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# The 5 Major Trends Impacting Email Marketing in 2016

Posted by [Derek A. Lackey, Editor](#) / March 31, 2016

The last five years have been one of the greatest periods of change in the marketing industry. Consumers are now connected 24/7, accessing content anywhere, at any time, and on multiple devices. Digital marketing now represents over 30% of marketing spend and is expected to increase to nearly 45% of marketing budgets in 2016.

This momentum is driven by the popularity of mobile devices which have evolved to become an extension of a person. While smartphones are now in the majority of consumers hands in North America, marketers are still playing catch up. In 2015 we saw marketers adopt responsive designs in greater numbers which, in turn, led to an increase in engagement metrics, as consumers received messaging optimized for their preferred devices. The evolution will continue and marketers need to change in step, adapting and shifting their perceptions about mobile devices and its users. Here are the five major email marketing trends that you need to be aware of to ensure that youre ready for 2016!

## 1. The Mobile Shift

The recent resurgence in the popularity of email can, in large part, be attributed to the smartphone as customers can now check their email from anywhere and at any time. eMarketer forecasted that the number of smartphone users in North America increased 11.6% in 2015 (over the previous year), and that by 2019, there will be 262.2 million smartphone users in North America alone!

One of the key benefits of mobile is that marketers now have more user data than ever and with it the opportunity to do better behavioural analysis. The volume of digital messaging through social/email and mobile is causing consumers brains to be rewired. Attention spans are shortening; but so is the way they process information. The key for marketers is to really know their audience and more carefully orchestrate interactions.

## 2. The Rise of Contextual Marketing

Consumers are getting better at tuning out, blocking, and skipping irrelevant advertisements. Alternatively, many will go out of their way to browse advertisements that are specific to their interests. According to eMarketer, 78% of retail customers are more likely to be a repeat customer if they are sent targeted personalized offers -nothing works better than an email that truly matters to the customer.

Relevance, perceived value, and context are key components to increasing consumer engagement. Personalized advertisements and recommendations will

become increasingly valuable in 2016, as technology makes it easier to provide more targeted content that is relevant to consumers. For example, many subscribers are now on the go when they open emails. A retailer can use these moments, when a subscriber first opens a message, to recommend the closest store locations, potentially driving in-store sales. Is it raining, sunny, or snowing at your customers location? Dynamically generated weather-specific inventory or messaging can further enhance your subscribers brand experience. Interactions like this will give brands a competitive edge and an opportunity to stand out from the crowd.

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