

inboxFX Marketing News, Insights, Tips & Tricks



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Emailed to inboxFX clients and people who have expressed an interest in custom email stationery.
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1. Welcome To Our New Clients

Thank you to the following businesses (among others this past month) for choosing inboxFX.

[Rex Image](#) - A marketing, branding and graphic design agency. We function just like an in-house art and marketing department but with a distinct advantage: you only pay us when you need us. We develop and nurture company brands, presenting a polished and unified image across all marketing, advertising and promotional platforms from printed materials to digital media and websites.

[WSI - Internet Business Solutions](#) - The importance of being found and being seen cannot be overstated as consumers are increasingly turning to the Internet as their primary method of research during their buying cycle. It's a safe bet that if they can't find you online then they'll find your competition. Toronto, ON

[Janin Mavvan](#) - Prudential Sussex Realty - "As a realtor I believe that buying and selling a home is more than just a transaction. Whether you are moving out or moving in, you deserve the best possible service. I will assist you every step of the way to ensure that your experience is a great one." West Vancouver, BC (Thanks to Julie Miller for the referral)

[John DiGirolomo](#) - REMAX Midway - Realtor specializing in Central Florida real estate. (Thanks to Carolyn Moriarty for the referral)

[Pawlik Automotive](#) - Visit Vancouver's best car repair and auto service team! Pawlik Automotive is conveniently located 5 minutes from the Vancouver International Airport. Get your vehicle serviced while you're away and save on expensive airport parking! (Thanks to Rex Image for the referral)

[Kye Grace](#) - Killarney Realty - Realtor specializing in Vancouver real estate including Fairview slopes. [Recently held a 72 hour open house!](#)

[Heather Daoust](#) - Origin Group Mortgages - For most of us, buying a home is one of the biggest and most important purchases we'll ever make. So, when you find a place you want to call 'home', you need to move fast to make sure you make it yours.

[Donna Bailey](#) - Keller Williams - Realtor specializing in Atlanta real estate sales.

2. Coupons Use Increasing - But Some People Still Blushing

A new study shows that while American consumers are using coupons more than ever, some are still a little ashamed to be the ones holding up the line as they rummage through their purses to find them.

About 22% of Americans say they are uncomfortable using coupons in grocery stores, reports ICOM Information & Communications, a market research firm based in Toronto. But the rough economy and rising grocery prices are helping people get over it: Another 57% say that while they're self-conscious about redeeming coupons, their desire to save a little money trumps any twinges of embarrassment.

The biggest change is in younger shoppers. About 26% of consumers 35 and younger say they have less inhibition about using coupons than they used to—with 20% saying they were embarrassed at one time, but are not now because of the need to save money, while 6% say they are simply less self-conscious.

3. Any Ideas for Seasonal Stationery?

We had some interest for decorating stationery with Valentine's images, but postponed this until next year. Let us know if you are interested in adding seasonal clip art for Spring, Easter, St Patrick's Day, July 4th, Canada Day or Thanksgiving. Or you might have an idea of your own.

4. Cool New Idea For a Simple Email Newsletter

One of my favorite newsletters is one I receive every day Called Get to The Point. It takes less than 1 minute to read and the layout is eye-catching.

If you have a second email address you can use, we can create a simple newsletter layout like this and all you have to do is add the content. (or hire us to do this for you)

This newsletter you are reading is time-consuming to create (although the results are excellent) and not everyone has time to read through it. If you were to send out a branded newsletter that was short, interesting and easy-to-read you have a far greater chance of staying at the top of your client's awareness.

As a special promotion to the end of February we will create a newsletter layout for only \$99.00 including the first years fee. (annual renewal is \$ 99.00)



5. Here are some common things SPAM Filters look for:

We take great care in the design of our email stationery to avoid spam filters, but there are a few things you could be doing that increase the possibility of catching their attention. If you have any questions or concerns about spam call us at 800-568-8338.

1. Using spammy phrases, like "Click here!" or "Once in a lifetime opportunity!"
2. Going crazy with exclamation points!!!!!!
3. USING ALL CAPS, WHICH IS LIKE YELLING IN EMAIL
4. Coloring their fonts bright red, or green
5. Coding sloppy HTML (usually from converting a Microsoft Word file to HTML)
6. Creating an HTML email that's nothing but one big image, with no text (since spam filters can't read images, they assume you're a spammer that's trying to trick 'em).
7. Using the word "Test" in the subject line (agencies run into this all the time, when sending drafts to clients for approval)
8. Sending a test to multiple recipients within the same company (that company's email firewall can only assume it's a spam attack)
9. Sending nothing but one big image (with little or no text) in the message
10. Designing HTML email in Microsoft Word, and exporting the code to HTML (that code is sloppy, and spam filters hate it)

As proof of the importance of these tips I ran this newsletter through a spam checker and here are the results:

Your TOTAL SPAM SCORE for your e-mail was 3.2

By the way 0.0 - 4.5 is considered nice and clean, no problems except tiny ones below; no action required

(0.9 points) BODY: Contains 'Special Promotion' (From the warning above)

(0.6 points) BODY: Image tag intended to identify you

(0.5 points) An exceedingly large amount of HTML coding is often used to disguise common spam phrases. Consider reworking slightly.

(0.5 points) BODY: HTML title contains no text

(0.3 points) From: does not include a real name

(0.1 points) BODY: HTML font color is blue

(0.1 points) BODY: HTML has a big font

(0.1 points) BODY: HTML has "tbody" tag

(0.1 points) BODY: HTML font color is red

(0.0 points) BODY: HTML included in message

(0.0 points) BODY: A WHOLE LINE OF YELLING DETECTED (From the warning above)

(0.0 points) Asks you to click below

If you have not had a chance to visit my marketing blog at www.themarketingguy.wordpress.com then these tips are a sample of the kind of information you can find on my blog.

6. 27 Email Pet Peeves that Tick People Off as Much as Spam

[Peggy Duncan](#), a personal productivity expert, wrote this great list of pet peeves.

1. **Sending or responding to all to CYA** (cover your butt). Stop sending to all if all do not have a need to know.
2. **People trying to solve complex issues using email.** If it needs more than 3 responses pick up the phone!
3. **Dirty (messy) email messages.** Peggy is referring to carets (>>>), or pages and pages of email addresses that weren't protected using a blind copy feature. Is it too much to ask for the sender to clean dirty emails before sending it? Would you send a letter out on your company stationery like that?
4. **Subject lines that don't match the message.** Don't pull up an old message, hit Reply, and send me a message that has nothing to do with the previous one. At the very least, change the subject line!
5. **Last-minute cancellations.** Cancelling a meeting at the last minute and letting me know via email. I show up, "Oh, didn't you get my e-mail?" When did you send it? I left my office two hours ago, and now my whole day is shot.
6. **Procrastinators.** People who wait until the last minute to ask you to do something as if you had nothing else to do. You know the work was in a pile on their desk, and while they were digging for something else, they found it, and sent you an email message, marking it urgent. Then when the deadline isn't met, it's not their fault because they "gave it to you."
7. **People who call you instead of checking their email.** You've done your job, and sent an email message to people with information they need. They end up calling you asking for the info because, "I'm too busy to check email. Please always call me with the information or at least call me to let me know you sent it." Closely related to this one is people who'll send you a message, then they call you or come by your desk asking if you received it!
8. **No response.** You send a legitimate email message to someone who has requested information. The message clearly needs a response, but nothing happens. If you're too busy to hit Reply to say "No," you need to examine how you're working. Why did you make me waste your time and mine?

The other 19 can be found by clicking [here to go to my blog](#).

Check out her book, [Conquer Email Overload with Better Habits, Etiquette, and Outlook 2003](#) to develop skills that will help you manage email overload.

Peggy is a combination professional organizer, project manager, and computer trainer. She uses this powerful set of skills to help busy people like you spend less time working but get more done. She's a personal productivity expert, speaker, trainer, consultant, coach, and author. Whether you need a conference speaker or someone to work with a small team, Peggy Duncan is your answer!

7. Cool Web Sites

[How To Write a Bio](#) - This website shows you how to write a personal bio, professional bio or business bio, and provides fill-in-the-blank bio templates for over 100 different jobs. As well, the sample bio illustrates a great professional bio format that you can follow.

[Mozy](#) - Mozy is the simple, secure, and affordable online backup solution for businesses.

[GoToMeeting](#) - Easy Online Meetings – Anytime, Anywhere. Use GoToMeeting to present, demonstrate and meet all you want – for one low flat fee.

[Become A Blogger](#) - Free video tutorials on How To Blog.

[xobni](#) - Find People, Email & Attachments Instantly. Xobni is the Outlook plug-in that helps you organize your flooded inbox.

8. Need a Website - Call Me!

In addition to being an Approved Vendor for a great website company called [Ubertor](#), I am now expanding into an exciting new area of creating blogs that look like websites.

You choose from a wide variety of themes and I set up all of the pages for you. After a short training period you can easily add content and images to your own website. The main advantage is how effective these websites are at being indexed by the search engines and achieving higher rankings as a result.

Check out a couple of clients I have recently started working with:

[Ray Doner](#) - Realtor - Sutton Realty - Bayview Realty - Toronto, ON. This website, utilizing an Ubertor template is Ray's first website.

[HikeBikeTravel.com](#) - An innovative travel idea; marketing travel-tested, real life itineraries for a wide range of hiking, biking and regular trips around the world. This site is currently under development using a purchased theme and a Wordpress blogging platform. Keep your eye on it as we add more bells and whistles.

You can also check out my new website for this business at www.mikeblaney.com. It needs more work, but it is getting there.

9. Running Out Of Business Cards?

Have you ever thought of upgrading your business cards to a thicker stock card with a silk finish that people always comment on? Well then call me. I design and print a lot of business cards and have an excellent source. [Follow this link to my blog with a few recent designs](#). If you are interested in 1,000 cards (or more) with 4 colors on each side for only \$ 195.00 please call or email me at marketingguy@shaw.ca. I can add foil and die-cut any custom shape you would like. How about a business card in the shape of a house or perhaps an oval? I guarantee they will get noticed.

10. Social Media Marketing - 6 Tips to Succeed in Social Media

In the last year, social media has become very popular. Everybody is talking about it and many online marketers have used it. I am a blogger, have a LinkedIn and Plaxo account, Facebook, post videos on Youtube and Twitter (twitter.com/goodideas) to name a few. I think the second part of this post about the myths is right on the money.

[An article in Startup Nation](#) listed the 6 tips to success.

1. Don't Steal Other People's Work
2. Avoid Self-Promotion - Don't talk about yourself and your company all the time. People don't care about that. Give them something of value, build relationships and get people to trust you. Let them know what you do but don't try to sell them anything. They will call you when they are ready to buy.
3. First Give, Then Ask - See how you can help others.
4. Use Your Real Name
5. Do It Only If You Enjoy It - If you don't enjoy the process, you are not likely to be successful at it. People can read between lines, and they can tell if all you care about is their money.
6. Don't Annoy Your Followers - In implementing your Social Media Marketing, send your followers a message or a request only if it will be useful to them.

I should also point out a great article called [The Five Myths of Social Media](#) by Mark Evans:

1. **Social media is free** - The reality, however, is while the tools are free to use, it takes time, effort and resources to implement and operate social media programs.
2. **Social media is easy** - It takes a lot of time and involves a tremendous amount of blocking and tackling on a daily basis. It means hours of effort to monitor, track and engage with people on dozens of platforms.
3. **Social media is about the tools** - The tools mean nothing if you don't have someone to leverage them. The tools are cool but even the best tools are worthless without a clear goal of what and how they should be used.
4. **Social media is a standalone activity from a company's marketing, communications and sales activities.** - Wrong, wrong, wrong. Social media is not an add-on or an accessory but it is surprising to see companies suggest they need to add some social media to the mix. In other words, it's not a widget that can easily be plugged in when needed. To be successful, social media needs to be part of and aligned with a company's brand, messaging and strategic goals.
5. **Social measure is difficult to measure or get a handle on return on investment.** - There's no lack of tools available to track, monitor and measure social media activity, many of them free. At the same time, increasingly more sophisticated and value social media measurement and analytics tools are being created that will provide companies with amazing insight about what's happening within the social media universe and who's doing it.

11. Feedback

We would like to hear from you. Any suggestions or comments will be appreciated so feel free to send your feedback to us at feedback@inboxfx.com or call Mike Blaney at 800-568-8338 (In Vancouver 604-618-5512)