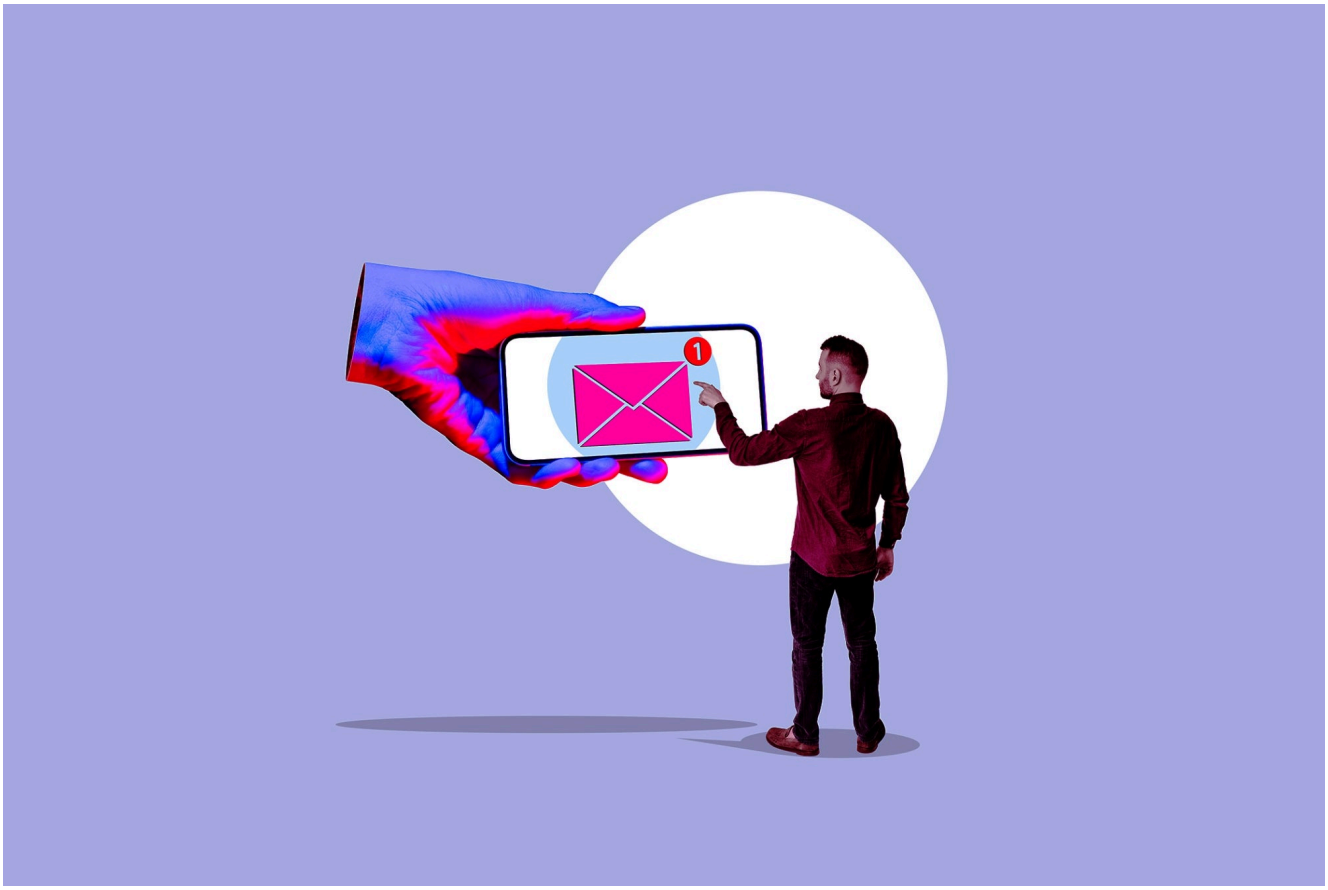
Email Isn’t Dead — But Your Strategy Might Be. Here’s How to Revive It



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Let’s address the elephant in the inbox.

Email marketing isn’t dead. It’s not outdated. It hasn’t been replaced by TikTok, Threads or an army of AI bots. In fact, email is still one of the most reliable, highest-ROI marketing channels in your arsenal — if you actually use it right.

But here’s the inconvenient truth: most businesses don’t. They treat email like a leftover tactic from 2009, not the strategic revenue engine it can be. So when their campaigns fail, the blame is often directed at the platform, the audience, the open rates — everything except the real culprit: a broken system.

I’ve had enough client calls that start the same way to spot the pattern. “We’ve been sending emails for years,” they say. “Newsletters, sales promos, special offers. But it’s just not working anymore.”

Spoiler: The problem isn’t email. It’s execution. Let’s break it down.

Stop sending and hoping

Before you send another message, ask yourself one question: What is the actual goal of this email? If your answer is “generate leads,” great. That’s a start. But leads don’t materialize just because you hit send. Email isn’t magic. It’s a relationship channel.

You need a strategy. Are you building relevance? Segmenting based on interest? Optimizing timing? Tracking behavior across your site and CRM? If not, you’re not doing email marketing. You’re just sending digital flyers and hoping someone notices.

Related: 12 Reasons Why Your Emails Aren’t Driving Business

Your list isn’t a strategy

Here’s the harsh reality: most email lists are digital junk drawers. Bloated, unsegmented and outdated.

One client had 25,000 contacts in a single list labeled “Newsletter.” No segmentation. No tagging. Just one-size-fits-all messaging to cold leads, VIP clients and long-lost contacts alike. Their click-through rate? Less than 1%.

Would you hand the same sales pitch to a returning customer, a cold prospect and a lapsed buyer? Then why are you emailing them like they’re all the same person?

Your email platform has segmentation tools for a reason. Use

them. Tag based on behavior, purchase history, content engagement and lifecycle stage. And if your list is outdated? Run a re-engagement campaign. Let people self-select. And yes — let them unsubscribe. Because a clean, active list will always outperform a bloated one.

Your platform might be failing you

If you're still using the free version of Mailchimp from 2017, expecting results is like entering a Formula 1 race on a tricycle.

Email platforms have evolved. If yours doesn't offer automation, A/B testing, tagging, CRM integration or real-time analytics, it's holding you back. For ecommerce, I recommend Klaviyo. It connects directly to Shopify, lets you recover abandoned carts, trigger smart automations and — this is key — track actual sales tied to email behavior.

And yes, you'll need to invest in a platform that can handle more than "send newsletter." If you're serious about revenue, stop being cheap about the tool that drives it.

Stop worshiping the open rate

Everyone obsesses over open rates like they're gospel. But here's the truth: a high open rate doesn't mean anything if no one clicks, converts or remembers you. Don't just design pretty emails. Design strategic ones.

Ask better questions. What KPIs actually map to your business goals? For ecommerce, it might be revenue per email, cart recovery rate or product clicks. For B2B, it may be meetings booked or resources downloaded.

Start there. Reverse-engineer your content. Then test relentlessly. Subject lines. Send times. CTA placement. Message framing. Real marketers test. Lazy marketers send and

pray.

Visibility, credibility, engagement – then sales

Email doesn't operate in a vacuum. It's part of a journey. You don't go from "nice to meet you" to "here's our invoice" overnight. So layer your content.

Visibility gets you seen.
Credibility makes you trusted.
Engagement builds the bridge.
Sales walk across it.

If every email is just a promotion, you're not building a bridge – you're shouting into the void. Offer value. Share insight. Deliver relevance. And when it's time to sell, you won't have to beg for attention. You'll already have it.

Related: 6 Reasons Your Marketing Emails Aren't Converting – and How to Fix Them All

Campaigns don't build revenue – systems do

Most marketers jump straight to tactics – "Let's send something Tuesday at 10 a.m." – with no infrastructure underneath.

But if your email doesn't plug into a system, it's a short-term stunt, not a long-term strategy.

Here's what a real email system looks like:

- Set up automated workflows for key stages like onboarding, re-engagement and post-purchase to nurture your audience over time.

- Build segmented customer journeys that align with specific buyer behaviors so your emails are always relevant and timely.
- Integrate your email platform with your CRM and ecommerce systems to enable real-time targeting based on user actions.
- Define clear KPIs that are directly tied to business outcomes before you create or send any campaigns.

This is the work most marketers skip. And it’s why their email marketing never scales. Strategy always beats volume.

Want to win Q4? Fix this in Q3

Here’s your reality check: once fall hits, you’re out of time. Black Friday. Cyber Monday. Holiday chaos. End-of-year goals. Your calendar will be execution-heavy and strategy-starved.

So fix it now.

Audit your platform. Clean your list. Segment your contacts. Define your goals. Connect your data. Build the machine. Because when email works, it doesn’t just deliver opens. It delivers ROI. Recurring revenue. Customer loyalty. And a real reason to celebrate when the quarter ends.

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