



# 5 Dynamic Content Mistakes that Cost You Sales (and How to Avoid Them)



# The Importance of Integrating Dynamic Content into Your Email Marketing Strategy

Research shows that marketers can see a 760% increase in revenue from segmented campaigns ([Campaign Monitor](#)), and segmented email campaigns get 14.31% more opens and 100.95% more clicks ([MailChimp](#)) than non-segmented campaigns. According to the DMA, segmented and targeted email messages generate 58% of all revenue. In fact, the DMA reported that email list segmentation and personalization were the most effective email strategies of 2017. That means dynamic content works and should be part of your email marketing strategy.

The trick to make dynamic content work for you is to avoid making common mistakes that destroy even the best email marketing plans. This ebook provides tips to help you recognize and avoid five of the most common mistakes, so your dynamic content drives the best results possible.

Keep in mind, mistakes can happen at any time during your email development and creation process. From the initial

strategy conversations to the design, testing, and proofreading processes, there are many chances to make mistakes.

The problem is when mistakes are made, messages go out to recipients with errors, and sometimes, those errors can offend recipients and tarnish your brand. Mistakes could jeopardize future sales from a recipient, and worse, they could motivate recipients to complain about your brand both offline and via social media.

Bottom-line, dynamic content works to improve your email marketing results. It can help you generate more sales and maximize ROI. However, if it's not done correctly – if you're making mistakes – the results could lead to irreparable harm to customer relationships and your brand.

Keep reading to learn what the most common dynamic content mistakes for email marketers are and tips to avoid them so you can benefit from the opportunities dynamic content offers.

## MISTAKE #1:

# You Don't Know the Difference between Personalization and Dynamic Content

The first thing you need to understand before you can improve your email marketing results and increase profits from your email marketing investments is the difference between dynamic content and personalization. There's been so much buzz about personalization in recent years that the terminology can get confusing.

With research reports touting stats like, "Emails with personalized message content receive a 5% lift in open rates," ([Statista](#)) and "Marketers see an average increase of 20% in sales when they use personalized experiences," ([Monetate](#)), it's not surprising that everyone wants to jump on the personalization bandwagon.

The problem is there's a lot more to effectively using personalization than simply adding a person's name to the email subject line, and dynamic content takes things to a completely different level of segmentation and targeting. If you don't understand the difference, you could end up with disappointing results from your email marketing investments.

## What is Personalization?

Personalization is exactly what the name implies. The email message is personalized to the recipient using some type of merge field within the email marketing platform. Each person on your list who receives your message will see data pulled from their contact record where the merge field appears.

For example, you could personalize the greeting of your message to include each person's name. If you sent a message to me, my greeting would say, "Dear Justin." Every contact on your list

Dynamic content is smart content that lets you speak directly with individual buyer personas at specific points in the consumer buying cycle and marketing funnel in an efficient, automated way.

would see their name in the greeting because the name is pulled from their contact record in your email marketing tool.

## What is Dynamic Content?

Dynamic content takes the concepts of personalization, segmentation, and targeting, and puts them together into an incredibly effective way to boost email marketing results. In simplest terms, dynamic content is content within your email messages that changes based on who receives it. Rather than creating multiple messages to send to multiple segments of your audience, you create a single message and use dynamic content tags (based on the criteria you choose) to automatically change specific elements depending on who receives it.

For example, you could create a dynamic content campaign that shows different images, offers, or messaging to women than men or to people who have visited your website and those who haven't. You could configure dynamic content based on demographics and behavioral information, which can lead to big results. Why? Because people are far more likely to follow your call to action if the content in your messages is highly relevant and speaks directly to them.

## How to Avoid Mistake #1

Educate yourself, look at examples, and get a clear understanding of how simple personalization differs from comprehensive dynamic content. Research the email marketing tools you use and determine if they actually enable you to use dynamic content or if you're restricted to personalization. If you truly want to increase your email marketing results, you have to invest in a tool and the resources you need to do it effectively.

## MISTAKE #2:

# You Don't Target Effectively

Effective targeting is critical to maximizing your email marketing results using dynamic content. However, if you're mistakenly thinking of dynamic content as simple personalization, you're missing out on huge opportunities to improve your ROI.

If your email marketing platform supports the use of advanced targeting and dynamic content, then you can segment your list based on personal information, company information, behaviors, and more. You should be collecting data and using that data to target your audience and send highly-relevant email messages to them using dynamic content.

## How to Avoid Mistake #2

To avoid mistake #2, you need to understand how your email marketing tool allows you to gather data and use it as dynamic content. Once you understand how much flexibility you have in terms of creating custom segments of your audience and delivering dynamic content to them based on the criteria you select, you can set up tracking mechanisms to start the process.

For example, if you own a pet store, you can track customers' previous purchases and send one message to all customers. Using dynamic content, you can change the image or offer based on what type of pet each customer purchased products for in the past.

To help you think about how you can use dynamic content creatively in your email messages, here is a list of elements that could change the offer, images, messaging, or other parts of your messages based on who the recipient is:



## Personal Demographic Information

- City
- State
- Zip code
- Country
- Gender
- Income
- Marital status
- Parental status
- Age
- Education level
- Employment status

## Company Demographic Information

- Industry
- Company size
- Job title
- Business type (B2B, B2C, nonprofit, etc.)
- Annual revenue

You can get very detailed and create long lists of criteria to track, but you need to make sure your email marketing tool has the capacity to store and track the data for you and has the tools you need to use that data in your email marketing campaigns.

The important thing to understand is that you can use dynamic content to create a single email message, apply specific tags based on the criteria you choose, and display different elements to different recipients that are more likely to appeal to them and boost conversions. Rather than creating multiple messages, you create one. It's faster and easier, and if you're targeting effectively, it works extremely well.

## Behavioral Information

- Emails they've opened
- Links they've clicked
- Pages they've visited on your website
- Products or services they've purchased
- Last purchase date
- Most recent visit
- Lead source
- Free trial status
- Demo status
- Salesperson interactions
- Stage of sales pipeline
- Stage of marketing funnel

## Psychographic Information

- Hobbies
- Travel preferences
- Magazines they read
- Television shows they watch
- Social media sites they use
- Websites they like
- Blogs they read
- Sports they like
- Sports they play
- Music they like

## MISTAKE #3:

# You Don't Cleanse Your List

Are you 100% confident in all of the data in your email marketing list that you can use in dynamic content campaigns? If your list isn't updated and accurate, and you use personalization or advanced dynamic content in your email marketing campaigns, then it's highly likely that someone will get a message with inaccurate or irrelevant information.

Depending on which information in your sent message was inaccurate or irrelevant, the recipient might just ignore the message or click the delete button without thinking much of it. Perhaps they live in Florida and received a message in July with a picture of people in the snow with winter coats. This type of error (if only done once) will probably go unnoticed or will be forgiven by most recipients. However, some recipients will notice and won't like it. They might unsubscribe or tell people they know about the error. But in the grand scheme of things, it's not a massive error that could destroy your entire business.

On the other hand, some dynamic content errors can be offensive. Some mistakes can make recipients so angry that they boycott your business and spread the word across social media that other people should boycott, too. A mistake can go viral quickly, so you need to be very careful.

## How to Avoid Mistake #3

To avoid mistake #3, you need to work from an up-to-date and accurate list. Unfortunately, there is no way to guarantee 100% accuracy, but you do need to take steps to cleanse your list on a regular basis.

It's a good idea to send a survey to your subscribers every few months asking them to update their preferences. Include questions about your most important targeting criteria for your dynamic content campaigns to ensure you have the best data to work with at all times.

You also need to make sure you have a good review and QA process in place to spot list-based errors that could cause problems with recipients. Go to Mistake #4 to learn more about developing an effective review and QA process.

## MISTAKE #4:

# You Don't Have an Effective Review and QA Process

The last line of defense against potentially-damaging dynamic content mistakes is your review and QA process. Unfortunately, most brands and agencies don't have reliable review and QA procedures in place, nor do they use a tool that could help them do it effectively. That's a big mistake.

Sending review request emails back and forth causes confusion. No one knows if they're reviewing the right version, edits are missed, and double-work becomes a daily occurrence. Even worse, you spend an inordinate amount of time following up with stakeholders to get their feedback and approvals. It's a recipe for trouble, and when you add dynamic content into the mix, it's a recipe for disaster!

## How to Avoid Mistake #4

You can avoid mistake #4 by investing in a review and QA tool like ProofJump that actually works. The risk of error is simply too high when you use advanced dynamic content in your email marketing. You have to use a tool that ensures you're sending out accurate messages.

Many brands and agencies make the mistake of thinking they don't have to invest in a review and QA tool that specializes in dynamic content, but the reality is you'll save money by increasing productivity and reducing errors when you have the right tool.

You also need a documented review and QA process that includes a thorough, documented review of:

- All text and images display properly in desktop and mobile.
- All dynamic text and images are working correctly
- Links are working
- Text has been proofread
- Legal disclaimers have been included (if needed)
- Preview text has been optimized

These are the minimum elements that should be reviewed for your email marketing campaigns, and you need a process to ensure that all stakeholders are completing their reviews, all comments are easy to follow, everyone is reviewing the most recent version, and all dynamic content has been reviewed side-by-side for easy comparison. ProofJump does all of this and more.

You can learn more at [proofjump.com](https://proofjump.com) or take a look at The Simple Way to Solve Many of Your Dynamic Content Mistakes at the end of this ebook.

## MISTAKE #5:

# You Don't A/B Test to Optimize Results

If you're not split testing your email campaigns, you won't know if you can improve your results with simple changes. A/B testing is essential to a successful email marketing strategy, particularly when you're using dynamic content, so if you're not already doing it, start as soon as you can.

You can test your offers, subject lines, images, personalization, dynamic content, and more with A/B testing. However, you'll need to make sure your email marketing platform offers A/B split testing features or you won't be able to do it. (Hint: If you can't do A/B split tests, you might want to consider moving to a different email marketing tool. It's that important.)

The bad news when you do A/B testing is that you'll end up with even more versions of your messages. That means there will be more testing, proofreading, and reviews by stakeholders that you'll need to manage. Things can get confusing and frustrating, and the risk of sending messages with errors skyrockets.

## How to Avoid Mistake #5

Don't be afraid to do A/B split tests to optimize your email marketing results, particularly to test dynamic content. After all, you've spent the time to develop laser-targeted offers, it makes sense to test dynamic elements of those offers to ensure they're fully-optimized to drive the highest results.

While A/B testing can seem intimidating and overwhelming, if you have the right tools, you'll get the hang of it quickly. First, find an email marketing tool that allows you to run A/B tests. Second, invest in a review and QA tool like ProofJump that turns the process of reviews and approvals into an efficient one that significantly reduces the risk of sending messages with errors in them.

Only 39% of online retailers send personalized product recommendations via email ([Certona](#)), so the opportunity to get big results with dynamic content is waiting for you!

# The Simple Way to Solve Many of Your Dynamic Content Mistakes

Many of the biggest problems that stem from the five common dynamic content mistakes discussed in this ebook can be solved if you use an email QA and approval tool that was built for

dynamic content proofing. The only tool on the market that does it at a price even small businesses can afford is ProofJump.

## The Features You Need to Reduce the Risk of Making Mistakes

ProofJump was built by email marketers for email marketers. It's packed with the features you and all of your stakeholders need to efficiently and accurately proof even the most complex email marketing campaigns, including:

- Dynamic content, personalization and advanced segmentation proofing
- Transparent communications
- Complete version control
- Automatic archiving
- Seamless collaboration
- Automatic proof labeling
- Side-by-side reviews
- Annotated comments
- Real-time updates and notifications
- Compatible with all email marketing tools
- And so much more

## How Does the ProofJump Solution Work?

Rather than sending feedback request emails, consolidating comments (from email, voice mail, handwritten notes, and hallway conversations), and trying to make sense of multiple versions of the same message, you'll send one link to all stakeholders for review and approval.

When stakeholders click on the link, they'll see your email message with all versions clearly marked. They'll be able to test links and dynamic content, and they'll be able to add their comments or approval. They'll also see everyone else's comments and quickly learn why changes were requested. It's 100% transparent, easy to use, and proven to measurably improve the entire email review and approval process.

## Putting the Email Review and Approval Solution to Work for You

ProofJump solves the problems related to many of the dynamic content mistakes that are costing you money, making

stakeholders unhappy, raising your stress level, and wasting so much of your time.

To improve your email review and approval process and reduce dynamic content mistakes, sign up for a free 21-day trial of ProofJump at <http://proofjump.com/plans.php> or schedule a free demo at <http://proofjump.com/demo.php>.



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