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## Your From line: benefit or barrier?

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*According to the DoubleClick Consumer Email Study released in late 2002, 60% of respondents cite the "From" line as the most important factor motivating them to open emails, while 35% cited the "Subject" line.*

In this issue of Email Marketing Hints & Tips, we'll cover the From line, and what you can do to make sure your From line serves as an advantage, instead of an obstacle. *This is especially important as the soon to be released AOL 9 and Outlook 2003 include new anti-spam features that will require some action on the part of senders.*

In the next issue, we will follow up with tips on creating a subject line that achieves the same goal.

**The From line** is all about getting recipients past that first critical step to email success: the open.

How can you make sure your From line maximizes your open rate rather than creating a barrier to open? The following 8 tips are guaranteed to help.

Your From line has two parts:

**Part one** is the "From Name" - the name, such as "Constant Contact's Email Marketing Diva, Michelle Keegan."

**Part two** is the "From Address" - the electronic address including "@" such as, "tips@constantcontact.com."

Your recipients may see just the From Name, just the From Address, or both depending on their email client or reader.

1. **Be consistent.** Recipients will become familiar with your communications and look for your specific From Name and/or Address in their email inboxes. Consistency in your From Name and Address will ensure that your email is recognized and opened.
2. **Become a trusted sender.** Encourage the recipient to put your From Address in their address book, trusted sender list or approved sender list (whatever the name may be in their email client).

New anti-spam features in AOL 9 and Outlook 2003 are designed to place spam control in the hands of recipients and to protect them from unwanted visual images. In AOL 9 and Outlook 2003, your beautiful HTML layout will appear, but images will not be visible unless you are on the recipient's trusted sender or contact list.

As a trusted sender or contact, your email will be delivered and remain exempt from anti-spam measures including filters, challenge response systems or image blockers.

Make it easy for recipients to add your From Address to their trusted sender or contact list by keeping it short, easy-to-remember and easy-to-type. *Doing this will also make it easier for recipients to search for your previous email newsletters and offers whenever they need to.*

3. **Make it meaningful.** Both your From Name and Your From Address should identify you and/or your company as the sender of the email and clarify the relationship between you and the recipient. Take this opportunity to give the recipient a reason to open your email vs. a reason to delete it.
4. **Use a From Name and Address the recipient will recognize.** Recipients signed up to be on your list. They know your name, your product or service name, or your company name, and are expecting to hear from you.
5. **Use your brand.** The From line is an important branding opportunity. As such, it is a good idea to use a From Name and/or Address that includes your name, company, product or service name - whichever the recipient will know best. Your brand in the From line assures the recipient that the email is coming from a reliable and trusted source and builds familiarity and your credibility - especially when repeated over time.
6. **Keep your From line short** so that it appears in its entirety in the recipient's inbox. If the recipient's email client displays both the From Name and From Address, things can get awfully cramped, and even hidden. If there is some reason your From Name and From Address have to be long, at least make sure the most important identifier comes first, like so: "Constant Contact's Email Marketing Diva, Michelle Keegan." People know Constant Contact, but new readers don't know me, yet!
7. **Avoid using a From Address like any of these:**
  - PayDayToday@luckydice.biz - looks like a smarmy online gambling site - DELETE
  - k3mm7u3vx901@hotmail.com - Hmmm a bunch of random letters and numbers - DELETE
  - youknowme@blast.net - Don't think so - DELETE
  - getpaidfornothing@mx11.sleightoftheupperhand.com - You're kidding, right? - DELETE
8. **Avoid using a From Name like any of these:**
  - The Answer - Could you be any more vague? - DELETE
  - Sexy Angie - Dime a dozen porn site - DELETE
  - Size Matters - Gee, I wonder what this is? - DELETE

Prank Call - Could this actually be a prank email follow-up? - DELETE

**As you examine your From line and consider these tips, remember that there are pros and cons to change.** You may already have a From line that works just great for you. You may have a sizeable list of recipients who have already added your From Address to their trusted sender list, contact list or address book. In that case, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." However, if you are just starting out or see room for improvement in your From line, however, now may be the perfect time to make a change.

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