

## The Perfect Welcome Email is Like the Perfect First Date

The perfect welcome email can be compared to a first date with someone you really, really like -- both require a calculated mix of chemistry and good strategy. Basically, you have to have some game.

Let me illustrate why:

**A First Date:** By agreeing to go on a first date, you and the other person have solidified some baseline level of interest in one another. Whether you find them cute or think they have a great sense of humor, that interest will either grow into a series of dates to follow, fizzle out, or maybe even turn into a serious relationship -- depending on compatibility and your dating style.

**A Welcome Email:** A customer has shown initial interest in your brand or products and has signed up for your newsletter. They are interested in what you're offering, but haven't made a purchase yet. As a brand, you have to communicate with them in a way that persuades them to checkout and, ideally, helps them become a lifelong customer.

**Here are 7 best practices for the ultimate welcome email to make sure your customers convert (and hopefully win some second dates, too):**

### 1. Don't wait too long, but don't be too pushy.

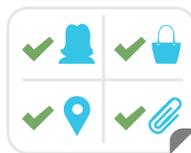


After the interest has become clear, you don't want to wait too long to set up the first date. You also want to make sure to be respectful and courteous when setting up the date... in short, don't be pushy about it. The same

goes for deploying your welcome email after signup. While we do recommend sending the welcome email immediately after signup - and at the very latest no longer than 24 hours post registration - it's important not to get pushy with your new audience. Examples: Don't try to force their friends to signup, force social media follows, or other tactics that could risk disengagement.

### 2) Take advantage of what you know; capture information at sign-up.

Let's be honest here, before you're going on a date with someone you're google-stalking the hell out of them. You think you know their favorite foods thanks to gratuitous Instagram food posts, you know the last headlines they've read thanks to retweets, and much, much more. Just like you would take advantage of that information when thinking about the perfect first date, you need to be proactive about creating the best experience for your customer. Capture information during the sign-



up form like gender and interests in a signup form so you can tailor your welcome email to each unique user. More advanced marketers go so far to feature product / content based on the acquisition keyword, for instance, working in the brand name used in the initial Google search for a hyper-targeted welcome email.

### 3) Be yourself. Stay true to your brand while giving customers what they want.



That photo of you from 10 years ago isn't going to get you past introductions. Be true to who you are to set the foundation for a long lasting relationship. Don't fake it; your date (and customer) will

most likely see right through you. For email, answer these questions in your welcome message: what makes your brand personality unique? How are your products different from your competitors, and why does this customer need them? What can the customer find on your site that they can't find anywhere else? Showcase your best selling products (even if they aren't super hip), products that have proven to activate first-time buyers, and most importantly, products that your customer are likely to purchase based on the data you collected on the sign-up form and during browsing history (if available!).

## 4) Impress them. Make sure they trust your company.

First impressions are lasting impressions, and if you're looking to score a second date, there has to be a sense of trust established from the get-go. Translating this idea to the welcome email could mean adding customer testimonials, quotes from earned media and other content that establishes your organization as a thought leader or sales leader in the category. Helping to establish that level of trust needed to get customers to commit to purchasing is critical during the first engagement.



## 5) Don't be desperate...you can erode a customer's willingness to buy.



I won't even go into how this translates into dating, as we all know what we're talking about here. For a welcome email though, I'm talking about offering up a discount in the first communication. Consider what the long-term impact of discounting will look like with your customer relationships. Give users time to convert on their own (at full price) vs. pushing too hard for it and potentially reducing their longer term willingness to pay. When you do offer discounts, be sure to focus on the longer term value and lifecycle mechanics of those promotion takers, not just on gross near-term conversions.

## 6) Make your intentions clear. Provide one strong call-to-action (CTA).

You know that you like the person you are going out with, so make sure she knows that too. Don't send her confusing messages or signals. Similarly, don't make your new customer navigate your email like it's the Bermuda Triangle. The welcome email should have one - and only one - purpose: driving first purchases sales, app downloads or site visits, but not all three at once. Whatever the relevant CTA might be for your business, make sure it stands out with a prominent button and keep the message simple - messages like 'go', 'explore now', 'shop now' are all it takes. Move everything else to the footer or focus on additional CTA's in emails down the road.



## 7) Don't give up, everyone is different.



Even if you couldn't lock down the second date at the end of the night, you shouldn't give up on someone you truly like. Staying respectfully persistent and approachable is a winning tactic in the inbox too. If a user doesn't commit to purchase right after the welcome email, don't throw in the activation towel. Every customer will interact with your brand differently, so we recommend setting up a dedicated welcome/activation series for accelerating time to first purchase designed with triggers for many types of shoppers. A welcome series can consist of a multitude of emails deployed in a daily or custom cadence that includes a number of messages that will help convert users and guide their way down the purchasing funnel. Addressing misconceptions, covering FAQ, highlighting popular or back in stock inventory announcements, etc. are all powerful ideas to leverage during this time.

**With those best practices in mind, take a look at your current welcome email and ask yourself, is it first date appropriate?**