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MATERIAL SPECIFICATION - RECOMMENDATION

There are a lot of e-mail clients on the market and all interpret e-mail in different ways. To build an e-mail sendout isn't the same as building a web site. Unfortunately, all e-mail clients cannot manage every kind of design and all functionality as a web page. That is why it is so important to check that the material is adapted for e-mail. A clear and simple code with tables works best.

WIDTH

Max 700 px. 600 px Recommended

CSS

CSS and DIV tags isn't always working. Try to avoid them and use tables instead. If you have to use CSS you must place your CSS code within the <body> tag and preferably use inline CSS. For example: Text.

TABLE

Use tables instead of DIV tags. To get the best results you have to divide the code in separate tables, instead of putting it all in one, huge table. It also helps to **be very explicit**.

Write the **width** and **height** of all tables, cells and pictures. If you want margins and spaces working in all e-mail clients you have to use **transparent gif pictures** of 1x1 pixels. Place the gif picture in the table cell and drag it out to the number of pixels you want for the margin. Try to keep the number of COLSPAN down in tables and avoid ROWSPAN completely. Also remember that the table attribute CELLSPACING isn't working everywhere.

PICTURES

Make the letter easy to understand without pictures. Avoid placing important text in

pictures since they might disappear if the picture is blocked. To use more pictures than text in a newsletter should be avoided, since that might be interpreted as spam. Make sure that the pictures have ALT-text so those who cannot see the pictures can get information about what they contain. Make the ALT-text as short as possible. Unfortunately the ALT attribute doesn't work in all e-mail clients, but for those where it works its worth the effort.

Background pictures and **colour fading** isn't working in a lot of e-mail clients, avoid them. The same goes for **Flash**, which seldom works. **GIF animations** works in some clients but others just show the first picture in the animation. We recommend that you put in links in the e-mail to web pages where you can place such content.

Unwanted margins or small spaces under pictures can surface in some e-mail clients. You solve it by always inserting the inline CSS code: style="display:block;" in the picture tag.



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LINKS

A well-expressed link with a clear request or offer will get more clicks than one with just a “click here”. The link should lead to the offer or to more information about the contents in the mail. Let the reader understand right away which parts of the mail that are clickable and give them lots of opportunities to act on the mail. A lot of links will generate more clicks.

Always use **target=”_blank”** in links, that will make them open in a new window.

MISC

Clearly state that you are the sender. The logotype can preferably be placed at the top of your mail, since the reader will see it right away. Don’t forget to include clear and visible contact information. Also check that the headline in the mail subject sums up the contents and that the introduction inspires to go on reading the mail. JavaScript and forms very seldom works. We recommend that you insert links in the mail to web pages where you place such content.

You don’t have to put a link to the web version in your mail. We will a text and some links at the top and bottom of the mail, like web version, tip a colleague and un-registration.

SPAM

Avoid the following in the subject line:

- Capital letters, ? (question mark), and !!!! (repeated exclamation marks)
- Words that might be seen as spam, for example: Free, Sale, Campaign, Price.
- A long subject line. Keep it under 45 chars, including spaces.
- Repeated text. The subject line shouldn’t be repeated in the mail content.

Avoid the following in the content:

- Large typeface sizes
- More pictures than text and too large pictures
- Advance HTML code, since a lot of e-mail clients will react on that.

Don’t use CSS, use clean code with tables instead.

BEFORE DELIVERY

Clean up the code and remove the unnecessary code parts inserted by WYSIWYG software like Dreamweaver and FrontPage. Test your HTML mail in several e-mail clients and check of it works and looks like you intended.