

## **JSOnline.com AdMail Creative Specifications**

Below are Journal Interactive's guidelines and specifications for JSOnline.com AdMail. Please read the document thoroughly. All deliverables provided to Journal Interactive should arrive on CD or as attachments to e-mail.

### **HTML E-MAIL**

#### **1. File Size**

Max file size - 70K

This includes both the HTML file and images. You can minimize file size through image optimization, strict HTML markup, and the removal of any unnecessary tags.

#### **2. Layouts**

Width - Must be 500 pixels

All messages will have the JSOnline.com AdMail header and footer appended to the layout by JSOnline. You can view an example of this here:

<http://design.journalinteractive.com/admail/pilch/2008/04/admail.htm>

#### **3. HTML**

- Layouts should accommodate the resizing of text by the recipient. Text should be a universally font.
- Characters must be selected from within the US-ASCII character set (printable characters occupying positions 0-127). Replace characters outside this range with suitable proxies (e.g., two dashes for one emdash) or HTML character entities (e.g., &copy; for ©).
- If using style sheets (CSS), use inline CSS. Surround font styles with font tags and embed them within the body tags.
- Use a combination of images and text in your HTML (images may be blocked by the e-mail client).
- *Always specify ALT text for images*, especially images conveying information important to the meaning of the mailing (e.g., offer details). Unimportant images should receive null string ALT attributes (i.e., alt=""). Link all images.

- *Images and links must use absolute URLs* (cannot be embedded in the email itself). Image names cannot contain spaces and in some email clients are case sensitive. Links should not contain.
- Avoid using Image Maps. Instead, cut up the image into individual pieces so that each area that should be linked will be a separate image.
- Do not rely on BODY tag attributes (BGCOLOR, BACKGROUND, etc.) or mark-up within the HEAD tag as Web based e-mail clients will tend to filter out such elements in the final presentation.
- Nested TABLES should be kept to the minimum. And since background colors on the BODY tag may not be rendered properly you should use tables for such attributes.
- All tags must be properly nested and properly closed.
- NO embedded scripting (JavaScript, VBScript, etc)
- NO FRAMES, ANCHORS or DIV tags should be used.
- NO Flash or Rich Media

#### **4. Copy & Content**

- Text should be easy to read, so be aware of the background colors used.
- Remember you may only the top few inches to tell your story if this is being viewed in a preview pane. *Design so the top of your email shows the most important information, even when images are disabled.* Summarize the proposition, offer or product at the top, include links.
- Use headlines to grab attention while keeping the promotional copy to two paragraphs or less.

### **SUBJECT LINES & SPAM**

Subject Line – keep to 55 characters (including spaces). *Must* include company name.

- We suggest coming up with a few different subject lines for testing purposes. This is one of the easiest items to test and can affect open rates. Make sure the subject line is direct, relevant, timely and impactful. Use action words.

- Do not repeat text, be succinct and try to avoid spam related words.
- Do not use all CAPS. Keep the majority of your text in lower case.
- Avoid using unnecessary punctuation (!, \$, 100%) to lower your spam ratings.
- Test your subject line in various email clients at

[http://www.emailabs.com/tools/from\\_subject\\_line\\_tool\\_popup.html](http://www.emailabs.com/tools/from_subject_line_tool_popup.html)

## **TIPS AND TRICKS**

These Tips and Tricks will help to make optimize results from your e-mail marketing campaign.

- *Keep in mind that most e-mail clients have a small preview window and you should generate interest in the top 100-200 pixels of your message. Design so the top of your email shows the most important information, even when images are disabled. (Do not use all images – if images are blocked – the receiver will not see a blank email and have a better chance of deleting rather than opening and downloading the images.)*
- *Text should be in a universally supported font (Arial, Verdana, Tahoma, or Times New Roman). If you must use special font – use it within an image. Font should be no smaller than 10 pt (size “2” or 10 pixels)*
- *Font - Avoid using white as a font color, many spam filters look for white (#FFFFFF) in a font tag as a spam trigger.*
- *Repeat anything you show in images in your copy – many email clients block images therefore spell out, literally: your brand, your headline, your call to action and links to your landing pages.*
- Use plenty of white space in your message. It provides breathing room and breaks up the text and graphics. Do not crowd the page.
- Relevant content is important. Optimize the information for two types of readers, those who read bullet points and those who want details.
- *Include multiple links. Increasing the number of links may lead to increased open and click-thru rates. Make sure all images (including your logo) are linked.*