



EMAIL MARKETING BENCHMARKS REPORT 2014





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INTRODUCTION: WHY BENCHMARKS?

Everlytic's first ever benchmark report came about after hearing the frustrations of many marketers about the lack of local email marketing data that could assist marketers to benchmark their own campaign success rates.

Marketers have needed to rely on international benchmark studies that are most often not applicable to a South African audience.

To our knowledge, this is the first study of its kind to be done in South Africa by a South African based company. We also commit to do the study annually, so we can gain more knowledge and track overall trends.

Data: Methodology & Application

The data used for this study was compiled from emails sent by Everlytic on behalf of its clients during the period of January 2014 to December 2014.

Over 1 billion delivered emails were analysed. Campaigns with less than 100 recipients were removed from the data set. The median campaign size was 1 632 recipients with a mean of 7 829.

The only exception to this was the list interaction rates which are calculated over a three-month period from October 2014 to December 2014.

Campaigns were weighted the same regardless of their size in order to remove any skew that unusually large campaigns may create.

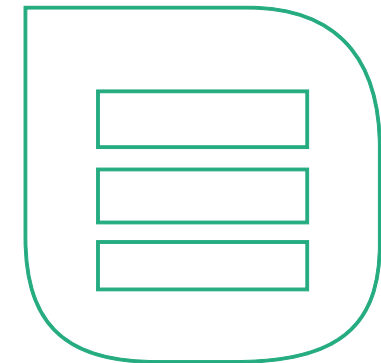
In this report we will typically use the median to do comparisons unless we specifically indicate otherwise.

Why Industry Benchmarks

The benchmarks in this study will assist you to help determine how your campaigns fare against other brands in your industry. Being average is no longer good enough and brands should be striving to be in the top quartile.

Additional Resources

At the end of this report, you will find a list of additional resources from Everlytic so you can gather as much insight as you need to be a savvy South African marketer.





OPEN RATES

The open rate describes what percentage of recipients read your email communication. In this report we use the unique open rate; if a recipient opens an email more than once, it is only counted once. The open rate has traditionally been the most popular metric for email marketers as it is simple to use and understand. However, it doesn't always tell the whole story. Combining open rates with other metrics such as click-through rates and list interaction rates gives a more holistic picture of the success of campaigns.

Observation

Industry vertical medians show that Medical & Healthcare (26.93%), Property & Real Estate (26.39%) and Retail & Wholesale (26.31%) are outperforming other industries. The majority of top quartile performers are achieving open rates in excess of 30%. Open rates are generally lower for more frequent or daily senders, which may explain why the Publishing and eCommerce industries have relatively lower open rates.

BY INDUSTRY	UNIQUE OPEN RATES			
	Mean	Median	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
Overall	24.86%	23.61%	31.08%	17.63%
Technology and Science	24.03%	22.48%	28.09%	16.54%
Retail and Wholesale	25.98%	26.31%	32.84%	18.77%
Publishing and Media	23.29%	22.10%	27.85%	17.12%
Property and Real Estate	27.87%	26.39%	35.89%	21.42%
NGO	25.40%	23.88%	30.95%	18.25%
Medical and Healthcare	27.54%	26.93%	31.08%	22.75%
Lifestyle, Arts and Entertainment	26.50%	25.47%	32.83%	19.35%
Industry, Trade and Manufacturing	24.56%	23.19%	31.13%	18.23%
Hospitality, Travel and Tourism	26.12%	24.97%	32.14%	19.77%
Financial Institutions	22.91%	22.47%	30.20%	14.21%
Education and Training	25.49%	24.07%	32.18%	17.05%
eCommerce	22.43%	21.74%	33.46%	13.04%
Business and Consulting	22.99%	21.34%	28.25%	15.89%
Automotive	22.73%	22.10%	25.69%	18.98%



CLICK-THROUGH RATES

The click-through rate (CTR) describes what percentage of your recipients clicked on a link inside your mailer. Again, we use the unique CTR in this report; if a recipient clicks more than once, it is only counted once. The CTR provides more insight into how valuable recipients find your content and are enticed by your call to action.

Observation

Top quartile performers are getting significantly better results than bottom quartile performers in most industries. The Property & Real Estate, the top quartile performers (6.64%), are 13 times better than bottom quartile performers (0.49%).

BY INDUSTRY	UNIQUE CLICK RATES			
	Mean	Median	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
Overall	3.28%	1.88%	4.17%	0.70%
Technology and Science	2.66%	1.55%	3.66%	0.49%
Retail and Wholesale	3.28%	2.05%	3.64%	0.61%
Publishing and Media	4.47%	3.17%	6.03%	1.47%
Property and Real Estate	5.05%	3.31%	6.64%	0.49%
NGO	2.60%	1.38%	3.11%	0.45%
Medical and Healthcare	3.10%	1.84%	3.95%	0.93%
Lifestyle, Arts and Entertainment	3.81%	2.19%	4.54%	0.82%
Industry, Trade and Manufacturing	2.58%	1.66%	3.08%	0.92%
Hospitality, Travel and Tourism	2.59%	1.62%	2.76%	0.82%
Financial Institutions	2.31%	1.01%	2.90%	0.37%
Education and Training	3.54%	1.65%	4.69%	0.53%
eCommerce	3.03%	1.31%	3.07%	0.80%
Business and Consulting	2.37%	1.53%	3.07%	0.60%
Automotive	3.00%	2.61%	4.49%	1.48%



CLICK-TO-OPEN RATES

The click-to-open rate (also known as the effective rate) gives a percentage based on the amount of clicks from people who opened the mail, not from the overall delivered amount. This reveals more about engagement, as it does not solely look at the amount of opens, but the amount of engagement within the open rate.

Observation

On average, 11.84% of people that open a mail, click on a link. The best performer for this metric is Publishing & Media with a top quartile of 27.55%. This could be explained by enticing headlines that encourage subscribers to click through to deeper content.

BY INDUSTRY	CLICK TO OPEN RATES			
	Mean	Median	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
Overall	11.84%	8.87%	16.13%	3.53%
Technology and Science	9.48%	6.04%	13.78%	2.62%
Retail and Wholesale	11.41%	8.91%	14.61%	2.65%
Publishing and Media	17.82%	14.64%	27.55%	6.79%
Property and Real Estate	14.34%	13.31%	21.49%	3.66%
NGO	8.34%	6.10%	11.29%	2.34%
Medical and Healthcare	10.15%	7.56%	14.05%	5.34%
Lifestyle, Arts and Entertainment	12.77%	9.88%	17.08%	3.81%
Industry, Trade and Manufacturing	10.46%	8.26%	15.63%	4.00%
Hospitality, Travel and Tourism	9.26%	6.84%	13.29%	3.69%
Financial Institutions	9.00%	6.26%	11.07%	2.10%
Education and Training	11.86%	8.41%	15.22%	2.96%
eCommerce	12.12%	9.32%	14.20%	6.08%
Business and Consulting	9.81%	7.96%	14.44%	2.60%
Automotive	12.93%	13.40%	18.55%	5.18%



PLATFORM RATES

Knowing which devices, email clients and web browsers your subscribers are using, allows you to think more carefully and strategically about the design and layout of your campaigns. This insight helps you better understand your target audience and create marketing campaigns that are user-friendly, mobile-responsive and compatible wherever opened.

Observation

25.88% of emails are read on a mobile phone. While a large percentage of people will say they use mobile to read emails, the reality is that most email is still read on a desktop or web browser.

When the user agent has not been received or was unidentified, it is marked as unknown.

BY INDUSTRY	DESKTOP VS. WEB VS. MOBILE			
	Desktop	Web	Mobile	Unknown
Overall	41.69%	17.73%	25.88%	14.70%
Technology and Science	49.89%	15.38%	22.46%	12.27%
Retail and Wholesale	39.22%	17.52%	26.59%	16.66%
Publishing and Media	43.97%	16.87%	24.52%	14.64%
Property and Real Estate	40.48%	15.94%	31.70%	11.89%
NGO's	35.01%	18.16%	26.31%	20.53%
Medical and Healthcare	35.99%	18.91%	31.38%	13.72%
Lifestyle, Arts and Entertainment	37.38%	17.17%	28.98%	16.47%
Industry, Trade and Manufacturing	47.89%	22.77%	18.60%	10.74%
Hospitality, Travel and Tourism	44.08%	16.74%	27.77%	11.41%
Financial Institutions	44.42%	17.35%	24.74%	13.50%
Education and Training	35.45%	18.58%	26.60%	19.36%
eCommerce	35.74%	22.86%	26.22%	15.18%
Business and Consulting	46.98%	16.61%	25.45%	10.96%
Automotive	44.50%	20.61%	21.24%	13.66%



CHURN RATES

Churn rates include the unsubscribe rate and the complaint rate. These rates describe by what percentage your list size decreases each time you send a campaign. The complaint rate is particularly important as it indicates the quality of your database. If you have a high complaint rate then it is extremely important to address this or risk damaging your brand. A high complaint rate could indicate that the recipients on your list have not knowingly subscribed to your communication and consider it spam.

Unsubscribe Rate Observation

Less people unsubscribe to newsletters from NGOs than any other industry. A median of 0.141% and top quartile boasting 0.064% sets the benchmark for others to follow. Financial Institutions (0.157%) and Education & Training (0.192%) come in second and third respectively.

BY INDUSTRY	UNSUBSCRIBE RATES			
	Mean	Median	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
Overall	0.384%	0.253%	0.111%	0.510%
Technology and Science	0.420%	0.317%	0.130%	0.591%
Retail and Wholesale	0.410%	0.301%	0.159%	0.565%
Publishing and Media	0.359%	0.233%	0.099%	0.473%
Property and Real Estate	0.594%	0.405%	0.163%	0.799%
NGO	0.223%	0.141%	0.064%	0.278%
Medical and Healthcare	0.332%	0.230%	0.091%	0.507%
Lifestyle, Arts and Entertainment	0.411%	0.306%	0.138%	0.516%
Industry, Trade and Manufacturing	0.394%	0.299%	0.113%	0.569%
Hospitality, Travel and Tourism	0.429%	0.286%	0.146%	0.557%
Financial Institutions	0.263%	0.157%	0.063%	0.291%
Education and Training	0.262%	0.192%	0.106%	0.377%
eCommerce	0.337%	0.279%	0.096%	0.488%
Business and Consulting	0.419%	0.297%	0.145%	0.554%
Automotive	0.389%	0.356%	0.114%	0.581%



CHURN RATES: CONTINUED

Complaint Rate Observation

While it is not unusual to get no complaints from an email campaign (as the multitude of zeros in the top quartile attest to), poorer performers are getting upwards of 0.040% complaint rates. Brands should be benchmarking against the overall median of 0.006% and any complaint rates above this need to be dealt with urgently.

BY INDUSTRY	COMPLAINT RATE			
	Mean	Median	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
Overall	0.027%	0.006%	0.000%	0.025%
Technology and Science	0.042%	0.009%	0.001%	0.041%
Retail and Wholesale	0.023%	0.004%	0.000%	0.020%
Publishing and Media	0.022%	0.007%	0.002%	0.022%
Property and Real Estate	0.036%	0.011%	0.000%	0.038%
NGO	0.018%	0.002%	0.000%	0.015%
Medical and Healthcare	0.021%	0.006%	0.000%	0.017%
Lifestyle, Arts and Entertainment	0.030%	0.007%	0.000%	0.024%
Industry, Trade and Manufacturing	0.026%	0.003%	0.000%	0.032%
Hospitality, Travel and Tourism	0.029%	0.009%	0.002%	0.032%
Financial Institutions	0.015%	0.002%	0.000%	0.013%
Education and Training	0.016%	0.005%	0.000%	0.017%
eCommerce	0.032%	0.007%	0.000%	0.026%
Business and Consulting	0.029%	0.008%	0.000%	0.029%
Automotive	0.020%	0.004%	0.000%	0.037%



LIST INTERACTION RATES

List interaction rates (also known as engagement rates) describes what percentage of your subscribers in a particular list have engaged (opened or clicked) with any of your communications in a three month period. These rates are skewed to the downside if new lists are imported every time a send is done. For brands that concentrate on best practice list management, this metric can be extremely valuable as it gives a better indication of overall subscriber engagement than the open rate.

Open Interaction Rates Observation

The overall median list interaction rate is 39.67%, while the top performers are Property & Real Estate (45.74%) and Publishing & Media (45.19%). Top quartile performers indicate that brands should be aiming to have more than 50% of their subscriber lists engaging with them. Active quality management of lists help to improve engagement, lower costs, and increase ROI.

BY INDUSTRY	OPEN INTERACTION RATES			
	Mean	Median	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
Overall	40.16%	39.67%	51.48%	28.65%
Technology and Science	36.49%	34.47%	47.96%	23.16%
Retail and Wholesale	39.52%	39.23%	52.00%	29.06%
Publishing and Media	45.90%	45.19%	54.86%	36.58%
Property and Real Estate	44.41%	45.74%	54.63%	33.31%
NGO	43.56%	43.41%	54.60%	31.99%
Medical and Healthcare	39.39%	34.18%	49.17%	30.36%
Lifestyle, Arts and Entertainment	40.82%	38.63%	50.00%	29.87%
Industry, Trade and Manufacturing	37.46%	34.72%	49.39%	25.40%
Hospitality, Travel and Tourism	43.02%	42.93%	50.58%	34.39%
Financial Institutions	39.32%	42.54%	51.61%	24.95%
Education and Training	40.41%	41.90%	53.52%	26.27%
eCommerce	42.01%	40.51%	52.69%	29.59%
Business and Consulting	35.84%	33.90%	45.57%	22.44%
Automotive	30.87%	34.26%	46.89%	13.76%



LIST INTERACTION RATES: CONTINUED

Click Interaction Rate Observation

Publishing & Media stand out amongst the rest with an impressive 14.03% median list interaction click rate and a 27.92% top quartile rate.

BY INDUSTRY	CLICK INTERACTION RATES			
	Mean	Median	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
Overall	9.96%	5.88%	13.31%	1.80%
Technology and Science	7.66%	4.38%	8.70%	1.68%
Retail and Wholesale	8.84%	5.75%	11.47%	1.48%
Publishing and Media	19.57%	14.03%	27.92%	5.96%
Property and Real Estate	10.65%	4.97%	14.26%	2.97%
NGO	6.74%	5.68%	10.92%	1.48%
Medical and Healthcare	9.72%	6.58%	10.90%	2.87%
Lifestyle, Arts and Entertainment	9.46%	5.08%	12.80%	1.07%
Industry, Trade and Manufacturing	6.52%	3.20%	9.20%	1.40%
Hospitality, Travel and Tourism	8.69%	6.28%	12.48%	2.41%
Financial Institutions	7.01%	4.50%	10.42%	0.98%
Education and Training	8.14%	5.83%	11.82%	2.45%
eCommerce	12.16%	8.37%	14.67%	4.22%
Business and Consulting	8.31%	4.92%	11.85%	1.49%
Automotive	9.02%	2.81%	14.10%	1.27%



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Demystifying The Inbox 2012 \(Part 1\)](#)
Demystifying the Inbox (2012) Part 1 looks at factors that make email the ultimate digital communication channel. The study includes insights on when, where and how South Africans use email.

[Demystifying The Inbox 2012 \(Part 2\)](#)
Demystifying the Inbox (2012) Part 2 looks at how South Africans clearly indicate that their inbox's are manageable and that they enthusiastically subscribe to commercial emails that appeal to their interests.

[Demystifying The Inbox 2012 \(Part 3\)](#)
Demystifying the Inbox (2012) Part 3 looks at what makes email subscribers engage with email marketing campaigns. Part 3 provides the answers to what makes them subscribe, open and read emails.

Everlytic Top Tips

In September 2014, Everlytic launched a spring campaign titled Everlytic's Top Tips. This campaign served readers a daily email marketing tip accompanied by a growing

springtime garden. The total of 20 tips were compiled in a document and have been divided into the following sections: Content, Database, Design and Functionality, Delivery and Analytics. These themes are essential for all marketers when it comes to planning a core email marketing strategy.

Guide To Navigating POPI

Everlytic's Guide to navigating POPI provides an introduction to the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI). While POPI has already been passed into law, the act provided a one-year grace period for businesses to become compliant. At the publishing date of this guide, the one-year grace period had not yet commenced due to its pending announcement.

Guide To Best Performing Emails:

Part 1 – Open Rates

To kick-start 2015, Everlytic went on the hunt for some real "learning" nuggets and we wanted to know: Which clients had achieved exceptional success from their 2014 mailers based on the key metrics of: Open rates (Part 1) and

Click Through rates (Part 2). In Part 1 we selected clients who achieved open rates of over 40%.

Part 1 contains the following key information:

- Five real examples of mailers that achieved an over 40% open rate.
- Critical insights from Everlytic's email experts as they weigh in on each successful mailer.
- Email planning assistance for 2015.

Guide To Best Performing Emails:

Part 2 – Click Rates

In Part 2 we identified the top five mailers that achieved click-through-rates of 10% or more (the SA benchmark is on average 3%). The following information is available in Part 2:

- Five real examples of mailers that achieved an over 10% click-through-rate.
- Critical insights from Everlytic email experts as they weigh in on each successful mailer.
- Email planning assistance for 2015.



ABOUT EVERLYTIC

Who We Are

Prefix Technologies (Pty) Ltd is the company behind Everlytic. Established in 2004, Prefix is a Level 2 BEE contributor and our software is 100% built in South Africa by our team of talented software engineers. We strive to be the best in the world at what we do and benchmark ourselves against international competitors from across the globe. With our head office in Johannesburg and another office in Cape Town, we are in the hub of South Africa's big business districts. We are a team of young, dynamic and innovative people who ensure you have a top-notch piece of software and an excellent customer experience.

What Everlytic Does

Everlytic is a central hub for all your digital communications. Our system gives you the ability to manage and segment your database, compose beautiful emails, send email and SMS campaigns with ease to any number of recipients, and track everything that happens.

We go beyond just email and SMS marketing though, with our production messaging engine you can power the delivery of any digital message from your organisation whether it is the sending of an invoice in a branded template, an order notification, or any other system generated email or SMS.

Why Choose Us?

Everlytic is the leading Cloud Marketing Software solution in South Africa. Every day hundreds of top South African and international companies use our software to send millions of messages to their customers and subscribers. With our bulk and production email and SMS engines you can manage all of your digital communications from one central hub. Whether it be newsletters and notifications, statements and system generated messages, Everlytic is the leader in ensuring top delivery rates.



AUTOMATE YOUR DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS