

eBlast Guidelines

Email HTML v. Web HTML

The viewing technology of a typical email client isn't as up-to-date as a web browser. Web browsers display interactive, dynamic content, and they update often. But interactive elements like Flash, JavaScript, or HTML forms won't work in most email inboxes.

Attributes of a Successful eBlast

1. eBlasts should be **maximum 600 pixels in width** (lengths typically range from 1000-1200 pixels). This will make them behave better within the preview-pane size provided by many clients.
2. Design for simplicity. Use grid-based layers and avoid complicated elements that require HTML floats or positioning.
3. Assume images will be initially blocked by email clients, or that certain images – background images, for example – will completely fail to load.
4. Don't design an email that's essentially one large, sliced-up image. While these kinds of emails look pretty, they perform poorly.
5. Is your email readable at arm's length on a small screen? Will the images slow its load time on a mobile device? Are your links easy to press with a thumb?

Web Fonts

An HTML document is a series of codes and instructions – not a “solid” graphic/image/rendering like you'd find in print. As such, an eBlast does not “send” specific fonts, rather it instructs the recipients email client to import the specified font from its own system. The same font often differs from one system, or version, to another. Given this, what you see in your inbox, may vary from what others see. If a specified font is not available from an email client, Times Roman is typically HTML's default.

The 15 Best “Web-Safe” Fonts

If fonts are not recognized by the recipient's email client, the client most often will swap in a substitute font, creating layout and readability issues.

- 1) Arial (the defacto standard)
- 2) Arial Black
- 3) Verdana
- 4) Times New Roman
- 5) Georgia
- 6 - 15): Courier New, Times, Helvetica, Courier, Palatino, Garamond, Bookman, Comic Sans MS, Trebuchet MS, Impact

General Guidelines:

<i>Safe to use</i>	<i>Use with caution</i>	<i>Do not use</i>
static, table-based layouts	background images	JavaScript
HTML tables and nested tables	custom web fonts	<iframe>
template width of 600px-800px	wide layouts	Flash
simple, inline CSS	image maps	embedded audio
web-safe fonts	embedded CSS	embedded video
	<div> layering	forms

Safe to use: means widely supported by most email clients

Use with caution: means limited support from most email clients

Do not use: means not supported by most email clients

Supports Web Fonts

Apple Mail
Lotus Notes 8
Outlook 2011 for Mac

Does not support Web Fonts

Lotus Notes 7
Lotus Notes 8.5
Gmail

iOS Mail
Outlook 2016
Android App
Android Mail 2.3
Android Mail 4.2
Android 4.4

Yahoo
Outlook
Outlook 2003
Outlook 2007
Outlook 2013
Thunderbird
IBM Notes 9
AOL
Blackberry
Alto

Background Images

Some programs support background images in the pre-header, header, body, column, and footer sections of our drag-and-drop templates. Background images, however, don't render in every email client, and may appear differently in mobile clients, so it's important to preview and test your eBlast.

Wide Templates

Subscribers often open campaigns on mobile devices and/or in the preview pane of desktop email clients. Email viewing panes are narrow, so they'll cut off your message if it is too wide. **As such, Mechanical Business standardizes all custom eBlasts at 600 pixels wide.**

Do Not Use

The elements below are blocked by nearly all major email clients.

JavaScript: JavaScript is a programming language that makes web content interactive. It's common in websites, but the vast majority of email clients block scripts since they can hide malicious content. Avoid JavaScript and try to use .gifs, where possible.

iframe Elements: An <iframe> (inline frame) is an HTML element that embeds content from one website into another. Inline frames are often used to insert advertisements,

video, audio, or forms in other websites. iframes often contain scripts, so most email clients block them. Instead, link to the content you want to display in your eBlast.

Flash: Flash displays animations & graphics on websites, but most email clients block it.

HTML Forms: Text fields, text inputs, radio buttons, and check boxes are simple HTML form elements, but the submit button often requires Javascript. Some email clients will display forms, but unfortunately, subscribers won't be able to submit them.

Embedded Media: Autoplay and click-to-play media won't play in an inbox unless your subscriber's email client supports HTML5 <video> and <audio> tags. Only one major email client, Apple Mail, currently supports these tags, so it's best to avoid embedded media and consider an alternative. Instead, share a video player link with merge tags or video content blocks. To send audio files, share an audio file link.