call out of the blue months, or even years, after their last appointment.

This latter group simply needs their memory jogged from time to time.



That's why one of the most important factors for keeping your schedule full is to give your patients reminders. A monthly newsletter is a professional, consistent way to do so.

Educating patients with monthly newsletters shows that you care about your patients' health. It also positions you as a natural health authority in the community. In this process, you gently remind them that you are the best – and only – solution for their chiropractic needs.



Here are the essential components for crafting an impactful patient newsletter:

- Write brief articles, under 200 words
- Include eye-catching photos or graphics
- Educate on patient-relevant health issues
- Write from the patient's point of view
- Write a compelling subject line
- Send around the same time each month

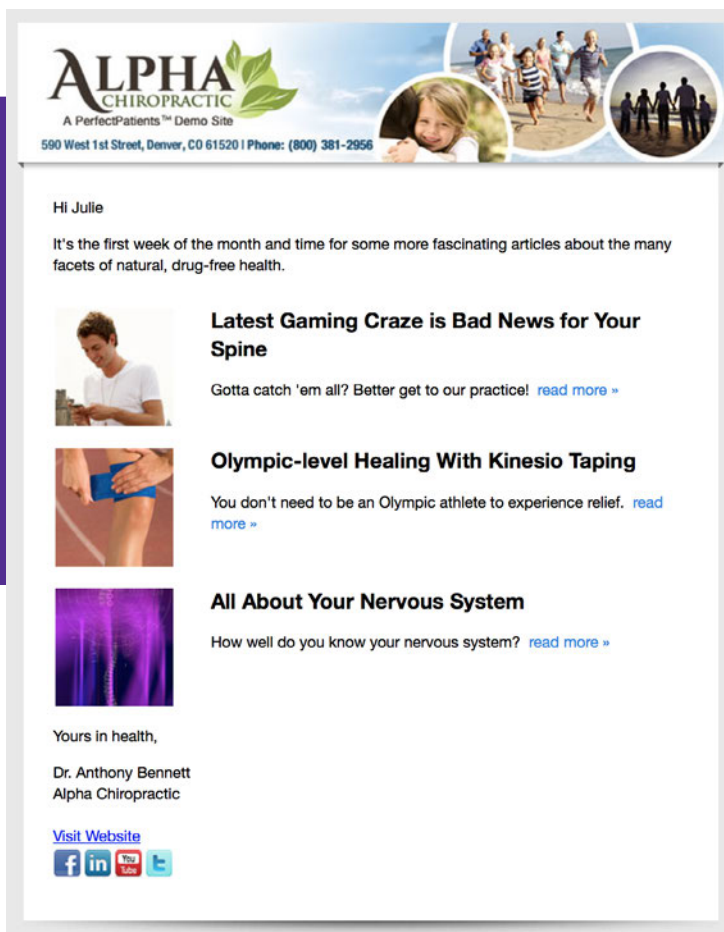
Distributing informative content that your patients find valuable is a great way to create lasting relationships. It equips patients with the knowledge to be informed supporters of chiropractic – and supporters of you, as a result.

Bonus: if a patient finds your newsletter particularly informative, they just might share it on social media or forward it on to a friend or family member, which could lead to a new referral patient.



Subject Line:

Latest Gaming Craze is Bad for Your Spine



New Patient Surveys

Online reviews play a pivotal role in your online presence. Not only do five-star reviews establish trust, they may improve your rankings in Google. Of course, securing a consistent flow of five-star reviews isn't easy. That's where new patient surveys sent via email can help.



New patient surveys are an unobtrusive way to encourage feedback, which provides valuable intel for your practice.

In addition, it builds on your new patient relationships right from the get-go. After all, you're asking how you can make their next appointment an even better experience.

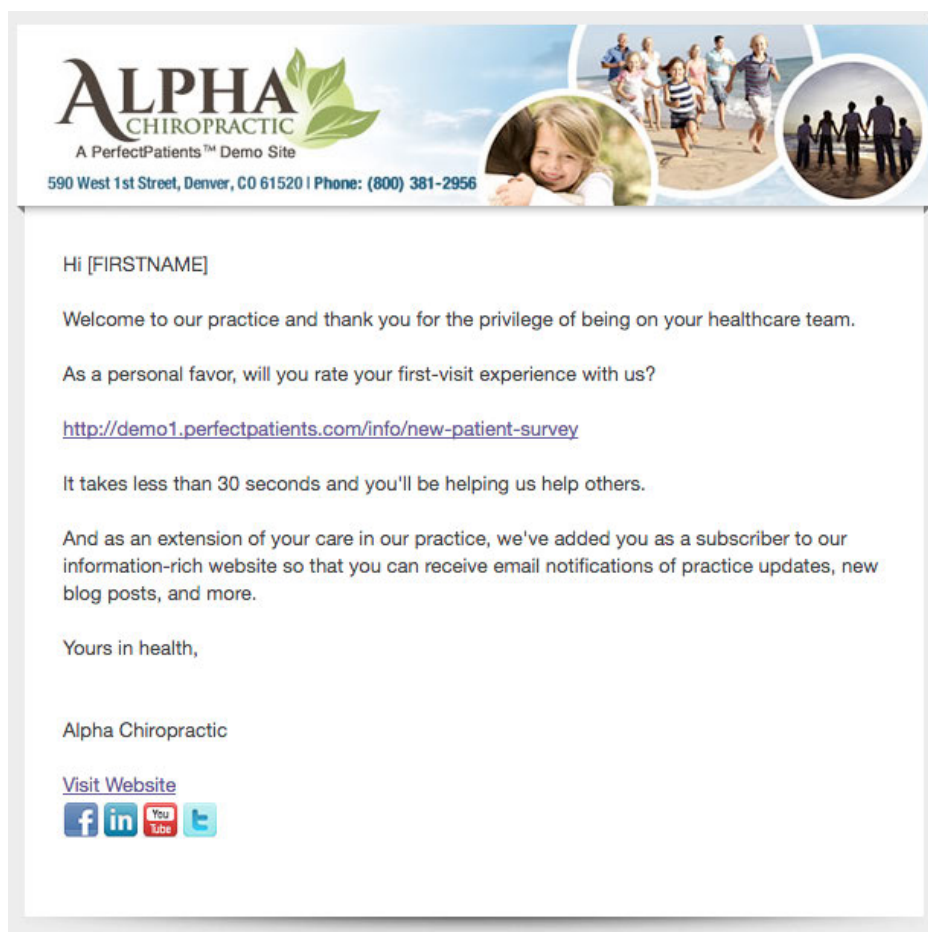
Implementing a patient survey requires a reliable system. For example, there are website and software platforms (such as Perfect Patients) that can automatically send an email to any new patient who joins your practice. This directs the patient to a brief survey where they can provide feedback about their first-visit experience.

79%

79 percent of consumers trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations.

You can then promote positive online reviews by detecting the satisfaction level of the patient (learn about these benefits in our [300 New Patients eBook](#)). If the patient provides positive feedback, they will be encouraged to review your practice on the most popular review sites.

Not only does this provide valuable feedback about your practice, it's a way to build an online reputation that entices prospective new patients.



*Subject Line:
Welcome to Our Practice*

Birthday Greetings

In addition to the start of a new year, birthdays are a time when people tend to think about their health. Similar to monthly newsletters, sending birthday greetings to your patients each year can encourage repeat office visits. After all, by reminding patients that you're thinking about them, you're in fact reminding them to think about you.

Idea: To get inactives to resume care, many practices find it helpful to extend a free visit on a patient's birthday. ☆

Back in the day, you'd purchase a greeting card, handwrite a message, and drop the card into the mail. The introduction of email simplified this process. Still, keeping a calendar of your patients' birthdays and typing out a greeting can be time-consuming.

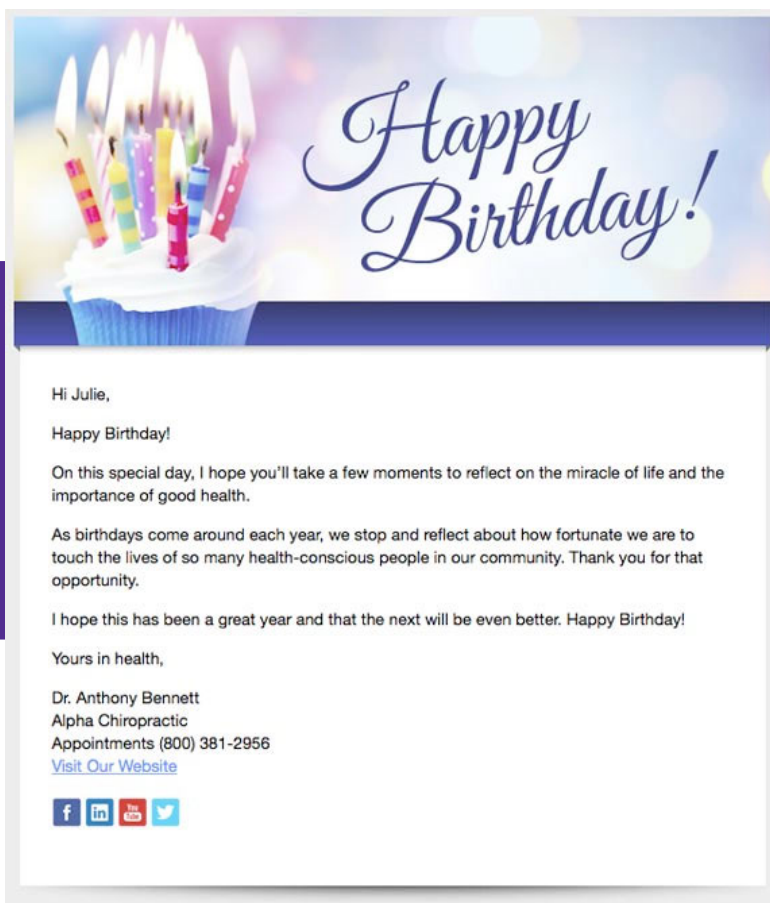
That's why it's important to automate your patient database. With the right software, you can have birthday greetings sent automatically. Check with your website provider to see if this feature is included.

20%

Marketers see an average increase of **20 percent in sales** when using personalized web experiences.

Subject Line:

Happy Birthday from Alpha Chiropractic



Targeted Campaigns

One of the most important elements of a successful email marketing campaign is personalization.

For instance, putting a relevant offer in front of a receptive patient. Email “tagging” is a powerful tool that segments your patients into targeted lists. This allows for effective “upselling” and “cross selling.”

By creating and adding a particular tag to a patient in your database, you are organizing them into a group – a list of people that have something in common.

For example, here’s how the [Perfect Patients email tagging service](#) works:

- *Add a patient to your website*
- *Tag the patient with a custom label, such as “Blue Cross”*
- *Send a targeted email to only your orthotics patients*

Say you have patients who are interested in your weight loss or nutrition program. You can group those patients with “weight loss” or “nutrition” tags, and then send a specific email only to this group announcing an event, new product, or special offer.



Other Ideas & Examples

Here are a few examples of other types of emails you may want to send your patients...



Hi Greg,

On behalf of our team here at Alpha Chiropractic, we would like to wish you and yours a happy holiday season! Thank you for entrusting us with your care!

You can be confident that we will remain committed to delivering the highest levels of chiropractic care in a warm and friendly environment now and in all the years to come.

We look forward to being your healthcare provider of choice, and will endeavor to help you and your family achieve optimal health and wellness!

Yours in health,

Dr. Anthony Bennett
Alpha Chiropractic

*Subject Line:
Happy Holidays from
Alpha Chiropractic*



ALPHA
CHIROPRACTIC

A PerfectPatients™ Demo Site

590 West 1st Street, Denver, CO 61520 | Phone: (800) 381-2956



Hi John,

Hauling a heavy backpack over one shoulder can worsen pre-existing postural deformities or spinal misalignments. Common sense tells us that a heavy load, unevenly distributed, day after day, can stress a still-growing spine. Consider the old adage "As the twig bends, so grows the tree."

If your son or daughter find themselves lugging books back and forth from school, consider these safety suggestions:



*Subject Line:
Are Your Children Carrying a
Heavy Academic Load?*

Email Marketing Best Practices

Before starting an email marketing campaign, it's crucial to look at the big picture. What's your number-one goal? Most likely, it's to keep your patient schedule full. Good patient retention and a steady flow of referrals are two of the best ways to achieve this.

Your email campaigns should be part of a holistic approach to educate patients about your practice and chiropractic care. But like any online marketing campaign, there are several factors to consider.

From branded email addresses to compelling subject lines, the following best practices will provide the guidance you need to run rewarding email campaigns.



Brand Your Emails

Any time you market your practice, it's important to have cohesive branding. Your business cards, signage, etc. should all represent the same brand. And just like in the real world, having a unified **online** brand improves trust and credibility. Which underscores the importance of having a branded email account.

In short, a branded email account matches your website's domain. For example, rather than having a gmail.com or yahoo.com email extension, your address would look something like this: drsmith@chiroabc.com.

Why is this important?

- A personal email account on a free platform like Gmail might show inexperience, which could reflect on your clinical skills.
- You have the ability to set up multiple emails for different segments of your practice (i.e. info@chiroabc.com, billing@chiroabc.com, frontdesk@chiroabc.com, etc.).
- Free email accounts are not built for mass communication, so you might suffer from deliverability and spam constraints when launching campaigns.
- Your patients will recognize your email right away because the branding is consistent with the rest of your practice.



Over **90 percent** of small businesses affirm that using branded emails makes them appear more credible.

Create Compelling Subject Lines

The subject line of your email is your first impression. And if you don't make a good first impression, patients won't be compelled to click. You can boost your open rates by ensuring that your subject lines are concise, descriptive, and enticing.

Most of your patients' inboxes are already drowning in emails. If your subject line is uninspiring, it will likely get passed over. Likewise, if your subject lines give off a spammy, used-car-salesman vibe, they'll likely go straight to the trash.

Consider these examples:

Poor subject line:

"SAVE MORE CASH ON YOUR NEXT ADJUSTMENT!!!!"



Spam filters swing into full gear when confronted with subject lines that include all caps, excessive exclamation points, and spam trigger words like "save" and "cash." Sure, it might seem like you're helping patients by "saving them money." In reality, though, this subject line is all about you. The moment a patient sees it in their inbox (if it even makes it there), they're thinking, "Ah, they just want my money."

Good subject line:

"5 Exercise Tips For Better Health"



This is a better subject line. It's concise, catchy, and patient-focused. Offering tips on how to improve your patients' wellbeing does two things:

1) It reminds them about their health; 2) It shows that you care.

Great subject line:

"Why Your Cell Phone is Killing Your Back"



Not only does this address a health concern, it's clever and provocative. Odd as it may sound, most people have a very intimate connection with their cell phone. This subject line creates an emotional reaction. Then, by explaining the effects of cell phone use on posture and neck alignment, you can encourage patients to schedule an appointment.

This is the type of email that a patient might more likely forward to a friend or family member. And when a patient hits “forward,” not only are they sharing your helpful article, they’re essentially recommending you to the recipient - which leads to more patient referrals.

Here are more examples of compelling subject lines:

- “3 Ways to Ward Off Migraines – the Natural Way”
- “Want to Improve Your Flexibility? Learn How...”
- “The Surprising Link Between Nutrition & Chiropractic”
- “5 Shocking Myths About Your Body”
- “Prevention: The Key to Lifelong Health”
- “The Painful Consequence of Too Much Sitting”
- “Stressed? There’s a Natural Solution For That”
- “10 Goal-Setting Health Tips for Success”

Optimally, you’ll want to keep your subject lines between 40 and 56 characters. This will provide enough description, while allowing for easy viewing on mobile devices.

Want to test out your subject lines? Use [this tool](#) to measure your subject lines’ marketing potential, deliverability rating, and overall quality.



A [third of all email recipients](#) open emails based on subject line alone.

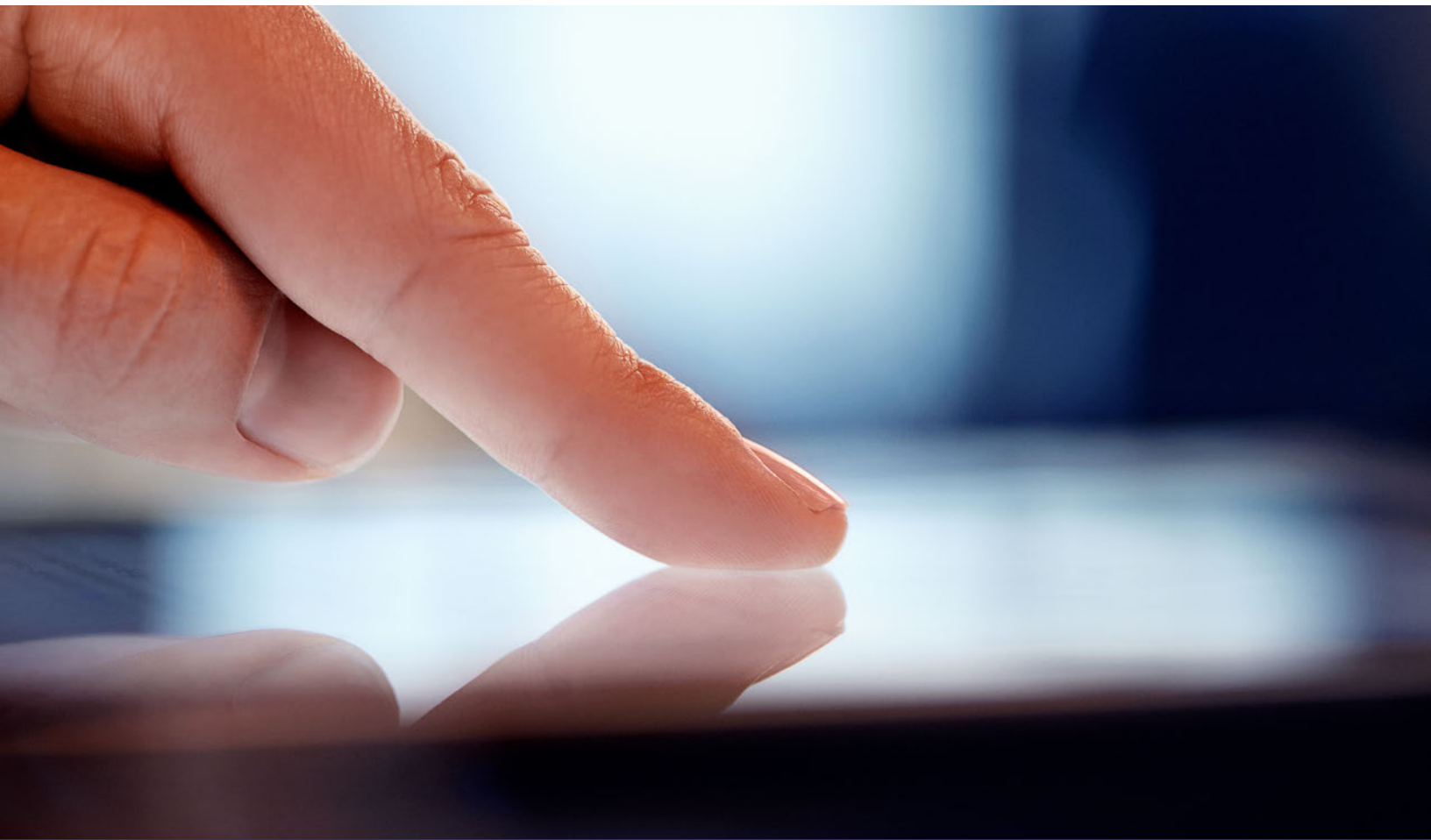
Make Your Emails Browsable

First, include a benefit for the reader in the first sentence, or at least the first paragraph—which may be all your patient will read. In other words, get to the point. Quickly.

Your emails should be easy to read. Quality content that is easily scanned is much more likely to be read than one big block of text. Therefore, the look and feel of your email is just as important as the information it contains.

Second, note that text-heavy emails with blocky paragraphs won't keep your patients engaged. Include an image or graphic and headings throughout to make your content more readable.

Some email hosts will, by default, block images in an email. While this shouldn't deter you from including them, note that image-heavy emails can appear awkward when viewed through certain email hosts. With that in mind, send the occasional text-only email. This will ensure those with blocked images still receive your message.



In addition to imagery, be mindful of:

- Sentence length (*run-on sentences can cause a reader to lose interest*)
- Paragraph length (*don't be afraid of short one or two-word paragraphs*)
- Word choice (*don't use too much technical jargon*)
- Hard-to-read fonts (*a serif font is always best*)
- Spacing between paragraphs
(*make sure there is enough space so it doesn't look like one big block of text*)
- Using bullet points when appropriate (*like we're doing here!*)

Remember that your emails should be written for **patients**.

Technical content written for a practitioner won't win over the average patient. Before sending a new email, review the content's reading level. To keep patients engaged, get the content as close as possible to a 7th grade reading level.

Most Word processors have a built-in reading level feature. Or, copy your content into [this tool](#) to review your score.

Call Your Readers to Action

While most of your emails should be educational and not overly “salesy”, it’s always important to include a “call-to-action” (CTA). After all, the main goal of email marketing is to encourage readers to do something – call, reply, click a link, download a guide, etc.



More often than not, that task is to schedule an appointment.

Your mailing should be structured in a way that it will generate a direct response from your readers. Say that you’re sending out a newsletter. At the bottom of the email you might say, “Click here to schedule your next appointment!” or “Click here before reaching for the medicine cabinet!”

By clicking on the CTA, patients should be directed to a landing page on your website. Here they can fill out a form or pick up the phone to schedule an appointment.

Here are a few more CTA examples to consider:



- Ready to get started? Give us a call.
- Arrange to tour our practice and meet the team.
- Spinal problems rarely get better on their own. Begin care today.
- Are you a good candidate for chiropractic care? Find out!
- Questions? Concerns? Give us a call and put your mind at ease.
- Request an appointment today and take the first step to better health.

3

What to Avoid

Even with ample resources and state-of-the-art email marketing software, mistakes are regularly made. Misspellings, grammar issues, and poor subject lines are some of the more common, and more glaring, oversights.

However, you might be committing several blunders without even knowing it. “Sales-heavy” content could turn off readers. Emails that aren’t mobile-friendly could quickly get discarded. Some of the more technical mistakes could contaminate your patient list, leading to poor open and click-through rates.

But that’s not all....



**48%**

48 percent of emails are opened on a mobile device.

Not Optimizing For Mobile

“I had to zoom in and out to read this email on my iPhone!”

This is an unlikely scenario. Because if your emails don't cater to mobile devices, they'll likely go straight to the trash before they're even read. It's hard enough to get someone to open your emails, don't lose them once they do open it.

To optimize your emails for mobile, consider these tips:

- Use an email service provider that offers mobile-optimized templates
- Ensure that your image sizes fit nicely across a mobile screen
- Use a font size that isn't too large or too small for a mobile screen
- Always preview your emails before clicking the send button

Email Fatigue and Inconsistency

What is the optimum frequency for sending emails? You need to find the sweet spot that keeps your patients engaged without overwhelming them. Email fatigue sets in when patients get tired of receiving too many emails. And considering the overflowing inboxes of many patients, fatigue can set in pretty quickly.

*It's not just the **number** of emails that can cause fatigue, but the types of emails you send.*



Is the content relevant to the patient? Does the content provide value? The goal is for your patients to read your latest email and then actually look forward to the next one.

To cut down on the number of emails you send, add a P.S. message. For instance, if a new event announcement coincides with the timing of your monthly newsletter, you could add a message at the bottom announcing the event – rather than sending two separate emails.

Inconsistency can also pose problems. Your newsletter should be sent around the same time each month. Avoid large gaps in your publishing schedule, so your patients know when to expect your next mailing.





Avoid the Spam Folder

Email spam is still a big business. In fact, spam messages account for **56 percent** of email traffic worldwide.

Email providers are working harder than ever to reduce inbox irrelevance, therefore, sending more and more emails into the spam folder. But email providers aren't the only thing to worry about. The **CAN-SPAM Act**, a law that sets the rules for commercial email, has seven noteworthy guidelines:

- Don't use false or misleading header information
- Don't use deceptive subject lines
- Identify the message as an ad
- Tell recipients where you're located
(*your address in the footer of the email is sufficient*)
- Tell recipients how to opt out of receiving future email from you
(*have an unsubscribe option in your email footer*)
- Honor opt-out requests promptly
- Monitor what others are doing on your behalf

Of course, following all the CAN-SPAM act rules doesn't guarantee inbox success. Here are some additional tips to keep your emails out of the spam folder.

- Avoid ALL CAPS, exclamation points, and spammy words like "free" and "discount" in your subject lines
- Maintain a good text-to-image ratio – too many images may signal spam
- A/B test your emails to learn how changes with your content impacts delivery and engagement
- Don't include video or Flash within your email
- Avoid attaching documents to your emails
- Use a reputable email delivery service



4

Choosing an Email Service Provider

Hosting your patient emails on your Gmail Contacts list would be quite the chore. Running successful email marketing campaigns requires an email service provider. But email marketing services come in all shapes and sizes.

The basic functionalities of a provider include the ability to:

- Create email templates and/or use pre-made templates
- Maintain a subscriber list for distributing messages
- Personalize messages with your branding
- Send bulk emails to an entire subscriber list or narrow your list to send to a select group
- Provide statistics on each email campaign (*open rate, click-through rate, bounce rate, etc.*)
- Handle unsubscribes

iContact

 AWeber



MailChimp

Constant Contact 
Helping small business do more business.®

The Pitfalls of Commercial Email Software

There are many types of email marketing service providers to choose from, each offering their own bells and whistles. While commercial email companies offer the basic functionalities of email marketing, they have limitations.

One of their greatest pitfalls is the inability to precisely segment a list. While many commercial email providers may offer some integration with your website, their options for targeting a specific segment of patients are virtually nonexistent.

For an email marketing campaign to be effective, you must target the right people.



After all, sending something that is considered a “financial inducement” to a Medicare patient could, in fact, do more harm than good.

Integrate Your Email Marketing Initiatives

It's important that your email marketing efforts integrate with your website. If not, you'll have to use multiple vendors to run your email marketing campaigns (one to organize your contacts, one to send campaigns, etc.). This could lead to a disconnect in your strategy.



For instance, an integrated solution allows you to create custom landing pages on your website designed to pertain to a particular email campaign. If your email marketing is integrated with your website, you can create the landing page and then send the email all from the same place – your website.

You might check with your current or prospective website provider about their email integration capabilities. Then have procedures in place for collecting your patients' email addresses. Once you have their email addresses, they should be input into an integrated system, one that houses all your marketing overtures in one location.

Conclusion

Internal marketing is a crucial element of promoting your practice, but it is often overlooked when new patients are the primary goal. Email is one of the most impactful internal marketing channels. After all, many of your inactive patients are simply waiting for an invitation to return!

Building a powerful email marketing campaign is more than just writing and clicking the “send” button. With the right tools and best practices, you can transmit specialized messages that engage patients and encourage interaction.

This will produce loyal patients who visit often and refer you when the opportunity is right.



Handled well, it can be one of the most cost-effective ways to maintain a healthy patient roster.





The Perfect Patients Website Service

Serving thousands of chiropractors across the globe, Perfect Patients helps practices grow their online presence with an integrated website service. This comprehensive solution includes mobile-friendly design, content development, search engine optimization, and more.

Also included in the Perfect Patients website service is an email marketing solution that promotes patient community and engagement. This integrated solution links your patient email list with your website — the centerpiece of all of your online marketing efforts.

From monthly newsletters to custom campaigns, these [email marketing services](#) help improve patient retention and stimulate more referrals. You can send messages to your entire patient database with the click of a mouse. Or, automate birthday emails, new patient surveys, custom campaigns, and more.

Want to learn more about the Perfect Patients website service?

Visit www.perfectpatients.com or contact us today at team@perfectpatients.com

Glossary of Email Marketing Terms

A/B split: A strategy that tests different versions of a single campaign to see how small changes can impact the campaign's results.

Above the fold: The section of an email that is visible without a user having to scroll.

Attachment: Text, video, graphic, or PDF that is attached to an email, rather than included in the message itself.

Autoresponder: Automated email-sending capability that may be triggered once someone is added to or removed from a contact list.

Blacklist: A real-time database receiving servers can query to obtain information on the reputation of a domain. This database is used to determine whether an email should be accepted or rejected.

Call to Action (CTA): A link or image button that asks a recipient to take an action. Oftentimes, this is a call to visit a specific page on a website.

CTR: Short for "clickthrough rate," CTR shows the percentage of readers who click on a link within your email.

Deliverability: Measures the success at which an email campaign enters subscribers' inboxes (rather than the spam folder).

Double opt-in: A process that requires new contacts to verify their email by clicking within a verification message.

Hard bounce: Email sent to an invalid, closed, or nonexistent email account.

Header: Program data at the beginning of an email that includes the sender's name and email address, as well as the sender's and recipient's IP address.

Image link: A specific URL attached to an image that directs a reader to a particular webpage after clicking on the image.

Landing page: A webpage viewed after clicking on a link within an email.

Open rate: The percentage of recipients who opened an email campaign.

Opt-in: A pro-active request by an individual to provide their email address.

Phishing: A form of identity theft in which an email message appears to have been created only for a single recipient.

Soft bounce: Email sent to an active email address, but which is not delivered. This is often a temporary issue, often a result of server issues or an inbox that is over quota.

Spam: The term used for an unsolicited commercial email.

Spam score: Measures the reputation of an email account. A high spam score could get an account blacklisted, which sends future emails to recipients' spam folders.

Subject line: A single line of content displayed before an email message is opened.

Tagging: A feature that allows senders to categorize email contacts into a custom group.

Unsubscribe: To remove oneself from an email list to prevent future emails.

Whitelist: A command that a subscriber can authorize to prevent email messages from being marked as spam.