



# 2017

EMAIL MARKETING  
**TREND BOOK**

expertsender

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# 8 Email Marketing trends for 2017

Three of ExpertSender's email experts, Krzysztof Jarecki, Aleksander Heba and Adam Ambrożewicz took the time to talk about some of the **trends that might shape email marketing in 2017**, this Trendbook is a result of their conversations and we hope it'll give you some inspiration to experiment and test new approaches in your email marketing game.



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You'll find what we believe are 8 of the most interesting trends that could play a bigger role in your marketing strategy for 2017. Things are going to get contextual, your eyes are going to do a lot more talking, as are chatbots. Conversations are going to take place across various channels and there's going to be a whole lot more machines analyzing, scoring and automating your segmentation.

Well, without further ado, here are 8 Email Marketing trends that you should look out for next year.



# More context-driven communication

There's going to be a whole lot more emails that are going to be using context driven data, in **real-time**, at the **moment-of-open**. This content will be pulled from different sources and often it'll be based on real-time variables.

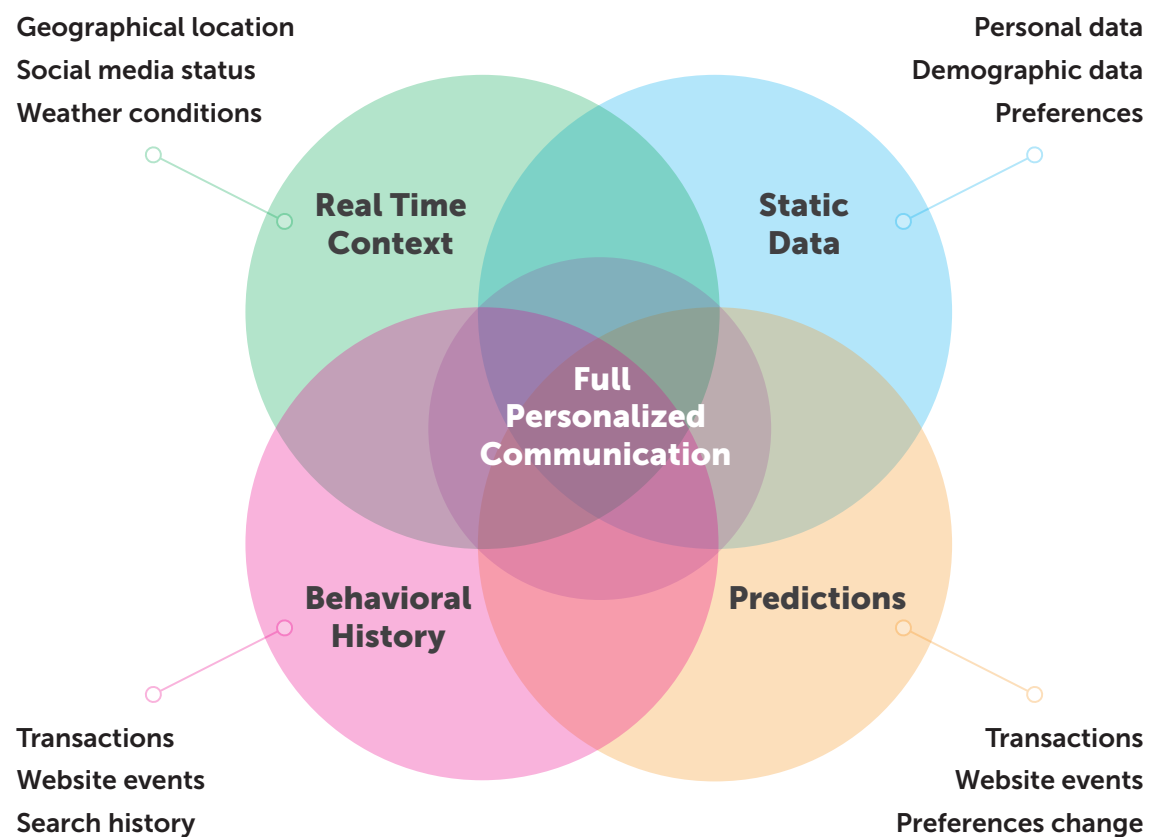
**This contextual data could be based on;**

- Device type
- Operating system
- Geographical location
- Weather conditions
- Political situation
- Sporting events
- Twitter *#hashtag* comments
- Stock availability

Let's say, for example, that you are a fan of the New York Knicks and we know that you'll read my newsletter during the halftime break. We'll be able to give you an up-to-date game summary while you check your email during the break.

“ Making use of a user's current environment or context is going to make emails that are often already very personalized, even more relevant and that can only be a good thing for marketers.

Moreover, a marketer will be able to achieve this in a couple of different ways; automatically from the customer's context after the email has been sent or by segmenting with real time data to acquire all users within a specific context. Is context the new king?



# Chatbots will be complementary to email in the e-commerce game

Chatbots are coming to e-commerce, well, actually they're already here.

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**charlie the chatbot:** *we sure are!*

**ed@expertsender:** *what can chatbots help us with?*

**charlie the chatbot:** *we can help you find and buy products, answer FAQ and execute various services. :)*

**ed@expertsender:** *will you take over email?*

**charlie the chatbot:** *I'm not sure I quite understand? Could you please give me more details?*

Don't worry, chatbots won't take over email. Chatbots will replace browsing on the e-commerce website in the customer's sale funnel with transactional emails remaining unchanged.

Currently, a customer's behavior on a website triggers automated emails and you can expect chatbots to do the same. They'll run automated workflows; send confirmation emails, abandoned shopping cart emails, allow the user to sign up to a newsletter and then send that newsletter with segmentation data that can also be pulled from chat sessions.

We expect more integration between the chatbot and email channels and they'll further complement the marketing cloud.



# Eye Tracking is back!

## Let your eyes do the talking

With every passing year, the global volume of sent emails grows, as does the average open rate, but average click through rates aren't keeping up the pace. Marketers are looking for new solutions to increase their click through rates and personalized and contextual real-time content are just a couple of those solutions helping them achieve that.

One of the most recent trends to emerge in the field of email marketing is that of eye tracking technology. Something that was mainly used to test websites is now being used more often in testing email creatives. Thanks to more affordable hardware, it's now possible to run fast and inexpensive email tests with eye tracking.

**Eye tracking** generates results based on testing focus groups with real end users. One of the advantages of eye tracking over predictive heat maps is that eye tracking helps to more accurately represent the real human emotions that were invoked by the tested content.

Eye tracking is very effective during the early stages of campaign testing, even before split tests are run. By using eye tracking test results, email creatives can be modified to try and improve **CTA conversions** and those modified creatives can then be tested with split tests.

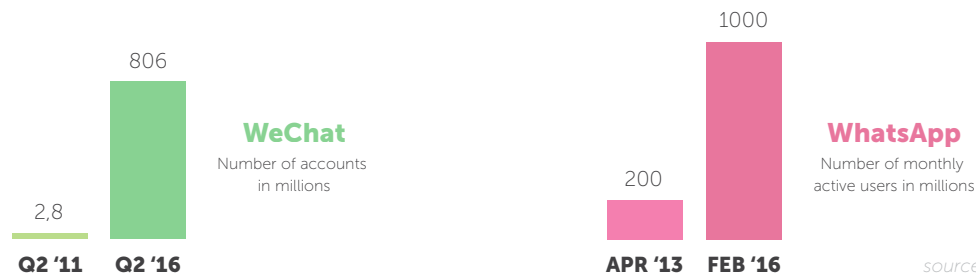


You can have the best personalization, content, and context, but if your creatives don't get the responses you're after, you may need to look at your design and this is where eye tracking can help.

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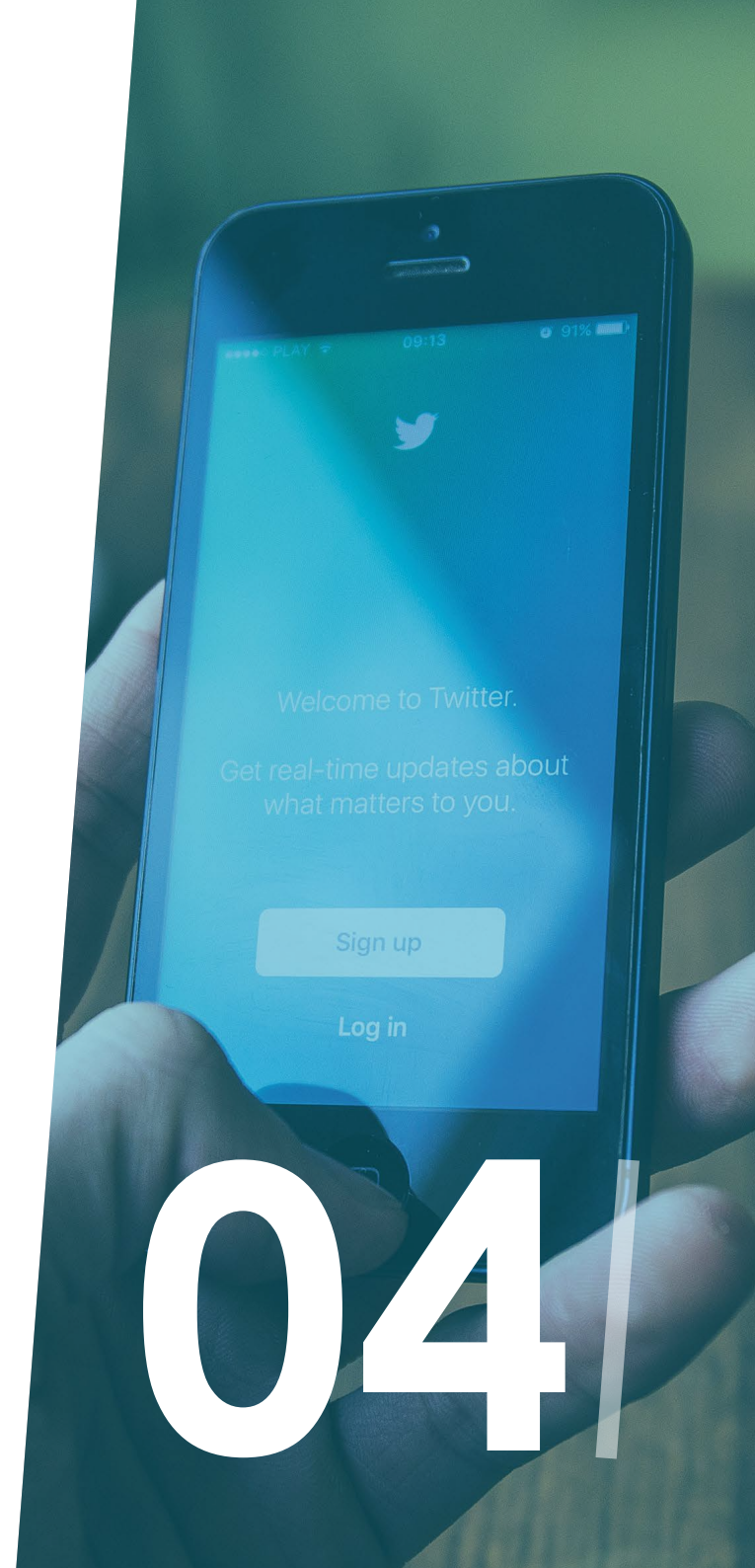
# More conversational e-commerce

Conversations between customers and brands via messengers have become more mainstream (particularly with **WeChat** in China which has over 800 million users as of Q2 2016), but also with other messengers such as Facebook Messenger, **WhatsApp** (1 billion active monthly users in February 2016, a 500% increase since April 2013), Telegram and Slack.



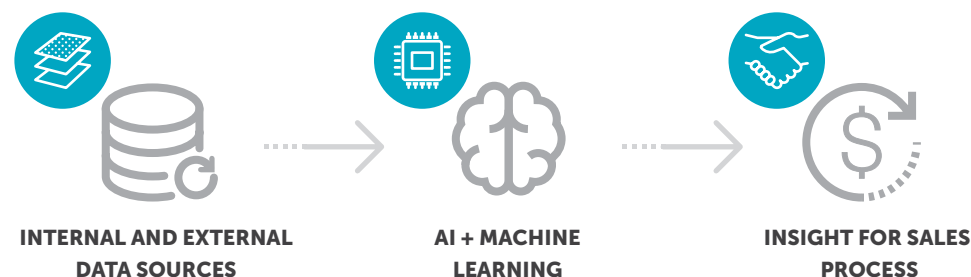
This conversational tone naturally lends itself to email, a channel that is already very personalized. By focusing on the tone of your email, you might be able to stand out in an already cluttered inbox. This is exactly what the **Barrack Obama Campaign emails did in 2012** with a simple "Barrack Obama: Hey" having been the best performing campaign according to the campaign's Email Director. With the wider adoption of conversations via messengers, customers might warm to seeing a similar tone with your emails.

Keep it real, be honest, don't take yourself too seriously, write like you talk, ask questions that encourage your customers to respond (this will not only assist in sales but also have a positive impact on your deliverability, thereby improving your reputation with various ISPs). A casual conversational tone will help your customers better relate to you and by extension to your brand, thus, creating a personal connection.



# Predictive lead scoring to be adopted by more marketers

Should your sales team be complaining about the quality of your leads then lead scoring could and probably should be used as part of the lead nurturing process in your email program. The model you employ will depend on your business, with more businesses choosing to have integrated models that are employing **Machine Learning** and **Artificial Intelligence** to generate scores automatically – predictive lead scoring using predictive intelligence.



This data, your lead's characteristics, their behavior and third party trends can then be used to automatically segment customers, decide which type of content they should receive, the frequency with which they should receive it and when. **79% of marketing leads never convert** into sales and a lack of lead nurturing is the most common cause of this poor performance. When organizations do use lead scoring, they experience a 77% lift in lead-generation ROI over organizations that do not use lead scoring (MarketingSherpa)

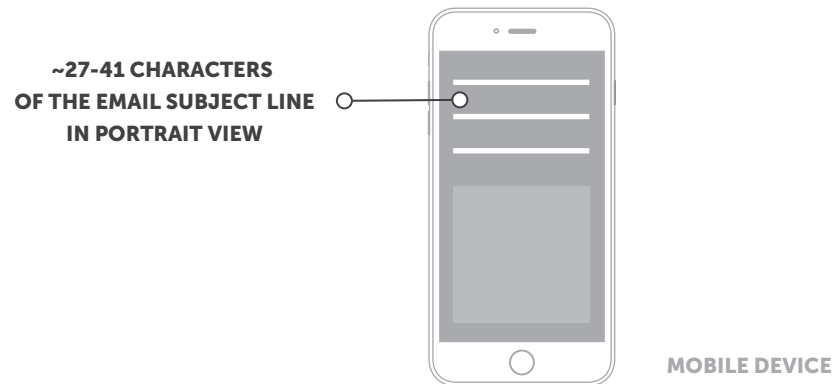
**Predictive intelligence** is the layer that'll be on the top of your **automated marketing**. It's going to help you get the right content to the right person at the right time.

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## Email content is going to get even shorter

There's a worldwide trend of less and less reading taking place, we're going to have to do more with less. Short, attention grabbing subject lines and email content that has a clear and compelling call to action will be even more important as it's going to be a greater challenge to stay relevant.

With mobiles now being the most common device for viewing emails, we have just 27-41 characters of your subject line that will be displayed on the most common mobile devices (Android and iPhone in portrait view). You'll need to look at which devices and clients your customers are using and how well your subject lines have performed and make those first few characters count.



According to Boomerang in 2016, the sweet spot for email length was between 50-125 words which generated response rates of above 50%. Short (very short) subject lines of between 3-4 words also proved to elicit the greatest response rate of 48%. Sorry Mr. Byron, we love your epic works, but the time is no longer nigh.

# Machines will match subscribers with content

Creating segments based on the **appropriate criteria** will provide for **better targeted content**, but as soon as we have a single customer view across various marketing channels, that's going to become a whole lot more time consuming. With such an overload of data we won't be able to humanly create such a myriad of segments - algorithms and machines will do this automatically for us.

“ **+70% of online consumers are frustrated by irrelevant communication**

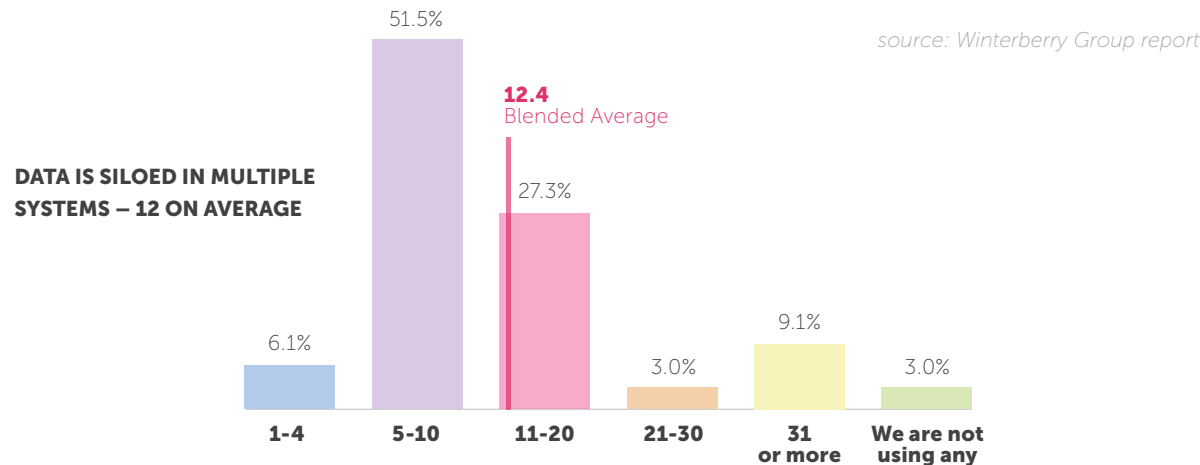
Automatically creating segments also naturally leads to content being matched with them automatically and with all the content being produced there'll be a whole lot more content matching happening (72% of B2C marketers are producing more content than they did last year – Content Marketing Institute 2014).



**Algorithms making use of automated data feeds from different channels, creating a single customer view in your CRM will become the norm.**

# Cross-channel data will be leveraged even further

In 2016, 57.6% of marketers said that **cross-channel measurement** and **attribution** would become their top priority (IAB). Search, social and display are channels that allow us to collect more data about our customers and we can use them to help grow our email lists. Additional data from other channels will only further increase the effectiveness of email as we'll be able to even better segment and target our customers.



Channeled data silos are going to be less prevalent as we'll see behavioral, demographic, contextual and transactional data leveraged across campaigns to give us a single customer view. We'll then push emails with the right content at the right time to always-on devices.



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