

Welcome emails

Best practices guide



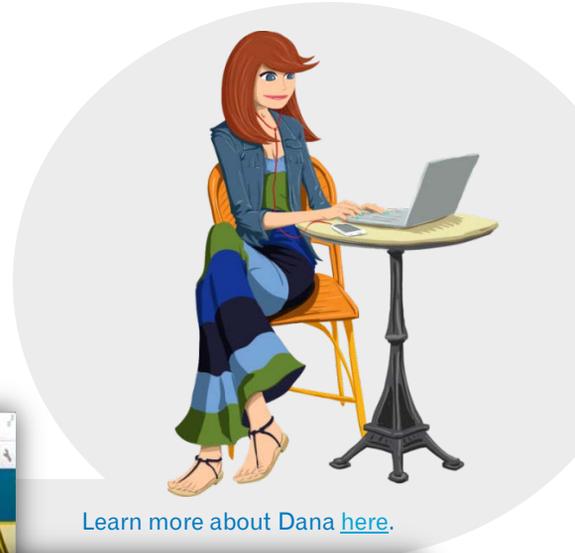
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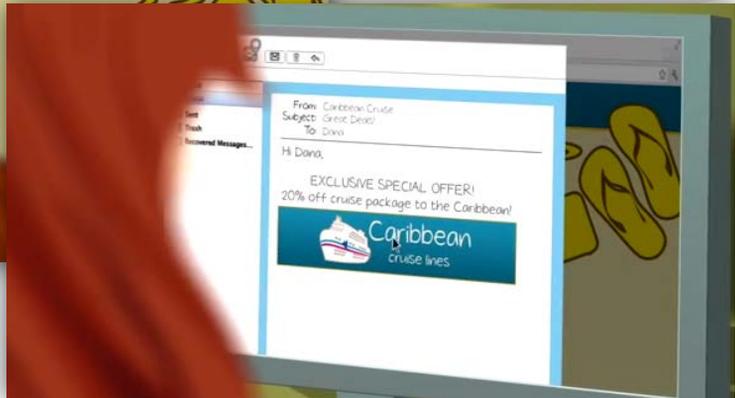
What is a welcome email?

Welcome emails are your chance to make a first impression. And, like a first impression, you only get one shot to delight and enchant your customer with your email to set the relationship off to a good start.

Example: The images below illustrate a hypothetical scenario of a welcome email sent to a customer, named Dana, who just signed up online to receive email alerts from Caribbean Cruise Lines.



Learn more about Dana [here](#).



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Why welcomes matter

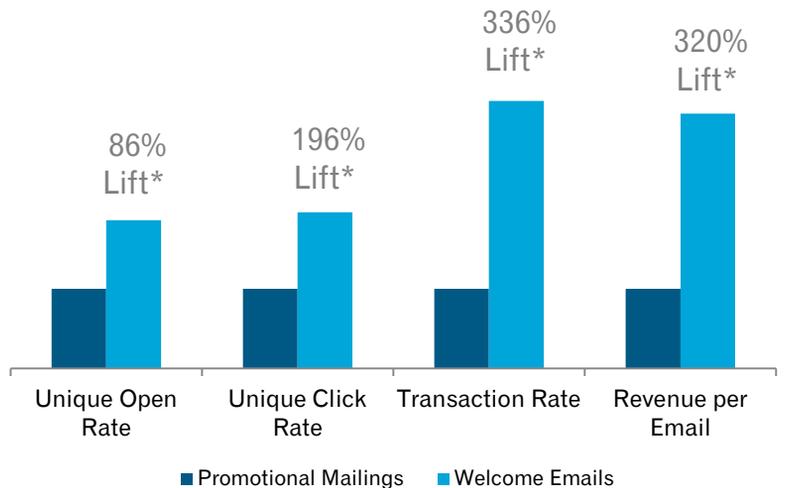
Welcome emails introduce subscribers to your brand and are also very high-performing in terms of open, click, and transaction rates (as reflected in the chart below). Subscribers receiving welcome emails are self-selecting, meaning they've declared a direct interest in your brand and are interested in what you have to say.

Read on to learn the best ways to optimize the welcome experience for your new subscribers, as well as the effectiveness of your email program.

Welcome emails see more than

3x

the transactions and revenue per email over regular promotional mailings



*Over regular promotional mailings benchmarks

Source: Experian Marketing Services

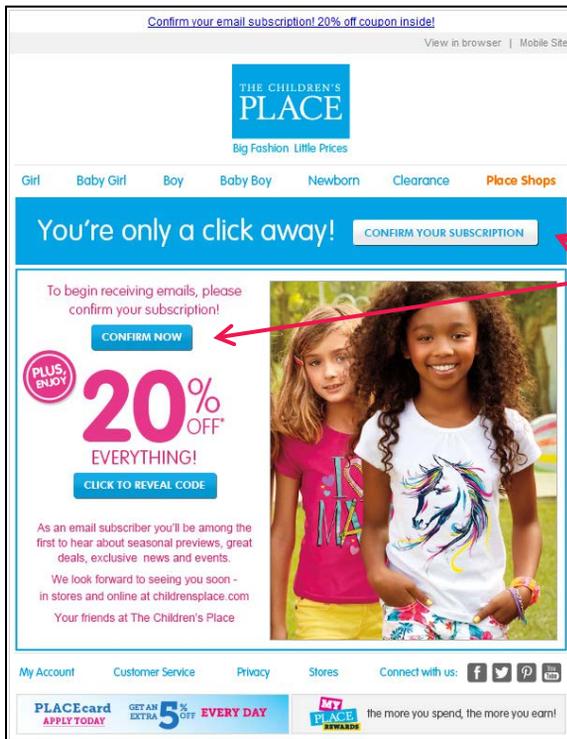


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Confirmed opt-in

In today's deliverability environment, it's important to use a welcome email to confirm you sent a message to the intended recipient and ensure the customer is still interested in receiving your marketing messages. The welcome email from The Children's Place shown below is a good example of this best practice.

Example: The Children's Place



The Children's Place uses large call-to-action buttons in the header and body of the email asking the subscriber for confirmation

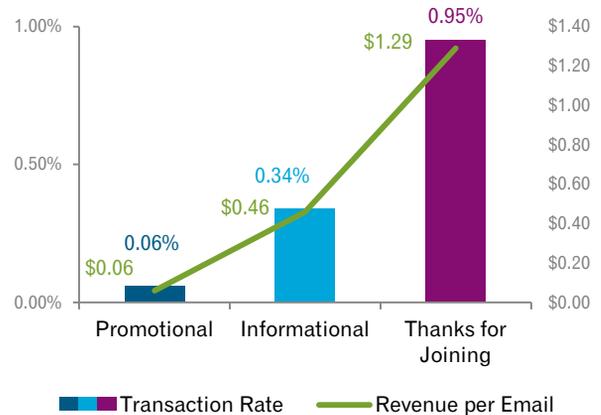
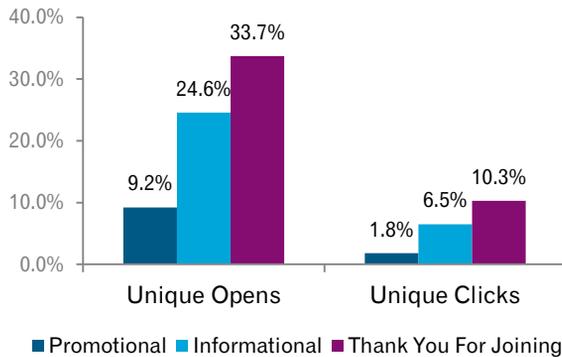


How to welcome subscribers

Just like an in-person introduction, it is polite to introduce yourself to someone with interesting things to talk about. In the case of email, it's a good idea to:

- **Remind customers of where or how they signed up for your email program**
- **Thank them if they made a purchase**
- **Inform them of the benefits they can expect to receive in your email alerts**

Although promotional emails perform well, the graphs below show that informational or “Thanks for joining” messages drive even higher transaction rates, as well as revenue per email.



Source: Experian Marketing Services



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Use what you know

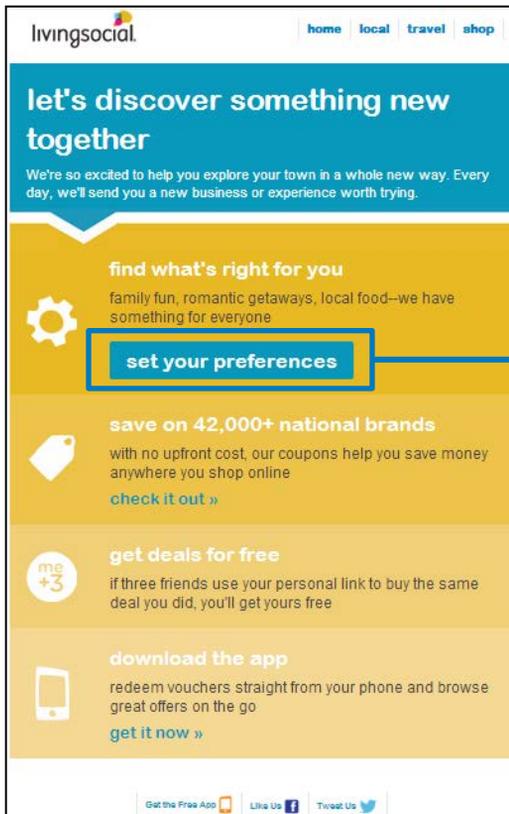
Although you might not know a lot about subscribers in the very beginning of the relationship, you can still use the information you *do* know to give your introduction a personal touch. Remember, you shouldn't be treating all your new email subscribers the same way. So before blasting a welcome email, take into account the interactions you may have had with the customer in the past or through engagement in other channels.

Example: Urban Outfitters sends welcome and thank you emails to new subscribers based on their basic engagement and shopping information.



Customer preferences

A welcome email is also a great opportunity to drive new subscribers to your preference center to capture their unique preferences. This allows you to tailor their email journey with your brand to ensure you're always delivering content of interest.



Example: LivingSocial sends a welcome email that encourages its new subscribers to set their email preferences so that the brand can deliver relevant messages and offers specific to their unique interests.

set your preferences



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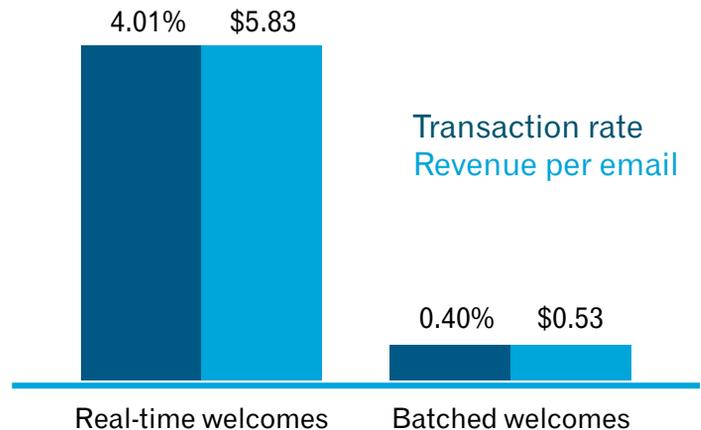
When to send welcome emails

In much the same way that you wouldn't wait to introduce yourself to someone a full day after they greeted you, welcome emails should be sent as soon as possible — preferably in real-time. Although many welcome emails are sent via a “batched” method, we recommend triggering a welcome email in real-time via an API (Application Program Interface) call. As the graph below indicates, welcome emails triggered in near real-time achieve significantly higher transaction rates and revenue per email.

Real-time welcome emails see more than

10x

The transaction rates and revenue per email over batched welcome mailings



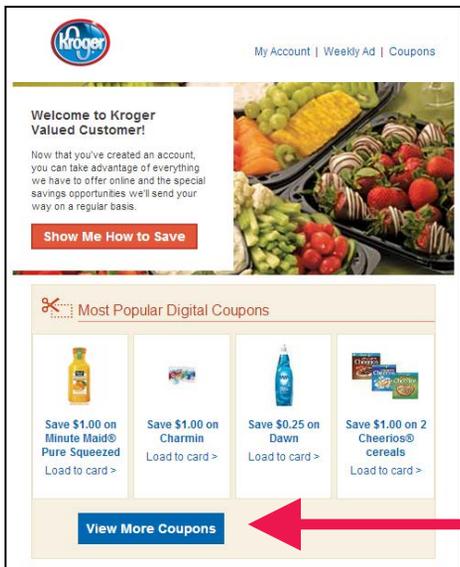
Source: Experian Marketing Services



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Mobile welcomes

With the proliferation of smartphones and mobile email readership on the rise, it's important to consider how your welcome emails render on mobile devices when crafting your campaigns. It is also important to keep in mind that mobile screens are smaller, so your subject lines should be shorter as well.

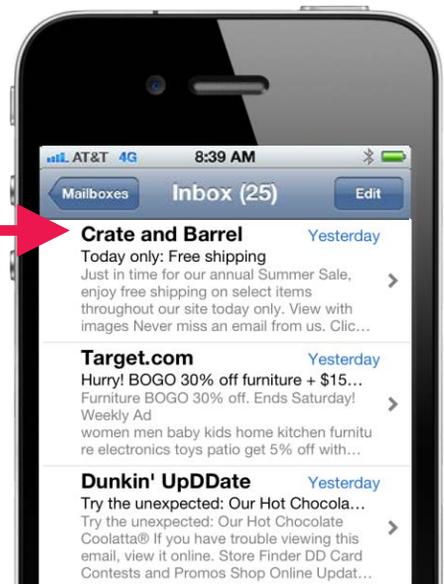


Mobile by the numbers:

Shorter subject line character limit (30–35)

Slimmer width (500-520 pixels)

“Finger-friendly” buttons



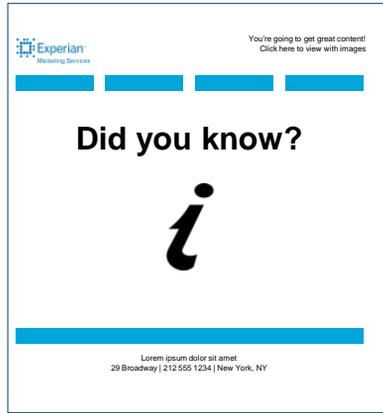
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The next level: Welcome series

Since welcome emails are critical communications, it only makes sense to continue the conversation with your customers through a series of intelligent interactions.



Real-time
Welcome 1



Informational
Welcome 2



Cross-channel
Welcome 3

Fast Fact: We've seen that welcome email campaigns with coupons have up to **2.5 x higher** transaction rates than welcome mailings without coupons

Source: [Experian Marketing Services' coupons in email report](#)

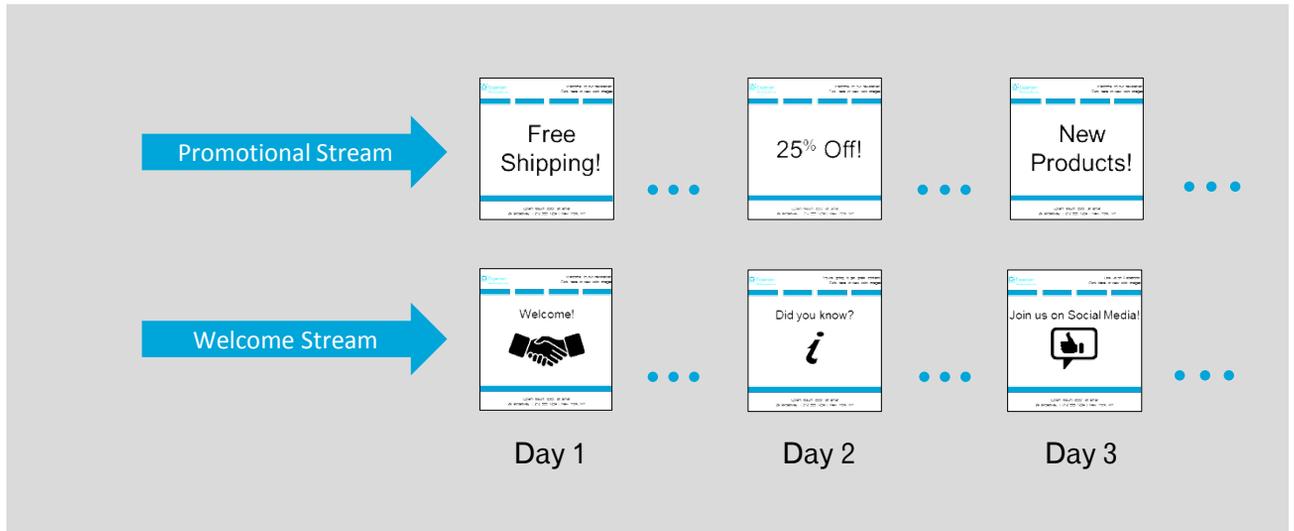


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Mimic your program flow

In order to set expectations for cadence and content, it's best for your welcome series to mimic your promotional stream.

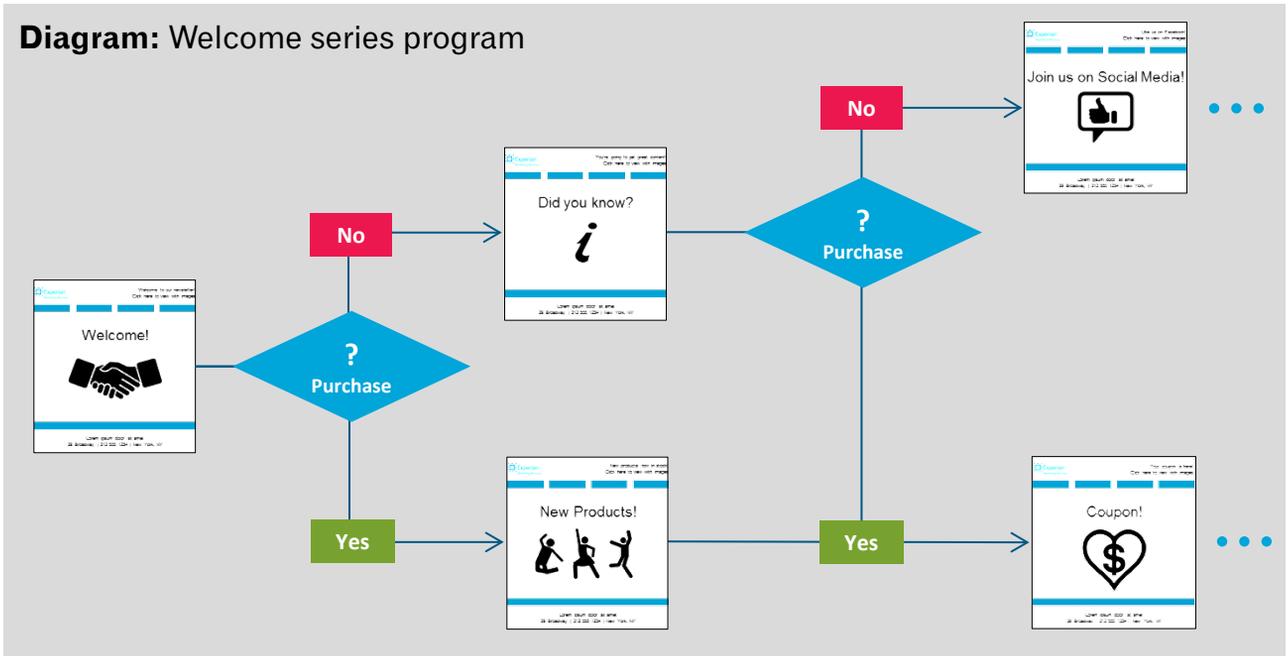
Mail three times a week? Then your welcome emails should be spaced out accordingly so new subscribers will receive each email in the same timeframe they will receive a promotional mailing.



Say hello first

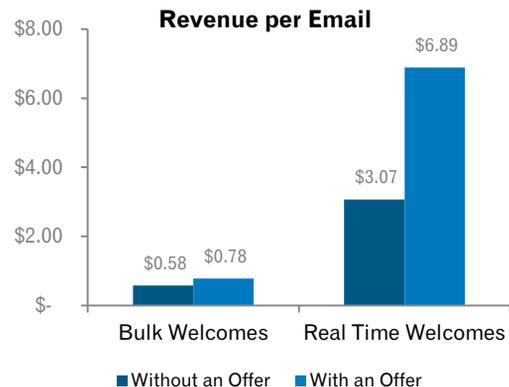
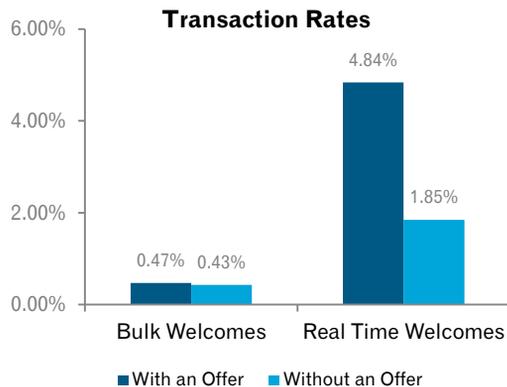
Before inserting a new subscriber into your promotional stream, we recommend sending a welcome series to get the conversation started and set the expectation for what will be received in the future. However, many of our clients remove a new subscriber from a welcome stream if they make a purchase before the series is complete—especially if there's a discount at the end of the series and the new subscriber no longer needs that incentive to make a purchase.

Diagram: Welcome series program



Promotional priorities

Marketers often question whether to include discounts or special offers within welcome emails. We recommend testing this in your individual programs to see what works. In a [recent study](#), though, we found that transaction rates often go up with a discount.



Source: Experian Marketing Services



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Summary

Welcome emails are a great opportunity for you to set the tone of your brand's relationship with its customers. Because new subscribers are self-selecting, meaning they have declared a direct interest with your brand, it's highly important for you to make a good first impression when you have their immediate attention.



Key things to remember:

- **Don't wait to introduce yourself:** Real-time welcome emails see more than 10x the transaction rates and revenue per email over batched welcome mailings.
- **Add a personal touch:** Customize welcome emails based on how your customers have engaged with your brand and ask for their specific email preferences to tailor future mailings.
- **Optimize for mobile:** With mobile readership on the rise, welcome emails should be easy to view and interact with on mobile devices.
- **Set the expectation with a welcome series:** We recommend that your series of welcome emails mimic your promotional stream so customers know what to expect from their email subscription in terms of cadence and content.
- **Consider using special discounts or offers:** We found that transaction rates for welcome emails often go up with a discount, but we recommend testing to see what works best for you.



About EMS

Experian Marketing Services is a leading global provider of consumer insights, targeting, data quality and cross-channel marketing. We help organizations intelligently interact with today's empowered and hyperconnected consumers. By helping marketers identify their best customers, find more of them, and then coordinate seamless and intelligent interactions across the most appropriate channels, Experian Marketing Services' clients can deepen customer loyalty, strengthen brand advocacy and maximize profits.

If you are looking for strategic or tactical guidance to create more intelligent interactions with your customers through integrated email tactics, contact your Experian Marketing Services account team, call 1 866 626 6479 or visit us online at www.experian.com/marketingservices.



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