

E-mail Guidelines for Advertisers

Courtesy of WPNI

Last updated 3/4/2008

General Guidelines

- All materials, including validated HTML, are due 3 days before drop date.
- WPNI needs to receive all three creative files (Text version, AOL version, HTML version). Each creative should be in a separate .txt file (not a .doc file).
- If using graphics, send the jpeg/gif file(s) along with creative to WPNI; WPNI will host the images in the e-mail.

CAN-SPAM Requirements

- Advertiser must provide to WPNI any pre-existing opt out list at least five business days prior to mailing.
- Advertiser's mailing address (not P.O. Box) must appear in the creative.
- WPNI's mailing address (not P.O. Box) must appear in the footer.
- Method of opting out of future e-mail from advertiser must appear in the creative.
- Method of opting out of future e-mail from washingtonpost.com must appear in the footer.

E-mail Creative Requirements

Text

- The text version is plain text, without active hyperlinks, images or special formatting.
- The use of extended ASCII characters is discouraged.
- Avoid use of equal (=) signs as dividers, use dashes instead.
- Keep blocks of copy short and provide multiple URLs throughout.
- Special character formatting (underscore, bold, italic, etc.) is not possible.
- Limit justification of text to left-margin only.
- Meet all CAN-SPAM requirements (see above).
- Include opt-out text, privacy policy and copyright text at the end of the e-mail.*(see end of this document).

AOL

- AOL users with version 5.0 or above will receive the HTML version; the AOL version of the creative is for AOL users with versions lower than 5.0. If flash is used in HTML version (see HTML guidelines), all AOL recipients will receive the AOL version.
- AOL coding is similar to that for HTML, except images are not allowed.
- Links can be masked. URLs should include HTML coding to indicate hypertext e.g. `Hyper text`
- The following code should be at the beginning of the creative: `<html><body><pre>`

- The following code should be at the end of the creative: `</pre></body></html>`
- Meet all CAN-SPAM requirements (see above).
- Include opt-out text, privacy policy and copyright text at the end of the e-mail.*(see end of this document)

HTML

- Most recipients will see the HTML version, which may contain hyperlinks, images and special formatting.
- All HTML must be validated by W3C before it is sent to WPNI. <http://validator.w3.org/>
- Maximum mailing size is 65kb, which includes the actual HTML document plus all images. Minimize mailing weight as much as possible through image optimization, HTML code refinement, etc.
- Aim for less than 600 pixel height and width.
- Limit of 2 images and 2 links per email
- Tables -- Keep the nesting of tables to a minimum (2-3 deep) and avoid it altogether where possible. Break (vertically) lengthy tables into a series of “stacked” shorter tables. Remember to set table background colors where necessary. Always specify widths and heights for table data cells when fixed and known.
- The usage of “pixel” or “spacer” images for precise layout control should be avoided whenever possible. Within tables, placing a SPACER element within a table data cell and specifying the appropriate height and width for each (cell and spacer) will achieve the same effect.
- Flash is allowed in e-mail, however a back-up HTML image must be provided. Note that approximately 50% of recipients will view the flash version, 25% of recipients will see the back-up image, and the remaining 25% will view a text version of the e-mail.
- Host-initiated audio/video is not allowed.
- Avoid usage of HTML 4.0-only elements, such as style sheets.
- Embedded client-side scripting (JavaScript, Jscript, etc.) is not allowed.
- Some e-mail clients (AOL 9.0 and others) block all images by default. To ensure your offer gets through to these users, avoid using images that comprise the entire message; use regular HTML for basic copy. When using images, specify ALT text.
- Verify that all links point to correct, live URLs that will be accessible to recipients of your mailing.
- Composition of HTML documents with any Microsoft Office 2000 product is strongly discouraged.
- HTML images will be housed on WPNI’s servers and the correct URLs should be embedded into the e-mail. Be sure to send the images to WPNI, along with the HTML creative, so that we may put the images on our servers.
- Hyperlink text and images where appropriate to increase click through rates.
- Meet all CAN-SPAM requirements (see above).
- Include opt-out text, privacy policy and copyright text at the end of the e-mail.* (see below)

*Opt-out/privacy policy/copyright text for advertiser e-mails

When you registered with washingtonpost.com you indicated that you wanted to receive periodic offers, deals and contests sent by washingtonpost.com on behalf of select advertisers.

To unsubscribe from this e-mail list, [update your profile](#) on washingtonpost.com. Do not reply to this e-mail.

We are committed to protecting your privacy. For more information visit our policy visit our [privacy policy](#).

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