



Emailed to inboxFX clients and people who have expressed an interest in custom email stationery.

Making a Great Impression...One Email at a Time!

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1. Know Any Good Referrals? Special Promotion to February 15, 2009

Like your business, referrals are the lifeblood of our business. We thank the many of you that call or email and let us know you have referred us, but unfortunately, very few referrals actually contact us. Let's try something new. If you call or email with the name of a colleague, client or prospect that has expressed an interest in email stationery we will automatically give you a \$ 25.00 credit on your account regardless of whether they sign up or not.

Thanks to the following clients for their referrals this past month. If I missed you please send me an email as you receive a \$ 25.00 credit for each referral:

[Leslie Miletich](#), a Realtor in West Vancouver referred [Sharon DeLisser](#), a Realtor in Vancouver

[Paul van Buekenhout](#), a real estate photographer in Vancouver referred [Ralph Maglieri](#), a Realtor in North Vancouver.

[The Gibbard Group](#), a mortgage company in North Vancouver referred [Denise Negin](#), a mortgage broker in North Vancouver.

Thanks for thinking of us.

2. Email Effective for Baby Boomers

Like other adult Internet users, boomers prefer to talk face-to-face about products, brands or services. Some 93% of baby boomers were very or somewhat likely to share product information with friends, according to a ThirdAge/JWT BOOMsurvey.

However, given the choice between instant messaging, text messaging or sending an email, 80% of younger boomers and 87% of older ones still preferred the "old-fashioned" digital channel, according to a May 2008 white paper from ExactTarget.

A JupiterResearch study conducted in August 2007 showed this group was most likely to forward an email message from a marketer to another adult, at 10%, compared with 7% for all adults. Recommendations from friends and family are valued highly by boomers, so marketers should consider email messages as an important medium to reach them online.

3. Welcome To Our New Clients

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

John Mayfield - [The Real Estate Tech Guy](#) - If you're looking for technology training aids, then John's website is the right place to go on the internet.

[Ralph Maglieri](#) - REMAX Crest Realty - Specializing in residential real estate in North and West Vancouver, BC
[Lionel King](#) - Kappel & Kappel Realtors - Lionel King is also known as the California Real Estate King. Lionel specializes in real estate sales in Solano County.

Denise Negin - [Negin Mortgage](#) - Residential mortgages throughout the Vancouver area.

[Sharon deLisser](#) - Sutton Group - Specializing in residential real estate in Vancouver, BC

4. Thanks for Your Support of the Seasonal Stationery Idea

Our email stationery decorating service for Christmas was a huge success and we want to thank all of the clients who participated. One has even carried it further and added a Happy New Year message. We will be offering other concepts like this, but if you have an idea for spicing up email stationery please share it with us.

The next planned event is Halloween, but we have clip art for Easter, St Patrick's Day, July 4th, Canada Day and Thanksgiving if you are planning ahead.

5. 2009 Marketing Tips

There is no shortage of marketing advice if you look for it, but I thought you might benefit from a simple recap of marketing strategies for 2009.

1. Consider using Social Media in your marketing i.e. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter or blogging. I can help you get started on all of these if you are interested, but if you pick only one I recommend blogging.
2. Update your database and if you don't have one then get one. Choose from Act, Maximizer, Outlook, Goldmine as examples. Go through your business cards and enter them all. Categorize or rank them so you can differentiate where your business is coming from.
3. Survey your customers. Send a paper survey or use an online service like [Zoomerang](#) or [Survey Monkey](#).
4. Get a website or improve your website. More and more people are going online so do not ignore this important medium.
5. Get a new business card. When I hand out a business card I get a positive reaction 90% of the time. My card is printed on a heavier stock with a silk finish and I know it has an impact.
6. Hand write thank you cards for everything.
7. Determine who are your key referral sources are and develop programs to nurture these sources.
8. Start using video in your business.

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. Personalization Improves Effectiveness - The Reciprocity Affect

No matter what form of marketing you employ the most important goal is to stand out from the crowd. Personalization of a marketing piece by adding a post-it note or a handwritten note can greatly improve the response. It also produces a "reciprocity" effect according to the Neuromarketing blog, where the recipient recognizes your effort and feels more obligated to respond.

In 1984, Brigitte Maheux, Md, Phd, Claudine Legault, Msc, And Jean Lambert, Phd conducted a study entitled "Increasing Response Rates in physicians mail surveys". They tested the effectiveness of two techniques among 604 Quebec physicians who had not responded to an initial letter; a handwritten thank you note at the bottom of the letter accompanying the questionnaire and a more personalized mailout package. The results were remarkable with increased response rates by 40.7 per cent and 53.1 per cent, respectively, compared to control groups.

According to the researchers, "even though personalization was undoubtedly effective in increasing physicians' returns, it is unclear why it worked. It is likely that it plays at different levels by increasing the probabilities that physicians will open the mailout, read the cover letter, and accept to complete the questionnaire. As others have emphasized, more research is needed to understand the principles underlying people's behavior in relation to mailed questionnaires and to uncover significant interaction among survey techniques, survey content, and population."

According to the Neuroscience Marketing blog it seems that what is causing the boost is a "reciprocity" effect. The recipient recognizes that the sender apparently put some personal effort into the mailing, and is more likely to reciprocate with some effort of his own. The recipients who received the handwritten Post-It note were not only more likely to respond, but they also responded more promptly and answered the questions more thoroughly. And, as suggested by the 1989 Maheux study, adding a "Thank you!" and initials to the note further lifted the response rate in yet another Post-It test.

The reciprocity effect is evident when we send a thank you card or even when we hand write an address on a Christmas card or thank you card envelope. And always remember to sign everything and where appropriate add a P.S.

What to Personalize

Roger Dooley of the Neuroscience marketing blog suggests a few kinds of mail communications that could be improved by enhanced personalization:

1. Event invitations - both non-profit and for-profit.
2. Surveys and questionnaires.
3. Donation requests.
4. Requests to schedule an appointment.

Even communications that don't require an action by the recipient, like a "thank you for your donation" note, can be enhanced by stronger personalization.

7. Cool Web Sites

Here are a few cool web sites you might find useful:

[Freshbooks](#) - Streamline your estimating and invoicing. Save time billing and get paid faster. Create, send and manage your invoices online. Track time and expenses for you and your staff. Accept online payment with PayPal, Authorize.net, etc.

[Hello My Name Is Scott](#) - Scott Ginsberg is that "guy with the name tag". Go to the articles section and register for access to over 700 articles.

[Snopes](#) - Next time you get an email from a well-meaning person that warns you that saran wrap in a microwave will kill you, check it out with Snopes; the definitive Internet reference source for urban legends, folklore, myths, rumors, and misinformation. Of course Snopes could be a hoax too....

[Yelp](#) - Real People. Real Reviews. Yelp is the fun and easy way to find, review and talk about what's great (and not so great) in your world. You already know that asking friends is the best way to find restaurants, dentists, hairstylists, and anything local. Yelp makes it fast and easy by collecting and organizing your friends' recommendations in one convenient place.

[Tabbloid](#) - Turn your favorite feeds into a personal magazine. This is a Hewlett Packard company that takes your RSS feeds and puts them into a formatted pdf so you can read them either on your screen or as a printed tabloid. Not everyone is using RSS, but if you aren't you should be.

8. Need a Website - Call Me!

I have recently been named as an Approved Vendor for a great website company called [Ubertor](#). The main benefits this solution offers are:

1. No monthly contract.
2. Incredible success with Search Engines.
3. On site blog included.
4. Customizable templated websites.
5. Complete, easy to use content management system.

The majority of my clients are Realtors and the three price levels are \$37.00, \$57.00 and \$77.00 per month depending on your number of listings. If you order your website through me I can offer you the first 4 months for only \$ 1.00 (plus my time to set it up). Typically I charge between \$ 150.00 and \$ 750.00 to customize your website and add content. The templates are equally useful for non-Realtor websites and the best news is the annual fee is only \$ 99.00.

Check out a few recent clients I have worked with.

[The Gessler Group](#) - Property Valuations - Philadelphia, PA (under construction)

[Stella Lau](#) - Realtor - Calgary, AB (under construction)

[IPPBC](#) - Association - Vancouver, BC (relaunched their home page to make it more dynamic.

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. InboxFX System Upgrade

We have recently completed a system wide upgrade to improve our spam scoring. In our never ending battle to stay in the good books of spam filters we discovered that a lot of spam filters will increase the rating of the email if you do not have the Title of the email contain the subject line of the email. Originally we had a line in the Title which said "From the desk of....." as this looked professional, but we have updated all of the client's templates to the new format which has the subject line at the top of the email.

This discovery did not have any measurable affect on our clients as every email stationery design is tested to ensure it complies with known anti spam design guidelines.

11. 10 Internet Marketing Trends For 2009

According to [Startup Nation](#), a website by entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs these are the top 20 internet marketing trends for 2009.

Recession Marketing

Expect a lot of marketing messaging related to the recession. Don't be surprised to see lots of offers that "save you money" throughout the year. With fewer purchasing dollars available, how will your marketing message be distinctive and stand out?

Internet Marketing-palooza

Due to its cost-effectiveness and inherent measurability, expect many more small businesses to take Internet marketing seriously in 2009. This includes everything from email marketing, pay-per-click advertising and social networking, to increased investment in websites, microsites and custom landing pages.

The Customer Voice

Customers are demanding a voice in your business, or they will seek alternative solutions. Think forums, blogs, crowdsourcing, feedback forms, etc.

Video Marketing

Many studies show that adding videos to a website increases traffic and time-on-site. Look for a major increase in online videos in 2009.

Blogging

Look for blogging to continue its growth in 2009. The barriers to entry in blogging are so low, expect many more small businesses to launch their own blogs in the coming year.

Social Marketing

Small businesses have been relatively slow overall to embrace social marketing. With greater verticalization of social media and social networking websites, expect more small businesses to get involved in targeted environments where ROI will be easier to achieve.

Mobile Marketing

It feels like everyone has an iPhone or other similar type of digital mobile device these days. According to Nielsen, nearly 40 million people in the US access email on a mobile device. Mobile marketing will finally realize its potential in 2009, especially for local businesses such as restaurants, movie theaters and just about anyone targeting Generation Y.

Behavioral Targeting

Expect online ads to become behaviorally based. Many new behavioral advertising networks will become available in 2009, some serving dynamically generated images and messages based on each user's online behavior.

Back-to-Basics Marketing

Expect less fluff in 2009, and more marketing messages about how companies solve problems for their customers. Be sure that you understand how your business solves real-world problems, and then clarify that in your marketing messaging.

Personalization

What customer wouldn't prefer a customized product or solution vs. a generic, cookie-cutter version?

[Check out the article for 10 more.](#)

12. 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)