

Email marketing metrics reference guide – Hostinger Learning lab

CONTENTS

What's inside

01	Email marketing metrics at a glance	p.03
02	Open rate 01	p.03
03	Click-through rate (CTR) 02	p.05
04	Click-to-open rate (CTOR) 03	p.06
05	Conversion rate 04	p.07
06	Bounce rate 05	p.08
07	Unsubscribe rate 06	p.09
08	List growth rate 07	p.10
09	Engagement over time 08	p.11
10	Ready to send emails that actually get results?	p.12

Email marketing metrics at a glance

These eight metrics will tell you whether your email marketing is actually working – what each one means, what good looks like, and what to do when the numbers aren't where you want them.

 How to use this card: Keep it open when reviewing your campaign reports. For each metric, check where your numbers land against the benchmark ranges, then use the improvement tips to prioritise what to fix next. Benchmarks are cross-industry averages – your niche may vary.

Benchmark key:

"Healthy" – you're in good shape

"Watch it" – room to improve

"Action needed" – investigate why

01

Open rate

The percentage of delivered emails that were opened. A strong indicator of subject line quality and sender trust.

Formula: $\text{Opens} \div \text{Delivered} \times 100$

Benchmarks		
Healthy	Good	35%+ is above industry average – your subject lines and sender reputation are working
Watch it	Warning	20–35% is acceptable but there's clear room to improve subject lines or sending time
Action needed	Bad	Under 20% indicates low engagement – check list quality, subject lines, and whether you're going to spam

How to fix:

☐ **Test different subject lines**

☐ **Send at better times**

☐ **Use a recognisable sender name**

☐ **Clean inactive subscribers**



Apple Mail Privacy Protection can inflate open rates by auto-opening emails in the background. Use click data alongside opens for a more accurate picture.

02

Click-through rate (CTR)

The percentage of delivered emails where at least one link was clicked. Measures how compelling and relevant your email content is.

Formula: Clicks ÷ Delivered × 100

Benchmarks		
Healthy	Good	3%+ means strong engagement – your content and CTAs are resonating
Watch it	Warning	1–3% is the typical range – consider whether your CTAs are clear and your offer is compelling enough
Action needed	Bad	Under 1% means people are opening but not engaging – the content or CTA isn't landing

How to fix:

- ☐ Use one clear primary CTA
- ☐ Make links visually obvious
- ☐ Match the offer to the audience
- ☐ Shorten and focus the email body

03

Click-to-open rate (CTOR)

The percentage of people who clicked after opening. Unlike CTR, this isolates content quality – it removes people who never saw the email from the equation.

Formula: $\text{Clicks} \div \text{Opens} \times 100$

Benchmark		
Healthy	Good	20%+ indicates good VCTOR and means that those reading the email are engaging with it
Watch it	Warning	10–20% is a moderate score indicating content is reaching openers but not fully converting interest into action
Action needed	Bad	Under 10% means the email body isn't doing its job – even interested openers aren't clicking

How to fix it:

- ☐ Make the value proposition clearer
- ☐ Reduce friction to the click
- ☐ Use a button instead of a text link
- ☐ Align email content with the landing page

04

Conversion rate

The percentage of recipients who completed the desired action – a purchase, signup, or download. The clearest measure of business impact.

Formula: $\text{Conversions} \div \text{Delivered} \times 100$

Benchmarks		
Healthy	Good	2%+ is solid –your email is successfully driving real action beyond the inbox
Watch it	Warning	0.5–2% is the typical range – look at whether the offer, landing page, and audience match up
Action needed	Bad	Under 0.5% means the offer or landing page experience is breaking the journey after the click

How to fix it:

- ☐ Improve the landing page
- ☐ Segment better — right offer to right audience
- ☐ Remove steps between click and conversion
- ☐ Add urgency or a clear deadline

05

Bounce rate

The percentage of emails that failed to reach the inbox. Hard bounces mean the address doesn't exist; soft bounces are temporary failures like a full mailbox.

Formula: $\text{Bounces} \div \text{Sent} \times 100$

Benchmarks		
Healthy	Good	Under 2% means the list is clean and well-maintained, indicating good deliverability foundation
Watch it	Warning	2–5% means it's time to clean the list – remove hard bounces immediately
Action needed	Bad	Over 5% is a high bounce rate that will damage your sender reputation and hurt future deliverability

How to fix it:

- ☐ Remove hard bounces immediately
- ☐ Use double opt-in to verify new subscribers
- ☐ Audit old list segments for dormant addresses
- ☐ Never buy email lists

— 06

Unsubscribe rate

The percentage of recipients who opted out after receiving an email. A signal of how well your content and sending frequency match what subscribers signed up for.

Formula: $\text{Unsubscribes} \div \text{Delivered} \times 100$

Benchmarks		
Healthy	Good	Under 0.2% means content and frequency are well-aligned with subscriber expectations
Watch it	Warning	0.2–0.5% is worth investigating – may be a frequency, relevance, or segmentation issue
Action needed	Bad	Over 0.5% means subscribers feel the emails aren't relevant or are arriving too often

How to fix:

- ☐ Reduce sending frequency
- ☐ Improve content relevance
- ☐ Segment your list more tightly
- ☐ Offer a preference centre instead of unsubscribe

 A low unsubscribe rate isn't always good news. Some disengaged subscribers simply stop opening instead of opting out — monitor engagement trends too.

07

List growth rate

How fast your subscriber list is growing after factoring in unsubscribes and bounces. Critical for long-term scalability — email lists decay naturally over time.

Formula: $(\text{New subs} - \text{Unsubscribes}) \div \text{Total list} \times 100$

Benchmarks		
Healthy	Good	2.5%+ /month means list is growing net positive – your acquisition efforts are outpacing churn
Watch it	Warning	0–2.5% /month indicates slow growth – acquisition and churn are roughly balanced
Action needed	Bad	Negative score means list is shrinking – churn is outpacing new signups

How to fix it:

- ☐ Add opt-in forms across your site
- ☐ Create a lead magnet
- ☐ Run a referral campaign
- ☐ Promote signup on social media

08

Engagement over time

Tracks trends in opens and clicks across campaigns. Reveals whether you have a growing core of loyal subscribers or a growing pool of disengaged ones – and where to focus re-engagement.

****Track monthly – no single formula****

Benchmarks		
Healthy	Good	Engagement is growing or holding steady – your list quality is strong
Watch it	Warning	Audience may be fatiguing – review content variety and cadence
Action needed	Bad	Run a re-engagement campaign and remove subscribers who don't respond

How to fix it:

☐ Segment engaged vs dormant subscribers

☐ Send a re-engagement campaign

☐ Vary content format and topics

☐ Remove non-openers after 90 days

 Review engagement trends quarterly, not just after individual campaigns. A single low-performing campaign is normal – a downward trend across three months is a signal to act.

Ready to send emails that actually get results?

Use this reference card to track and optimize your email campaigns. Hostinger's email tools help you monitor metrics and improve performance in real time.

Master email marketing with Hostinger Reach

Hostinger email marketing lets you build your list, send campaigns, and track all the metrics in one place – with no technical setup required.

[Get started →](#)