

# Instructions for Submitting Email Promotions to PSDA

The following guidelines should be followed when submitting your email promotion. All specifications and art must be received a minimum of three full business days prior to the scheduled email blast date. If you have any questions, please contact your sales representative.

## PLEASE SPECIFY THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WHEN YOU SUBMIT YOUR EMAIL BLAST:

- 1. YOUR AUDIENCE:** Please tell us who this email is targeted to. This allows us to pull an appropriate list.
- 2. SEED LIST:** Please let us know which individuals at your company should be included on the email blast. We simply need the name and email address of your company contacts who should receive your email as it is sent.
- 3. SUBJECT LINE:** Please supply the text you would like as the subject of your email. We ask that you submit two different subject lines, one that is your preferred and one that is your second choice in the event we run into problems with the spam filter.
- 4. ALT Text:** Please provide ALT Text for the images in your design. Especially if you are supplying art as one large image (see Method #3 below).

## ARTWORK GUIDELINES - Three Possible Methods:

### Method #1 (Preferred Method): Email Blast Provided as HTML Code

**We prefer that you provide your email artwork as HTML code.** This can be done using a text editor to write the code, or by using an HTML design program such as Adobe Dreamweaver. HTML files created for email are a bit different than those created for web browsers. Please note that any CSS styles set in the HTML must be "Inline", or part of the BODY portion of the code. Any CSS styles that are referenced in the HEADER portion of the code run the risk of being stripped out before they reach the inbox of many email clients. Sometimes CSS styles include "positioning" which can be problematic in emails. Unless you have a method of testing this yourself before submission, it may be safest to use table-based design for email blasts.

You may submit the HTML in one of two ways: Upload the code and the images to your own server and send us the link. Or, email us the code, but be sure to also attach any images used in case we need to upload them to our server.

We recognize that not everyone is able to design in HTML format. If you do not have the capabilities to develop an HTML file, and do not work with an outside designer who can develop this for you, we recommend using one of the two methods that follow.

### Method #2: Email Blasts Using Outlook Express

You can design your message in Outlook Express, or other programs used to send mail. Outlook specifically has controls for adding images and adjusting fonts and colors. Follow these steps:

- Have any images you need at the ready.
- Open a new message in Outlook (or whichever email software you use). Arrange the text and the images to your liking. You will not be able to create special effects like backgrounds and animations. PSDA does not recommend using these features in e-mail messages since many email clients will not display them.
- Save your message as a draft. Contact your sales representative and find out who at PSDA you need to email it to.
- Be sure to attach all the images that you used when you send us the message. Even though they already appear within the message you designed, this is an important step. We must be able to download them so we can save them to our own server.
- Here's a tip: Be sure you save that final message file on your hard drive somewhere. Or, when you send it to us, copy yourself, or someone at your company. That way you have it easily accessible in case you need to resubmit at some point.

### Method #3 (Least Preferred): Email Blast Provided as One Large Image

This not the best way to create an email due to the fact that not all recipients can view images, or even if they can, the download time is significantly slower to view the message. However, if your only option is to send your entire email blast as an image, please note the following suggestions to help the delivery:

- One large image can be slow to download. "Slice" your image into multiple, smaller pieces. (See the illustration below for instructions on "slicing".) By doing this, you will help the download speed.
- Provide your images as JPG or GIF files, and be sure to note if you need us to add any hyperlinks to your website.
- Sometimes people have images turned off, or blocked all together. Give us some ALT text to assign to each image "slice". ALT text will show up up in the event the graphics don't. You must provide this to us. Keep this text VERY brief. If you provide too much copy, we may need you to resubmit it. This could cause a delay in your schedule. See some examples below.
- Design Tip: Save your entire image as one JPG in a program like Adobe PhotoShop and immediately set up guides to designate each "slice". Be sure to save this step. Next, select a slice area, copy and paste to a new file. Save it, and then repeat this for each image slice.

**Slice #1 - 01img.jpg**  
ALT text:  
Great Printing, Inc. is offering 10% off all online orders!

**Slice #2 - 02img.jpg**  
ALT text: Receive 10% off online orders placed by Jan. 1st!

**Slice #3 - 03img.jpg**  
ALT text: [www.greatprintinginc.com](http://www.greatprintinginc.com)

*Keep in mind that to make ALT text successful it must remain simple. Give your audience enough to read and link only.*

**Slice #4 - 04img.jpg**  
ALT text: use discount code: web01

**Slice #5 - 05img.jpg**  
ALT text: Great Printing, Inc., address, Ph: 800-800-8888

# How to Track Open Rates and Click-Throughs

You can find out how many people open your email blasts, and how many click on specific links using the two methods below. These methods require knowledge of HTML design, use of a web analytics program, and access to a web server.

## Tracking Open Rates - The Simple Way:

- Post an image to your web server and use it in your email. The image could be as simple as a single, invisible pixel, or it could be a larger image that is part of the design. Give your image a name that relates to the email. Make sure this image is used **only** in the email you are trying to track. If you want to use the same image in multiple email blasts, be sure to re-save it with a unique name for each one, otherwise, results will be skewed.
- After the email is sent, open your web analytics program\* and see how many times the image has been "viewed" by unique users. This is the baseline for how many times your message has been opened.

*\*Your web analytics program must keep records of image views. Google Analytics does not do this. If you can't see how many times an image has been viewed, you will need to use a more advanced method.*

Note: Many people could open and read your message without viewing the image. Images could be blocked for a number of reasons that you cannot control. There is no way of knowing exactly how many people read your message. Because of this, we recommend using both open and click-through tracking in your message to give a better picture of how many people have given the message more serious consideration.

## Tracking Click-Throughs - The Simple Way:

While tracking "opens" will tell you approximately how many people opened your email, tracking "click-throughs" will tell you how many clicked on specific links within the email.

Let's say you have a link to your home page and you want to know how many people click that link. Before setting the link in your email blast, you are going to need a new HTML page that will act as the tracking vehicle.

- Create the new page on your web server. In it place the following code:  
`<meta http-equiv="refresh" content="0;url=%%linkurl/%%">`
- Replace %%linkurl%% with the URL of the page you want the user to go to. (For our example it's your home page.)
- Also within this new page, add any code required by your web analytics program.
- Now you are ready to set the link in the email blast. Instead of directing it to the link you normally would, direct it to the new file you just created. They will never see this tracking page. They will still go directly to the link you intended, but the new page will track the click as it sends them there.
- After the email is sent, open your web analytics program. The number of times your new tracking page has been viewed corresponds to the number of clicks on the link in the email.

For most people, these "simple" methods for tracking will work just fine. We do have an "advanced" method for tracking **open rates** that does not require use of a web analytics program, but does require that you have ASP.net. If you would like to try this method, contact your sales rep and we will email what you need to get started.