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Sonnet Marketing HTML Email Blast Guidelines & Tutorial

Overview

In recent years, HTML E-mail has gained in popularity as a means to promote product announcements, sales flyers, and other marketing materials to customers. Compared to standard text-based e-mail, HTML E-mail provides the benefits of including images, color, stylized text, and hyperlinks. The downside, however, is that not all e-mail clients support HTML E-mail, e-mail must be viewed online (rather than offline) to properly view images, and some people prefer not receiving HTML E-mail. These are some factors you should consider before beginning any marketing campaign that includes the use of HTML E-mail.

For the purposes of these guidelines and tutorial, we assume you have a basic knowledge of HTML and e-mail protocols. You, or someone you know, should have these skills in order to successfully conduct an HTML E-mail product promotion. You should also be aware of the issues of e-mail spam (sending unsolicited junk e-mail to individuals and newsgroups). **Sonnet does not endorse the use of HTML E-Mail product promotions for unsolicited spamming.** You may however use the HTML E-mail code Sonnet has provided for individuals, mail lists, and groups that are knowingly signed up to receive such promotional information from you. **By using the HTML E-mail code provided by Sonnet, you agree to these terms and are thusly held responsible legally and morally for the use of the code in your promotions.** For further information and guidelines on spam, please visit the *Fight Spam on the Internet* website at http://spam.abuse.net/faq/

Prior to using the HTML E-mail code provided by Sonnet, you need to be aware of the following (these issues are explained in detail as you proceed through the tutorial):

> **HTML E-mail Preparation**
> Sonnet has already designed the HTML code and graphics for the HTML E-mail. All you need to do is copy the HTML code to a text-based editor or web design program (such as Adobe Golive or Macromedia Dreamweaver) and update the line of HTML code that would include your company name, corporate website URL, and product price.

> **Sending the E-mail**
> After you have successfully updated and proofed the HTML code, you will need to assess your HTML E-mail promotion. How many people will receive this promotional e-mail? Will this be a one time mailing or ongoing? Does your ISP allow mass e-mailing? Once you have determined these factors, you will need to select the proper e-mail client, application, or service to send your promotional e-mail.

HTML E-mail Preparation

HTML E-mail Tutorial

The following tutorial assumes you have a basic knowledge of HTML and e-mail protocols. The steps outlined in this tutorial explain how to retrieve, update, and send the HTML code necessary for a product promotion e-mail blast.

Step 1: Retrieve HTML Code

Log on to the Sonnet Partner's site and navigate to the HTML Email blasts area. Locate a product you wish to promote via HTML E-mail and click the "Highlight Code" button to select the code from the designated area (Figure 1). Copy (Apple-C on Mac OS and Control-C on Windows) the code into a text editor or web design program (such as SimpleText, NotePad, Adobe GoLive, or Macromedia Dreamweaver) as a new file.

Figure 1

Step 2: Edit and Proof HTML Code

Once you have the code pasted as a new file in a text editor or web design program, edit the line of text that refers to your company name, corporate website URL, and the price of the product (Figure 2) and save the file to your hard drive. **Note:** Since the images of the file reside as full absolute URLs (external links) to an internal server at Sonnet, they will not show up in the layout of the page until you view the page while connected to the Internet (Figure 3).
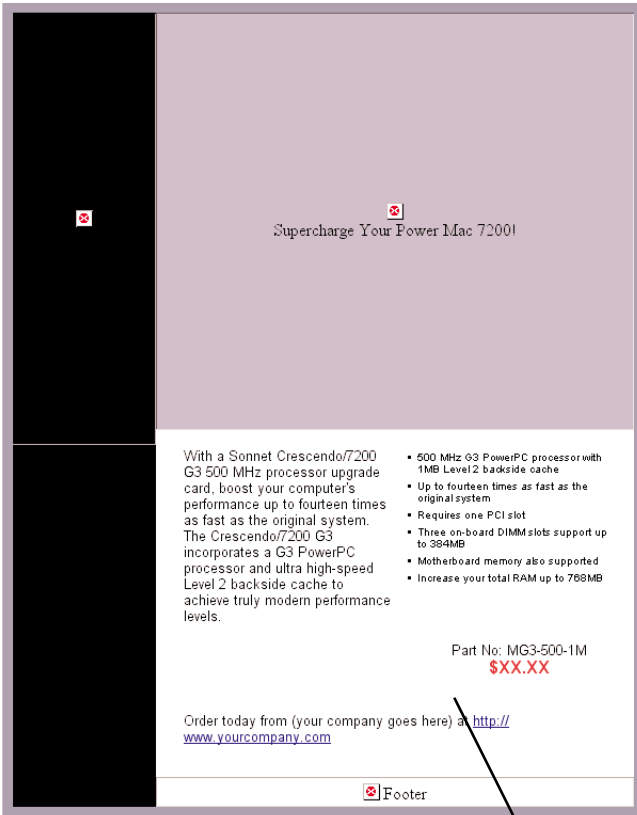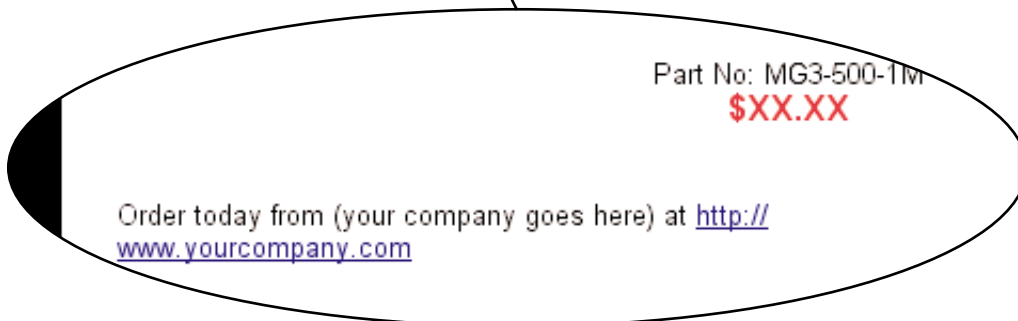
Figure 2

Figure 3

Sending the E-mail

Issues to Consider Before Clicking the Send Button

Before sending your HTML E-mail, you need to consider the following:

- Does your ISP allow batch E-mailing? Some ISPs limit the amount of e-mail you may send in a given time. Contact your ISP if you are uncertain of their policies.

- Will this be a one time mailing or a ongoing promotion? Is your corporate infrastructure set up to handle promotional inquiries and customer service related issues that may arise from your HTML E-mail promotion?

- Are you sending your HTML E-mail promotion to individuals who request such information? Sonnet does not endorse the use of the HTML code for unsolicited e-mail promotions. If your users are signed up to receive such promotions, do they have the option to subscribe and unsubscribe to such information?

- Have you selected an e-mail client, program, or service that properly sends HTML E-mail? Have you tested this program or service to make sure your HTML E-mail files are correctly displayed? Also remember, some e-mail clients do not handle HTML E-mails and render such files as raw code or random text.

Sending HTML E-mail varies from application to application. We recommend you consult your e-mail application user's documentation for further information on proper formatting and encoding. Below you will find examples on how to send HTML E-mail from the popular e-mail clients Microsoft Outlook Express and Netscape Composer.

Note: Remember to first test your e-mail message by sending it to yourself before sending it to other people. That way you'll have a chance to preview what an HTML E-mail message looks like and catch any mistakes.

Sending Mail with Outlook Express (Windows)

1. Choose File -> Select Stationary
2. Locate the updated HTML E-mail file you saved to your hard drive
3. Press "OK"
4. Enter a title in the Email subject line
5. Fill in the To field
6. Click "Send"

Sending Mail with Netscape 6.2 (Mac OS or Windows)

1. Open Netscape Composer and choose File -> Open
2. Locate the updated HTML E-mail file you saved to your hard drive
3. Select "All", then choose Edit -> Copy
4. Open Mail & Newsgroups
5. Choose File -> New Message
6. Choose Edit -> Paste -> to paste a copy of the file into the body of your Email document
7. Enter a title in the Email subject line
8. Click "Send". When prompted for a message format, choose "Send in Plant Text and HTML".