How to Write Newsletter Subject Headings That Get Opened!

Hi, I'm Catherine Gladwyn – an accredited email marketing expert and Mailchimp Partner.

You can find out more about me later, here.

What you're really here for is tips on how to get your own emails opened, right?

So let's get stuck in right away…

It's all very well having a jam packed exciting newsletter to send to your audience, full of amazing content and offers, but it's all completely irrelevant if the newsletter doesn't get opened.

So, in order to get the blighters opened this is what we want to do:

Get the recipient's interest piqued as soon as it lands in their inbox!

How?

With a subject heading that makes them think… 'ooh, what's that?'

Here are a few ways we do that:

- use a bit of clickbait, but…
- we also want them in the right mindset before they open it by trying to communicate what's inside the email.
- give them something they need
- make people feel special – imagine the radio presenter thing, good DJs make you think you're the one they're talking to, not millions of other people.

Let's look at some common scenarios

Don't worry if the examples aren't something you do right now in your business, it's more about understanding how you make the recipient feel.

You're running an event / webinar / online course

Think about the mindset these two subject headings will put you in:

1. *Invitation to networking event in [your area]*
2. *Are you free next Wednesday?*

1. Will likely make you think; *'oh, sod off'* or, *'I'll read that later'*, and then probably won't.
2. Will raise your blood pressure because you think you're being invited somewhere, it looks personal.

You now want to thank people for coming to your event / webinar, and possibly sell something else.

Which subject headings will make you want to open the email, and which ones make you think '*here we go!*' or '*go away, we literally just left each other*'

1. *Follow up from our meeting / webinar / event*

Yawn! No one needs a synopsis of what they were in attendance for. That's so boring. '*Let's discuss what you already know*'. No, let's not.

Instead, try something that's going to make them think it contains something new, something just for them – remember the DJ analogy I mentioned earlier!

Here's the link I promised you, Catherine
Thanks for joining me for lunch today.

I use the second one to follow up after I've run a webinar (helps that I run it at lunch time) and it always gets a great open rate.

You want someone to do something that only benefits you, perhaps leave a review?

How did we do? (you know before you open it that it's going to be needy)
Second chance to leave feedback (this is a real one I've seen recently – whoopee doo, what's in it for me?)

People LOVE to help, they love to be part of a cause – even if that's getting numbers up.

I recently asked my audience to subscribe to my [YouTube channel](#). I had a goal to get to 100 subscribers in a month, so I could have a unique URL, and got to over 100 in less than two weeks.

How about:

I've set myself a goal, can you help? (ooh, yeah)
Do you want to come on a journey with me? (where we going?)

As I said, people LOVE to help, just let them know why you're asking and what difference it will make and how grateful you are, and you'll find people come on board.

Something isn't selling well, and you want to raise a bit more interest

I did this recently for a client. An event wasn't selling; one their community had asked for. We needed to know why.

Which would make you want to open it – bearing in mind you probably already knew the event was on?

Tickets still available for the Halloween party.
Last chance to buy your tickets for the Halloween party.

Trying the old '*last chance to buy*' wasn't going to look good if the event was later cancelled through lack of sales.

I used…

We're not sure what we've done, but really need your help

I then made the content of the email (more about 'content' in a bit) all about how they'd created an event, but *'we must have done something wrong as we've not sold enough tickets to cover the cost of the DJ, free party bags, drinks and hall decoration. Is there anyone you know that would like to come along, or is there something we can change?'*

The feedback came back as the age range for the event didn't work for families with smaller children. So, we changed the age bracket and the event sold out!

You want to sell something new

'People don't like to be sold (to) – but they love to buy'
Jeffrey Gitomer

Online coaching course now available
Join my membership today

presses delete

I don't know if that's for me, and it's totally selling me something. Yes, people like to buy but they do need to know why they should invest and although you can list all of that in the content, that's utterly pointless if they're not opening the email in the first place.

So, how about we…

a) Think about what your product or service gives the buyer.
b) What the end result will be.

For example, my Mailchimp Webinars allow people to learn how to navigate around Mailchimp, understanding all the jargon, set up their own templates and sign up forms and send newsletters with ease – but I can't put all that in the subject heading. Instead, I think about the problems my webinars solve and test a few different subject headings.

So, I would use something like:

How are you getting on with Mailchimp?
How to understand Mailchimp, easily.
You'll be sending newsletters confidently by the end of this. Promise.

Extra bonus tips

- Don't be afraid to split your audience and test a couple of different subject headings.
- Use emojis – I haven't personally, but they apparently get a good open rate and it certainly helps the email to stand out.
- Personalise the subject heading, for example: *Catherine, this is for your birthday.*
- Avoid spammy words and characters in the subject heading, like: FREE, Bitcoins, $$, ££.
- You don't need to send weekly newsletters. Start monthly so it's manageable and you're not saturating or repeating content too often.

So, once you're getting the emails open, what about the content?

You want to sell something, right? If not, why are you even sending emails?

Consider these points when writing your next newsletter:

- Always have a call to action
- Always make the content enjoyable
- Always give them something – no, not necessarily a discount – share your expertise
- Always make it brief – no one has time to spend reading a lengthy email. If they do, they're probably not busy and thus won't have cash to spend with you anyway
- Try and get a conversation going, so ask a question – just one – and invite them to hit reply with their answer.
- Include a brief 'about me' section at the bottom of your email, in case they signed up on a whim and don't have a clue who you are.

Remember, people have provided their email addresses, give them quality newsletters and your open rates will soar.

Can't be arsed? Want someone to look at your newsletters with you and give you some 1:1 guidance?

Let's have an [Email Marketing Power Hour](#) and I'll critique what's happening now and what can change, with very easy to follow tips. My average open rate is over 60%, the industry average [as listed by Mailchimp](#) is 20.47%

~

'I was delighted with how quickly and painlessly Catherine solved all my issues with my WordPress website and Mailchimp. I had spent days on YouTube watching videos that never quite covered what I needed to know. In less than one hour everything was ticked off, and then some.

Catherine is both professional and approachable. She goes the extra mile and I would thoroughly recommend her. I will definitely use her services again.'

Liz Hutson
Growing Healthier