

## Latest Research - Will Email Still Cut the Ice for Future Business Marketing? What Are the Success Factors?

The Habeas study reveals consumer attitudes towards email and online interaction with businesses. There's some really valuable insight here for your online marketing...

### Email vs other communication mediums – will it survive?

The study confirms increasing concern about email fraud, scams, spam, viruses, and privacy, but...despite all this:

- 67% of respondents prefer email as a communications channel over other online vehicles and 65% believe this will **still be the case** in five years.
- The future importance of email is seen **far above other mediums** such as video conferencing, text messaging and Web meetings which don't even rate 20%.
- Even amongst the young generation (18 - 34), so comfortable with novel communications technologies, 65% favour email to communicate with businesses in five years.

### What about emerging platforms such as mobile?

There is an increasing trend toward consumer use of mobile devices such as internet-enabled phones, but far from superseding email, they will provide **another arena** for it. Just like Web sites, mobile versions of email need to be compact and focused to reach mobile users effectively. This is an **opportunity** not many businesses are tapping into yet, but will become more commonplace – probably for businesses with more time-sensitive services. It could be worth thinking forward to be ahead of the game...

### What are the most important factors for success?

The study confirmed interest from consumers in gaining more control over their online interactions with businesses, and noted other trust factors:

- More than 88% of respondents said they would like more choices over the content of the emails they receive, including options on article subjects, white papers, special offers, and adverts. This **power of choice** for customers was shown to **positively impact on a company's reputation**.
- More than 80% favour doing business with organisations that use opt-in permission.
- 75% prefer engaging with organisations that exhibit strong privacy practices.
- Only 12% purchased from businesses they did not know.

### What things will most scare your customers off?

Previous studies have shown a real '**email insecurity factor**' among consumers, in fact nearly 60% keep different addresses for entities they trust vs don't trust. If you can make it into their latter category, your emails will likely attract ready attention.

- On average, about 80% are uncomfortable with businesses sharing their email address with third parties, yet they believe two thirds of companies are likely to do

this, damaging reputation. It could be very worthwhile making a statement of commitment to keeping your customer email addresses confidential, if you haven't already!

- Daily email messages ranked with pop-up advertisements as the most damaging online tactics to a company's online reputation.

**So...stick with email but keep looking forward with good reputation management**

Far from being eclipsed by other emerging communications methods, consumers expect email to be the main workhorse channel into the future. Organisations that build trust with consumers through forward-looking reputation management strategies will stand out and **gain long-term competitive advantage**. As a brand expert recently said...**your reputation is your brand** - the most important asset your business has.