

# Email Append 101: A Quick, Easy Guide to Grow Your List

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Email marketing is a critical component of every marketing strategy. It's direct, trackable, and can yield a much higher response rate than traditional mail or telemarketing initiatives. One way to expand your email marketing programs is to add email addresses to your postal customer database — a quick and affordable way to expand the size of your email list and directly engage your customers. By using Email Append to grow your email marketing list, you will:

- » Increase the value of your contact data.
- » Bolster customer participation and retention rates.
- » Reduce marketing communication expenses.
- » Maximize response rates.
- » Personalize communication.
- » Easily measure the impact of marketing campaigns

## WHAT EXACTLY IS EMAIL APPEND?

Email append is the process of bulking – or adding – email addresses to your postal customer database, which should already consist of names and postal delivery addresses.

Basically, the email address is obtained by matching those records from the marketer's database against a third-party database in order to produce a corresponding email address.

## TYPES OF EMAIL APPEND

There are two different types of email append: business and consumer. Business email append allows you to send email to specific contacts at a company, while consumer email append gives you opt-in email addresses of residents that are linked to the provided name and postal address – all of which are based on detailed information from a large network of vendors.



Business email appending matches your file against a profile of company email addresses. When a match is found for a specific contact at a company, a letter is emailed to that individual with the option to opt-out. This is the most important aspect of email marketing – sending the permission request. Research shows that less than one-fourth of one percent choose to opt-out.

The time frame to allow for businesses to respond to your permission request is usually five to seven business days. The appended email addresses – including opt-out emails for suppression – are collected and the file is returned to you for use in your campaign.

The consumer email append service matches your customer file against various databases. When a match is found, the email address is added to your file. After an email match is found for a corresponding physical address, a letter is emailed with the option to opt-out. After allowing five to seven business days for responses, final numbers will be calculated, excluding undeliverable and opt-out emails.

During the data collection process for the consumer append service, subscribers voluntarily disclose their personal information and have access to view a privacy policy, stating that their information could be shared with third parties that have customer relationships with the individual. Following the completion of the email append process, the enhanced file is returned to you. The email addresses appended were those matched and successfully deliverable.

## SUPPRESSION

Suppression prevents you from duplicate-emailing individuals or businesses who have already requested not to be emailed, or have unsubscribed from your email list. Resending emails to recipients who have already received your first email, or individuals that have already notified you they don't want to receive emails, could also portray a negative image of your company – that you're either disorganized, too pushy or dishonest.

There is no cost to suppress your email list, so taking advantage of this service is critical to a successful email campaign.





## SELECTING A QUALIFIED SERVICE PROVIDER

Selecting a qualified append service provider can make all the difference in the success of your email marketing efforts. With the right provider, you will have a stress-free experience that's cost-effective for the type of email campaign you are looking to launch. Here are five ways to choose the right email append provider for you:

1. Make sure they have proven experience in the field.
2. See how their customer service system works – if they're friendly, easily available and offer the best solutions for you with prompt service, you're in luck.
3. Research how long the turnaround process takes for receiving your appended email addresses. The normal turnaround is about two weeks, depending on the size of the file. If a file requires processing more than 1 million records, the turnaround could take more than two weeks.
4. Beware of service providers with extremely fast turnarounds of a day or two. This could indicate they are not performing the opt-out option, or they could be sending you a "raw" database of email addresses.
5. Make sure you select a service provider who does not charge you for bounced emails.

## COSTS INVOLVED IN USING EMAIL APPEND

Email append is sold on a per match basis. Pricing is different for consumer and business email append.

For consumer email append prices range from \$0.15 for up to 500,000 records processed, to \$0.09 for more than 1 million records processed. The minimum order size varies, but is approximately \$700.

For consumer email append, prices can start at \$0.55 for processing up to 50,000 records. Any amount of records above 50,000 has varying reductions in per record cost. If you are processing more than 50,000 records, contact your append provider to receive specific pricing.

The business email append percentage will vary, depending on the accuracy of the contact names and company data in your list. It's best to select a service provider who can clean your list prior to adding the email addresses. The more accurate and up-to-date the contact information is on your list, the higher the append rate. The typical append rate for business emails is 5 percent to 15 percent, especially if your vendor validates your database prior to adding the email addresses. Consumer databases have seen match rates from 15 percent to 30 percent.

The success of your match rate depends on a host of variables, from the age of the data and postal address quality, to your industry and your customers' demographics.



## **"BOUNCE-PROOF" YOUR LIST WITH LIST HYGIENE**

Maintaining a crisp, clean and updated list is vital to the success of your email marketing efforts. A stale database of email addresses won't get you anywhere. In fact, you might see some of your emails returned or bounced back to you as a result of incorrect, inaccurate email addresses. According to published reports, if you have an average bounce rate of about 2 percent to 3 percent every month, you could be losing about 25 percent to 36 percent of your subscribers, due to email address changes and other issues.

There are two different types of returned email messages – soft and hard bounces. A soft bounce is an email message that is unable to be delivered to a valid recipient mailbox. A soft bounce gets as far as the recipient's mail server, but is bounced back before it actually reaches the addressee.

An email can soft bounce back to the sender because of several reasons – the recipient's email inbox is too full, the message is too large or their server is down. Another reason for the bounce back could be the recipient's firewall protection blocking the email.

A hard bounce is an email message that has been returned because the recipient's address is invalid – either because the domain name doesn't exist, the recipient is unknown or there is some type of network problem on the recipient's end.

So how should you bounce-proof your email list?

### **1. Validate, correct and eliminate duplicates.**

The best solution is to utilize a data hygiene service provider who can identify and correct invalid email addresses in your list. At times, errors can occur from typos, entering the wrong domain name, formatting problems and misspellings. Most errors occur because the recipient no longer has that particular email address. Many individuals change their email addresses frequently; when they switch jobs, Internet-service providers or move. Some even change their emails to protect themselves from being spammed or receiving unsolicited messages.

Other errors come in the form of duplicate email addresses. Sending duplicates could ignite the ire of some recipients. No one likes to receive the same message multiple times from the same source. A qualified data hygiene service provider is well-equipped to detect and validate wrong and duplicate email addresses.

### **2. Email Change of Address (ECOA) Service.**

Another solution is to utilize an ECOA service, which will help update and clean your database of email addresses. The service provides you with the current email addresses of those that are old and invalid, or of those who have changed their email addresses. ECOA also updates your list with your customer's preferred email address. Sending messages to your customer's preferred address will significantly bolster your response rates.

If you think you don't have enough information to do an email append – don't despair. There are some data hygiene service providers that can actually "fill in the blanks," with the information required to append that coveted email address. For example, if your customer database only contains an address and phone number, your service provider can append the name of your customer and then attach an email address with that particular name.

The same applies for businesses. Some service providers can identify business names and addresses based on their phone numbers; from there they can append an individual name and then an email address.

## TAKING YOUR EMAILS A STEP FURTHER

After you have obtained email addresses on your customers and have already sent out your messages, there's another approach you can take to identify and target your top business-to-business markets.

Appending the 8-digit Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes to the business records in your database, will help you pinpoint your most responsive industry types and acquire additional leads with similar attributes to your best customers. All of these data enhancements should help you achieve your marketing goals and increase response rates.



# Conclusion

Email append has proven to be a successful marketing campaign tactic. While taking the append route isn't the only way to bulk up the size of your email lists, it is a way to build your customer relationships and stay in contact with them. Email append saves marketers money because it's an affordable and cost-effective approach to direct market. Nevertheless, it will be more advantageous for you to harness the power of all direct marketing mediums – email, phone and traditional mail. Utilizing this synergistic, three-tiered marketing approach will help to fuel a maximum return on investment, increase your sales and bolster your response rates – all while enabling you to personally target the right people.



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## About Melissa

Since 1985, Melissa has specialized in global intelligence solutions to help organizations unlock accurate data for a more compelling customer view. Our breadth of data and flexible API technology integrates with numerous third-party platforms, so it works for you and makes sense for your business. More than 10,000 clients worldwide in key industries like insurance, finance, healthcare, retail, education, and government, rely on Melissa for full spectrum data quality and identity verification software, including data profiling, cleansing, matching, and enhancement services, to gain critical insight and drive meaningful customer relationships.

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