



When Bad Data Happens To Good Email

Your email campaign is only as good
as the physician data that goes into it



The High Cost Of Bad Data

Bad physician data is pervasive. It can ruin an email campaign before it even gets started.

Most email address providers operate at a very basic level. They want to sell you a list—period—which is exactly the problem:

Their lists have an unacceptably high percentage of invalid addresses—paid for but undeliverable.

Their data is often hopelessly out of date, derived from offshore lists, and likely to have high bounces and get the whole campaign sent to spam.

They offer no independent verification of the addresses, nothing to show that you will actually reach the people you're paying to reach.

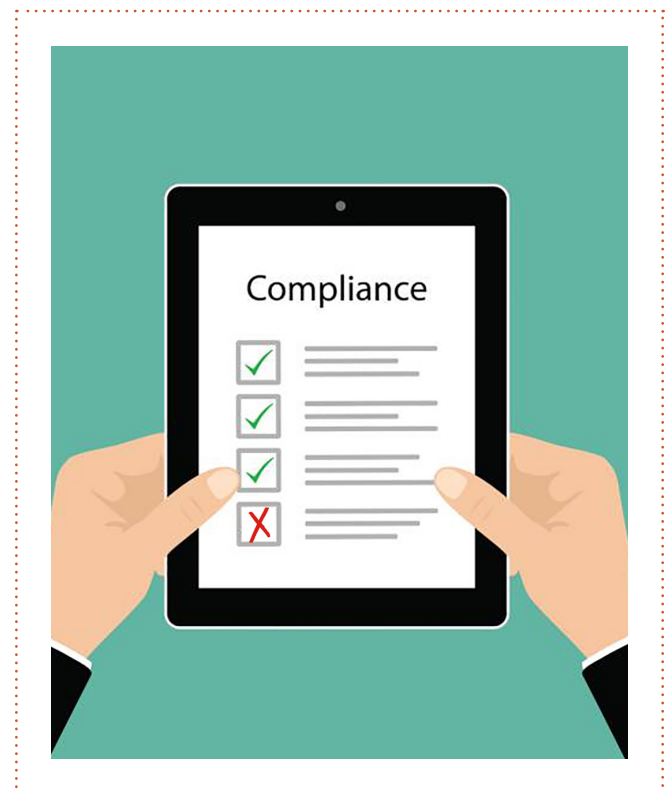
They have none of the executorial sophistication—targeting, deployment, testing, analytics—that makes the most of the data.

This is irresponsible—a waste of precious marketing dollars. The opportunity cost alone—prescriptions that won't get written by physicians who don't receive your email—can significantly affect revenue.

But there are other costs, and they're not just financial.

Irresponsible email risks alienating physicians from the very channel they most prefer for receiving professional communications.

Furthermore, in today's regulatory environment—where a single bad delivery can trigger an investigation—a suspect physician list from the wrong provider is a compliance problem waiting to happen.



A doctor in a white coat with a stethoscope, looking at a tablet. The image is overlaid with a dark blue semi-transparent filter.

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Email Does Well When Email Is Done Right

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There's a lot email can do for your marketing plan, whether it plays a starring or a supporting role. Email can be used to:

- **Target** messages to specific physicians based on segmenting by specialty, sub-specialty, procedure codes, geographies, and ever-finer slices of demography.
- **Reach** the physicians you want, at the address they prefer, on the device they're most likely to favor.
- **Engage** physicians efficiently, delivering a broad spectrum of content in a timely, cost-effective manner.
- **Condition** your physicians to associate your brand with relevant, high-value content, and to expect more of the same from you going forward.
- **Return results** that are measurable and testable, so you can take good learning—backed by solid metrics—into your next campaign.



Email can work on its own, or it can direct customers to your other assets—video, webinar, sales call, trade meeting—for whatever the next step in your sales cycle might be.

At its best, email becomes the connective tissue of your multichannel marketing efforts.

That said, making sure you are getting its best requires work.

Email Responsibly

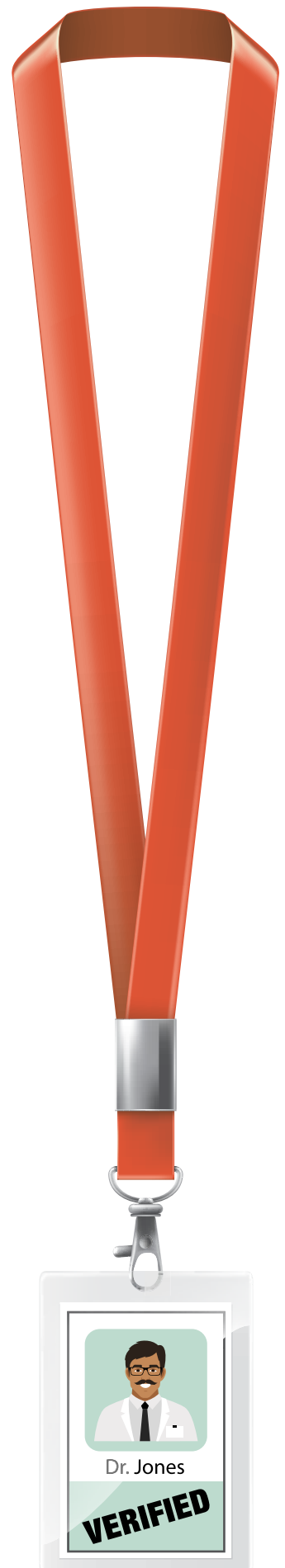
A good email address provider will work to keep you on the straight and narrow—to make sure your emails conform strictly to all privacy and compliance guidelines relevant to your industry.

They send only to physicians that are first-party sourced, and who have opted-in to receive email from you. This builds a high level of trust in your target physicians—trust you can work with.

Over time, the use of opted-in email builds a foundation that lets you deliver:

- High-value content, specifically relevant to your targets
- Strictly compliant messaging that won't compromise your use of the channel
- Content free of over-sending and duplicates

These things are not a given. There are plenty of irresponsible providers out there, selling physician lists that are at best wasteful, and at worst fraudulent.



The 7 Must-Haves of Responsible Email

Here is what you must insist on in any list you buy, and from any provider you consider:

- 1. Opted-in physicians** — Consent should be obtained from every physician to use their email address; this consent needs to conform with accompanying privacy or data use policies.
- 2. Authentication** — The addresses you pay for should actually be working and active. Each address should be first-party sourced and verified against the AMA Physician Masterfile to confirm that it belongs to an actual physician.
- 3. Certification** — Your email list should be audited and certified by a third-party, such as BPA Worldwide.
- 4. Regulatory compliance** — Every physician's privacy must be protected through strict compliance with all current industry agreements.
- 5. Preferred addresses** — You want to reach all physicians at the address they prefer for professional communications. In many cases this is their personal email address.
- 6. Deliverability** — There is a difference between just knowing an email address works and knowing if an email reaches its intended target. Beyond the delivery rate (the bar should be 99.5%, by the way), a provider of a quality list should ensure emails are delivered to the right target.
- 7. Database hygiene** — A truly robust physician database should be updated daily.

If the providers you talk to can't demonstrate proficiency in each of these capabilities, [contact us today](#).





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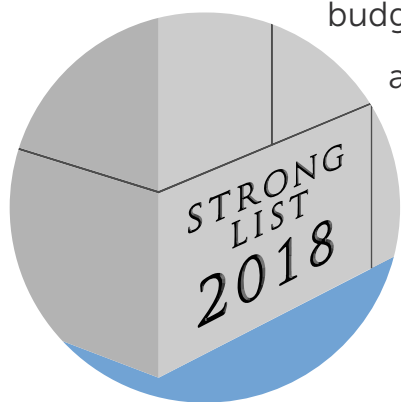
Good Email Starts With Good Data

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The quality of the database can mean the difference between a successful campaign and a complete waste of time and money.

Source Responsibly

You don't want physician data to be coming from just anywhere. Not when it's your budget in play. An email list is only as good as its sourcing. A list with a strong pedigree contains reliable, accurate addresses. It's made up entirely of vetted, commercially-viable physicians.



A high-quality list might cost more, but it's by far your best shot at high rates of delivery, opens, and click-throughs. A strong list lays the foundation for a strong campaign. A weak list does just the opposite.

Ask any email provider to explain their sourcing. Specifically, ask them whether they offer:

- **First-party sourcing**, especially from high quality sources such as medical publishers
- **Cross-check with the AMA Physician Masterfile**, which has contact information for virtually every MD in the country
- **Data hygiene**, preferably a complete update every day
- **Preferred addresses**, the ones physicians open most often, including personal email addresses
- **Certification**, from a recognized independent auditor such as BPA Worldwide

You want all of these things, but a cheap list won't give you all of them. You should know the provider's true capabilities before you sign on.

Target Responsibly

The more you know about the physicians you target, the more effective your campaign will be. Your email provider should be able to segment each physician according to:

- Specialties
- Affiliations
- Insurance Carriers
- Prescriber Practices
- ICD-10 Diagnosis Data
- CPT Procedure Data



You might also ask them about the time of day and day of week when your targets open email—different specialists have different tendencies. This is valuable information most email providers can't provide.

Reach Responsibly

If an email provider can't reach at least 90 percent of commercially viable physicians, you can definitely do better.

A good provider with an authenticated database will never be fooled by a "Dr." in front of a name—it can easily separate the MDs you need to reach from the PhDs you don't.

But there are compliance issues involving reach as well. Your regulatory advisers need you to be vigilant about the right messages reaching the right specialties—that information meant for an oncologist, for example, isn't sent to a cardiologist.

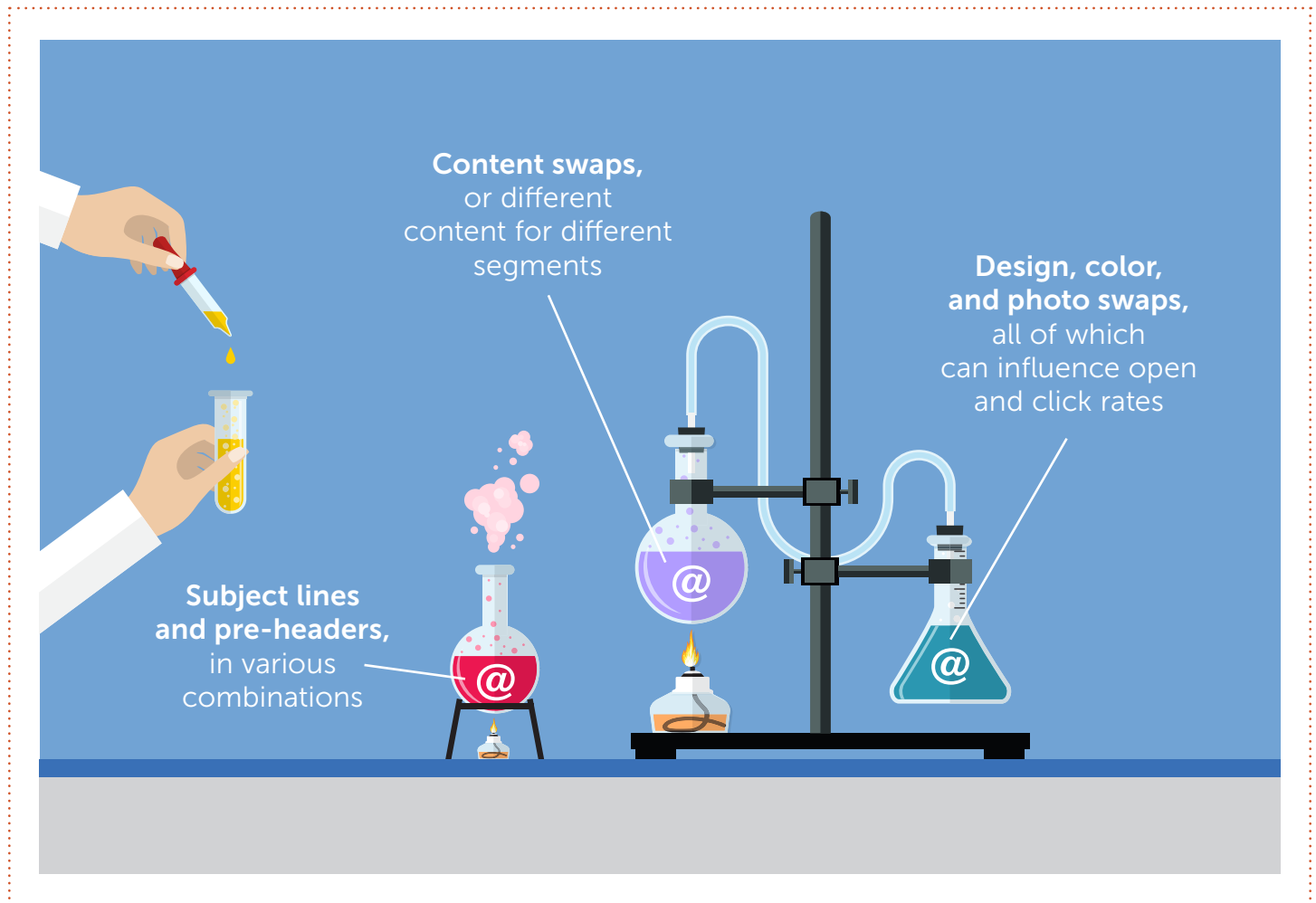
Finally, there's more to the healthcare profession than just physicians. Look for a database that can reach validated NPs and PAs as well.

Deploy, Test, Repeat

As important as a good list is, it's not the whole story. A good email campaign also requires a number of executional skills requiring deep knowledge of the channel and how it works.

Deployment, for example, isn't just about opens and clicks. It's about reaching your targets at the right time, on the right platforms, on the right devices.

It's also about testing. There are a lot of elements to test in an email campaign, and each deployment gives you an opportunity to gauge the effectiveness of each element, including:



Rigorous testing and analysis can illuminate physician needs and wants. It can reveal all sorts of patterns in their behaviors. The key is to learn as much as possible from each deployment, so as to apply that learning to the next one.

Creative Considerations

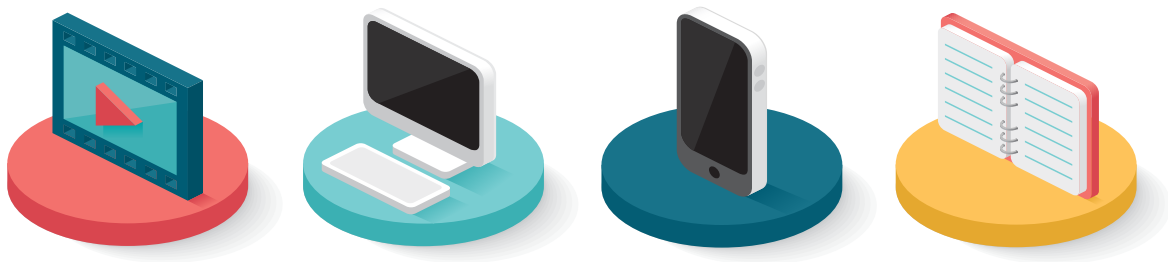
A well-conceived email campaign has a lot of moving parts—and the best providers keep track of all of them. Your email provider should add value at every step in the process, from targeting, to design, to deployment, to testing, and metrics.

Most email providers sell their list and move on. They don't have a strong grasp of the creative side—their design and coding show them to be largely oblivious of best practices. They should, but rarely do, provide:

- **Design parameters** that are optimized for maximum response rates.
- **Pre-coded templates** that can streamline your creative process and keep you within compliance parameters.
- **Render testing** to assure proper display on all devices and platforms.

In addition, you want someone who can work with your marketing partners, streamline the coding process, and coordinate how email works with other campaign elements.

They should also add value to your other sales channels. Email triggered by a rep's visit to a physician can be particularly effective, but you also want it to drive users to your other assets—video, website, webcast, podcast, dinner meeting, conference, etc.—as part of a coordinated communications plan.





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Whether working on its own or as part of a multichannel campaign, email is an indispensable part of any marketing effort. When done well, the results can be spectacular.

A true workhorse, email is a cost-effective way to engage your target audience, deploy your campaigns based on known physician behaviors, and test the various components for constant improvement over time.

What more could you want in a go-to channel?

**Contact us on your next
email campaign**

DMD: The Responsible Email Provider

After nearly 50,000 email campaigns, DMD knows more than anyone about how to reach physicians—and what to do once you've reached them.

From the sourcing of HCP addresses to the targeting, deployment, and testing of your campaigns, we have effective, responsible email down to a science.

No other provider can match us for breadth or depth:

- **91% coverage** of commercially viable physicians
- **1.7 million** opted-in addresses, third-party certified by BPA Worldwide
- **460 million emails sent** in over 48,000 deployments
- **Precision targeting** of specialties and sub-specialties
- **Deep learning** of email habits at the individual physician level
- **Robust testing** of copy and design elements
- **Detailed benchmarks** for measuring results