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Do your nonprofit's emails still bring joy to your subscribers?

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Every day, nonprofit emails need to compete with everything from the latest sales at local stores and breaking news alerts to neighborhood listservs and family photos and on and on. It's difficult to cut through all of that noise and motivate people to not just read, but also to engage with your nonprofit. Starting at an even more foundational level, you need to be sure that when someone is cleaning up their inbox, they aren't clicking to unsubscribe from your messages. You need to be sure that, if they are applying the "Marie Kondo" standard to all of the email lists they are on, your messages are still bringing them joy. Here are a few ways to keep that joy going.

Check - and learn from -click-throughs

Often, with so little free time, many of us can be tempted to look just at email metrics of open rates, click-throughs, and unsubscribes. But there is a lot of additional information at our fingertips. One of the easiest next things to look at are the actual clicks. Are there topics that stand out as resonating more? Did a particular photo or video set a new record for clicks for you? Do the clicks seem to taper off well before the end of your message, indicating you may want to consider shorter

messages?

Experiment

As Cole Porter might say, “Make it your motto day and night, experiment, and it will lead you to the light.” Try different visuals. Use different locations or colors for a donate button. Deploy different subject lines. Most email platforms allow you to do [A/B testing](#) (some split your entire list in two; some allow smaller random samples, followed by allowing you to send the better performing version to the rest of your list).

Get an outside opinion

Friends and family can be great sounding boards in your personal life. They can also be helpful in your professional life. Often, being too close to a certain subject can cloud the ability to effectively judge what will appeal to others. Having a few people who will share honest feedback can help with those experiments you are working on. They’ll also help you realize when your messaging is drowning in jargon.

Ask

The best way to know what content people want to keep receiving from you is, simply, to ask. You don’t need in-depth interviews or to have people spend 15 minutes on a survey. Often, just a quick three-question survey will do. Let your readers tell you what topics they are most interested in. That can help you either segment your lists (if you have the capacity to create different versions of messages targeted to specific interests) or spend more time sharing impacts in an area that more of your readers are interested in.