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AI-STRATEGIES
to Use in Email
Marketing

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AI-STRATEGIES
to Use in Email Marketing

The chief goal of any email marketing campaign is to build effective communications with subscribers, to get the best response possible, and to secure a high ROI.

Open rate, clickthrough rate, complaints and unsubscribes – all of these factor into the achievement of the goal. In order to keep those metrics solid, you need to rely on a number of mailing strategies. You want to combine them in various ways and find the winning combinations, to tweak and tailor them to every particular email campaign. Only by doing so can you build customer loyalty followed by stable long-term relationships with each user. It might seem that building strong relationships with subscribers through email marketing is a labor-intensive daily "test and learn" routine. However, the development and implementation of artificial intelligence change this routine. The new way is to use AI strategies, which not only allows to get the best results in OR, CTR, and other standard metrics but also to use customer information to calculate the lifetime value of each customer. It expands investment opportunities for the development of the whole product and allows to predict the revenue that can be expected in the future period.

Below, you will find a list of the TOP15 Email Marketing Strategies powered with AI and ML algorithms that we at iAge Technologies rely on and would like to recommend to every marketer out there:
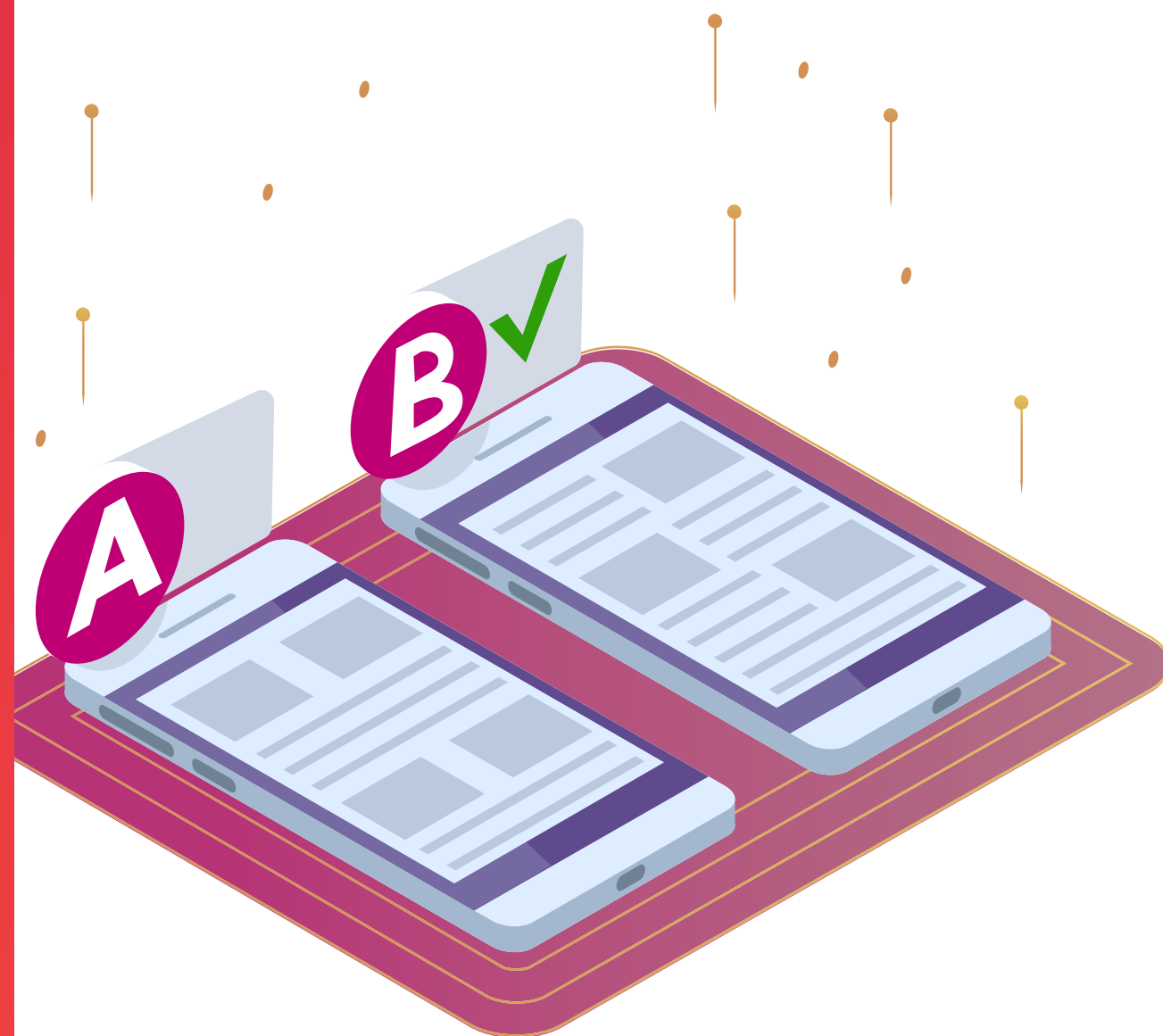
A/B TESTING

Alternatively called split testing, A/B testing is a popular strategy that involves comparing two variables and determining which of them stimulates a better response from subscribers. A/B testing can help to improve your messaging and, consequently, click rates.

There are a lot of parameters and metrics that can be A/B tested. Below you can see several of the most important ones which are likely to bring in significant improvements in the performance of your email campaigns:

- Subject and Pre-header

- Send time and weekday

- Email body length

- Visuals

- Calls-to-action and Buttons

AI strategies allow to do A/B tests quickly and without the manual work of a manager. The results can be scaled by doing numerous variations of A/B testing. For example, a manager uploads new lists of subject lines for a campaign and AI algorithms redirect a small part of the campaign traffic to see new subject lines to get an understanding of how they perform in comparison to the old one. Upon getting the results, the AI strategy decides which subject line should be used further.

An AI strategy for a company is, in fact, a complex of several strategies. So, we can also apply A/B tests to AI strategies to determine which of them will perform in a better way.

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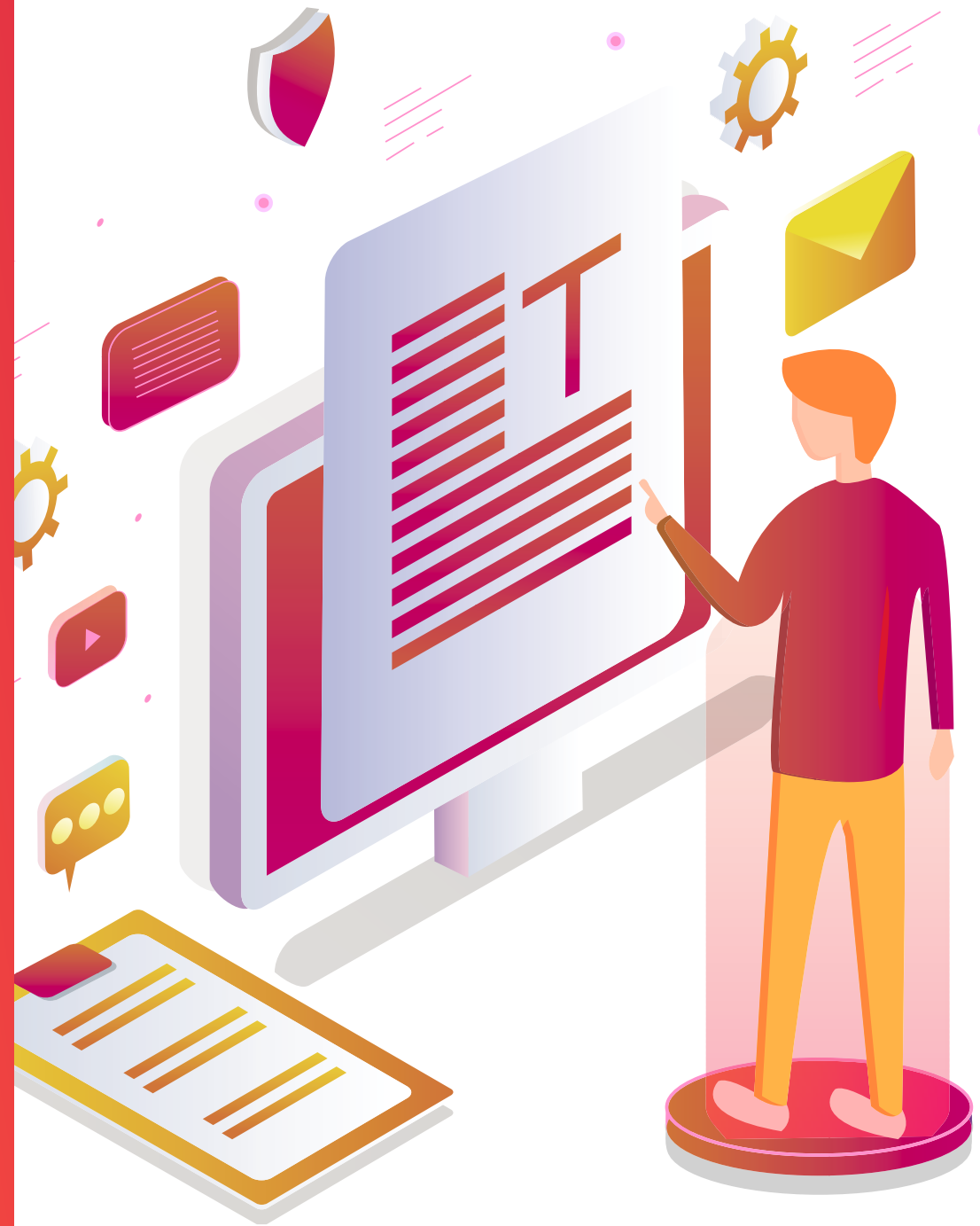
MULTIVARIATE
testing

Multivariate testing allows for a comparison of several variables and helps to get even more insight into the interaction of the tested variables.

The goal of every email campaign is to get the best response, which is usually measured in the number of clicks. In order to achieve it, AI-powered solutions test multivariate options. Doing it manually is a difficult task as a manager needs a lot of time to set up all the different kinds of emails and estimate the results to make correct conclusions. AI strategies are based on complex math practices, so they can do the same job quickly and without calculation errors.

For example, one test email has a simple uncluttered layout plus an image of the character and a single call-to-action, while the other looks more complicated, has multiple calls-to-action, medium-length body copy, and no image of the character. MVT allows to compare those sets of elements and see which stimulates a better response and helps to increase the click-through rate to the website of the company. It's also helpful in decreasing the number of experiments needed to achieve the best response at the lowest cost.

All in all, it gives marketers freedom to craft more ideas, allowing to test a virtually endless number of elements at a time.

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SUBJECT LINE GENERATION

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Subject line generation is one of the many email content optimization techniques that are relatively easy to implement. It is usually done with the help of machine learning algorithms and shows a significant incremental lift in open rates (up to 60%).

Why is it important to thoroughly tweak and test the subject line? The answer is obvious: it is the pretty wrapping paper that covers your gift, i.e. offer, newsletter, etc. What's inside may be worth a million dollars, but who will see its worth if the wrapping is messy and unappealing? Moreover, it also has to create a sense of urgency – tear it off immediately and see what's inside! It should be personalized – how pleasant it is for a child to get a present wrapped in paper with their favorite cartoon characters! Now, this only is a metaphor but it explains the importance of the subject line choice very accurately.

Machine learning algorithms can sort through thousands of possible subject lines and immediately convert them into usable insights. While it can seem great and the results of efficiency testing are really impressive, sometimes getting a significantly higher open rate doesn't equal an increase in CTR. So, you want to combine this strategy with several others and try to see the big picture to make your marketing funnel more powerful.

USER CLASSIFICATION AND CONTENT CUSTOMIZATION

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As a strategy, user classification and content customization involve dividing all customers into clusters based on certain common features and creating a separate email program campaign for each cluster with regard to the definite common feature. Manual data gathering, singling out common features, and segmentation can be quite simple as a process if a company works with very similar customers and can interact with users by simple segments based on the acquisition source or a typical level of activity (which can be measured by opens and clicks). But in a more realistic environment, customers are very different and there are a lot of factors which should be taken into account during segmentation.

Interests and preferences concerning the content type and email frequency, a typical activity level, behavior prediction - these are the things that AI strategies are ready to analyze in order to create numerous clusters of customers. By increasing the number of factors based on which AI strategies build customer clusters, email marketers can as much as build individual Segment-of-One communication.

Respecting the preferences of each cluster helps to build loyalty and increase engagement. For marketers, user classification and content customization allow to get more clicks from campaigns.

CUSTOM
Sending Frequency

5

Defining the optimal frequency of email campaigns is one of the most challenging marketing tasks. Some of your subscribers may prefer daily evening tips, while others would be happier to get only one email per week. To make your email marketing efforts more effective, you need to adjust the sending frequency to the preferences of every subscriber. A standard - but also simple and best-practice approved - method is to give subscribers an opportunity to choose the desired frequency of content emails. It is usually done via a subscription manager - a separate page on your website where a subscriber can learn more about the types of emails you are offering, get a preview of each, and adjust their frequency.

There is also a more effective method: AI strategies can choose the right sending frequency for each of your subscribers taking into account a number of various factors, including their typical activity level, engagement, etc. It shows great results measured in the increased number of clicks from subscribers. An additional feature that AI strategies offer is working on reactivation communications with customers who no longer open emails and finding the right individual sending frequency for them. Because if a subscriber does not open or read your emails, you should not give up on them – they may just be less interested or have less free time at hand. You can still turn such subscribers into donors or customers if you find the sending frequency.

SENDING DIFFERENT CONTENT AT DIFFERENT TIMES

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One of the factors that greatly affect the open and click rates is the send time. Finding the right time to send a certain campaign and optimizing delivery for this time can increase the impact your emails produce on your customers by 30%! The day on which you send your emails is just as important as the send time. Some weekdays are busier than others in terms of the volume of messages your users get into their inboxes.

However, what is effective for one subscriber can be absolutely useless for another. ML algorithms can analyze individual users' behavior and pinpoint the time when your messages are more likely to get a response or be interacted with by every single one of them. Such details give a significant boost in conversion. Automated rescheduling of the planned send time helps to adjust your campaign to the ongoing changes in a customer's behavior, interests, etc.

SPECIALTIES
for Loyal Users

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Appreciate your most active audience! Consider your repeat customers (or long-term subscribers) your VIP clients and let them enjoy the perks that their status infers. Help them feel valued by sending special offers like free shipping and «top secret» content to continually increase engagement and interest in what you have to offer. AI strategies can not only help you to build personal communications with your core audience but also use data to expand the audience segment that can be classified as long-term subscribers and send them additional content. It allows your campaign to get more clicks from those whom you could not have driven to click if you had done your email marketing manually.

There are a lot of opportunities to encourage VIP customers to click, e.g. you can send them email invitations to exclusive events held by your company, deliver a customized e-card for their birthday to give them additional delight, or create a special email design to emphasize their VIP status.

Your core audience is the cornerstone of your capital gain, it should always come first. So, the main objective of AI strategies here is to define and use your core audience to get more clicks.

CUSTOMER JOURNEY OPTIMIZATION

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Customers can have different features, preferences, and habits, but regardless of these differences, marketers should focus on solving their problems and consistently emphasize the value of the solution they are offering throughout the email sequences they send. Defining the end goal and creating campaigns to specifically achieve this goal by following different paths does not seem overly complicated anymore with machine learning algorithms to rely on.

Knowing the final KPI and having the promotional materials you want to use, AI solutions can do the job for you. They can build a strategy and define the right sequence of campaigns to send. ML algorithms use more than just the standard approach that includes confirmation, welcome, trigger, and content emails; they can also predict the most successful funnel to use these types of emails. This is critical, as all actions and clicks you want your customers to perform should be directed to a particular KPI.
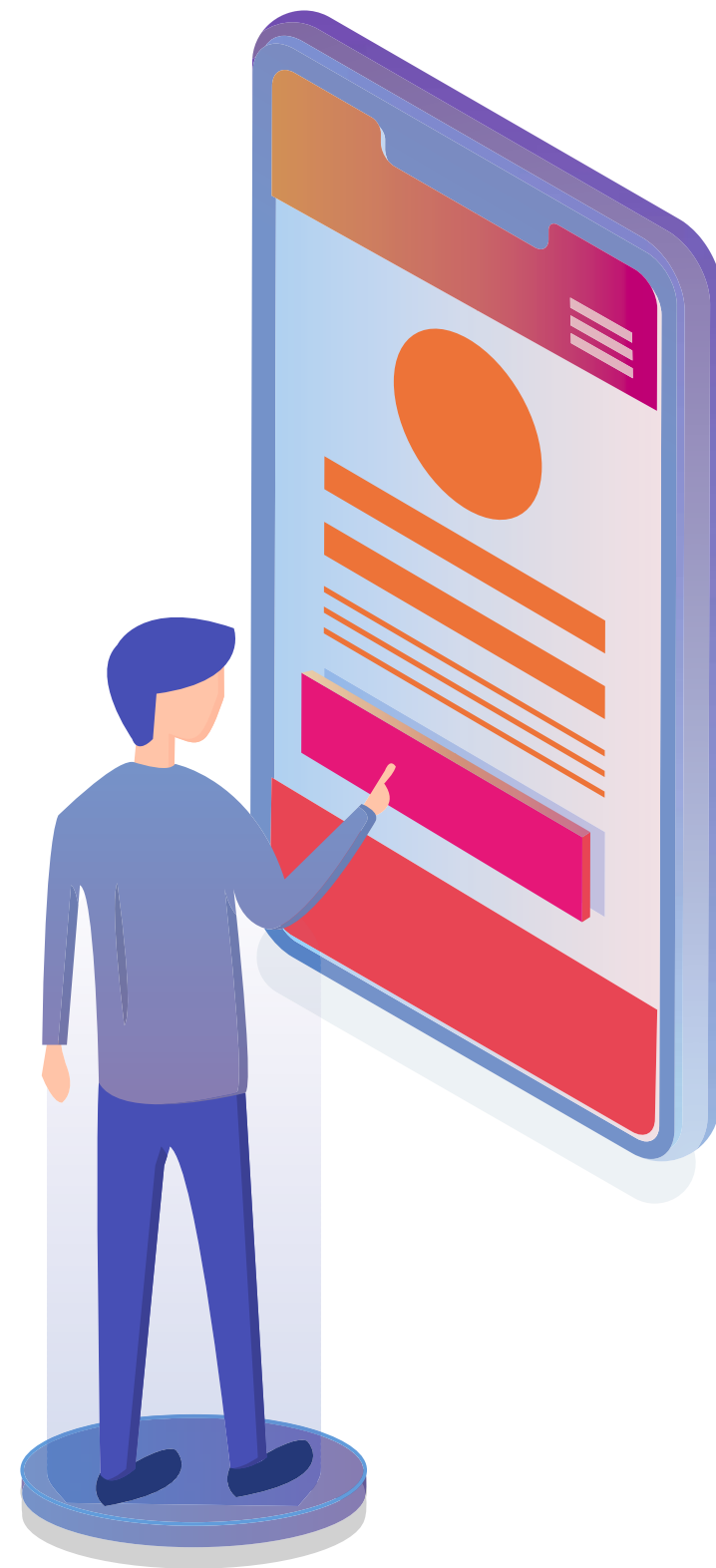
DEFINING THE MOST CLICKABLE CONTENT

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The process of onboarding your new subscribers and transforming them to long-term customers is one of the main tasks that email marketing is faced with. At the early stages, it is very important to show the value of your product, to explain how it can solve your customer's issues. Depending on how effective this initial communication is, the customers will either leave or stay with you and eventually purchase your product.

So, at these early stages, AI strategies help to define the content that has maximum click probability for a certain user and use it to increase engagement. By analyzing all uploaded content and your customers' characteristics, ML algorithms can very accurately define the content that should be used and create personal communications calendar to get the best response from each customer. It also can be effective in reviving the fading interest, depending on the email strategy you are applying.

CONTENT REPURPOSING

If you are doing content marketing (and you most certainly are doing it), you already have a wealth of content at hand. And when your audience does not react to any content item in the way you expected them to, you feel discouraged and tend to hide it from sight. However, you needn't always do that.

Don't hesitate to send the same content twice to a user who did not react to it immediately. The reason for the lack of response may vary from vacations or an illness to tight deadlines, WiFi issues, etc. If you feel the content is worth reading/watching, just give it another try.

Moreover, some of the content in your treasure trove may be "evergreen", which means that you can send it repeatedly, without worrying about the time of the year and other factors. Automation will help to assign a special status to such content and use it to increase customer engagement.

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SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER

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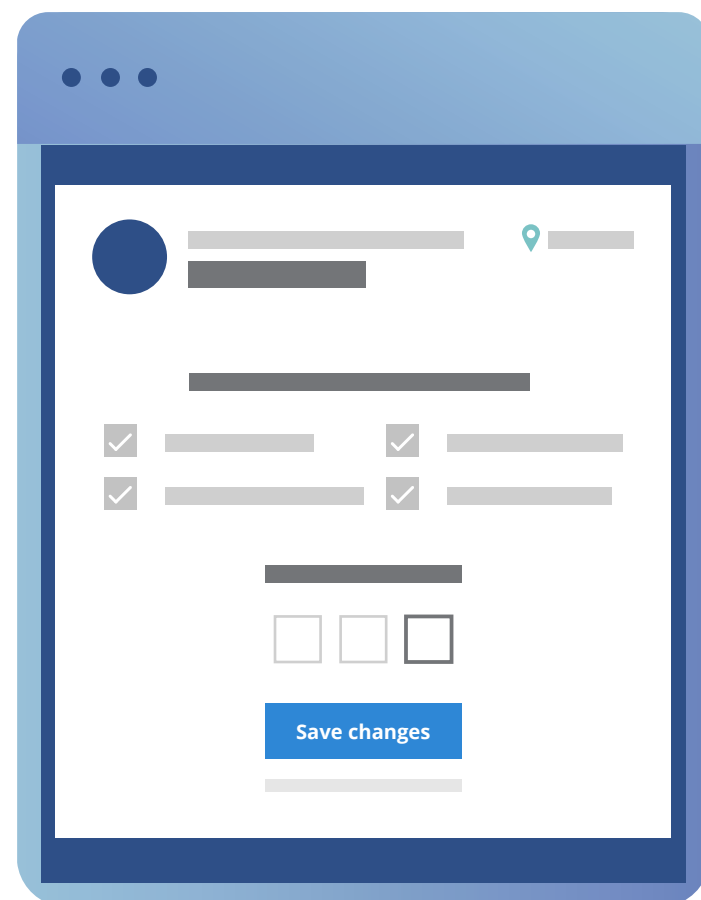
People like to keep everything under control. Enable them to do so by creating a subscription manager, where they will select the desired content types and set email frequency preferences. Even if you are not new to email marketing and have an ample mailing list, the subscription manager will enable you to achieve even better results.

By letting your subscribers choose when and which content they would like to receive and which is completely unnecessary, you can kill two birds with one stone. First, you can make your email campaigns more targeted and relevant because you now know what exactly your audience segments are interested in. Second, you can reduce your email churn and unsubscribe rates considerably: people eagerly react to the emails they are looking forward to receiving and they no longer have to unsubscribe altogether to avoid getting irrelevant information.

It should not be extra time- or effort-consuming to introduce a subscription manager, but you will be surprised with the results you'll see: some users may request to receive more emails, your technical costs may substantially drop, and your revenue may grow! Combined with the AI strategy of choosing Custom Sending Frequency, a subscription manager can help improve the results of marketing campaigns five-fold!

CONTENT TYPE SWITCHING

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If a user stops interacting with the content, it probably means their interest is fading. You need to bring your churning audience back to life promptly before they become completely uninterested.

One of the most effective strategies is to switch the type of content you are serving them or at least change the tone or form in which you are delivering it. You need something eye-catching, inspiring, and very fresh to revive their interest.

There is a number of mechanisms and algorithms that can help to find out which type of content you can switch to, from user group similarity based on purchase habits to recommendations based on the history of interactions. Marketing automation solutions can help to make your emails different, unexpected, and appealing. They can improve the subject lines to match the new requirements while keeping their style human-like, not robotic; they can define which content to put inside your regular emails to secure higher engagement rates and serve special offers and exclusive content to spark your subscribers' interest.
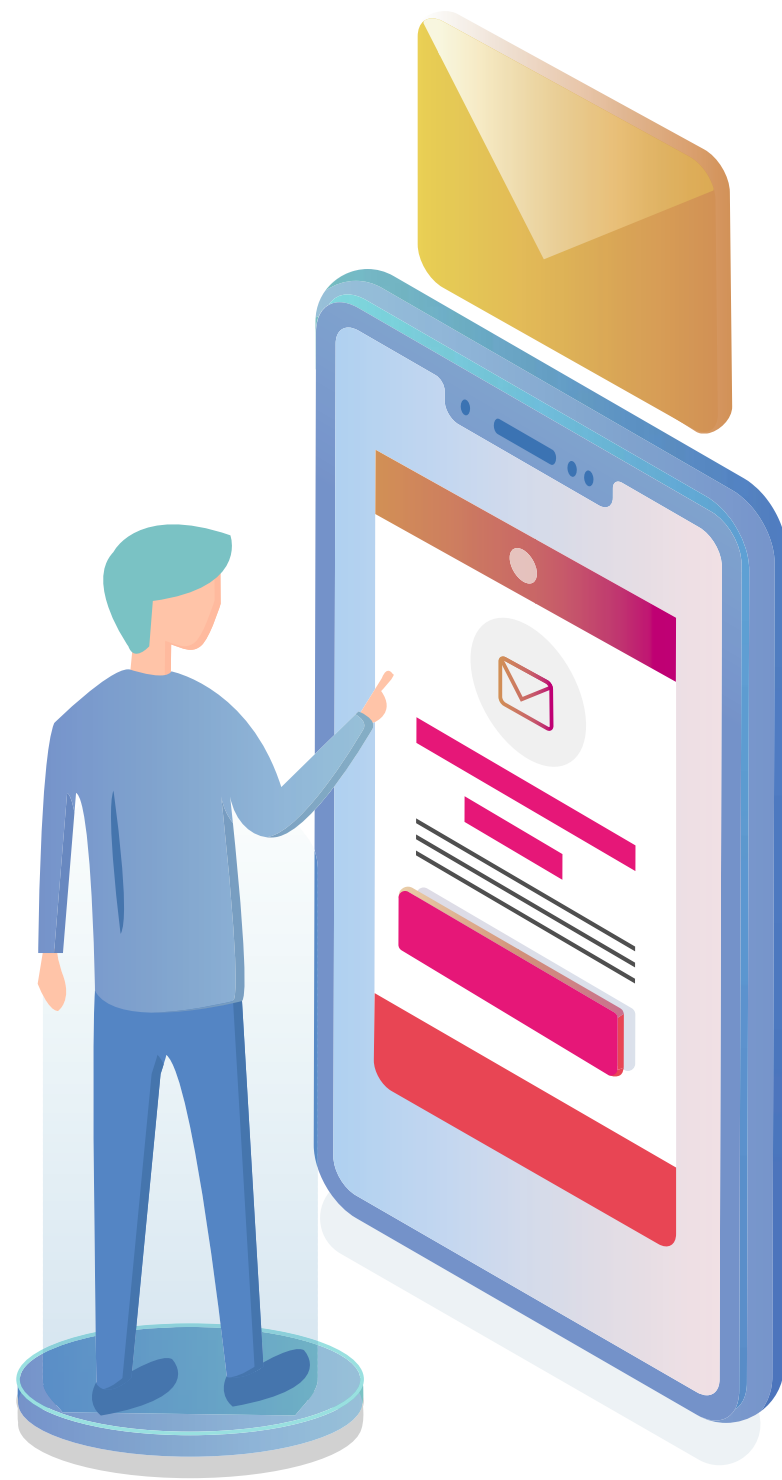
REACTIVATION EMAILS

Customers do not fall off in bunches - each day, or better still, each hour, someone from your audience loses interest. However, if a user doesn't click in your emails or at least open them, it's too early to give up on them. They are still there, they exist, but you need to restore their activity by offering them something special. One of the most effective methods of turning inactive subscribers into active users is to decrease the frequency of regular emails they receive and to involve them by special reactivation emails where the content is created specifically to fight fatigue.

Machine learning algorithms can also predict the decrease in user activity and react accordingly by adding a special type of content to the personal communications schedule in order to improve the situation and place the customers back into active segments.

AI strategies send out reactivation emails with great care to achieve the desired result without triggering any side effects - complaints and unsubscribes.

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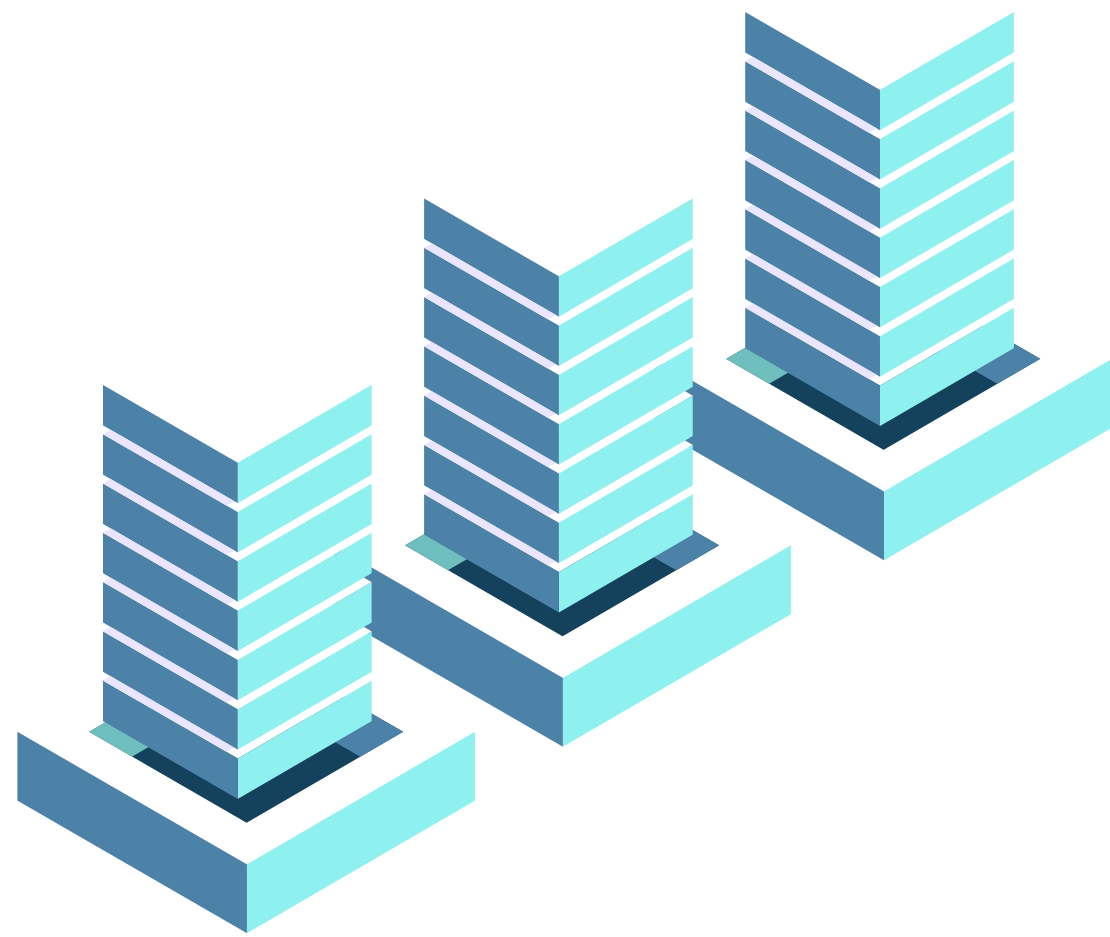
GROUPING CONTENT IN SERIES

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In email marketing, content is king. A lot of people are involved in the creation of content and setting it up into email newsletters. Your content is a real treasure, but it also requires lots of hard work to spread and sell. One of the difficult manual tasks is to define the best way of using all content to recover the content creation costs and to make revenue. AI solutions use complex algorithms which analyze all uploaded content and by defining its common features (for example, the purpose of it: getting a confirmation, achieving an open, etc.), divide the content into groups. After that, machine learning algorithms use content series to build a personalized communication strategy for each user. While you create and upload the new content, AI powered solutions define its type and add it to one of the existing series or create a new one. Each series will be tested in order to determine the optimal sending frequency.

This AI strategy can help marketers a great deal in terms of optimizing the subscription manager; it also gives AI recommendations about the sending frequency and the preferred types of content.

TRYING TO HELP, NOT SELL

Think of your audience as your best friends.

People are subscribing to your emails because they want to receive some value, be it special offers, discounts, or simply helpful info. Your goal is virtually the same – to get some value, real financial value – from your interaction with customers. But you cannot expect them to start making purchases immediately. People need to understand that they can rely on you, that what you are offering makes sense and solves the problems they are looking to solve.

Only by offering quality content, expert advice, excellent products, and reliable opinions will you gain your customers' trust and gratitude. AI strategies can define the optimal ratio of different email types - content, advertisements, etc. - to build the best communications that can be called long-term and friendly. The manual solution of sending tons of offers with calls-to-action - Buy! Pay! - can only guarantee huge complaint rates and a speedy outflow of subscribers. AI solution works on long term relationship while also achieving the marketing KPI.

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EMAIL
Marketing

Email marketing is a continuous process of testing and learning. Remember to analyze the outcomes of your efforts, combine strategies in various ways to achieve better results, and to apply AI strategies in email marketing, as they can drive a significant increase in the number of clicks from subscribers. This is achieved through Segment-of-One marketing and creating an individual communication strategy for each customer with the most suitable content and sending frequency.

Rely on AI solutions to do this job in a better and faster way and to get more response and revenue from your subscribers. Our company, iAgeTechnologies, Inc., has 15 years of successful digital marketing experience. We will be glad to guide you through the ways in which our AI-powered solution XR (https://engagemktg.com) can help to scale your business by relying on any of the AI strategies listed above, so please don't hesitate to ask your questions and request personal demo here!

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INTERESTED? WANT TO KNOW MORE? CONTACT US!

🌐 iagetechnologies.com

✉ everydayrevenue@iagetec.com

iAge Technologies, Inc.

901 N. Pitt Sreet, Suite 325 Alexandria, VA 22314,

877-635-4243