

A day in the life of European email marketers

Whitepaper
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A series of interviews about the state
of email in the European Union



The voices that deserve to be heard

The email industry, like many other industries, is predominantly US-based. Many email vendors, email thought leaders & overall email geeks come from across the Atlantic. As a result, much of the content you read online speaks to American statistics & experiences. But what about the state of email in Spain, or “the perfect subject line” in Poland?

We felt it was time to put a spotlight on the EU email professional. What’s it like to work in email in their country, what are the challenges & the email pearls of wisdom they live by? We asked eight email professionals across the EU about their experiences:

- Emily Ross of Inkvine Communications (Ireland)
- Janine Kreienbrink of CXdoing (Germany)
- James Metzger of Aspire Marketing (Spain)
- Jenna Tiffany of Let’sTalk Strategy (Portugal)
- Yanna-Torry Aspraki of Harlem Next (Netherlands)
- Conn Ó Muíneacháin of Blacknight (Ireland)
- Radek Kaczyński of Bouncer (Poland)
- Ioana Dulcu of inboxAds (Romania)

We’d love to hear from you! Get featured in the [next edition](#).

A day in the life with Emily Ross of Inkvine Communications



I believe that email is one of the most underrated tactics in the arsenal of a good marketing professional. At Inkvine we plan and manage strategic communications & **email is always in the mix**. We use outbound email for PR campaigns, market research, mindshare generation, inbound lead generation, and more. We work with deep tech B2B firms in eCommerce, AI, IoT, and Cybersecurity.

We are laser-focused on growth, and take a data-driven approach to every aspect of our campaigns. Unlike normal agencies (and we describe ourselves as the opposite of an agency) we take a very manual approach to campaign creation and execution. We tend to be allergic to most marketing automation platforms, though they do have their place at scale. We deliver consistently better results for clients with excellent creative, detailed audience research and well crafted messaging.

What's the biggest challenge in email marketing?

Marketing people confuse output with performance. **Cutting through the noise and capturing attention is the single biggest challenge for any email marketer**. Less is more. Smaller lists, shorter emails. Also, if I had a dollar for everyone that told me they had a marketing automation tool but were pretty sure they weren't using it properly, I would have enough money to buy us both fancy dinner.

Share your favourite email tips with us?

The best tips are either deeply technical or deeply practical. For the former: Make sure your DKIM is set up correctly. I didn't know what DKIM was until I met Sensorpro. Their support and knowledge base is excellent.

"Whatever you're selling, email connects one human to another."

For the latter: It helps to be fascinated by human behaviour. Leverage human biases. Understand FOMO, urgency triggers, social proof. **Enjoy experimentation** and focus twice as much on what didn't work than what did (Survivorship bias!).

For me, it's remembering that at both ends of every email there are two human beings. Well, there should be! No-reply addresses do my head in.

Tell us about your vision for email marketing in Ireland?

Our vision on email isn't terribly controversial: **Know the customer. Know the value. Communicate with empathy & meaning**. This isn't quite a vision statement, but it's a motto that has served us well: **NAMDAM**. No Assholes, Money Doesn't Actually Matter.

Ireland is a nation of storytellers. It's interesting to see how our cultural capability continues to adapt to the digital age. I'm keen to see how email marketing becomes more interactive as our interfaces evolve, thus enabling us to tap into our storytelling capabilities.

Some Irish companies are doing astonishing work on that interactivity piece. For example, Axonista has built the interactive video technology behind QVC, Virgin Media, and WaterBear.

AI is also transforming email. xSellco, another Irish firm doing amazing things has integrations with Amazon, eBay, and Google, transforming the email communication layer between buyers and sellers, using AI to improve everything from feedback to translations. Webio is doing really interesting work in conversational AI, and while I believe that email needs to connect humans, chatbots have their place too.

When I interviewed Webio's CEO at ConverCon, back in the beforetimes, he was able to share how chatbots provide humans with Irish companies across all sectors that think creatively about the email layer, as a means to connect and engage with other human beings will always do well.

I think that's what it boils down to: **Whatever you're selling, email connects one human to another.**

A day in the life with James Metzger of Aspire Marketing



Well, I cover more areas than just email marketing as I help build complete marketing strategies for companies, but **email is a key foundation for that.** First things first are breakfast with my wife and baby daughter, COFFEE, and then 15 minutes quiet time before I start work.

Once my brain is in check I then start with emails. I have clients that span from North America and other parts of Europe other than just Spain. It's important to catch up and make sure everything is in check. Normally that takes 30 minutes to an hour as I just focus on updates and checking in.

I try to do an hour every morning on preparing next week's social media content. This one is easy to skip as my mind is always client-focused, but it is an important part that I must be disciplined in. The rest of the morning is usually taken up with content creation for clients, and content for my new email newsletter and blog, which is soon to be released. I try to get this done in the morning as this is when my brain is most creative!

"The fact that you own your list in email, you aren't at the mercy of social media's algorithms, and you can automate personalized content directly to your audience."

Then I cook a quick lunch for the family. Working from home is a great asset for me because it allows me to be a bigger part of my family life, which I love! Cooking for me is a great disconnect and so I try to do it as much as possible, even if it's just fancy sandwiches! Traditionally in Spain, it's a two-hour lunch break, that isn't possible for me, but it is very important. I can take a least 45 minutes to an hour - which I know is a luxury for some people! Depending on the

day my afternoon is filled spent either in client meetings or strategy calls, or data analysis for campaigns, A/B testing, and client strategy development. Then some evenings after work will be spent on work development.

What is an email wisdom you live by?

Know your audience. Speak their language and remember it's not about you, it's about them. Your email list is your most important marketing asset. It should be full of people that WANT to hear from you and TRUST your opinion. They've trusted you to give you their email, so always treat them and speak to them like your true fans. Always A/B test your emails and optimize your email onboarding experience, that way you will maximize conversion and brand loyalty.

How do you overcome your email marketing challenges?

Many of my Spanish corporate clients have an international customer base, therefore traversing through culture sensitivity can sometimes be difficult. For example, your brand message will always be the same, but retaining that integrity through different copy and subject lines in different languages and markets, can be difficult. It requires two areas to be done really well.

Firstly, native copywriters that understand the business well enough to make sure your business message is correct and, secondly, that you have a message that will also attract the reader, open the email and engage with the CTA. Without meaning to sound redundant, the other is to A/B test continuously, to make sure your message and subject lines are connecting with your audience.

Share your view on email marketing with us?

Email marketing, I believe, is on the rise. It is becoming increasingly difficult to be heard on social media platforms. Continuously changing algorithms due to a saturated market place is causing those social media platforms to become very hard to organically reach your audience. The fact that you own your list in email, you aren't at the mercy of social media's algorithms, and you can automate personalized content directly to your audience, means we are only going to see an increase in email marketing.

I believe email marketing will become **the main lead source for nurturing and selling online** if social media continue to limit the visibility of its users' followers. The problem is that I find many companies invest too much time and resources into the glitzy charm of social media, at the sacrifice of email marketing. That's not to say social media isn't a powerful tool, because it is.

But, it's also seductive to companies and very hard to gain real metrics and analytics compared to email marketing. We've all seen how Covid-19 has caused a massive shift in how technology has grown and utilized in many companies' business development. This also follows with their digital presence and, unfortunately, many companies haven't seen the nurturing potential through growing a strong email list.

They DO want to do webinars, build communities and see a vision for selling more online. But they often overlook their email list as the foundation and main source for this. I think that **the advancement of email automation platforms will help companies** see how much email marketing can be an asset. It's already happening and I think some industries just need to catch up.

Specifically for my Spanish clients, at least in my experience when I compare them to their North American counterparts, they are following trends, just a little slowly, and especially in the

B2B sector. I have also noticed statistically in my campaigns, a slight cultural bias when using lead magnets to grow lists. Meaning that there is a greater distrust to give email information for FREE gated content, which I think has led to a surface level distrust to implementing email marketing as the assumption is that this is the only asset to email marketing.

Also, GDPR compliance, although it's much easier through many email automation platforms, was and is still a concern when building an email marketing strategy. Although in reality, it is an asset because when you gain subscribers, you know they have had to jump through a couple more hoops to get your content, meaning they are more likely to be TRUE fans. This all has slowed the development in email marketing, but I think realistically in Spain, within 5 years the general business consensus of email marketing will catch up with monetizing newsletters either through subscriptions or advertising and utilizing properly automated and personalized messages.

One area I do feel is important is to grow in the future, is a greater authenticity to email communication that is more personalized and spoken more authentically to the audience. The authenticity of communication is something that most Spanish companies are willingly ready for. Unlike Latin American Spanish-speaking countries, Spanish businesses communicate in a far more informal manner, far more akin to the US, UK or Australia, and New Zealand, than compared to Latin America or Italy. Therefore to push my clients to have an authentic more personable tone within email content is far easier to attain and converts extremely well.

A day in the life with Conn Ó Muíneacháin of Blacknight



We send emails twice a month with a summary of the content produced by our team. The challenge we face in email marketing would be to keep your emails fresh, relevant and useful to your subscribers. To overcome this challenge, you have to keep asking yourself: **"Why would I open this email?"**

"Irish email subscribers are realizing that Brexit has put the UK beyond the pale."

What do you see happening to email marketing in Ireland?

Irish email subscribers are realizing that Brexit has put the UK beyond the pale. Brands cannot simply copy and paste UK content for Irish subscribers. To stay relevant, marketing emails will need to differentiate themselves as being addressed to an Irish and/or EU audience.

The customer is always right, in the sense that they know what they want.

A day in the life with Ioana Dulcu of inboxAds



As a marketer, I can't say I have two days the same because of the diverse nature of this job. Usually, I start my working days by checking my emails to see if there's anything urgent that needs to be done and the meetings I need to attend. I also scan relevant publications in the industry.

Given the multitude of tasks, I need to organize them carefully to minimize the switching time. To be more precise, there are days when I focus only on the content creation in which I research the blog or guest articles, writing copy, or working with the designers. On other days, I work on the communication strategies we need to put in place and on the budgeting and meeting with suppliers. And in others, I dedicate my time to sync with my team about the ongoing marketing plans or to take part in presentations.

What's your vision on email marketing?

We address our product to publishers who want to generate a completely new stream of revenue by placing programmatic native ads in their email newsletters' template. During the last year, we've seen a considerable increase in our customer base. Still, despite quick growth, the programmatic email advertising space is young. But as more publishers drive significant revenue with this approach, others will want the same.

At inboxAds, we help our customers monetize their newsletters with programmatic native ads. Programmatic ads are automatically selected based on the newsletter's profile and the subscribers' online behaviour. Native ads appear as complementary articles to the main content, much like the "suggested articles" most content marketers include at the end of their blog posts. Because they are natively integrated into the newsletter template, they don't detract from the reading experience; on the contrary, they heighten it.

Is there a difference in email marketing between Romania and the UK?

For sure, Romania still has a lot to go in comparison to the UK, especially when it comes to the use and integration with new platforms. In the UK, when I receive a package from an online store, I instantly receive a photo with the package delivered to my door, regardless of the delivery company. In Romania, there's no such thing yet, but there is still time for improvements.

"Having 100,000 email subscribers means infinitely more than the same number of followers on social media."

I also believe we'll see more brands adopting automated tools to create targeted campaigns quicker, along with interactivity and personalization, that are of paramount importance to customer engagement. I will add the use of programmatic email advertising as a standard practice among newsletter publishers, as well as an ongoing source of revenue.

Because having 100,000 email subscribers means infinitely more than the same number of followers on social media.

What email tip would you like to see more in practice?

I would like to see more emails that keep the customer on the top of everything. Even though I receive a lot of emails, very well written, I noticed that there is a tendency for very long emails. Emails should not be confused with the articles of at least 2,000 words written especially for SEO purposes. It is obvious that there is a battle for people's time, but as marketers, we need to respect our customers and understand that a reader can't physically keep up with so much content. Besides, I would like to see more clean and simple layouts and less salesy subject lines.

A day in the life with Radek Kaczyński of Bouncer



I'm addicted to email. When I get to inbox zero, I feel empty... even nice pictures in SuperHuman do not compensate for it. That's why I try to keep control over it - I do my best not to look at email just after waking up and turn off notifications on my phone in the evenings. In-between, I spend a big portion of my time communicating via email, as it's a wonderful medium to share some thoughts and ideas. I use other channels, too - I try to work multi-medium, but I like email the most.

"I truly believe that when we send a message with love and respect it will be delivered and read."

Email is less brief than social media & I'm not good at brief. It is in written form, the opposite to phone calls -so I don't have to be afraid I will forget details & it is much easier to manage. Even though I usually do video calls at the beginning of the relationship, I very quickly switch to email.

What challenges you every day?

My main challenge is to prove that what I have to say is valuable to my recipient. I like simplicity on the one hand - I don't like shiny emails and catchy subject lines, and on the other hand, I prefer longer forms. So my emails sometimes may seem boooooorrrrring.

Besides, it's still not uncommon to see small businesses sending messages from their free mailbox including multiple recipients in BCC. I believe that they could benefit from some email marketing solutions. Providing email verification solutions we have also noticed that email servers are not as stable as they could be - of course, messages are delivered to a recipient but sometimes not as fast as they could.

What do you think will happen to email marketing in Poland this year?

I really hope that at some point we will be less bombarded with different stimulants, and our email lives will be more balanced and we will be able to get some harmony there. So when a

valuable message will be in our inbox, we will have time and energy to study it. It may happen that technology will help us there... and I hope that when it will be developed for us it will also respect our privacy rights, too. I believe that email marketing is getting more mature in Poland, as there are more and more email experts here. And it looks like small businesses are starting with the best practices, as don't have too many old habits. I hope that soon it will start getting less formal too... you can still feel some distance between humans in Poland when you communicate via email.

What's an email wisdom you live by?

I love the holistic approach to communication regardless of the channel. I truly believe that when we send a message with love and respect it will be delivered and read. And with 'love' I mean maximising the probability of it being valuable. And respect, I mean respect to recipients time, energy and attention. My tip would be to be mindful of the potential value of what you have to send to your recipient. And then craft a form that will maximise the probability it will be read.

A day in the life with Jenna Tiffany of Let'sTalk Strategy



I can summarize my day with one word, varied! There isn't a single day, that is the same. My agency works with a wide range of clients based all over the world, all with different objectives, challenges, and campaigns. This keeps us on our toes as a team, and this is what I like most. The variety means I could be on a strategy scoping call with a new client in the morning, catching up with the team's performance on another client's recent email campaign, and formulating another brand strategy.

We also work with other marketing channels, and I love the multichannel approach, and currently, we have several large multichannel projects on the go. My day is also filled with the tasks needed to run a company, and there is always something that needs to be done from that side too! Writing blogs and teaching is also a big part of my day today to share my experience with the amazing email community and up and coming marketers studying the discipline.

Can you share your all-time favourite email tip with us?

My number one is to define the objective of the campaign that you're planning on sending. What is the goal that you want that campaign to achieve? How does it fit within the overall customer journey and most importantly, how does it add value to your subscribers?

"What is the goal that you want that campaign to achieve?"

What's your vision on email marketing in Portugal?

Email marketing in Portugal is in a quite basic stage, and behind in some areas compared to the UK. The strategic element, for example, is a couple of years behind. Data cleansing tools should be used more and regularly if lists are growing rapidly. And tools to check that the email is

rendering correctly. This isn't a practice I see commonly used here.

In the UK and in places such as Germany my experience has been that yes there on the whole customers are ready for my vision on email! However, that hasn't always been my experience in Portugal. As I mentioned earlier, the marketing approach is a couple of years behind places like the UK, and my approach can seem too radical! There is the language difference which can be a barrier.

For the future, it'd be helpful to take a more sophisticated approach to email and seeing less like a batch and blast channel and more of one to improve and enhance the customer experience throughout their journey.

A day in the life with Janine Kreienbrink of CXdoing



I start my day with two coffees, the news, and a deep dive into LinkedIn. I check my calendar and the todos for the day and make a rough plan for the next 9 hours. There might be a Client workshop, an online session scheduled for the day, calls with clients or I work on a piece of content. Every second Friday it is my turn to write our weekly Newsletter called "CXdoing Hacks".

What's your biggest challenge in email marketing?

When I write emails I try very hard to build a connection with our audience. By doing so I would love to build a conversation with the audience but that proves to be difficult.

"Concentrate on topics that the email audience really needs and cares about."

Tell us your favourite email tip?

Don't forget a great subject line and an engaging preview-text.

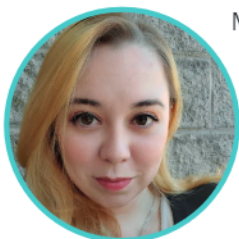
What's your view on the German email landscape?

There are just too many channels and there is way too much content out there. Our audience consists of busy people and so we have to make sure that we write about topics that concern them. We need to ensure that we make a difference with our email marketing texts, that we help them in their day-to-day life. That is our challenge, not theirs.

Concentrate on topics that the email audience really needs and cares about. Don't produce just another piece of email that nobody has the time to read. Which is a big challenge!

Like with every other channel, every email is a possibility to connect with our audience. **It is a great and very personal opportunity because this piece of content lands right in the inbox of your customers.** We as email marketers have to make sure that we never forget that, which is not easy at all...

A day in the life with Yanna-Torry Aspraki of Harlem Next



My day starts with my new biking habit instilled by the fearless Dutch people. It helps kickstart my day and focus on the millions of decisions that need to be made on a daily basis. From deliverability issues to educating other teams, **I live and breathe email**. Not only can I talk about it for hours on end, but I think it may slowly be taking over my life... bit by bit... in the most positive, wonderful way!

Day to day I am putting out fires, innovating, and talking to my peers in the industry with my amazing team at Harlem Next. I feel extremely lucky to work for a company that is not only looking to grow, but cares about doing email right no matter the challenges and the changes that need to be made. It is the dream environment for me. I can do crazy things like massive list cleaning with no objection from the company.

We all know how something as simple as list cleaning can come with lots of red tape!

"The Women of Email Organisation has helped me grow professionally and network with other amazing minds."

Deliverability is an amazing money maker when done right. When a business' income relies on email, which many do, email & deliverability specialists need to work together with other departments. They also need to be heard, as not listening to their expertise can really impact the ROI and the company's online reputation.

What is the point of sending beautifully crafted emails with amazing promotions.... if no one receives them in their inbox?

On the other hand, I always save some time in my day to ensure I am always on top of new trends or changes in the industry which always keeps me on my toes! I do this by stalking my favourite #emailgeeks, watching the State of Email webinars from Validity, and reading anything I can get my hands on!

For day to day monitoring I love to use emailconsul.com I have everything I need in one place to look at the health of my ecosystem and how the emails are performing. I even heard that soon I will be able to double check my clients' email list efficiently! I can't wait!

You will also find me in 250ok, Taxi for Email, Google Sheets, Really Good Emails, Email Geek Slack Channel, the Women of Email Facebook Group... and Twitter/Linkedin Stalking my Email heroes!

What's something everyone in email should know?

The Email Geek Slack Channel & the Women of Email Organization. I always have a hard time explaining to non-Email Geeks how amazing the Email Geeks community is. You can ask any type of email question and you will have an army of people answer or help you succeed... Even

people from competing companies. The Women of Email Organization has helped me grow professionally and network with other amazing minds. There is an amazing ocean of knowledge and the women sponsor and promote each other like there is no tomorrow. WoE changed my life!

An actual email tool I would highly recommend is Cakemail. They were my first email family, and I know first hand how amazing the people behind the product are. From small companies to giant ones, Cakemail will not only offer an amazing email marketing experience, but it will give you a tool that will scale with you as your business grows. There is also nothing better than being able to call customer support and have a specialist help you with your email problems even when they are not related to the product.

Another tool which is amazing for smaller business who may not have the budget for tools like 250ok, is Email Consul. It is the best way to manage your deliverability on a budget. It has all you need to monitor your health and reputation of your email program and it comes with amazing deliverability consulting for when you need it. The data you get from this deliverability tool is absolutely fantastic! You get data I know most marketers don't even know exist!

What challenges do you face on a daily basis?

My main challenge is making others understand what I do and why email & deliverability specialists are needed. I can not count the number of times I had to explain it or have been asked: "So... You send emails, right?"

When they understand the why though, it helps them work on the What that needs to be done! I love sharing all the amazing things in the email world and getting others excited about it!

Share your vision on email with us?

People think that email is simple. Everyone does it everyday, no? Email is anything but simple.

Email is a very precise niche and if you are not in it, you may not even know what to Google. Deliverability also needs to be present in all email conversations and it is often isn't. What is the point of a beautiful campaign if no one receives it?

Best practices, laws and authentication can seem annoying and boring, but they bring you more money. It is as simple as that. Ask any email specialist and they will tell you how they made more money by cleaning their list, than by buying one.

Many things seem counterintuitive when it comes to email, because we rely on many misconceptions. This makes many of look like spammers without even knowing it.

Saving the World One Email at a Time™. That is on my mind every time I make any email decision. What can I do to ensure I send better emails, to the right people, at the right time with the right content while thinking of deliverability, best practices and laws?

What are your favorite email tips you'd like to share?

- ✓ Authenticate your email;
- ✓ Sending less actually helps you make more money;
- ✓ Don't look at open rates and click rates only. If 100% of your list opened an email, then they all clicked on the link... but no one bought your product would you celebrate?
- ✓ Optimize, optimize and then target the right audience.



Chris Byrne is co-founder with Ireland-based Sensorpro, an email marketing & survey platform that has served many brands including Pampers, Brown Thomas and Family Dollar. Get to know Chris on LinkedIn & his work at Sensorpro.



With years of experience in the email (marketing) industry, Tom Blijleven writes about various topics within the industry, covering both marketing as transactional email. In his role as marketer at Flowmailer, he specializes in email deliverability and transactional email best practices.

The email delivery platform **you can rely on**

Everyone can send email. But making sure every email hits the inbox time and time again is craftsmanship.

At Flowmailer, we specialize in delivering email.

We're making sure that your important emails hit your customer's inbox. Not once, not twice. Every single time.

Create your own flow – your way of engaging customers. Every message delivered to the inbox is adding to a positive customer experience, and it's all happening in your flow. That's how communication should work. No hassle. With result.

Don't go mainstream, you're in control.
Welcome to the Flow.

flowmailer