

State of Email Report

The data, trends,
and innovations that
shape successful email
programs in 2020—
and the decade to come



litmus

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Introduction

It's 2020 and the beginning of a new decade. What *hasn't* changed over the last 10 years? Email continues to reign as the channel of choice for marketing and business communications for consumers in all age groups, long after everyone predicted it would die out.

The 2020 edition of the Litmus State of Email Report details the key information you have come to rely on: the significant email developments in email client news, key industry updates, and legislative changes that affect your business on both the front and back ends.

As always, we dive into what those changes mean for your email team and provide hands-on advice and links to resources that will help you stay in the forefront of email innovation.

But we're not just looking back at the changes that happened over the last 12 months.

In this report, we also look into the future. With the help of our savvy team members and top thought leaders around the email industry, we predict what the next decade holds for email design, strategy, teams, and technology.

Spoiler alert: The future will be challenging! But, it will bring rewards for email teams that can master both the technologies that keep email vibrant, relevant, and necessary, *and* the strategic planning to help them use that technology wisely.

Ready? Let's go!

Keep Up with the Latest in Email

Join over 300,000 email marketing pros who rely on Litmus for expert advice and analysis. Sign up for our emails to get the Litmus newsletter, notifications of new reports and executive summaries, announcements of upcoming webinars and events, and more.



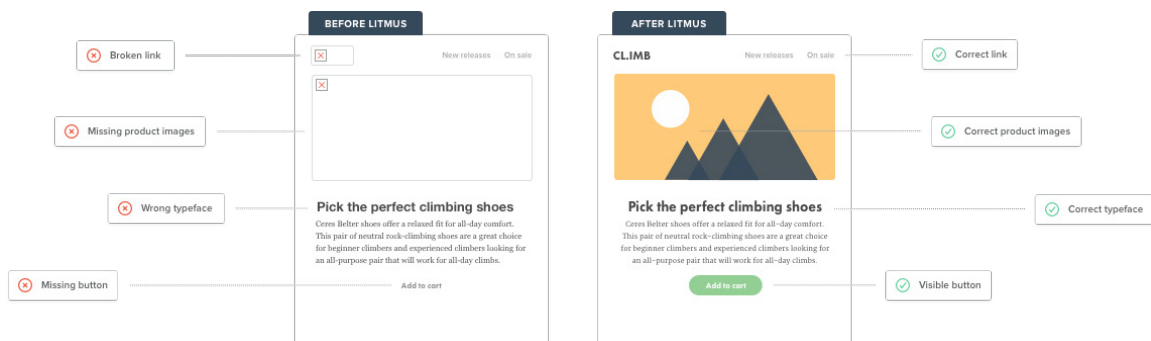


Who Is Litmus?

Litmus is passionate about email marketing research, because our mission is to help brands get access to the knowledge and tools they need to send better email. Through our industry-leading [blog](#), [Litmus Live conferences](#), [ebooks](#), [webinars](#), [Delivering Podcast](#), [Community](#), and more, we discuss best practices and explore trends to help your team stay on the forefront of the industry.

We are also passionate about software that makes creating high-performing email easy. Marketers use the Litmus Platform alongside their existing email service providers to ensure a consistently great brand experience for every subscriber, work more efficiently, accelerate campaign performance, reduce errors, and stay out of the spam folder.

Email marketing is complex. But through hands-on advice and software you can trust, we enable your team to do their best work—creating innovative, on-brand campaigns that engage and delight audiences. With the Litmus Platform, you'll have the tools and insights you need to provide your customers with an incredible email experience—and get the best results in return.



Simplify and Accelerate Your Email Workflow

Join more than 600,000 marketing professionals who use Litmus to efficiently create high-performing email campaigns.



Key Takeaways

The email landscape shifts a little every day. New clients and operating systems appear. Legacy platforms change or disappear. New laws, customer expectations, and evolving industry standards mean your work in email isn't the same as it was a year ago—or even 6 months ago. These takeaways from the 2020 State of Email Report will help you understand and stay ahead of developments in our dynamic email world.



1. The email client landscape continues to change, providing new challenges—and opportunities—for modern email marketers.

The email client ecosystem continues to be fragmented and dynamic, but we're starting to see trends that span *across* email clients: Support for AMP for Email moves beyond the Gmail Inbox, and more email clients offer support for Dark Mode. Optimizing emails for these updates takes effort—but it gives marketers a unique opportunity to stand out from the competition. Read more on [page 14](#).



2. The conversation about email data and privacy legislation has moved from the European Union to the United States, where state-level regulations could lead to a single federal privacy law.

Marketers across the US spent the year learning about the requirements of the California Consumer Privacy Act, the most sweeping set of regulations affecting consumer rights on data and privacy, including email data. Read about why this state-level law concerns marketers who live beyond the Golden State's borders on [page 32](#).



3. The last 10 years have seen massive changes in email marketing, design, technology, and standards. The next decade will see even more changes. Buckle up!

Litmus' resident experts teamed up with some of the best minds in the email industry to assess where email stands at the dawn of this new decade. The consensus: The future is bright for marketers who can adapt to new standards and build on them to prove their value to their customers, their companies, and the guardians of the inbox. Learn more about where the email industry is heading on [page 37](#).



2

Email Client Industry Trends

The email client landscape is heavily fragmented—but sometimes trends span across inbox providers. In 2019, two key developments spread through the email client landscape: Dark Mode and AMP for Email. They aren't just cool gadgets but features intended to make email more accessible, useful, and valuable than ever.

Email clients embrace Dark Mode, a darker color palette for low-light or nighttime environments

Dark Mode. The tech industry is buzzing with these two words, and email marketing is no exception. In 2018, Apple was one of the first brands to add Dark Mode to its desktop email client. In 2019, Dark Mode made it to the mainstream as iOS Mail and other industry heavyweights, including Gmail, announced support for Dark Mode.

“There’s no denying Dark Mode is taking over the inbox—and making sure emails look great in this reading environment is the new big challenge for email marketers.”

Alice Li
Principal Email Engineer, Litmus



What’s Dark Mode?

Dark Mode reverses the typical online color and brightness scheme. Instead of darker type on lighter backgrounds, Dark Mode uses light-colored typography, UI elements, and iconography on dark backgrounds.

Many users prefer Dark Mode for several reasons:

- **It’s easier on the eyes.** Light text on a dark background is much better for minimizing eye strain, especially in low light.
- **It reduces screen brightness**, saving battery life.
- **It can improve content legibility** and can make it easier for some to read content on desktop and mobile.

Other users might simply opt for Dark Mode because it’s a personal preference. Whatever the driving factors might be, Dark Mode is becoming more popular than ever—and taking over the inbox, too.

Which email clients support Dark Mode?

Today, most popular operating systems and apps now allow users to switch to Dark Mode. Here are the clients that let you view emails in Dark Mode, either as a setting the user can set manually or by automatically detecting the user's preferred color scheme:

Mobile Apps	Desktop Clients	Web Clients
Gmail App (Android)	Apple Mail	Outlook.com
Gmail App (iOS)	Outlook 2019 (Mac OS)	
Outlook (Android)	Outlook 2019 (Windows)	
Outlook App (iOS)		

How Dark Mode affects your emails

Here's where it gets tricky with Dark Mode. The email clients listed above allow users to set their UI to a dark color scheme. However, they don't handle your emails the same way.

At the moment, there appear to be three fundamentally different types of color schemes that email clients use to apply Dark Mode to emails. Let's look at them one by one.



No Color Changes

Yes, you read right. Some email clients let you change their UI to Dark Mode, but that doesn't have any impact on how your HTML email is rendered. Whether the app is set to Light or Dark Mode, your email will look exactly the same. Email clients like iOS and Apple Mail always render your Light Mode designs by default (unless you specifically add code to trigger Dark Mode).



Partial Color Invert

This Dark Mode theming only detects areas with light backgrounds and inverts them so the light backgrounds are dark, while the dark text becomes light. It generally leaves areas that already have dark backgrounds alone, resulting in a fully Dark Mode design. Fortunately, most email clients that use this method also support Dark Mode targeting, so you can override the client-default dark theme.



Full Color Invert

This is the most invasive color scheme: it not only inverts the areas with light backgrounds, but impacts dark backgrounds as well. So if you already designed your emails to have a dark theme, this scheme will ironically force them to become light. Unfortunately, this is currently the tactic used by some of the more popular email clients, such as Gmail app (iOS13) and Outlook 2019 (Windows).

For a full overview of the different rendering approaches and email examples, read the [Ultimate Guide to Dark Mode](#) on the Litmus blog.

How do I target Dark Mode users with my own styles?

If you'd like to apply your own Dark Mode styles that could very well differ from email clients' default color schemes, you can try these two methods:

```
@media (prefers-color-scheme: dark)
```

This method works in very much the same way as applying a block of styles inside a **@media** query for your Mobile Responsive view. However, this CSS block targets any user interface that's set to Dark Mode.

```
[data-ogsc] and/or [data-ogsb]
```

This is a method first [brought to our attention by Mark Robbins](#) to target the Outlook app. While it seems like a pretty narrow market share, it's relatively easy to simply duplicate the **@media (prefers-color-scheme: dark)** styles you already applied and simply add the appropriate **[data-ogsc]** and/or **[data-ogsb]** prefixes to each CSS rule. But—and there's always a “but” in email—there's no consistent support for these targeting methods either. Check the chart below:

Dark Mode Rendering and Targeting by Email Client

Email Client	HTML Treatment in Dark Mode	@media	[data-ogsc] and/or [data-ogsb]
Gmail App (Android)	Partial color invert	✗	✗
Gmail App (iOS)	Full color invert	✗	✗
Outlook (Android)	Partial color invert	✗	✓
Outlook (iOS)	Partial color invert	✓	✗
iOS Mail	No color changes	✓	✗
Apple Mail	No color changes	✓	✗
Outlook 2019 (MacOS)	Partial color invert	✓	✗
Outlook 2019 (Windows)	Full color invert	✗	✗
Outlook.com	Partial color invert	✓	Partial



Action Items

- ☐ **Review [The Ultimate Guide to Dark Mode for Email Marketers](#)** for a detailed walk-through of how Dark Mode impacts your emails—and what you can do to optimize your emails for readers who prefer the dark color scheme.
- ☐ **Get inspired by [how leading brands utilize dark color schemes](#)** in their emails and experiment with bringing this design trend to your emails, too.
- ☐ **Advocate for better display in Dark Mode.** Email clients are still figuring out how to best implement Dark Mode and might be open to feedback from users—especially because not allowing developers to target Dark Mode with their own styles can hurt legibility and accessibility.

Send your thoughts [directly to Gmail's Accessibility team](#). Also, [contribute screenshots showing how Gmail's Dark Mode breaks your email](#).

- ☐ **ABT: Always Be Testing!** Remember, [email clients are constantly changing](#). Especially with a new feature like Dark Mode, tweaks to rendering logic come out fast and furiously. The only way to be on top of it all is to test every email with a tool like Litmus.

Do your emails look great in Dark Mode?

See how popular inboxes render your emails in Dark Mode with Litmus Email Previews.



AMP for Email on the rise

If you're an email geek—whether a designer, developer, or marketer—this is one of the top stories of the year. Google's Accelerated Mobile Pages Project (AMP), an open-source technology designed to improve the performance of web content, made it to the inbox.

“AMP started as an effort to help publishers, but as its capabilities have expanded over time, it's now one of the best ways to build rich webpages. With this came the opportunity to modernize one of the most popular places where people spend their time: email.”

Aakash Sahney

Product Manager, Gmail


AS

What's AMP for Email—and what does it mean for email marketers?


At its most fundamental level, AMP for Email is a new markup specification that can be added on top of traditional HTML emails to provide extra functionality in the inbox.


Ever get an email notification when someone commented on your Google Doc? Notice how you can now comment back directly in Gmail, providing feedback without ever leaving your inbox? That's AMP for Email in action.

Bettina Specht mentioned you in a comment in the following document

 January Newsletter

Subject Line: **Slim down your GIFs**
PVT: And other email resolutions. Plus, learn how we generate email previews, what email will look like in 2020, and more.

 Bettina Specht **New**
[+wpeet@litmus.com](#) How about this as a subject line?

 That works for me, Bettina!

[Reply](#) [Resolve](#) [Open](#)

AMP for Email powering Google Doc responses within an email

AMP allows you to add interactivity in the inbox, from basic image carousels to ratings, dynamically updated content, and even advanced calls back to your own server. All of this happens using AMP markup that looks like HTML but is a new specification. That code is written in a separate email file, delivered using an additional MIME type (on top of the existing HTML and text types already sent with a marketing email).

Here's where things get tricky: To use the power of AMP, marketers have to work with an ESP that allows them to send that additional MIME type. Plus, the subscriber must open the email in an inbox that supports AMP. Limited support on both the sending and receiving side is the biggest hurdle for AMP adoption.

Building an AMP email means more work. Email marketers have to create a separate MIME type that powers the AMP email. Spending additional development time for an email type that can only be seen by a limited number of subscribers might not pay off.

Support for AMP for Email

Google announced in February 2018 that it would add native support for dynamic and interactive email powered by AMP. About a year later, in March 2019, [Gmail kicked off the rollout to its webmail client](#), and [support in mobile email clients](#) followed later in fall. But the news reached far beyond just Gmail: Microsoft [announced](#) that they'll offer AMP support for Outlook.com through a developer preview by summer 2019. Verizon Media [said](#) they're working on bringing full support to Yahoo! Mail soon. Mail.ru also [announced](#) support for AMP for Email.

And on the ESP side? Throughout 2019, more email sending tools announced support for AMP for Email, providing their customers with the opportunity to send AMP-powered emails.

ESPs that support AMP for Email

- [SparkPost](#)
- [Twilio SendGrid](#)
- [Amazon SES and Amazon Pinpoint](#)
- [AWeber](#)
- [Mailgun](#)
- [MessageGears](#)
- [Braze](#)
- [Adobe Campaign](#)
- [Elastic Email](#)

Is it time for marketers to embrace AMP for Email?

Two email powerhouses, Microsoft and Verizon Media, have joined Gmail in their commitment to support the new inbox standard. Once rolled out to all inboxes, AMP support might reach critical mass—and brands may need to invest in more interactive, engaging emails powered by AMP.

Do most of your subscribers open email in email clients that support AMP? Do you use one of the ESPs that already offer AMP support? If you nodded your head yes to both of these questions, it might be worth exploring if AMP-powered emails help you move the needle. Is it more work? Yes. But at the same time, you might be among the first brands to bring truly interactive experiences to your subscribers' inboxes—and have a unique opportunity to stand out from your competition.

“Should you embrace AMP for email? Yeah, probably. If you can.”

Jason Rodriguez
Community & Product
Evangelist, Litmus

JR



Action Items

- ☐ **Learn more about AMP for Email** in this blog post, [Gmail Announces Native Support for Dynamic and Interactive Email Powered by AMP](#). Also, listen to two special editions of our podcast dedicated to AMP: [Instant Reaction to Gmail Announcing AMP Support](#) and [Is it time to embrace AMP for Email?](#)
- ☐ **Assess your subscriber base and email program.** See whether investing time in testing AMP for Gmail is worth your efforts. Gmail holds [27% of the email client market share](#) (No. 2 behind Apple's iPhone) and has an estimated [1 billion+ monthly active users](#).

If Gmail is one of your subscribers' top email clients, too, and if your brand or products rely heavily on moving email readers to landing pages to complete actions, it could be worth your time to explore.
- ☐ **Work with your email designers and developers.** Encourage them to check out [Google's documentation](#) on AMP for Email.
- ☐ **Experiment with AMP for Email markup in Gmail's [Playground](#)** and send test emails to your own inbox.
- ☐ **Build your first AMP email** with the help of Google's [developer documentation for AMP for Email](#).



3

Email Client Updates & Farewells

In 2019, Apple brought out the iPhone 11 series and expanded Dark Mode to iOS 13. Gmail's UI got a facelift. Verizon's email brands make unsubscribing easier. Between Dark Mode and AMP, email is becoming more accessible, interactive, and useful than ever. Learn what updates the most popular inbox providers made to set their tools—and users—up for success.

Apple's new iPhones and iOS 13

While screen sizes and resolutions for the new iPhones remain the same (that's great news for email marketers!), there's one thing you must be aware of. With iOS 13, Apple introduces Dark Mode to its mobile phones, including the native iOS Mail app—and that might impact how your emails display for your subscribers.

The good news first: We'll cover the physical environment of the new iPhones first and then go into Dark Mode (Not literally, but if you're reading this on a device running Mojave, Catalina, or iOS 13, try it out so you can see what viewing in Dark Mode does to content like yours) and other features of iOS 13 that could affect how your emails display and perform.

Screen sizes and resolutions for the iPhone 11, 11 Pro and 11 Pro Max

As we said, the screen sizes and resolutions on the iPhone 11 phones are the same as in previous versions. If you used specific media queries to target each of Apple's iPhones in the past, those work just as well with the 11s.

If you use a breakpoint for triggering responsive styles instead, you're also in luck because that breakpoint is 414px, the same as with [previous iPhone models](#). Setting the media query to target **max-device-width: 414px** will ensure that responsive styles are shown on all three of the new iPhone models.

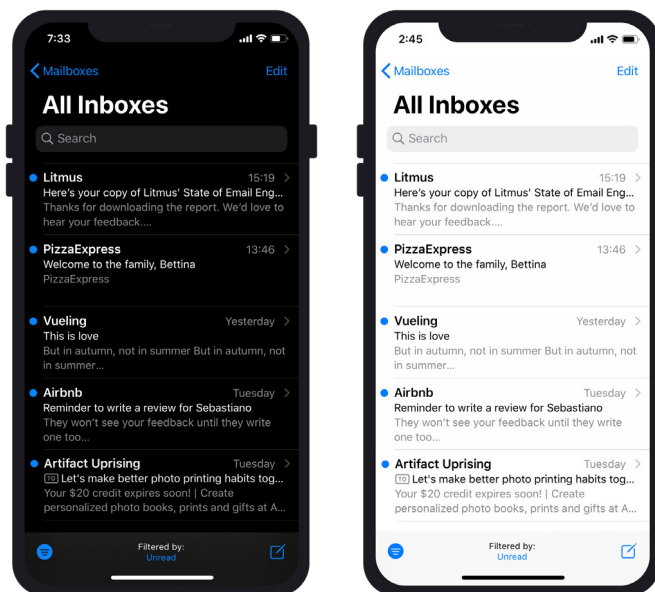
	iPhone 11	iPhone XR
Screen Sizes	6.1 inches	6.1 inches
Resolution	1792 x 828	1792 x 828
Pixel Density	326 ppi	326 ppi
Pixel Density Ratio	2	2

	iPhone 11 Pro	iPhone XS
Screen Sizes	5.8 inches	5.8 inches
Resolution	2436 x 1125	2436 x 1125
Pixel Density	458 ppi	458 ppi
Pixel Density Ratio	3	3

	iPhone 11 Pro Max	iPhone XS Max
Screen Sizes	6.5 inches	6.5 inches
Resolution	2688 x 1242	2688 x 1242
Pixel Density	458 ppi	458 ppi
Pixel Density Ratio	3	3

Dark Mode is coming to Apple's mobile devices

In 2018, [Apple brought Dark Mode to its desktop operating system](#), allowing users of MacOS Mojave to switch to a darker color palette for all windows, views, menus, and controls, making the interface more suitable for work in low-light environments or at night. With iOS 13, this popular feature is coming to Apple's iPhones, too. Let's look at how that might impact your emails.



The iOS Mail Inbox in iOS 13 in Dark and Bright Mode

Similar to [Dark Mode for MacOS](#), the new Dark Mode on Apple's iPhones does not impact HTML emails by default. Dark Mode is only applied to personal and plain text emails. Even if you do not have a background color defined in your HTML email, the background is still rendered as white. So you don't have to worry about Dark Mode messing with your code or rendering experience for regular HTML emails out of the box.

However, bright-colored email backgrounds can create a very jarring experience for subscribers who read email in Dark Mode. Having your screen switch from the dark inbox view to a really bright email (and vice versa) is exhausting to the eye and doesn't make for a great reading experience for the subscriber.

Fortunately, iOS Mail is one of the email clients that lets you target inboxes set to Dark Mode via a media query. This way, you can set custom styles that only apply when your email is opened in an inbox that's set to Dark Mode. That means you can use different background colors, font colors, or even images for subscribers who open on Dark Mode.



Action Items

- ☐ [See how Litmus optimized an email for Dark Mode using a media query.](#)
Then, experiment with Dark Mode targeting for your own campaigns.
- ☐ **Not ready to design a dedicated email experience for Dark Mode users?**
Using darker background colors can be an easy way to optimize for subscribers reading in Dark Mode while providing a great experience for subscribers who view your email with default settings. [Check out these examples of emails that embrace dark styles.](#)

How do your emails look in iOS 13?

See how iOS13 renders your campaigns with Litmus Email Previews for the iPhone 11.



Gmail updates

Gmail's UI gets a refresh

The Gmail team gave its popular email client a facelift in 2019. Google [announced in January](#) that it had refreshed the Gmail UI and aligned it with the brand-standards Material Theme, which includes a bright-white background, use of color to focus attention, and the Google Sans font.

One thing it doesn't include: the big heavy red banner at the top of the inbox. Google replaced it with a search bar in both the desktop and mobile versions. The UI refresh rolled out first to Android users and then to iOS.

For marketers, the cleaner lines and use of color for focus and hierarchy can make messages stand out and makes the whole Gmail user experience less frustrating.

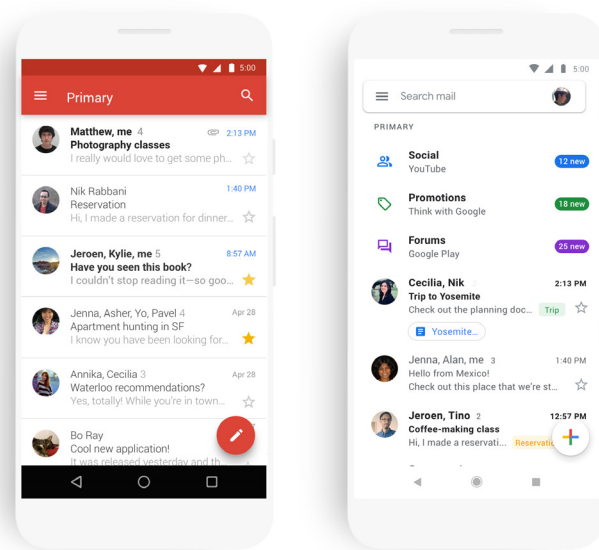
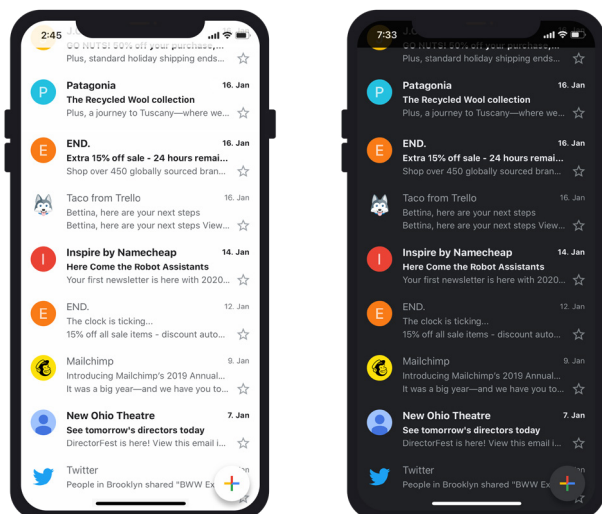


Image via [Techcrunch](#)



The Gmail mobile app on iOS 13 in Light and Dark Mode

Dark Mode is coming to Gmail

While Gmail's default UI is getting brighter, Gmail is also embracing the dark side. On-par with one of the biggest industry trends, Google launched support for Dark Mode for its mobile clients on both iOS and Android.

Now the bad news: Remember the different ways email clients render emails in Dark Mode?

Gmail on Android partially inverts your colors and the iOS Gmail app utilizes the most invasive color scheme, fully inverting colors—which can cause your carefully crafted emails to look off-brand.

On top of that, Gmail doesn't currently offer email designers and developers any opportunities to target subscribers reading in Dark Mode.



Action Items

- ☐ **Ensure your logos and images render in Gmail's Dark Mode.** Add a translucent outline to transparent PNGs with dark text for legibility in email clients where Dark Mode can't be targeted, like Gmail's apps. This will ensure your logo remains visible. [Check out this blog post for an example.](#)
- ☐ **Do your emails break in Gmail's Dark Mode?** Send your thoughts [directly to Gmail's Accessibility team](#). Also, [contribute screenshots showing how Gmail's Dark Mode breaks your email](#). Your feedback will help improve Dark Mode rendering going forward.

Google joins BIMl

The movement for inbox validation picked up a big partner in July 2019 when Google announced that it joined the AuthIndicators, the group working on the Brand Indicators for Message Identification standard. Google said it expected to launch a trial in Gmail this year.

Google's move ups the ante for brands that want to build trust and get maximum visibility in the inbox, given that Gmail is one of the biggest email clients, with an estimated [1.4 billion active users](#).

If Gmail does become a testing ground for BIMl, it would join Yahoo! Mail, which started testing BIMl on its roughly 225 million active users in 2018.

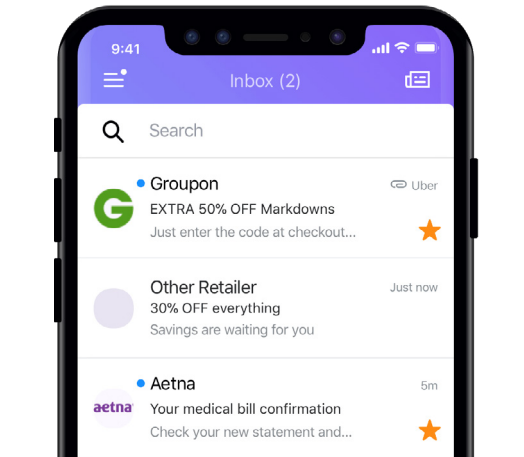
BIMl-approved brands can have custom logos appear next to their messages in subscribers' inboxes, which helps them stand out against unauthenticated brands, personal messages, and potentially unwanted email. Only commercial messages, not one-to-one communications, will display the brand's custom logo.

Here's how it looks in Yahoo! Mail's mobile inbox.

Brands need to meet several conditions before they can participate:

- Successfully authenticated commercial sending domains via SPF, DKIM, and DMARC
- Have a good sender reputation
- Meet any other qualifications a mailbox provider specifies

[BIMIgroup.org](https://bimigroup.org) has more background information, including technical specifications that lay out the requirement for enforcement in DMARC (p=reject).



Action Items

- ☐ **Brush up on your BIMI knowledge** with our blog post "[What is BIMI and why should email marketers care?](#)"
- ☐ **Make sure your emails are properly authenticated** using DMARC, DKIM, and SPF. Without these basics in place, you won't be able to set up a BIMI record.

Outlook updates

Animated GIF support is coming to Outlook 365

Animated GIF support—or the lack thereof—in Microsoft Outlook has long been a thorn in the sides of email marketers. A favorite of email geeks and subscribers alike, animated GIFs allow for movement and excitement in an otherwise static medium. But desktop Outlook users have always been left in the dark when it comes to animated GIFs.

That was until February 2019, when Microsoft announced that desktop Outlook will start supporting animated GIFs for Office 365 users. It's a long-awaited—and very welcome—change that delights marketers and subscribers alike.

“Outlook is committed to creating experiences that delight our customers and the new support for GIFs in Outlook for Windows fits just perfectly with this goal. Outlook is the one place people go to stay connected to people and businesses. Now marketers can be confident that their email campaigns can carry on conversations with animation all the way through their target audiences.”

Matthew McFadden

PM, Microsoft



For email marketers and developers looking to utilize animated GIFs in Outlook 365, here are a few details worth noting:

- GIF support is for Office 365 subscribers using the desktop Outlook client.
- Animated GIFs are already supported in Outlook's mobile apps as well as the webmail client. Outlook 2019, however, is not supporting animated GIFs.
- GIFs play automatically. Looping GIFs will play three times, after which they will pause (but can be played again manually by users).
- There are no file size limitations for animated GIFs.
- Animations will be enabled by default but can be turned off in Outlook settings.



Action Items

- ☐ Learn how to use the power of motion in your emails with our [Ultimate Guide to Animated GIFs in Email](#).

Verizon Media updates

Yahoo! Mail, AOL, and Verizon Inboxes add one-click unsubscribe

“It’s our job to help consumers get the emails they want—and help them get rid of the messages they don’t want to receive any more.”

Marcel Becker

Director of Product Management, Verizon Media

MB

That’s the thinking behind Verizon’s [move to expand its one-click unsubscribe](#) to its Yahoo! Mail and Verizon email clients. Previously it had been available only in AOL Mail.

As a marketer, you might be leery of anything that makes it easier for your subscribers to opt out of your mailing. Plus, link-based unsubscribing has its own challenges, too. Chief among them is that anti-spam software that clicks on every link in an email could accidentally trigger an unsubscribe request.

But one-click unsubscribe avoids accidental anti-spam link clicks by combining an unsubscribe URL with a POST request. Now, your subscribers can opt out without leaving the inbox.

A simple visit to this URL—for example by an anti-spam tool—won't trigger an unsubscribe. But when a user unsubscribes, the sender will get a POST request, which looks like this and triggers the unsubscribe:

```
POST /unsubscribe/opaquepart HTTP/1.1
Host: example.com
Content-Type: application/x-www-form-urlencoded
Content-Length: 26
List-Unsubscribe=One-Click
```

The move also eliminates the need to complete the unsubscribe on a landing page or in a preference center. That keeps subscribers in the inbox and engaged with email.

The one-click unsubscribe is the most recent in-message user convenience added to Yahoo! Mail. The inbox provider added functions to save coupons and discounts in 2017 and to set email reminders in 2018.

Unlike the coupon and reminder features, the one-click unsubscribe will appear only if you add the function. See the Action Items below to learn how to do it.

As far as making unsubscribing easy, remember that unsubscribing is a part of email life. And, an unsubscribe is better than a spam complaint. Why should reporting spam be easier than simply exiting your list?



Action Items

- ☐ **Read the rationale and documentation for one-click unsubscribing:**
[Don't want to be marked as spam? Support one click unsubscribe!](#)
- ☐ **Add a list-unsubscribe field to your email header** that indicates you're leveraging the one-click unsubscribe URL. [Learn more about how to do that in this blog post.](#)
- ☐ **Test the function on a segment of your mailing list** to see how your subscribers react to it. Track link activity to see if your subscribers are using the function instead of your other unsubscribe links in footers or elsewhere in your message.

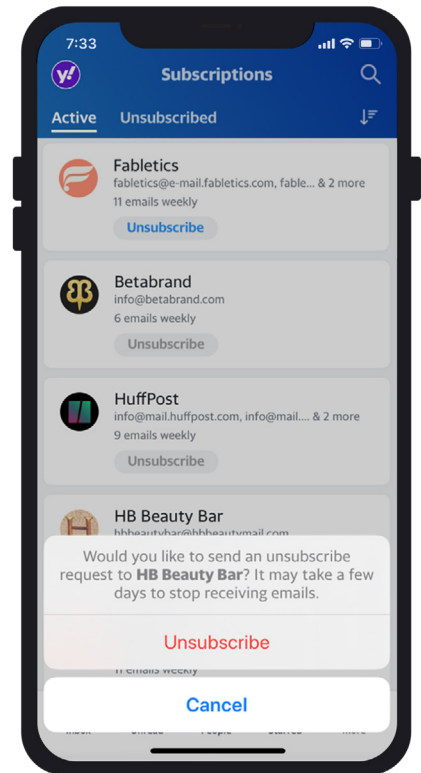
Yahoo! Mail 6 launches

The new app, which launched in September 2019 with versions for Android and iOS, does not “solve for corporate cases,” Senior Director of Product Management Josh Jacobson [said](#). Instead, it is “completely focused on the consumer email use case, solving the business of your life.”

The move that will affect email marketing most directly is the ability to group, view, and unsubscribe from email subscriptions.

Tapping on an email subscription calls up all of the messages from that list in the folder. The unsubscribe feature takes two taps: one to unsubscribe and one to confirm the request.

The emails are grouped by sender, but in several cases, the sender shown is the ESP, such as Responsys or Oracle Bronto. The display does include the sending email addresses of the ESP’s clients, such as “niczoe@reply.bronto.com.” (Yet another argument for not using a “do not reply” email address, right?)



The app gives the user several other ways to organize information. Among them are these:

- Alerts for date-related events like package deliveries and tracking, meetings, and flight departures appear automatically at the top of the inbox when the user opens it.
- Users can add customized buttons to the navigation bar to view emails with deals, attachments, receipts, travel info, and contacts.

“Most popular email software, including Gmail and Outlook, is built for enterprise use first,”

[The Atlantic](#) writes:

“That’s finally changing, thanks in part to Yahoo and AOL, two old-school internet icons sold off for parts after newer tech darlings overtook them. Harnessing a legacy as consumer companies, they hope to wrest email from work’s oppressive grip by redesigning it for use at home.”



**When email clients change support without warning,
your brand reputation and customer experience are at risk.**

With Litmus, you can see screenshots of your emails
across 90+ apps and devices and ensure your emails look
great and perform in all environments.

✗ BEFORE LITMUS

✗

New releases On sale

✗

20% Off All Seed Packets —
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✓ Visible button

**Get started with Litmus Email Previews and
never send another broken email.**

Email Client Farewells

Google shuts Inbox by Gmail

In September 2018, Gmail announced that it will retire its email playground Inbox by Gmail. Outcries by Inbox's devoted users didn't help change the Gmail team's mind, and in the beginning of April 2019 it began to shut off both the Inbox app and the web client. But Inbox will live on in many of the features that Google experimented with in Inbox, including:

- **Snooze:** Lets you temporarily suspend emails until a future date or time.
- **Follow-ups (nudges):** Moves some old emails to the top of your inbox with a suggestion to act on them.
- **Hover:** A desktop function in which you can hover over emails in your inbox and act on them without opening, such as archiving or marking them as read.
- **Smart reply:** Suggests responses to personal emails that vary according to the content in the original message.

I like it!

It was fine.

I think it's fine.



4

Industry Movers and Shakers

It was a busy year for mergers, acquisitions, and financing. Email-related companies raised almost \$400 million in investor funding, while at least \$18.4 billion changed hands among acquisitions that reported purchase prices. Salesforce's \$15.3 billion acquisition of software firm Tableau and Klaviyo's \$150 million in Series B funding set the pace.

January 2019

CM Group acquires Sailthru and Liveclicker: CM Group, the organization behind email marketing tools Campaign Monitor and Emma, announced that it [acquired marketing automation firm Sailthru and the email personalization service Liveclicker](#), but did not disclose terms.

TowerData acquires Xverify, email validation firm: TowerData, a provider of email data and technology services, [acquired Xverify, an email validation specialist](#). Terms were not disclosed.

iContact sold by Cision in \$49 million deal, eliminates some jobs: iContact, a 15-year-old email marketing company serving small and medium-sized businesses, was [acquired by j2Global in a \\$49 million purchase from Cision](#).

772M email addresses found in public cache: The first big data breach story of 2019 has broken, and it's a whopper: [772 million email addresses and 22 million unique passwords were found in a public cache called Collection #1](#). The discovery was revealed by Troy Hunt, cyber researcher and regional director at Microsoft.

WhatCounts and Windsor Circle combine and rebrand: WhatCounts, an enterprise email marketing platform, and Windsor Circle, an automated personalization platform, [announced a combining and rebranding of the two companies](#), owned by Output Services Group (OSG) under the name WhatCounts, an OSG Company.

February 2019

Mailchimp acquires graphic design startup Sawa: Mailchimp [invested in automated design technology](#) by acquiring the Atlanta-based design startup Sawa. Terms were not disclosed.

Personalization firm DataSine raises \$5.2 million: DataSine, a London-based startup that helps firms personalize their email and other communications, [raised \\$5.2 million in Series A funding](#).

\$3 billion Twilio-SendGrid deal completed: SendGrid was formally [absorbed by Twilio in a \\$3 billion transaction](#). The combined companies offer a one-stop platform for managing email, voice, instant messaging, and video, according to Twilio.

Inside.com raises \$2.6 million, expands newsletter offerings: Email newsletter publisher Inside.com [raised \\$2.6 million in funding and launched 20 new titles](#) that include "Inside" newsletters for New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston, Portland, Seattle, Washington, D.C., Austin, Denver, and Pittsburgh.

MAR

March 2019

Publicis acquires Epsilon for \$4.4 billion: Publicis Groupe [acquired email and data intelligence company Epsilon](#) for an estimated \$4.4 billion.

Email platform Spike raises \$5 million in funding round: Spike, a conversational email platform, [raised \\$5 million in a new funding round](#). Among the investors are Wix, a web development platform; Koa Labs; and NFX.

Iterable raises \$50 million in Series C funding: Iterable, provider of a cross-channel engagement platform, [raised \\$50 million in Series C funding](#), bringing the firm's total financing to \$80 million.

APR

April 2019

Klaviyo raises \$150 million in Series B funding from Summit Partners: Michael Medici, a managing director at Summit Partners, joined the company board as part of the investment.

Trendline acquires Canadian email agency InboxMarketer: Trendline Interactive, an email consulting firm based in Austin, Texas, [acquired InboxMarketer, a Canadian email agency](#). Terms were not disclosed. The combined companies now have a total of 140 email staffers.

Ansira acquires Brightwave: Marketing technology and services firm Ansira Partners Inc. [acquired BrightWave](#), a US email and eCRM company.

Yahoo fined \$35 million by SEC for failing to disclose data breach: Yahoo agreed to [pay \\$35 million to settle charges that it misled investors](#) by waiting nearly two years to disclose that hackers stole data, including email addresses, telephone numbers, birth dates, hashed passwords, and security questions and answers relating to 500 million users.

Upland Software acquires PostUp for \$35 million: Upland Software, Inc., a provider of cloud-based enterprise work management software, [acquired PostUp](#), a specialist in email and audience development for publishing and media brands, for \$35 million in cash.

IBM spins off marketing platform: IBM [sold its marketing platform and commerce software](#) to Centerbridge Partners to form a standalone marketing and advertising technology company that debuted under the new brand name Acoustic in Summer 2019.

MAY

May 2019

Upland Software acquires Kapost for \$50 million: Upland Software, Inc., added another firm to its roster: Kapost, a content platform provider, for \$50 million.

Validity acquires Return Path: Validity acquired [email deliverability firm Return Path](#). Terms were not disclosed. The Return Path deliverability platform was added to Validity's existing suite of tools, including DemandTools and Trust Assessments.

JUN

June 2019

Salesforce buys Tableau: Salesforce [acquired big data firm Tableau Software Inc](#) for \$15.3 billion, marking the biggest acquisition in the company's history.

ACTITO buys customer data software firm SmartFocus: Belgium-based marketing automation firm ACTITO [acquired UK customer intelligence software provider SmartFocus](#), previously owned by Emailvision. The purchase price was not disclosed.

Cordial pulls in \$15 million in Series B funding: Cordial, an email platform provider, [raised \\$15 million in Series B funding](#). The round was led by PeakSpan, with participation by existing investors Upfront Ventures and High Alpha.

Email provider Stensul raises \$7 million in Series A funding: Stensul, a firm that specializes in streamlining the email marketing process, [pulled in \\$7 million](#) in a Series A funding round.

Email security firm Tessian raises \$13 million: Tessian, a UK-based email security firm, [raised \\$13 million](#) in a Series A funding round led by Balderton Capital and Accel.

Validity acquires BriteVerify: Validity, a firm that helps brands maintain data quality, [acquired BriteVerify](#), an email verification network that has served clients such as Oracle, MailChimp, Return Path, Marketo, and Salesforce. Terms were not disclosed.

JUL

July 2019

Amperity lands \$50 million in Series C funding: Amperity, a provider of an AI-driven customer data management platform that can fuel email and other types of campaigns, [snared \\$50 million in Series C funding](#). The round brings total funding to \$87 million for the firm.

SEP

September 2019

Ometria raises \$21 million in Series B funding, will expand to US: Customer marketing platform Ometria [raised \\$21 million in Series B funding](#) in the US, led by London-based Octopus Ventures.

OCT

October 2019

SparkPost buys eDataSource: SparkPost, provider of an email sending platform, acquired [email deliverability firm eDataSource](#). Terms were not disclosed.

Mailgun acquires Mailjet in international email deal: Mailgun, a US email delivery firm, [acquired Mailjet](#), Paris-based provider of an email solution. Terms were not disclosed.

Rising Media acquires Only Influencers, email discussion platform: Rising Media, Inc., a global events producer, [acquired Only Influencers](#), a subscription-only email marketing discussion platform, from founder William McCloskey. Terms were not disclosed. McCloskey also handed over the chairmanship of the Email Innovation Summit, an event he launched with Rising Media, to Jeanne Jennings of Email Optimization Shop.

DEC

December 2019

Acquia to acquire AgilOne, CDP provider: Acquia, which offers a digital experience platform, acquired [AgilOne](#), a provider of a customer data platform (CDP). The terms were not disclosed.

Iterable snares \$60 million in Series D funding: Iterable, the provider of a cross-channel marketing platform, [raised \\$60 million](#) in Series D funding, bringing its total financing to date to over \$140 million.

Unroll.me settles with FTC after falsely claiming it didn't collect and sell email data: The company and the Federal Trade Commission [reached a settlement](#) over misleading marketing after the company was found to have deceived its users over its handling of email data.



5

Data Privacy, Spam Laws, and Email Security

Data privacy and regulation topped the news again in 2019 in both the European Union and the United States. On one side of the Atlantic, the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) marked its first year with fines and findings about its effect on email marketing. On the other side, marketers spent 2019 preparing for the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA), which went into effect on January 1, 2020.

Settling in to a post-GDPR world

Remember all the overheated predictions that GDPR, the EU's new laws governing consent, data, privacy, and security, would be the end of email marketing as we knew it? GDPR went into effect in May 2018, so 2019 marked the first full year under the new regulation—and it's safe to say that we now have a good idea of the law's impact on the email marketing industry.

What did we learn?

Email is still alive and kicking. The majority of marketers say GDPR has even had a positive effect on their operations. But what about those who don't stick to the rules? We learned in 2019 that the authorities won't shy away from issuing fines that hurt.

EU fines brands for GDPR breaches

GDPR not only comes with stricter regulations around consent and the use of personal data, but also with higher-than-ever penalties for businesses that don't play by the rules. Non-compliance with GDPR can lead to fines of up to €20 million or 4% of a brand's total global annual turnover, whichever is higher.

While authorities have not yet taken advantage of the maximum fine amount allowed, big-name brands were slapped with fines that show marketers must take GDPR seriously:

British Airways fined £183 million for data breach

The UK's Information Commissioner's Office [fined British Airways the US equivalent of \\$230 million](#) for a 2018 data breach that exposed logins, payment cards, names, addresses, and other information for half a million customers. It was the first fine the ICO levied under GDPR and a record high among fines levied by other EU organizations.

Google fined \$57 million over GDPR violations

The French National Data Protection Commission [fined Google \\$57 million](#) in January 2019 for failing to get "unambiguous consent" before using people's data to personalize ads, as required under GDPR. Google was accused of using a pre-checked box to gain consent and failing to explain exactly how it uses personal data across various services for web targeting.

Marriott fined nearly £100 million over GDPR breach

In July 2019 the UK's Information Commissioner's Office announced its intention to [fine Marriott International nearly £100 million](#) for infringements of the GDPR. The proposed fine relates to an incident which exposed personal data from approximately 339 million guests.

UK marketers generally positive about GDPR effect

In fall 2018, Litmus research found that a [clear majority of email marketers have not suffered the major list damage](#) the doomsayers predicted, with 60% of brands who comply in full or in part with GDPR saying they saw either no effect on list size or a loss of less than 10%.

Unengaged and inactive subscribers have little to no value to your email program, and GDPR has forced many brands to remove these email addresses from their mailing lists. While a cut in list size can feel like a loss to many email marketers, it can actually improve the performance of a brand's email program.

The UK DMA's [2019 Marketer Email Tracker Report](#) found 56% of UK email marketers were positive about the impact GDPR is having on their operations. Among the responses, 41% said opt-out rates decreased, while 55% said spam complaints were down, and 55% said email deliverability had improved.

The United States prepares to tighten privacy regulations

It's not just the European Union that's doing more to protect consumer privacy. We see a stronger focus on privacy and data security in the US, too. While CAN-SPAM (Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing) has not gotten its much-needed update, individual states have stepped up to create their own privacy law. California's wide-ranging set of regulations is considered a precursor to a national standard.

FTC declines to alter CAN-SPAM

The US Federal Trade Commission concluded its two-year review of CAN-SPAM, the set of rules that regulate commercial email, by [voting in February to retain the rules and make no changes](#).

While marketers didn't expect the FTC to scrap the 16-year-old law, some had hoped the commission would add some teeth to the law.

Here at Litmus, we believe that CAN-SPAM's low bar for consumer protection, especially its failure to mandate opt-in for commercial messages, is woefully out of step with subscribers' expectations and spam regulations in most other countries. This sets [US brands up for failure](#) in global commerce. An update to CAN-SPAM could have improved the standards for commercial emails nationwide. Instead, we're now seeing individual states step up to raise the bar for more consumer protection.

Marketers get ready for CCPA

Just after GDPR went into effect in 2018, the [California Legislature enacted the California Consumer Protection Act \(CCPA\)](#), which regulates data privacy and security and applies to all California residents, even those who don't live in the state. Because of that provision, out-of-state marketers with California residents in their databases have to comply with the law's provisions.

The law went into effect on January 1, 2020, but marketers spent much of 2019 learning about the law and its ramifications.



Action Items

- ☐ Read [the law](#) or [Litmus' guide to the law and steps you need to take to comply](#).
- ☐ If you still haven't taken steps to determine how the law affects your data collection, security and management policies, take these actions as soon as possible:
 - ☐ Reconsider whether you want to use third-party data.
 - ☐ Reevaluate the data fields on your forms and profiles.
 - ☐ Collect only data that you can use immediately.
 - ☐ Create a mechanism that can delete a consumer's information, when requested.
 - ☐ Don't sell information about your customers or users without their consent.

Data privacy law introduced in Congress

The House of Representatives' Energy and Commerce Committee [proposed a data privacy law](#) in December that its author claimed would be more restrictive than CCPA. The bill aims to limit the abilities of advertisers like Facebook and Google to collect and use personal data for ad targeting. The bill doesn't target email marketing specifically, but marketers could be subject to the same limits on data collection and use.

Judge allows Google scanning lawsuit to continue

In September, a California judge [declined to throw out a lawsuit](#) accusing Google of scanning Gmail messages to get information for targeting ad messages shown to Gmail users in their inboxes. The judge allowed the lawsuit to continue in California, Florida, and Maryland, but rejected claims filed in New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Washington.

Email authentication protocol ARC launched

[Authenticated Received Chain \(ARC\)](#) is a new email protocol designed to keep authentication from breaking as it travels from the original sender to the inbox. The Internet Engineering Task Force published the protocol in July. In October, Microsoft enabled ARC for all Office 365 mailboxes. Gmail, G Suite, Fastmail, and Proofpoint also support the protocol.



6

The Future of Email in 2020 and Beyond

New year, new decade, new visions for email! We didn't consult the crystal ball to tell email's fortune for the coming years. Instead, we put our heads together to develop a vision of what the next 10 years will bring for email in the marketing mix. Then, we asked some of the best and brightest people in the business for their views. *Spoiler alert:* The news is good!



What does the future hold?

Email's Role in the Overall Marketing Mix

Email will move to the core of a successful marketing organization

The decade of the 2010s didn't kill email, as so many people predicted it would. Far from it! As we move into the 2020s, we see that email is not just alive and kicking—it's driving results like no other channel does. With an [ROI of 42:1](#), email marketing is more effective than ever, outperforming other channels by a long shot.

"Every new channel wishes to be as successful as email, which is why so many have proclaimed themselves email-killers. RSS, mobile, Facebook, Slack—they all declared that email is dead.

But email marketing has only become more powerful and more relevant over the past two decades. The coming decade will be no different. Looking to free themselves from their dependence on paid Facebook and Google ads, smart brands will invest heavily in building out their email marketing relationships and capabilities."

Chad S. White

Head of Research, [Oracle CX Marketing Consulting](#) | Author, [Email Marketing Rules](#)



In the next decade: More brands will recognize email as the most reliable, most personal, and highest-performing channel in their marketing toolkits—and that means email will move from the sidelines to the core of a successful marketing mix.

Email has the power to inform other marketing channels—and drive overall marketing success

Email marketing is your most measurable channel. You can measure overall campaign performance—like open, click-through, and conversion rates—but an email address as a unique identifier also gives you a glimpse into each subscriber's behavior and preferences.

For each subscriber who interacts with your messages, you can learn what content resonates the most, how long they engage with your email, and whether or not your email leads to a conversion. You can learn about your subscribers on an individual level. No other channel provides that level of insight.

Plus, your subscribers have actively opted in to hearing from you; they're looking to learn about your brand, your product, and your promotions. They're the most closely aligned to your prospect audience and best able to show what they most want to hear about.

In the next decade: Email marketers already have access to invaluable data with the power to inform and optimize marketing activities across the organization. Coming up, they'll use that power to fuel overall marketing success.

A more integrated approach to marketing, with email at the core

To be successful in 2020 and beyond, email marketers can no longer afford to stay in their channel silos, because that's not how your customers experience your brand, either. While a strong email program will be the foundation of a successful marketing organization, the tight integration with other channels will set mediocre email marketing programs apart from the outstanding ones.

"Becoming more customer-centric means taking a more holistic approach to marketing. We have to focus on the customer journey because if we focus on each marketing channel in isolation, that's when we give the customer a disjointed journey. Email is now and will be in the foreseeable future the backbone to the customer journey until another channel comes along that supersedes email."

Kath Pay
Founder, [Holistic Email Marketing](#)



In the next decade: Successful marketers will be the ones who can use their knowledge, expertise, and technology to break down the last remaining silos in their organizations, thus freeing their data to create the broadest picture possible of their customers and the ways to communicate with them.



What does the future hold?

Email Strategy

Email strategy will become more personalized and targeted by necessity

The 2010s proved decisively that message relevance drives email marketing success, and personalization was the key to achieving relevance. We also understood that relevance is what customers want to receive, not just what companies want to send.

New tools developed over the last 10 years allow brands at all experience levels to send more relevant messages by personalizing them through targeted and triggered messaging based on interests, preferences, behavior, and profiles.

“We need to bring marketing back into email marketing, as marketers care not just about their results, but also about the consumer, and they want to enhance the customer experience, of which lifecycle campaigns and a robust strategic approach will give you the results.”

Kath Pay

Founder, [Holistic Email Marketing](#)

KP

In the next decade: Personalization is quickly being overtaken by hyper-personalization, not only in email messaging but in touch points far beyond the inbox. Brands that have resisted the personalization wave will find their reliance on one-size-fits-all email might shut them out of the inbox as customers grow more apathetic to their messages—and ISPs use that apathy to give preferential treatment to brands more in tune with their customers.



What does the future hold?

Email Design

It's the decade of animation and interactivity

From emoticons :-) to emoji 🤔 in less than 10 years!

Nothing else symbolizes how our communication habits have evolved from words to imagery. Email now mirrors that preference for visuals over text. Images in messages overcame early programming and rendering issues to become standard content features.

The evolution continues as consumer preferences switch from still images to animation and video. [91%](#) of consumers prefer interactive and visual content over traditional, text-based, or static media. We watch more video than ever, but email has been slow to catch up because in-message video doesn't deliver a reliably uniform experience for subscribers.

Instead, we've seen a steady rise of animation and interactivity in email. The majority of brands now regularly use [animated GIFs](#) to add movement to their campaigns.

The 2010s also saw the development of interactive technology, creating the possibility that email could be more than just a vehicle to deliver buyers to websites.

While becoming increasingly popular, interactivity in email [hasn't made it to the email mainstream yet](#). In the 2020s we expect that to change. As the new decade opens, technology like AMP for Email is close to making that vision come true.

"I think interactivity will be the next big thing in the email industry. The design of emails will depend on the new interactive features that email clients and browsers will allow us to create. An important aspect depends on email security, making interactivity and email security two factors that will rule the development of interaction design in emails moving forward."

Andrian Valeanu
Founder, [Designmodo](#)



In the next decade: Interactivity will overcome tech and email client limitations to deliver on its promise as a strong driver of subscriber engagement and action. The tipping point toward widespread acceptance of email interactivity is near, but concerns about email security, compatibility, and enough support from brands, email clients, and customers will determine how fast it moves from experimental stage to standard feature.

New technologies like AMP for Email continue to divide email marketers

It's not hard to start a fight among email people. Email interactivity, especially Google's AMP for Email, is one of those topics that marketers and developers can debate for hours. Now that more inbox providers and sending services are announcing support for the new technology, layered on top of HTML, a groundswell is beginning to develop. But it still faces an uncertain near-term future with questions about its accessibility and viability beyond a few test brands.

“AMP for Email may not be the best solution for enriching the inbox, but it's no longer a solution we can ignore. I'm excited—if a little tentative—to see how it changes the email marketing landscape and subscribers' expectations of what can be done in the inbox.”

Jason Rodriguez

Community & Product Evangelist | Host of the podcast [“Delivering.”](#) Litmus

JR

In the next decade: The next couple of years will be the proving ground for AMP for Email. Gmail's dominant share of the email client market paves the way for wider acceptance, but even if developers and inbox providers can resolve all the issues, the users themselves will have the final word.



What does the future hold?

Email Teams

Demand for emails—and the talent to support them—will increase

The creative and managerial skills that made email an essential marketing and revenue channel at the turn of the 20th century aren't the only ones that will move email into the core of the marketing mix for the next decade.

The one- or two-person team that could manage to build a weekly newsletter or daily promotion is no longer enough to handle the growing variety and technological, data, and reporting demands of a successful 21st century email program.

In [Litmus' 2019 State of Email Workflows report](#), we found smaller teams (1 to 3 full-time employees) were working with 1 to 5 emails at a time, while teams of 11 or more have 21 to 25 emails in varying states of production. The email channel continues to drive results, so brands are looking to send more and better emails—and they're willing to spend more. In 2019, [33% of brands were planning to increase their budget for email team personnel](#).

"Email is being taken more seriously than it has been in past years. The C-suite is beginning to understand that investing in profitable email programs makes them even more profitable, rather than just settling for the returns they are getting from the channel."

Organizations are realizing that the people they hire to drive the marketing automation tool (email marketing specialists or managers) aren't the same people they need to truly leverage the technology to increase ROI. A higher level person is needed, either a full-time employee or a consultant, who develops and oversees email optimization strategy on an ongoing basis."

Jeanne Jennings

Founder & Lead Strategist, [Email Optimization Shop](#)



In the next decade: Marketers will need to make room on the bench for more players. Besides creative geniuses, teams will need technical marketers who understand the weirdness of the email channels and

stay on top of new technological trends. Equally important will be strategists with the vision to look beyond day-to-day business needs to envision wider uses of email throughout the organization.

When email is part of a truly integrated program, email marketers must embrace other channels, too

It's not just channel specialists that will be in high demand. As marketing teams embrace a truly integrated mindset and brands begin to look at the email channel to drive cross-channel campaign success, there will also be an increased need for marketers that understand both the email channel itself and its interaction with other channels.

*“As email teams prove their worth as effective marketers within the organization, it helps show the team as thought leaders and strategists for groups **outside** of marketing.”*

Lauren Kremer

Marketing Operations Lead, [ProQuest](#)

LK

In the next decade: Having working knowledge in other disciplines will become more crucial than ever for people looking to take on leadership roles in email marketing. Prepare yourself and your team for future success by learning more about channels that are about to get more closely intertwined with email—social media, paid media, content marketing, just to name a few—to prepare for the decade of truly connected marketing programs.

*“Good email marketers understand the email channel—but the **best** marketers understand how email integrates with all marketing channels and can power cross-channel campaigns that span the entire marketing organization.”*

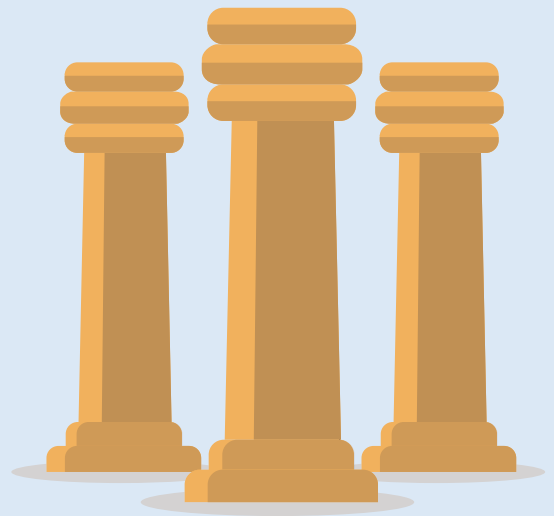
Bettina Specht

Senior Marketing Manager, Litmus

BS

The Litmus Methodology to Email Marketing Success

We believe there are three crucial pillars to email marketing success: Optimize your campaigns before the send (Pre), analyze results and use these insights to optimize future sends (Post), and—finally—break down silos and use the power of email to improve the effectiveness of other marketing activities (Perform).



You're never truly alone: the power and growth of the email marketing community

The earliest email marketers had to teach themselves the art and practice of email. In the 2010s, that practical need spurred the creation of vibrant groups like [Litmus' Community](#), the [Email Experience Council](#), or the [#emailgeeks Slack community](#). These and other email groups share a mission to promote best standards and practices for email, often bringing competitors to the same table to work out solutions for everything from back-end coding to C-suite strategy and management.

"Staying engaged not just with the new processes of technologies we use but also being active within the larger email community will be a big part of continuing to be an effective email marketer."

Email wasn't fine-tuned by just one person. Email marketing as effective communication wasn't led by just one person. Even if you're the only individual responsible for email at your company, there's a world of people that are always willing to share insights and tips to help shine a light on this truly impactful marketing channel."

Lauren Kremer

Marketing Operations Lead, [ProQuest](#)

LK



What does the future hold?

The Email Tech Stack

Greater access to data as the key to email marketing success

Although data has grown more crucial to marketing planning, development, and message deployment across channels, it often remains locked down in platforms that marketers don't have access to or with no easy ways of requesting it. In this decade we'll finally see things change.

"In MarTech selections the question "What will we do to store the data?" comes up more often. It is in part because of the popularity and hype around CDPs ([Customer Data Platforms](#)) and I love it. Brands need think about their data strategy. Maybe in 10 years the term CDP will be surpassed and we can go straight to "How can I (as a marketer) access the data that we need to do X?"

The days of walking to another department and waiting on them for a simple data query or selection, should be over. I call it [Data Accessibility by Design](#), and it goes in sync with the rise of the Citizen Data Scientist.

So how will the email marketing tech stack change? Direct access to data can increase the number and effectiveness of campaigns. Email software allows you to unlock more data, improve statistical models and offer cross-channel optimization."

Jordie van Rijn

Email Marketing Consultant & MarTech Watcher, [Email Vendor Selection](#)



In the next decade: Unlocking the data closet will give marketers the freedom to create better emails for their customers and to use email to power problem-solving and opportunities beyond their own departments.

ESP consolidation will give way to more evolutionary changes

The cloud-based marketing suite became the new model of service delivery for digital marketers who wanted to create an omnichannel program that would reach consumers wherever they were on the customer journey (also a concept that flowered in the previous decade). Some ESPs bought start-up firms that created niche technologies missing from the larger platforms. With other consolidations, data companies bought ESPs to bring email marketing in-house.

“Fifteen to 20 years ago, we saw data companies buying ESPs. The ESPs that didn’t get bought turned around and bought data companies. They built big, bulky Death Stars that ended up cross-selling other company services.

Now we’re seeing data companies divest their ESPs. One example is IBM, which bought and rebranded Silverpop, just divested it, and it’s now a stand-alone agency called Acoustic. But we’re also seeing smaller companies acquiring each other, like the acquisitions of Emma and Liveclicker under Campaign Monitor.”

John Caldwell

Founder, [Red Pill Email](#)

JC

In the next decade: Email will continue to be a fertile ground for technological innovation. Expect to see these initiatives springing from nimble start-ups run by far-sighted industry veterans who have both the experience to know what works for email and the vision to put it into practice to tackle growing needs for accessibility, data management, and security. Also, look for acquisitions to bring complementary tech firms together instead of plugging tech holes in a suite of diverse tools.

The best tools will be the ones that embrace the power of seamless integrations

Think about all the different tools you use today to get an email out the door, from copywriting and designing to testing, sending, and analyzing your campaigns. Will the next decade bring out the one magic tool that can cover the entire email workflow?

We don't think it will. Email teams, their requirements, and their workflows are too unique to make a one-size-fits-all solution likely. Instead, we'll see email tools embrace the power of flexibility. Smart technology providers will accept that they can't do it all and instead focus on seamless integrations with the marketing tools their customers already use—for flexible, customizable solutions that fit each team and their unique workflow.

“Best-of-breed will be important, but best-integrated will be key. Brands can't provide a unified customer experience if their systems aren't all working off a single view of the customer across their entire digital marketing and CRM platform.”

Chad S. White

Head of Research, [Oracle CX Marketing Consulting](#) | Author, [Email Marketing Rules](#)



In the next decade: Whether it's an ESP, a campaign management tool, or a platform for email testing and analytics, the amount and quality of integrations a tool offers will become a crucial factor for marketers who build out their email marketing tech stack. Seamless integrations enable a smooth flow of data and power efficient workflows—and that's the secret for email marketing success in 2020 and beyond.

Litmus Works Where You Do

No matter which tools your team uses, we want to make sure that you can utilize Litmus to improve your campaigns. That's why Litmus is designed to work with any email tool, and to fit into your unique workflow.





What does the future hold?

Email Workflows

Teams must master complex email workflows in order stay competitive

Your workflow is where people, tools, and strategy come together. So let's recap some key predictions: In the coming decade we'll see more people involved in email production, expect a demand for a higher volume of more targeted campaigns, and continue to see brands use a diverse set of tools to get their work done. What does that mean for your workflow? It's getting more complex.

“Workflows will only grow more complex. Brands that don’t find a way to manage that growing complexity will suffer from overloaded workflows—and risk cuts in productivity and campaign quality.”

Whitney Rudeseal Peet

Digital Marketing Specialist, Litmus



So, how do you get ahead of an overloaded email workflow? Take a close look at every step of your current workflow and see where your team spends the most time. Is it coding and development that's taking the longest? Does your team waste too much time collecting reviews and approvals?

In the next decade: Don't let obsolete workflows turn into painful bottlenecks. Tackle them today to accommodate all the changes your email program needs to stay productive.

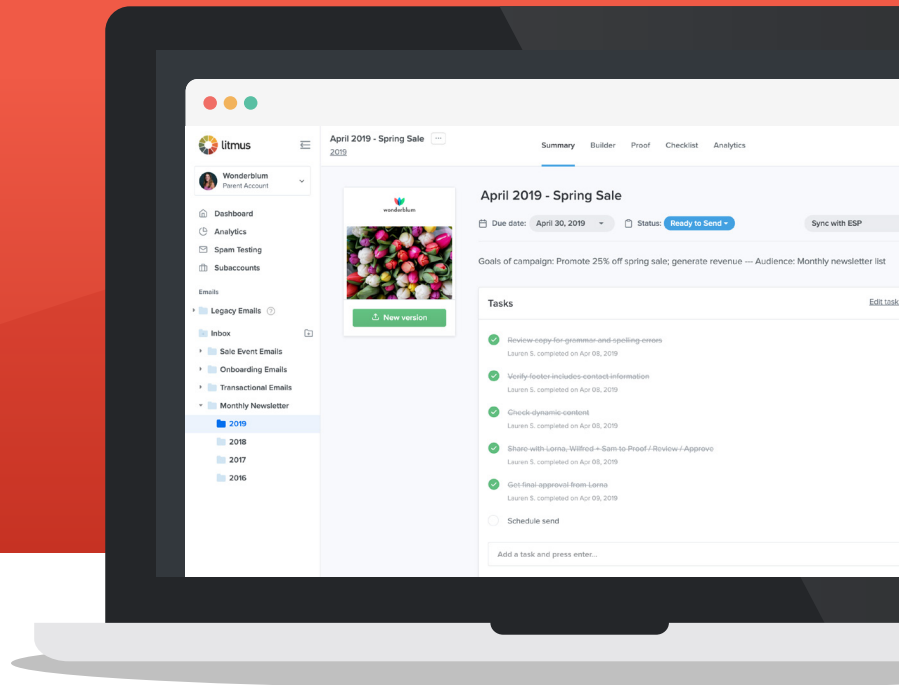
Automation as the key to streamlining workflows

Too often, teams simply accept mundane, repetitive tasks that slow down their team and leave room for errors. They inline CSS by hand. They countlessly copy and paste email code from their email coding tool to their ESP. They test their emails manually. They patiently collect feedback from internal stakeholders across a range of communication tools even though centralizing this process would save time and energy.

If you're looking to set up a workflow that's capable of handling the rising demand for email in 2020 and beyond, you can no longer afford one that's not optimized every step along the way. Brands that do email right find ways to replace manual work wherever possible—and that boosts productivity, leaves less room for errors, and saves time and money.

Streamline every step of your email workflow with Litmus

Litmus makes it easy to build, test, approve, and analyze every email for the best results.



Campaign Development

Simplify organization and processes to accelerate email production, improve quality, and control access. Start new campaigns with a single click and set them up for success in a seamless, unified view; efficiently create, edit, and navigate code in Litmus Builder; and more.

Pre-send Testing

Create the best possible chance to drive results by testing every email with Litmus. Identify and fix critical elements that could hurt performance with Litmus Checklist, reach the inbox with Litmus Spam Testing, and ensure a great subscriber experience with Litmus Email Previews.

Reviews & Collaboration

Reduce confusion and speed up approvals—and production time—by enabling stakeholders to share feedback and approve campaigns in one place. Plus, easily share projects directly from Litmus and get even more visibility with notifications in Slack.

Technology & Integrations

Eliminate manual steps with integrations that let you access Litmus Email Previews directly inside hundreds of popular ESPs. Plus, seamlessly transfer code from Litmus to your ESP with a single click using Litmus ESP Syncing.

Insights & Analytics

Understand subscriber behavior to improve future campaigns in email and across channels. Fine-tune testing efforts and identify your most successful campaigns to inform future segmentation, design, and content decisions.

Wrapping Up

And now we're back in 2020...

Wasn't that a great trip into the future?
Let's not kid ourselves, though.

Email has some major challenges ahead of it in the quest to remain a relevant and vital channel for senders and recipients alike. The advice from our experts and the content in the 2020 State of Email Report will help you tackle those challenges head-on with knowledge and insight.



When the going gets tough, count on Litmus to keep you informed so you can anticipate and manage the big and small changes that come to email every day. If it affects email marketing and design, we'll be on top of it.

Stay on top of the ever-evolving email industry with these resources:

[The Litmus Newsletter](#): Get the best email marketing and design tips, stats, resources, and events straight to your inbox when you sign up for Litmus News.

[The Litmus Blog](#): Learn about industry trends, see which brands are driving email innovation, and get tips, tricks, and hands-on guides on how to bring your email program to the next level.

[The Litmus Community](#): Got a nagging design problem, an ESP inquiry, or an email question and you don't know whom to ask? Join the Community and start a conversation—or help someone solve a problem.

[Webinars and Events](#): Learn at your desk, or join us live! Check the calendar to browse our lineup of webinars and in-person events and learn from some of the smartest people in the business.



New laws. Dark Mode. AMP for Email. The email world isn't the same today as it was a year ago. Download [@litmusapp](#)'s 2020 State of Email Report to keep up with the ever-changing email industry.