



The Birth of **RESPONSIVE** Email Templates

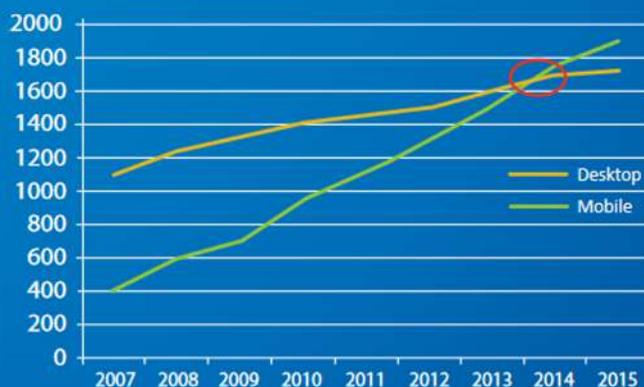
The Birth of Responsive Email Templates

The adoption of mobility solutions at the enterprise level is simply becoming more relentless in order to engage more and more customers. The mobile traffic is surging higher and higher every day, as the mobility trend gives more flexibility to everyone staying connected with each other and how they perform tasks using mobile devices and cloud services. But with the growth of devices in multiple sizes, organizations face challenges of providing excellent experience across different devices.

This has already led organizations to embrace a responsive design approach while building their websites. In fact, it has been a major point of discussion amongst decision-makers for the last couple of years. Now in the context of email designing, marketers also have started using the concept and technique of responsive design for their email campaigns. The following statistics can give you better ideas about why responsive email templates are important for your business.

- According to Forrester Research “Email Marketing Forecast 2012 – 2017” report, 78% Of U.S. Email Users Will Also Access Their Emails Via Mobile By 2017
- 56% of U.S. consumers made at least one purchase using their smartphone in response to an email
- 38% of email is now opened on a mobile device, with 33% for desktop and 29% for webmail – Litmus “Email Analytics” (September 2012)
- 88% of smartphone owners check their email on the mobile phone daily
- 80% of people delete an email if it doesn’t look good on their mobile device.

More and more organizations are turning to responsive design approach to create better experiences for their customers, and increase their engagement and click rates. This paper is going to cover the substantive side of having an optimized email template for different devices.



What is a Responsive Email Template?

At its core, “responsiveness” means that the output (content and design) reaches or replies to different devices with optimized readability and appropriate layout. No matter how different or complex the design is, the content is rendered in a well-fitted order for various devices, giving an ultimate experience to the users.

A responsive email design enables you to build email templates that give a uniform and optimized experience to users on a range of screen sizes and resolutions. It automatically renders an optimized version of the email as per the device where it is viewed. Responsive email template also provides consistency in displaying emails across different channels (Gmail, Yahoo, Bing, and Outlook) on different devices.

Responsive emails use @media Queries to recognize the device or resolutions or screen length and width and then ‘turn on’ different sets of rules based on that screen size to suitably show the email layout designed by you.

Below is a good display of how a responsive email looks when seen on a mobile device and a desktop PC.



- Text automatically gets adjusted according to the screen size for better experience
- 2-column template rendered to one column email
- Width of email template gets adjusted according to the size (width) of the device
- Header text automatically gets at better position
- Call for action displays at appropriate position to let customers quickly and easily contact you

Moreover, while designing a responsive email template, you can also change the layout and color, enlarge fonts, scale images, add padding, modify hierarchy and navigation, and also add or hide the content section. With the help of CSS coding, designers can design the layout that automatically adjusts to the devices' screen size being used by the email recipient.

There are many possibilities in a responsive email template; it all depends upon how you want your email displays on mobile devices.

Responsive Email Design Techniques

The basics on which responsive email templates are designed is CSS.

■ Media Queries

A media query, also known as @media is used to design responsive email. It is a special set of CSS styles that act like conditional statements or dynamic rules. Media queries identify the screen size of a device and then render the layout according to the different sets of rules based on that screen size.

```
@media screen and (max-width: 525px){}@media: this means that this line is a media query – (max-width: 525px): The CSS will apply to screens less than 525px wide – {}: CSS goes in here
```

■ Keep Flexible Width

In the email template, different content elements are bound to adjust according to the device size. That means it is important that tables have no fixed width.

So, instead of defining fixed width, keep it flexible, for example,

Make sure to add these styles to each table cell that contains content:

```
<table style="width: 600px;">
one would write<table
style="width: 100%;">
```

■ Image Setup

To ensure images will display appropriately, it is essential to not fix a width within the image tag. Doing so can make your email image stretch beyond the device screen, making it difficult for viewers to see the image in its entirety or correctly.

This is a good way to include a maximum width style to the image.

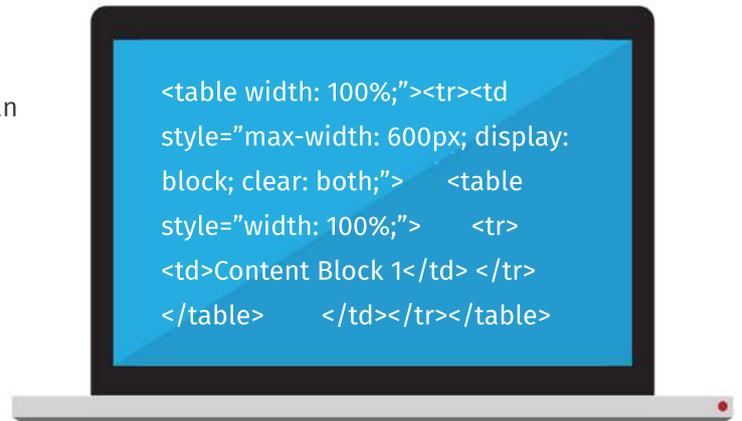


■ Table Setup

Using a table with in a table setup (as shown below), you can effectively manage the folding (or collapsing) of content blocks.

■ Buttons

It is important to set the appropriate size of your 'Call-to-Action' button, so that users can easily touch and tap the button on their device (especially on smaller devices). Design a finger-friendly 'Call-to-Action' button.



Best Practices for Responsive Email

- Get insights from customer response (data). The number one reason for a responsive email template is to enable you to capture more and more mobile customers. If your data reveals that there is a higher open rate of your email on mobile devices, then optimizing your emails for these devices should be your priority. Use customer data (from your marketing automation tool), and then strategize your responsive email template. You need to focus on improving mobile experiences as the use of mobile increases.
- Take a holistic approach to mobile devices. While creating a mobile-optimized version email template, keep in mind the different sizes of mobile devices, so that your email will get rendered appropriately in terms of style, space and length. Consider a single-column layout—this matches smaller screens, and enhances readability.
- Avoid using images in your 'Call-to-Action' button. Your 'Call-to-Action' button is the most important element of your email. It should not be in trouble for any reason, even if images are turned off. It is always recommended to add one 'Call-to-Action' in simple text format. With a finger-friendly font size and soothing color, your button can be displayed better than images.
- Use Inline CSS in place of CSS on Header of HTML.
- Display only the content, which is important for your business profit. Hide the content, which is not so important on the mobile versions. In other words, set your content priority and let the most important thing go into your mobile version. Larger font sizes are suggested, and 14px is a recommended minimum.
- Design for 'Touch and Tap'. Leave suitable space for Touch and Tap', so that users can easily explore your email. It is recommended the size of the button to be at least 32x 32px with sufficient padding to make a 44x 44px target, with an adequate surrounding of white space.

- Leave HTML text as standard as possible. Avoid using font sizes in decimals, in fact, use in whole numbers. Keep suitable space between letters and don't tighten the line height.
- Background images, animated GIFs, and image maps can trouble your email, so avoid them as much as possible. Limit CSS and implement it as inline CSS, and it is better to use tables for formatting and specify background
- Beware of special characters. Use the ASCII HTML code to display special characters.
- Optimize the template for better performance in a slow internet connection.



Test, Test and Test

Schedule extra time for design, development, and testing. This is one of the most important steps to ensure an awesome experience for your mobile customers. Rigorously test your responsive design in a range of email clients (Gmail, Yahoo, and Outlook) and mobile devices to be sure your email displays the way you designed. There are a number of devices, apps, and screen sizes in the market today, so don't leave any stone unturned that can impact how your email appears. And it always requires deep attention from a different perspective.

Things to remember while designing your Email Template:

Responsive emails are supported by:

- iOS Mail app
- Android 4.x Email (OEM) app
- Windows Phone 7.5
- BlackBerry OS7
- BlackBerry Z10

Responsive emails are not supported by:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| ■ iPhone Gmail app | ■ Android Gmail app | ■ Windows Mobile 6.1 |
| ■ iPhone Mailbox app | ■ Android Yahoo! Mail app | ■ Windows Phone 7 |
| ■ iPhone Yahoo! Mail app | ■ BlackBerry OS5 | ■ Windows Phone 8 |

Conclusion

Mobility continues to evolve across industry verticals. Organizations are leading the adoption of mobility to reduce their cost and increase productivity. So, it's now more essential than ever to optimize email campaigns for mobile users.

If you need expert assistance to create mobile -friendly campaigns that your subscribers can read on any device, we are just a click away.



Marrina Decisions has a proven track record of helping clients execute multi-channel campaign execution utilizing their expertise and detailed processes, and we'd like to help you do the same. Contact us today to find out how we can bring winning results to your next marketing campaign.

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