

How To Send An HTML Newsletter

Who here hasn't tried to create and send an HTML newsletter by email. It sounds easy enough. Create an html page, copy the code, paste it in email and voila. Well it does, until you actually try it. For a long time, I too tried to figure out how to send an html email newsletter. I tried just about every way to send it. One of the ways was to save the html page and then attach it as an html file with the email. I tried just copying the source code of the html file and send that in. I even tried saving the webpage as an email file and that didn't work either. After trying a few more ideas I decided it's best to just use plain text until I can figure out how to send it correctly. As luck would have it though I did find out how to finally send an HTML newsletter by email. I was working on an email comments form with ColdFusion, a web programming language, one of features included sending data in HTML format. I thought why not try it, it might just work. So I copied the code of an html webpage and then emailed it to myself, and voila. But had I really figured it out though? There had to be something else in the code which ColdFusion added that allowed the newsletter to display correctly. I looked at the html code for the email and there was nothing different about this email. It was the same code as all the other html newsletters that I had tried and tested in the past. Except that this one displayed correctly and the others didn't. Odd. Why didn't the newsletter work when I tried to copy, paste and email it. It's the same email and the same code so it should work just as fine. Something was missing. A couple of days later I went back to look at the code for the email thinking that maybe I had overlooked something. The source code was still the same, nothing had changed. So what could it be? That's when I stumbled on to a small line that would change everything. The line I'm talking about is the content-type, which is part of every email's header file. I'd read about content type, but most of it had to do with XHTML webpages. After a little bit of research here's what I discovered: Every email has a property known as: "Content-Type:" which identifies the type of content that is included in that email. The emails that you, me, and everyone usually send are mostly text. Plain Text to be exact. That's why when I tried to copy and past the html source code in the past it had just shown up as HTML. When I saw the content type for the text emails it was: Content-Type: text/plain; When I saw the content type for the html emails which displayed very nicely, it was: Content-Type: text/html; WOW. I mean I couldn't believe it that after all this time it was that one small line that had stopped me and probably countless others from successfully sending html emails. But how would you tag your email as html? It depends on how you're sending it. If you plan on sending your html email newsletter with a web programming language, such as Cold Fusion then you can use cfmml's type="HTML" feature, which will automatically set the Content-Type to text/html and display the email as an HTML Newsletter. If you plan on sending it with ASP.NET, then the below line should clear it up: YourMessageName.BodyFormat = MailFormat.Html Or if you plan on using PHP then it should look something like this "To: The Receivers Name n" . "From: The Senders Name n" . "MIME-Version: 1.0n" . "Content-type: text/html; charset=UTF-8"); Most, if not all web programming language include a feature which allows you to send html data. Tip: Make sure the code or software that you use to send email has support for MIME, which allows you to send non text emails, HTML etx. So now you know the secret. It's not the code, it's the email's content type which decides how to display your HTML email newsletter. Now that you know how to send HTML email, make sure to test your newsletters with different email accounts (Yahoo, Hotmail, Google, etx). Each one of them tends to display your HTML differently. Test, Test, and Retest. Happy HTML Emailing!

About the Author

Sam S. runs FreeNewsletterTemplate.net, A website dedicated to providing visitors with the latest information and the tools needed for creating HTML newsletter, managing email list and email marketing.

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