

New research - Top language tips for better emails: The best in financial services marketing

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Email marketing continues to be a popular communication channel in South Africa - particularly in the financial services space. This is due, in part, to its ability to reach a wide audience, while incorporating personalised content.



According to the most recent [Everlytic Email Marketing Benchmarks](#), email engagement rates are higher than ever. In the financial industry, 2020 data shows these rates at averages of 5% click-throughs and 21% click-to-open rates. In addition, unsubscribe rates went down by 28% and complaint rates by 100% from 2019 to 2020.

The pandemic also saw desktop use dropping substantially while mobile and web became more popular options. This meant a move away from desktop computers, illustrating how flexible email is as a medium through responsive layouts that can tailor and display content for any device size.

The best in financial services marketing

[Everlytic](#), South Africa's largest digital messaging platform partnered with behavioural communications firm BreadCrumbs Linguistics to analyse the top 50 mailers sent by financial services providers using the Everlytic platform in 2020.

The report focuses on the linguistic elements that correlate with mailer engagement success using the framework of Behavioural Linguistics, a science that looks at how language influences action. In direct mailer marketing, the action wanted is for mailer recipients to a) open the mailer and b) engage with the communication by clicking at least one link in the mailer.

The best 50 emails sent by nine of South Africa's biggest financial service providers were analysed across semantics, phonetics, syntax and visuals to highlight language trends across the successful sends.

Key findings:

- Financial services companies that use **connection-based language** (like your, you, we, and our) establish a better connection with their reader, resulting in boosted levels of engagement.
- The most **successful emails** were sent on Wednesdays, towards the end of the working day.
- Engagement levels increase based on **personalisation elements**. Most of the top 50 emails personalised at least one data field, including name, product type, and personalised attachments.
- Simple, **easy-to-understand content** is directly linked to more persuasive communication and is more likely to result in the call to action being followed.
- Visual language, through **imagery and colour psychology**, plays a key part in ongoing engagement with communication.
- Mailers that use **navigation ‘breadcrumbs’** like bullet points, infographics, text colour, and sub-headings receive better engagement rates.
- Linguistic tools like **alliteration, rhyme and metaphors** make brand writing more interesting and attractive. This helps to boost engagement and results in more persuasive copy.

Improved business communications

The link between language, decision-making, and behaviour is powerful. Once a brand starts thinking about direct marketing communication in ways that are intrinsically linked to how people think and act, they will be far more likely to create content that engages and persuades.

With our email inboxes filled to an all-time high, and multiple brands vying for consumer attention, it's critical for brands to craft communications that stand out. These need to grab attention and engage an audience to achieve a successful call to action – which is where a behavioural communication approach proves useful.

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About the report

This report was compiled as part of an Everlytic and BreadCrumbs Linguistics partnership. Everlytic is South Africa's largest digital messaging platform. It helps businesses communicate personally, reliably, and automatically via bulk email, SMS, voice broadcasting, and push notifications. BreadCrumbs Linguistics is an award-winning behavioural communications firm that uses Behavioural Linguistics to create marketing and communication that nudges action.

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