Distributing event promotions through the trusty email

Your business could be missing out if you haven't yet devised an email marketing plan to promote your upcoming event. A strong campaign that is sent directly into prospect's inboxes is one of the most uninterrupted ways to share your message with the people who matter most.

Email offers a hyper targeted approach, allowing you as the sender complete control over who receives what. Usually, your chosen recipients will have interacted with your brand in some way prior to receiving the email. This doesn't have to be your methodology - you can buy or build cold data lists - but recipients who are already familiar with your business will be more receptive of your communications.

Whilst most of us understand the simplicity of creating and sending an email, sending hundreds or possibly thousands at once requires much more forward thinking. Let us explain the tools and techniques you need to ensure your email strategy is a roaring (or purring!) success this National Pet Shop Day.

Identify your goals and target audience: Before crafting your message to mail, it's important to distinguish what you want to achieve by sending this content out. Are you trying to encourage in-store visits, boost online engagement, or RSVPs to a specific event? Your campaign will jump in effectiveness when the content is tailored to your goals and relevant to your target audience – pet owners, previous subscribers and local shop customers in this instance. Think about what these sorts of people will want to read and how your offerings will benefit them.

Catchy subject line which carries impact: Before recipients start reading about all the great things you have planned, they have to make it past the subject line. It's the first thing they see when your email lands in their inbox, and therefore the deciding factor as to whether they continue. And so, you're left with minimal characters to spark enough curiosity that your email is the one they click over others. The trick is to keep it simple, whilst alluding to the value they'll receive by reading further.

Create a sequence of emails: A single email can be informative, but it isn't enough to build momentum for an entire event. Instead, think about developing a sequence of emails, each with a slightly different message or purpose, which collectively work towards the promotion of your event. Here is an example sequence that you could stagger:

- **Email 1 – announcement email (4 weeks out):**
  Tell your audience about National Pet Shop Day and how you plan to participate as a pet shop or store. Provide key details like the date, time, and location of your event, along with exciting reasons to attend - special discounts, giveaways, or meet-and-greets with their favourite local pets.

- **Email 2 – reminder email (2 weeks out):**
  Check back in with your readers to remind them of the upcoming plans and share any new updates. Highlight exclusive offers, products or giveaways that will interest the attendees and encourage sign-ups.

- **Email 3 – last chance email (2–3 days before):**
  Build urgency and provide a final call to action, such as "Don't miss out on…", "Last chance to register…". Encourage RSVPs or remind them to visit your pet shop depending on the steps you want customers to take. Last chance emails sweep up any stragglers or late entries that either forgot to sign up or have only just seen the email.

- **Email 4 – post-event email**
  Thank your attendees and prioritise sharing the event highlights. Include photos, testimonials, or a special post-event offer to keep the momentum going for future pet shop celebrations.

The frequency of your emails depends on the level of noise you want to make and how much you have to say about your event. However, if you reach out multiple times, recipients are likely to catch at least one of the reminders.

Personalisation: Personalising your content could be including your recipients name in the subject or body of the email, or tailoring recommendations based on their past behaviour. This will make your audience feel more valued, playing on their previous engagements to create meaningful messages.

Engaging visuals and clear CTAs: Emails that contain engaging visuals usually perform better. Whether it's branded banners, flashbacks from previous events or any other high-quality images, graphics can quickly grab readers attention in a way that words can't.

When paired with a clear call-to-action (CTA), "RSVP now and secure your spot!" or "Explore event offers today.", recipients feel supported in what to do next and are more inclined to act promptly. Keep your CTA buttons or links bold and easy to click across all devices for a seamless signup process.

You must take into account that HTML emails can face formatting and delivery issues. Certain email applications limit or completely block HTML emails as a security measure, seeing as HTML codes could potentially allow for malicious scripts or viruses to be injected into user inboxes. Sending a test email to yourself or someone in the business is the best way to check whether your content configuration looks in place from a recipient's point of view.

Take advantage of user-generated content: If this is the second year your pet shop or store is participating in National Pet Shop Day, include pictures and positive experiences from last year to build trust and excitement for this year's celebrations. You could even ask your customers to interact with the email content by submitting photos of their pets for a chance to be featured in future mailing.

Performance overview: Most of the legwork has been done at this point. Now, it's just a case of tracking the performance of your emails through insightful analytics, such as open rates, click-through rates, conversion rates and unsubscribes. These metrics can be used to indicate what works and what doesn't, so you can tweak your approach for future emails and optimise results.

It is a mistake to overlook the trusty email as part of your event promotions, understanding its importance in maintaining contact with your database, building a sales pipeline and strengthening customer relationships. Committing to developing an email strategy will set you up nicely for future promotions, and is something you can continuously build on whenever an event takes place.