Your essential '10 Cs' checklist for choosing email signature software

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Looking to introduce email signature software across your business? (and if you're not, you should be!). It can be a complex and confusing decision (and whose decision is it - Marketing? IT? HR? CEO?). When you consider the average employee sends 1,000 emails a month, it's easy to appreciate that's a huge engagement opportunity you can't afford to miss. It's a decision you need to get right.

So to help you cut through the confusion of competitor comparisons, here's my 10-point checklist of the key qualities (and some specific special features) that make the best email signature software – and amazingly they all begin with 'C'!

Contact Details – a signature's more than a sign-off

I know this is obvious but if your email signature solution doesn't make inputting, formatting and updating your employee contact details easy then it isn't fit for purpose. Make sure it integrates with Active Directory so that any changes to employee details will update in your signatures automatically. By including social media icons, you'll make it easy for recipients to engage with you in conversation! (Discover 'The signature link to social success' here).

CHECK – *Does your email signature software remove unused fields for a cleaner layout?*

Creativity – better by design

The best email signatures make an immediate impact and leave a lasting impression, so design matters (it's no surprise that our Email Design Guidelines are our most popular download). It's a balancing act – you've got big design ideas but only a small space. Don't let a template constrain your creativity – a specialist signature designer can make your signatures really stand out.

CHECK – *Can you get the exact bespoke design you want or are you tied to a template?*

Clarity – display as desired

They're designed, but do they display? What if your signatures display on a desktop but get twisted on tablets or mangled on mobiles? 60% of emails are opened on smartphones so choose email signature software that automatically configures to different screen sizes and a provider who continually tests on all devices. And make sure your images appear as intended. Embedded images display as soon as the email is opened. Referenced images must be downloaded separately. Easy choice, huh? (embedded vs. referenced blog)

CHECK – *Are signature images automatically embedded so they display immediately?*

Control – take charge for complete consistency

Who's going to be in control of your signatures? IT? Marketing? HR? Whoever it is, what really matters is your email signature software puts them in complete central control. If you want on-brand consistency across your company you need control. And with centralised control you can update employee signatures at the click of a button, whether it's one, a hundred, or ten thousand, secure in the knowledge that individual employees can't 'creatively' add their own off-brand signature 'personalisation'.

CHECK – Are signatures employee tamper-proof? Can only central administrators update them?

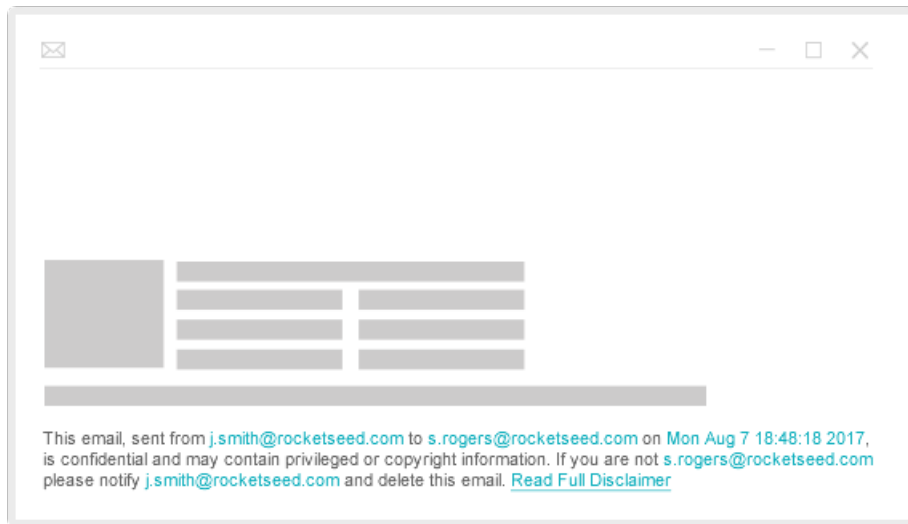## Compatibility – easy to integrate

One for the IT crowd. If you can't trust your email signature tech then you're in trouble. Complete compatibility with your mail server (cloud-based, on-premise or hybrid) and email platform (Office 365, G Suite, Exchange etc.) is essential. And you've also got to consider integrations. Does it sync with Active Directory, CRM platforms and the wide range of apps available through integration with Zapier?

CHECK – *Can you integrate easily to create all the marketing, admin and other workflows you need?*

Compliance – be covered, be confident

I've had a lot of email signature compliance enquiries lately. Why? Because thanks to GDPR and recent high-profile data scandals, compliance is big news. And nothing says compliance like an on-brand email signature disclaimer, sitting under your signature and protecting your brand. From confidentiality and copyright to contracts and codes of conduct, a few clear lines can keep you covered and confident (check out our special 10-point checklist just for email disclaimers here).

CHECK – *Does your email signature solution automatically move your disclaimer neatly to the bottom of any email chain?*

This email, sent from j.smith@rocketseed.com to s.rogers@rocketseed.com on Mon Aug 7 18:48:18 2017, is confidential and may contain privileged or copyright information. If you are not s.rogers@rocketseed.com please notify j.smith@rocketseed.com and delete this email. Read Full Disclaimer

Campaignability – maximise signature marketing

The big one for marketers as it transforms your signature into so much more. Suddenly every email's a marketing channel (we like to think of it as the 'hero channel'!) and, unlike bulkmail, this is one-to-one with all the open-rate (99%) and engagement benefits that brings. Add compelling, clickable calls-to-action to signature marketing banners (what makes us click?) to engage recipients. And to maximise this marketing potential, you'll need smart segmentation and targeting rules so the right signature banner message reaches the right recipient(s) at the right time. Basically, you need to start thinking of signatures as a vital part of your marketing plan.

CHECK – *Can you automate your signature campaign schedule so pre-planned banners run right on time?*

Click Data – insights to act on

Data is your most powerful marketing asset. You need to know how recipients are engaging with your email signature so you can measure performance and gain actionable insights. Your key performance metrics are therefore recipient click-through and email marketing conversion rates and you need to be able to attribute these to specific senders, recipients and campaign formats. Make sure you sure you choose email signature software that reports all this data quickly, clearly and concisely.

CHECK – *Do you receive real-time click alerts, so your sales team can react to every click?*

Cost-Effective – real ROI results

Not to be confused with 'cheap', although I fully appreciate cost is always going to be a factor. The best email signatures bring businesses closer to their customers, encourage interaction, engage leads and help move customers along their buyer journey. So a marketing-savvy email signature can create more customers, clicking their way to more purchases. There's your ROI right there.

CHECK – *Which signature solution will give you the biggest ROI (not simply the cheapest cost)?*

Client Service – on-hand to help

I'm not talking about a bit of trouble-shooting tech support here (although obviously that's important). I'm talking about the kind of client service that's like having another expert on your team – an expert who knows what works and what doesn't, who'll take away your tech headaches, who'll make your email signature campaign ultra-engaging (and really cares about the results you achieve) and has an eye for constant improvement.

CHECK – *Do you get a dedicated email signature account manager? [Here's 7 reasons why you need one](#).*

So there you have it – the 10C's checklist for choosing email signature software. Sure, some will be more important to you than others, but I hope it will help you cut through some of the confusion, direct your decision-making or help you review your current email signature provider (how many C's do they tick?).

Remember, the right email signature software can drive hundreds of thousands, even millions of visitors to your website, landing pages and social accounts for very little investment.

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Rocketseed is the first-choice email signature management software for both marketers and IT professionals across the globe, compatible with Office 365, Gsuite & Exchange.

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