

Email marketing growing in importance for SA brands and companies

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With all the hype around social media as the new darling of marketing, it turns out that a less sensationalised platform is arguably the real star. According to [Salesforce.com](#), email marketing has grown at about 83% worldwide over the past two years, placing it amongst the fastest growing marketing channels, along with video advertising and text messaging.



In addition, research from Radicati Group indicates that there will be more than 4 billion email users worldwide by 2020 - and email traffic will surpass 300 billion emails per day!

Everlytic, an enterprise-level marketing cloud solution that enables customers to communicate with their markets via email, mobile and social channels, recently released its [Email Marketing Benchmarks Report 2017](#) to take a targeted look at local email marketing trends. The company analysed over two billion emails, which were all bulk (not transactional) emails sent by SA customers.

"We compiled this benchmark report because there is no other data like this available for email marketing in South Africa," explains Walter Penfold, MD of Everlytic. "The report that most marketers have relied on in the past is the IBM benchmark report, which groups SA under 'rest of world'. This doesn't help us much."

For marketers operating in a highly competitive, digitised era, email has two major advantages: it is a permission-based platform, and relies on first-party data. Over the next several years, as marketers gain more access to behavioural and demographic data (and the sharing of data across different channels increases), email marketing will enable hyper-personalisation - which will allow for a much more targeted approach to marketing and lead generation.

"Email marketing sits at the epicentre of digital marketing in South Africa," adds Penfold. "Over the next five years, we predict that email will remain the top performing messaging channel in terms of ROI and will live up to its promise of being a true, one-to-one digital marketing channel."

Importantly for brands and marketers, the Everlytic report unveiled key statistics around user behaviour and what this means for future email marketing campaigns. For example, average open rates were sitting at 25.83% - this type of metric shows that the person receiving your email trusts your brand, and finds your subject line enticing and/or relevant. In addition, average click-through rates were pegged at 3.46%, which indicates that your content is relevant and that

subscribers want to engage.

Notably, the report found that over 28% of emails are read on mobile phones, underscoring the importance of mobile responsive emails. Finally, it is encouraging that unsubscribe rates sitting below the average of 0.33% indicate that your database shrinkage is within the norm.

“When examining the international and local data, it is clear that email marketing will continue to grow in importance in the local marketing mix,” concludes Penfold. “And with ever increasing access to data, marketers can personalise and fine tune email marketing campaigns - and achieve even higher levels of engagement and ROI.”

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