



8 RULES for Creating MOBILE EMAILS



8 RULES for Creating MOBILE EMAILS

In this mobile age, more and more people are reading their email on mobile devices. In fact, a recent stat from AT&T says that **78% of business people use mobile phones to check their email.**

So the big question is what can you do for these readers when creating your email? Should you create emails that are text only? Use special CSS code that is optimized for mobile devices? What about all your readers who aren't using mobile devices? There are many things to consider. But you can relax - we're here to help you through this puzzle and into the inbox.

Here are 8 rules that will help you create great emails for mobile devices and inboxes; follow them and everyone will be able to enjoy your email *no matter how they're reading it.*

1 Simple is Better

The simpler your design and content, the more likely it is to look the same across multiple browsers and devices. When you're designing for a smaller screen, keep to the point and try not to have too many elements distracting from the message. Here are a few pointers that apply for mobile and computer screens:

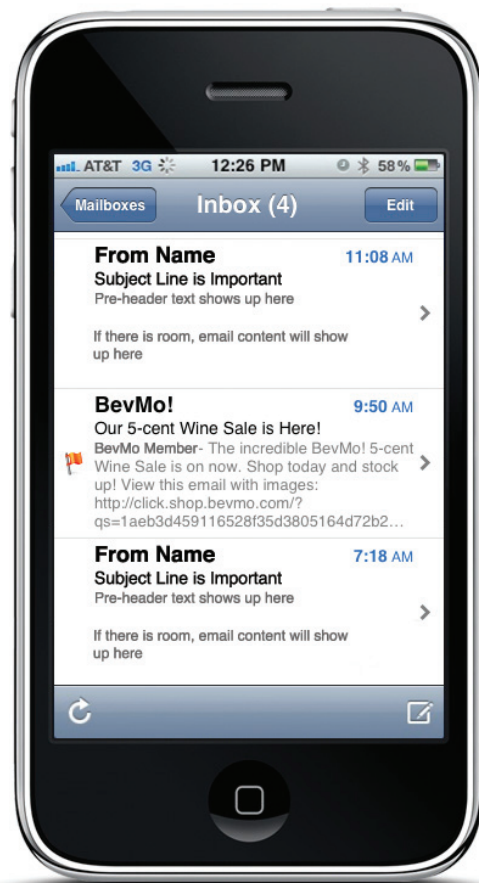
- **Organize it Well:** Make the message clear and easy to find, and keep the important info at the top, or "above the fold," as many mobile users may briefly glance at their inbox.
- **Break it Up:** Make your content scannable with bullets or numbered lists. Split up long blocks of text into shorter paragraphs.

keep it
simple

2 Subject Line And Pre-Header Are Crucial

A lot of mobile phone users triage their inboxes. This means they go through their messages looking for what is vital, and then either save an email for later or delete it. You want your message to be read or saved, and your subject line will be a deciding factor. These are a few things to keep in mind:

- **Front Load Your Subject Line:** You have about 6 words to get your message across, so put what's important at the beginning. This is true for all subject lines regardless of the device they're read on.
- **Keep It Short:** Many email clients truncate subject lines to 40 – 50 characters, so this is not the place to be chatty.
- **Use the Pre-Header:** On many mobile devices the inbox displays not just the subject line, but the pre-header as well. Use this space to communicate the value of the content in your email or offer. Subject line + pre-header = about 100 characters (but not all email clients show pre-header so keep it short).
- **Stay Consistent with your From Label:** This is what lets your reader know who is sending the email. This should be your company name, or whom the subscriber is expecting to hear from.



3 Use Fewer, Smaller Images

To help keep your email simple don't use too many images. A logo and three other small images is ideal. Since many email clients have images turned off by default keep the important info in the text - not in your images. Branding is always important, so include a small logo at the top of your email. Here are some other considerations:

- **Remember Alt Tags:** This will help convey more of your message even if the email client initially blocks images.
- **Keep A Balance:** We recommend ¾ text to ¼ images. Keep important info in text, not images.
- **Use Small Images:** Downloading images can take a long time on WIFI connections most phones use. Don't make your readers wait for big images to load.

follow us on:



use fewer,
smaller images

4 Links Are Important

Since you're designing a simpler email, you need to avoid having too much text. The best way to do this is to link to longer articles. Plus, whatever the point of your email is - purchase, donation, sign-up for an event, download a whitepaper, attend a webinar - you'll need links for your readers to be able to do that. A little advice:

- **Don't Crowd Links:** Too many together are hard to click on in the small space of a mobile device. Check your text back up for this, too, as not everyone will see the graphical version of your email.
- **Always Include Links To Important Pages:** Think website or landing page.



New!
Button Builder
FREE

5 Call to Action

People using mobile devices spend a little less time reading the content because of the smaller screen size, and the fact that they're usually on the go. So, make sure your email message has a clear call-to-action. Place it either near the beginning of the email or somewhere where it will stand out. Don't make it hard to find - it's the key to getting the response you want. To help make it stand out, use a call to action button to get your readers attention, and trigger them to do what you want them to do. Here's a bit about buttons:

- **Mind Your Button Size:** Fingers press about 45 pixels, so create your CTA buttons about this size.
- **Give Space:** Add about 10 pixels of space around them in case your readers miss the button.

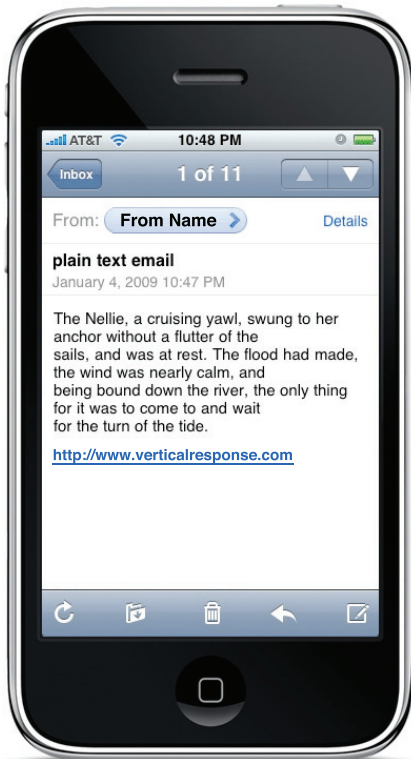
VR has a free Button Builder. [Learn More!](#)

6 Scrolling

With the smaller screen, scrolling becomes more troublesome for your readers. Up and down, left to right, they will lose interest if they do too much. “Slim Down” to keep scrolling to a minimum:

- **Slim Down:** Keep your email about 500-600 pixels wide. VerticalResponse creates our pre-designed layouts at about 600 pixels already so you don’t have to worry when you use our templates. For an iPhone (average mobile design is for this specific phone) the screen is 320 pixels wide, so an email at 600 pixels can be zoomed out and read easily.

on smaller screens
keep scrolling
to a minimum



7 Remember The Text Backup

Not everyone on your list will receive the graphical version of your email, regardless of what is used to read your email. Our system creates a text back up for you automatically, but check it out to confirm it will be easy to read on a smaller screen. Remember to keep it short and easy to read:

- **Break It Up:** Emails usually have line breaks at about 60 characters, and 20 for mobile devices.
- **Keep It Short:** Use short paragraphs (1-2 sentences) then link to a website for them to finish reading.
- **Don’t Bunch Up Links:** It will be harder to click links in the text version if there are close together, just have a few important ones for that version.

8 Think Landing Pages (Email is Just the Start)

Emails for phones also need more mobile-friendly landing pages and websites that are easy to read on a small screen. Here are some important points to keep in mind:

- **Leave Room to Breathe:** Keep in mind the whitespace around paragraphs and images. If your content is so squashed that it's hard to find anything, your readers might not stay for very long. Cluttered, visually busy sites are hard enough to read on a large screen. Don't ask mobile readers to go there!
- **Make Lists:** Make your content scannable and easy to read by breaking up long blocks of text with numbered lists, bullets and shorter paragraphs. This is great for all people hitting your site, not just your mobile readers.
- **Remove Flash:** Flash is fun, but not for your landing pages. Apple products are a large portion of the mobile market, and they don't support Flash yet. Even on devices that do support Flash, these files can take a long time to load and slow down the experience for your reader.



That wasn't too tough, was it? Keeping these 8 guidelines in mind while creating your emails will make all the difference to your mobile device readers. And remember, take a look at your website to make sure it will work for mobile devices, too.