

Evidence-Based Email Marketing

WITH STRATEGY BACKED BY PROPRIETARY RESEARCH, TRENDLINE INTERACTIVE CRAFTS PERFECTLY AIMED EMAIL MARKETING— AND LEADSPEND HELPS IT REACH THE TARGET

Social media is buzzing, and mobile technology is, well, on the move. But any reports of the demise of good, “old-fashioned” email are certainly exaggerated. No one knows this better than Andrew Kordek, the chief strategist and co-founder of Trendline Interactive, one of the only agencies in the world dedicated exclusively to email marketing. “Our strategy is simple, Kordek explains. “We’re specialists, not general practitioners. We focus on one thing—email marketing—so that we can do it well.”

Despite, or perhaps because of, the rapid proliferation of multiple social and mobile networks, a valid email address remains at the hub of people’s daily digital communication habits. Kordek says, “While social media and mobile are getting a heck of a lot of attention, email is still one of the first ways that organizations communicate, whether it’s with 5,000 or five million people, and the value of that is sometimes overlooked. But whereas in the past it was, ‘let’s just blast out another email,’ today there’s a lot of very thoughtful strategy that goes into developing an effective email campaign. The challenge is designing it right, and also in getting it delivered.”

Sensing a gap in the marketplace, Kordek, with two decades of experience with leading brands on the client side of digital marketing, established Trendline Interactive in 2010 with partner Morgan Stewart. “We get what it’s like to run an email marketing program, because we have actually run email marketing programs in-house,” says Kordek.



Trendline Interactive

Trendline helps its roster of clients—from start-ups to Fortune 500 stalwarts—integrate email as a powerful marketing tool. The thriving agency goes beyond so-called “best practices” with its own tailored studies and analyses. “We offer a full suite of services, from strategy to production to creative to technical implementation,” Kordek explains, “and we back that all up with our ongoing primary research in email marketing.”

Yet Kordek doesn’t need his own research to recognize that even the most compelling email campaign is only as good as its inbox placement rate—a challenge that has become more critical for marketers to meet each day. That’s why, since Trendline’s inception, the agency has partnered with LeadSpend to help clients validate email addresses and secure the integrity of their lists.

“There’s a continual raging debate about deliverability and what ISPs are looking for and how to get in the inbox, but it starts at the beginning,” Kordek says plainly. “That’s what LeadSpend brings to the table. They help us make sure the addresses you’re getting—or the ones you’ve already got—are deliverable and valid. It all begins with the email address. And a deliverable email address is one of the most coveted assets in the marketing mix today.”



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TESTED AND EFFECTIVE

When Trendline’s clients come to the agency with challenges (Kordek prefers to call them “opportunities”), the first thing he does is remind them that the customer—the email subscriber—is the one running the show. “I’m a big subscriber advocate,” he says. “Once organizations believe, truly believe, that the subscriber is actually in charge of their email program, they can shape a content and messaging strategy that works. It all comes back to, ‘What does the subscriber want from the experience?’”

Trendline, of course, helps its clients find the answer—from basic A/B testing to sophisticated Taguchi testing that can measure more than 32,000 variables for user-engagement. In addition, the agency invests significantly in its own unpublished research. “It’s stuff that we have access to that nobody else does,” Kordek says, referring to reams of data for B2B and B2C—Trendline has a healthy mix of clients in both sectors. “And if it so happens that we need more information, we can go get it,” he adds. “Our in-house research team will interview subscribers and, blending statistical analysis with human-behavior studies, draw insights about what those segments truly want in emails.”

Kordek appreciates that LeadSpend has taken the same research-based approach to email deliverability. “They are up to speed on everything that is happening in this fast-paced industry.” He also values the ease of use. “In the past, going to a validation company, it always seemed like there were a lot of hoops to go through to get your emails validated,” he says. “But LeadSpend just makes it so easy to do now. Even a marketer like me, without a lot of technical know-how, can package up a client’s email addresses and load it into LeadSpend’s system through their API and get

a good read on it pretty quickly,” he adds with a laugh.

LeadSpend, Kordek points out, has proven to be an invaluable resource to his clients. For example, Trendline recently used LeadSpend to scour a Fortune 100 client’s list of several million email addresses. LeadSpend identified 20 percent of the addresses on the list as invalid—whether because they were undeliverable, disposable addresses, potential spam traps, or otherwise non-functioning. “Imagine all the damage we avoided by not sending those emails. Hard bounces, soft bounces, reduced sender reputation, getting hosed by the ISPs. Wow!” Kordek says. “On different projects, we’ve seen time and again that LeadSpend helps us deliver results for our clients.”

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THE LEADSPEND CONNECTION

The nature of the Trendline-LeadSpend partnership is a flexible one; sometimes the two firms work directly together with a client, while at other times Trendline is the bridge between a client’s need and LeadSpend’s solution.

“Trendline Interactive is vendor-agnostic,” emphasizes Kordek. “The client’s best interest comes first. And we have worked on projects with other email validation vendors, too. But LeadSpend is the consistent go-to option for deliverability solutions. If one of our clients comes to us and says, ‘We need to do list validation—who would you recommend?’ we would suggest talking to LeadSpend first,” Kordek states directly.

Kordek takes his recommendation one step further: “LeadSpend is perfectly positioned as a data-insights company. Because the email marketing landscape is constantly shifting, you need to stay on top of it and monitor and truly understand what’s going on with your list. Today, a really strong marketing list with valid email addresses is absolutely essential for any organization hoping to increase revenue and build their subscriber base.”

FAST FACTS

1. TRENDLINE IS ONE OF THE LEADING FULL-SERVICE EMAIL MARKETING AGENCIES IN THE WORLD.
2. TRENDLINE DEPLOYS ITS EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH TO CREATE WINNING EMAIL CAMPAIGNS FOR CLIENTS. 
3. LEADSPEND CONSISTENTLY HELPS TRENDLINE INCREASE DELIVERABILITY FOR CLIENTS’ EMAIL MARKETING WITH ITS LIST-VALIDATION EXPERTISE.
4. LEADSPEND HELPED A TRENDLINE FORTUNE 100 CLIENT IDENTIFY 20% OF ITS LIST AS UNDELIVERABLE, PREVENTING DAMAGE TO SENDER REPUTATION. 