

# GROW YOUR DAYCARE AND BOOST ENROLLMENT WITH HOPPING IN'S GUIDE TO DAYCARE EMAIL MARKETING

Resources including: email marketing providers, optimal posting times, visual appearance and many more!

MORE TIPS ON: HOPPINGIN.COM

#### Introduction

Thank you for downloading Hopping In's guide to daycare email marketing.

We hope this list of resources helps you in optimizing your own email marketing strategy. No matter if you want to grow your enrollment rate or stay in touch with customers (and keep them satisfied), email marketing can help.

No two daycares are alike, so we recommend testing and tweaking every strategy to see what works for you. You can find our recommendations for daycare email marketing strategies on Hopping In blog.

To help you get started with email marketing, we have prepared a list of resources. From newsletter providers to tips on visual presentation and customer segmentation, it should serve as a starting point to your daycare email marketing journey.

Hopping In is a tool that helps your daycare grow by filling empty spots, and we also strive to help with other parts of <u>running a daycare on our blog</u>.

If you have thoughts you would like to share with us or need help with your daycare, let us know.

Thank you and good luck with your email campaigns!

Hopping In



## The basics

## Getting email addresses

Before you start looking into email marketing providers, it's important to have the parents' email addresses.

You can get them through the enrollment process, or when they schedule a tour of your daycare. If you have a website, you can integrate sign-up forms.

Since you are going to offer additional value with your email marketing strategy, you can offer it from the very start: digitize materials like brochures, and send them over as introductory packages with information they should know before coming for a tour.

## Finding time

The lives of daycare owners are busy, we know. Good news is that you don't have to craft every email from scratch and send it manually. You only have to set them up once and update them with the freshest information.

Daycare email marketing goes a long way and helps you stay in touch with current customers and attract the ones you thought you'd lost.

And you can always delete your account if you find that it's not your cup of tea.

#### Know when to break the rules

Our list of resources is here to help you but we strongly encourage you to mix and match, and come up with your own way of doing things.

Don't worry about making everything perfect – do like kids do, and have fun.



# **Email marketing providers**

Email marketing services vary from paid to free. While it's easy to get carried away with paid plans that offer many features, we recommend starting with free versions which have enough features for you to start experimenting with email marketing.

## **MailChimp**



<u>MailChimp</u> is one of the most popular email marketing service providers. It's very easy to use, aesthetically appealing, and it offers a free plan for up to 2,000 subscribers and 12,000 emails per month.

<u>MailChimp</u> email campaign reports allow you to track responses to your emails and see how many people opened them.

It's also very easy to create various customer lists, so you can automatically separate emails you send to current customers from the emails you send to prospective parents.

## <u>TinyLetter</u>



<u>TinyLetter</u> is MailChimp's less fussy, more personable email marketing service. It's good if you don't want to integrate too much into your newsletters and instead just send out basic writing with a few images.

It's completely free and as minimalistic as it can get. If you want to focus your email marketing strategy on text and have customers that will appreciate that, <u>TinyLetter</u> is a good choice.



## GetResponse



<u>GetResponse</u> is a great tool if you want to take your email marketing strategy up a notch. It sends out emails when your customers are most likely to engage with them, and offers landing page and webinar solutions. Their most affordable plan starts at \$15/month for up to 1,000 subscribers.

<u>GetResponse</u> is a good option if you want to make email marketing your main marketing channel.

## Why not do it on your own?

- 1) It's time-consuming. Email service providers allow you to create templates and just change the content every time. You can even schedule when the emails will be sent out, so it's all automatized and you don't have to waste time.
- 2) You risk getting flagged for spam. If you send out too many emails with identical content in the body, it can be characterized as spam, meaning that your email account can be shut down and your customers won't see the emails.

## Keep in Mind

If you are just beginning with daycare email marketing, try free version. MailChimp offers a very high-quality free option, while other services like GetResponse offer a free trial.

You are going to have to do a lot of testing to see what works best for your daycare so don't commit to a paid plan right away. Give yourself time to figure out what suits your daycare.



# **Email sending times**

#### Morning

It's best to send general update emails in the morning. Parents can see the notification in their inboxes and come back to them later on. Send them in the morning but check how many opened the emails in the evening.

#### Afternoon

This is not a good time to send emails. During afternoon hours, parents are rushing to and fro from work, picking up their children, and the last thing they want to do is check their email.

You also risk your email being buried under other promotional emails.

#### **Evening**

To make sure that parents see the emails, schedule them to be sent throughout the evening or the night. They can see them bright and early in the morning, making your emails a higher priority than others.

## Keep in Mind

A good posting time can go a long way, but it highly depends on your customers. In the beginning, you can experiment with different posting times to see which one works best for your customers.

If you opt for a service that tracks when they've opened the emails, you can adjust the times accordingly.



# **Customer segmentation**

Just because some parents didn't go through with enrolling their child into your daycare doesn't mean you've lost them as customers.

Daycare email marketing helps with keeping track of them, and informing them about improvements in your daycare.

You can use emails to highlight the most appealing aspects, and even schedule regular emails to be sent out as follow-ups to prospective parents.

Most email marketing service providers allow you to create different lists and schedule emails for them separately.

Lists you should have and types of emails:

#### Current customers

You can send them regular update emails, invitations, guides on using new features, and others you deem necessary.

#### Potential customers

Send only important emails, and don't overdo it. Make them aware of your daycare's unique features and improvements. If you use <u>Hopping In</u>, you can even offer them to book a partial spot for their child and "try on" your daycare.

## **Frequency**

How often you'll send out emails depends on your daycare.

Try to round up all the important updates and send them bi-monthly or monthly. It's good to keep the parents informed, but don't go overboard and make them click 'Mark as spam'.

For important emails like events that need to be RSVP'd to and limited time offers, you can send a reminder email mid-way.



#### **Email content**

#### Headlines

Headlines (the subject field of the email) are very important. Try to keep them under 70 characters and make sure that the message is clear.

Questions you should answer with the headline:

Why do the parents need to open this email?
What are you going to tell them?
What is this email's value to them?
Is it urgent?

#### Sample headlines:

• Changes coming to our daycare

This is a good subject line for announcing a change parents should be acquainted with.

• [LIMITED OFFER] Tuition plans 5% off

This headline works great for parents who still haven't made the decision to enroll their child into your daycare.

• How to use [a new feature]

If you've started using a new feature, be it software like <u>Hopping In which</u> <u>allows parents to book extra care or drop the spots they don't need</u>, you can use this email to explain it.

• Thank you!

This works particularly well for follow-ups after milestones or <u>fundraisers</u>.

Join us for a day of fun: [event name]

Short and sweet, good for event announcements.



## Body

Keep it clear and concise, but stay friendly. Avoid using child care terminology that parents may not understand.

For example, you may know what continuity of care is. To parents, it may just sound like you're pulling down the shutters and closing your daycare. Instead, you can explain why it's important that kids have a consistent caregiver in consistent environments matters.

When communicating with parents in your daycare, be mindful of your voice. Even via email, your voice shines through. You want to sound as approachable as you are when you greet them at the tour.

Avoid long introductions and conclusions. A simple greeting and a brief overview of the issue at hand is enough.

If the parents need further clarification, you can invite them to reply to the email and get back to them.

## Keep in Mind

- Don't overuse urgency. If you send a lot of emails with subject lines that seem urgent but the emails are not, parents won't appreciate that and you'll desensitize them to your daycare's emails.
  - Instead, keep it nice and casual just as though you're talking to them at pick-up time.
- Use puns and jokes. They're not as funny to you, but parents might just crack up.
- Be careful when communicating with prospective parents. It's good to have a separate email list and customize emails for them to highlight only the most important aspects of your daycare. You can even invite them for certain events where they can talk to other parents and get first-hand experience.



## **Images**

While images are a good way to catch the readers' attention, keep in mind that your audience are parents and they want information *fast*.

However, you can include images with regular update emails.

For example, if there was a recent activity for the kids in your daycare, you can share the images with parents. It's a good way to help them feel more active in their children's lives even if work keeps them away from nine to five.

In case of event emails, you can share photos of previous events to remind parents that it's always good fun in your daycare.

#### **Quality over Quantity**

Don't go overboard with adding photos. A few images are enough to create an atmosphere that helps the parents RSVP.

#### Placement

For the most unobtrusive placement, put the images at the end of the newsletter or to the sides, if your email template allows it.

## Keep in Mind

You should obtain proper permissions for photos of the kids. Email newsletters can be forwarded. A parent may be alright with other daycare parents seeing photos of their child playing with another, but are they alright with the possibility of cousins and aunts seeing those photos?



#### **Get started**

Good communication is the key to successfully running a daycare center, and email marketing just makes it a lot easier.

No matter what your goal is, remember to have fun and keep the parents in mind. Make your emails as valuable for them as they are for you.

If you have any questions, be sure to contact us or browse our blog for more tips on making your daycare the best it can be.

And, of course, have fun!

Hopping In

