

## Medallion Fulfillment & Logistics

20675 Nordhoff Street  
Chatsworth, CA 91311  
Phone: (800) 260-8250

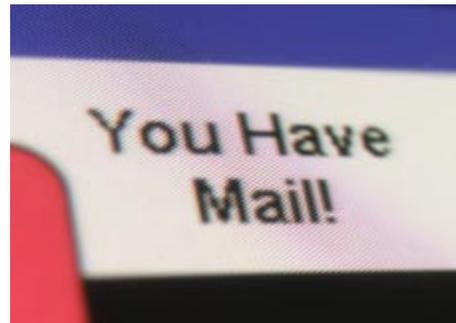
### Building an E-newsletter List? Make Sure You Are CAN-SPAM Compliant

Have you ever felt burned by getting a piece of mail from your bank, Cable Company or insurer whose envelope blared "Important Account Information Enclosed"? You know the outcome: You opened the envelope, that "important information" turned out to be an ad.

Translate that print tactic into untold millions of e-newsletters in distribution, and you will understand why the CAN-SPAM business compliance guide was created.

#### Email a Powerful Attraction Tactic

Even in an age of Facebook "likes" and Twitter "tweets," email and e-newsletters -- when handled right -- continue to be a robust tool for marketers.



- According to 2011 statistics published by Exact Target, 42 percent of subscribers are more likely to purchase from a company whose emails they subscribe to.
- The other side of that coin? Content Marketing Institute notes that the e-newsletter open rate can go as low as 8 percent, with monthly newsletters averaging in the low-20 range.

So the audience making up your e-newsletter lists needs to be one you screen carefully -- those on your list should be the people most likely to find your information valuable enough to subscribe and to read at least occasionally with few opt-outs. If you use purchased e-newsletter lists, ensure they are from reputable sources consisting only of "opt in" subscribers.

#### Keeping Out of Trouble

Once you've identified an audience to invite as subscribers, you must establish an acceptable template for your message. Just a few false moves and your carefully crafted e-newsletter could end up in the spam folder.

CAN-SPAM (Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing Act of 2003) establishes standards for commercial email, including e-newsletters. It spells out what you can and cannot say, and sets penalties for violations.

Under the CAN-SPAM rules, for example, you are required to:

- Identify the nature of your message as an e-newsletter.

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- Tell recipients where you are located. Your e-newsletter must include both an email return address and a valid physical postal address.
- Tell recipients how they can opt-out of your e-newsletter, and honor their request within 10 business days.

Conversely, the CAN-SPAM law prohibits:

- False or misleading header information. In other words, the "To," "From" and "Reply to" headers must accurately identify the person or company initiating the email.
- Deceptive subject lines. No false promises, "gotcha" wording or other text that doesn't reflect on the actual content of the e-newsletter.
- Sending through an open relay or using harvested email address (both examples of technology that allows spammers to find and use lists).

And of course, the CAN-SPAM act requires you to truthfully describe any products or services you are offering for sale in your e-newsletter -- and if you are positioning this information as an ad, you must identify it as such.

### How to Attract More Subscribers

Subscribers can quickly become un-subscribers, so identifying and attracting new audiences is an important part of your e-newsletter strategy.

How can you encourage people to opt-in?

- Promote your e-newsletter on your website's homepage. Keep a colorful sign-up icon near the top of the screen, as you can never rely on visitors scrolling all the way down.
- Invite new customers to subscribe. If someone makes a purchase through your website, follow it up with an email invitation to the newsletter. You can use the same tactic with visitors who leave contact information on your landing page.
- Include a "send to a friend" link on every e-newsletter to encourage forwards from subscribers.
- Promote your e-newsletter on your social media pages; include sneak-peeks of articles or offers that subscribers will find in the newsletter.



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- Offer a free gift to new subscribers. It can be a special deal or item associated with your business, or something general, such as a drawing for an iPad. (However, all giveaways and drawings must be "no purchase necessary" in nature and something anyone may enter.)

### Test and Test Again

The way you handle your e-newsletter lists may change once you see how many people opt-in and opt-out of their subscriptions. As with most forms of web marketing, e-newsletters can benefit from testing and measuring results to create the ideal marketing tool for you.

### About the Author

Jan Stewart writes exclusively for [Medallion Fulfillment & Logistics](#), a family owned fulfillment service business located in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. When you need simple or comprehensive assistance with warehousing, order processing, and shipping for your store or e-commerce business, consider Medallion first. Visit them at [www.MedallionEnterprises.com](http://www.MedallionEnterprises.com).