

Spreading the word through friends-and-family emails



Friends-and-family emails

A few words can influence an email campaign in so many ways

Today's consumers want to feel like they have an intimate and personal connection with brands, which is probably a main reason why subject lines that use words such as "you" and "your" drive higher open rates than those without — and why friends-and-family email campaigns tend to perform so well.

The friends-and-family campaigns of yesteryear were highly targeted campaigns sent to preselected groups of employees, business partners and perhaps best customers. These offers were highly coveted and carried a perception as being "better" than those available to the general public. Not only were they strong revenue performers, but the campaigns also became effective acquisition tools due to the viral nature of the included offers.

Marketers took notice of the outstandingly attractive results obtained, and now, most friends-and-family campaigns are not targeted, but instead distributed to entire customer files. Luckily for marketers who leverage this tactic, however, it appears that the perception of friends-and-family offers being "special" continues — going so far as to outperform identical promotions without the friends-and-family messaging on all key metrics.

To discover key trends and pinpoint optimal strategies pertaining to friends-and-family email marketing, Experian CheetahMail's Strategic Services team analyzed the performance of friends-and-family email programs compared to bulk promotional campaigns. The first portion of the analysis evaluated the friends-and-family emails from 79 businesses to non-friends-and-family bulk campaigns from the same businesses from July 2009 to June 2010. The second portion focused on friends-and-family email performance during the holiday season, identifying 23 businesses that sent friends-and-family mailings with the equivalent offer value as non-friends-and-family mailings during the same time period.

Friends-and-family emails

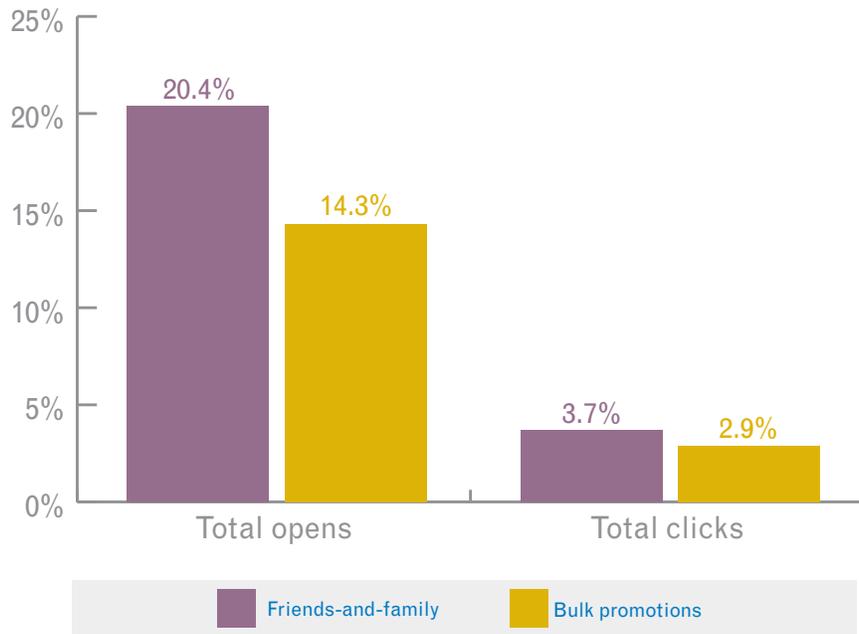
Friends-and-family benchmarks and trends

Friends-and-family emails drive higher customer response and engagement year-round

Subscribers open and click on friends-and-family emails at higher rates than bulk promotions

Customers engage with friends-and-family emails at a much higher rate than they do with promotional campaigns. Friends-and-family emails have 43 percent higher open rates and 29 percent higher click rates than bulk promotions. The exceptionally high open and click rates underscore the opportunity for companies to introduce new products and services to highly engaged customers through these emails.

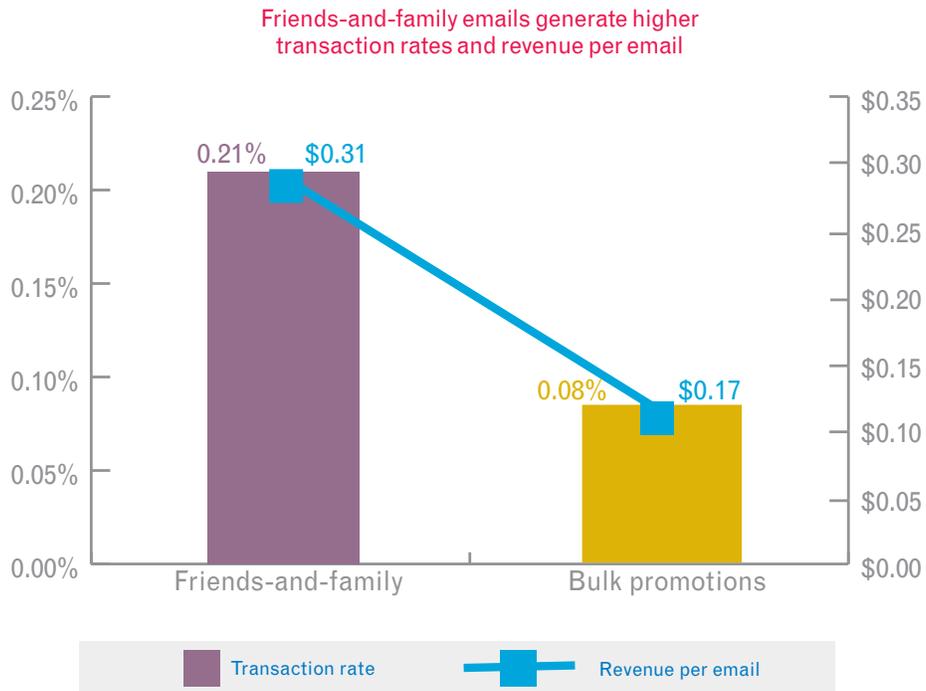
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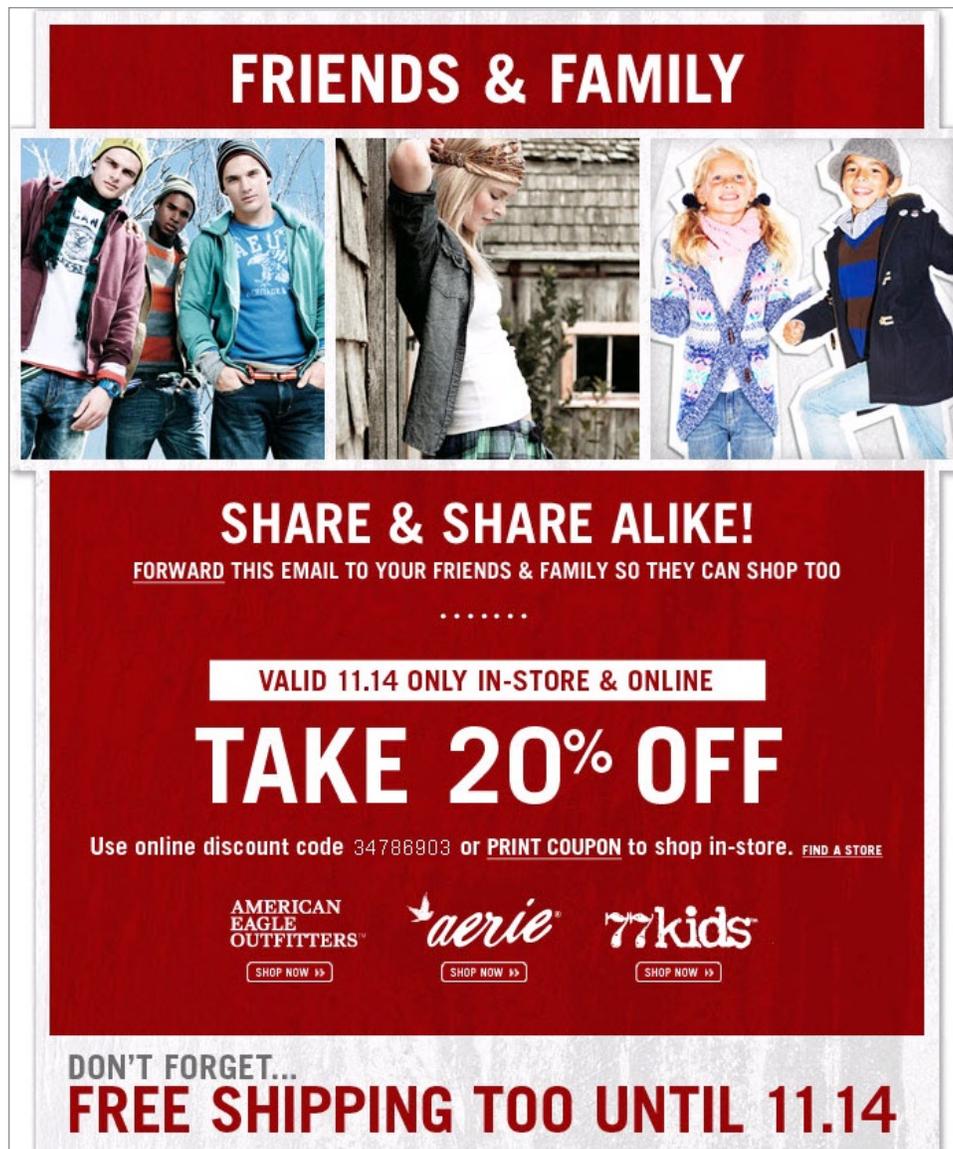
Friends-and-family emails

Friends-and-family emails generate higher transaction rates and revenue per email

High revenue-per-email results and strong transaction rates demonstrate the significant monetary value that friends-and-family messages can add to any email program. Compared to standard promotional mailings, transaction rates for friends-and-family emails average 2.5 times higher and revenue per email is 85 percent higher.



Friends-and-family emails



FRIENDS & FAMILY

SHARE & SHARE ALIKE!
FORWARD THIS EMAIL TO YOUR FRIENDS & FAMILY SO THEY CAN SHOP TOO

.....

VALID 11.14 ONLY IN-STORE & ONLINE

TAKE 20% OFF

Use online discount code 34786803 or **PRINT COUPON** to shop in-store. [FIND A STORE](#)

AMERICAN EAGLE OUTFITTERS® aerie 7kids

SHOP NOW >> SHOP NOW >> SHOP NOW >>

**DON'T FORGET...
FREE SHIPPING TOO UNTIL 11.14**

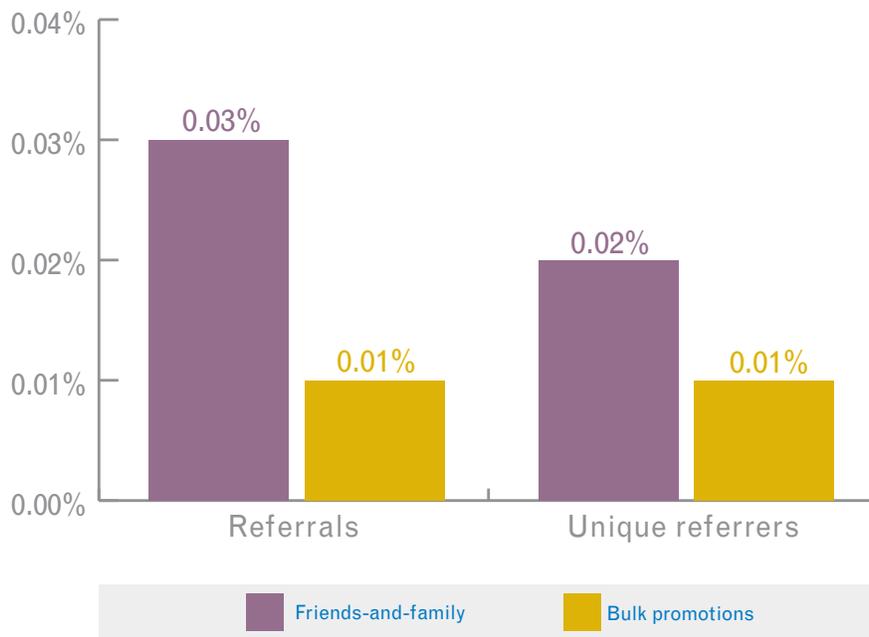
A key component of friends-and-family emails is the direct request to pass the offer on to others.

Friends-and-family emails

Friends-and-family emails are meant to be shared

A key component of friends-and-family emails is the direct request to pass the offer on to others. Friends-and-family campaigns tend to generate an average of three times the referral rate as compared to bulk promotions. Friends-and-family emails also produce an average of twice the number of unique referrers, and an 11 percent increase in the number of referrals made by each unique referrer (1.44 referrals for each unique friends-and-family referrer, compared to 1.29 for bulk-promotion referrers). These metrics demonstrate the viral power that friends-and-family messaging possesses and supports the branding potential inherent in friends-and-family promotions.

Friends-and-family emails are meant to be shared

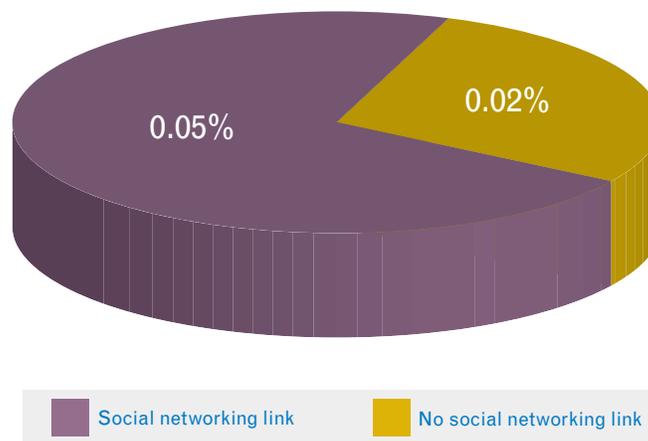


Friends-and-family emails

Referral rates for friends-and-family emails with social networking links are notably high

Within friends-and-family campaigns, emails that contain links to social networking sites have much higher referral rates than emails with no social networking links. The integration of social features in email enables subscribers to easily share offers on popular and viral social networking sites, in turn presenting businesses with an effective and inexpensive opportunity to acquire new customers.

Referral rates for friends-and-family emails with social networking links are notably high



Friends-and-family emails

Friends-and-family emails generate significantly higher response than standard mailings with identical offer values

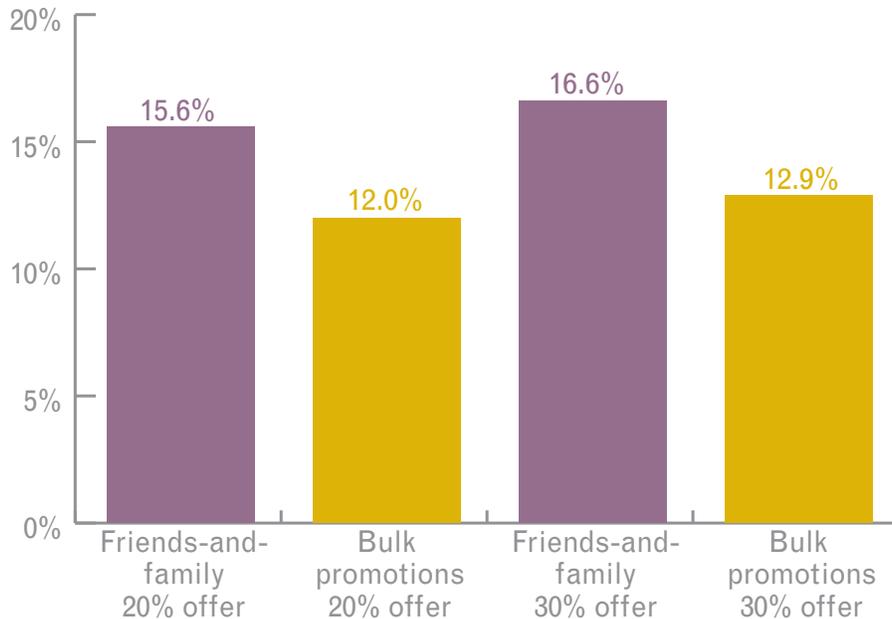
The holiday season is the opportune occasion to let your friends-and-family campaigns shine

Although friends-and-family emails are sent throughout the year, 75 percent of businesses launch at least one friends-and-family campaign during the holiday season, with November and December seeing the greatest number of these types of mailings.

Adding the words "Friends and Family" to holiday emails can significantly improve campaign performance

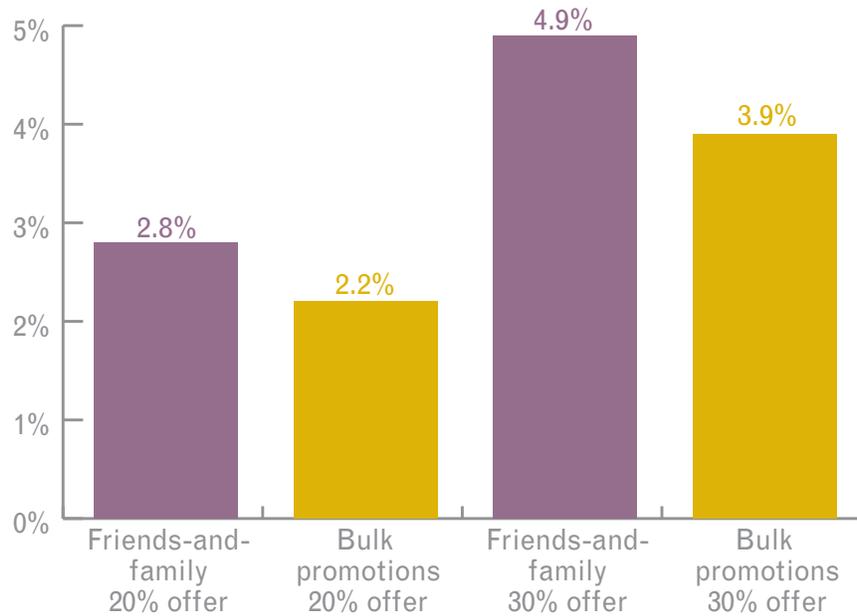
During the 2009 holiday season, the most popular offer values for friends-and-family emails were 20 percent and 30 percent off. During the same time period, many businesses also sent non-friends-and-family promotions with the same offer values. A comparison of the metrics for both types of campaigns clearly indicates that adding the words "Friends and Family" to an email will generate higher revenue per email, open, click and transaction rates than comparable bulk promotions that do not contain friends-and-family messaging.

Adding the words "Friends and Family" to holiday emails can significantly improve campaign performance



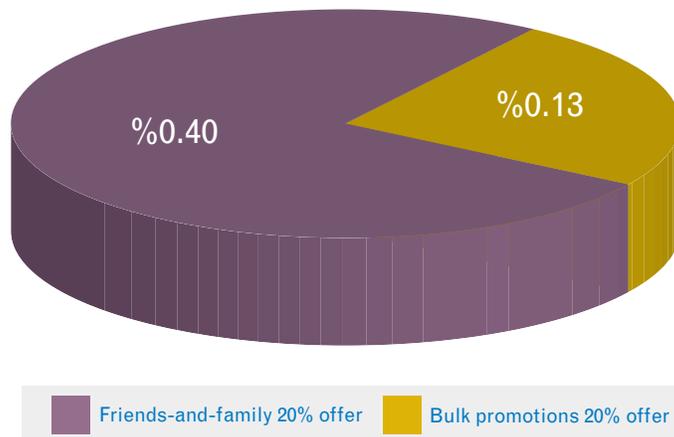
Friends-and-family emails

Click rates also increase when “Friends-and-family” are added to an offer



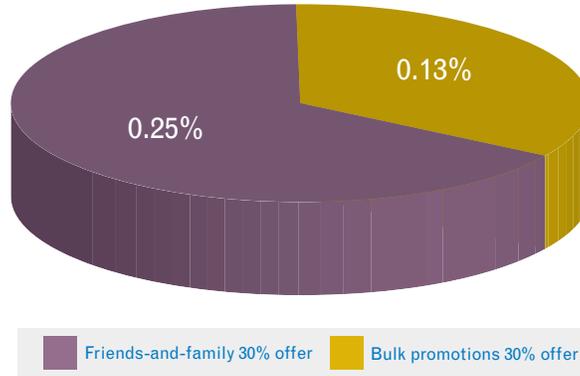
Friends-and-family emails have double and triple the transaction rates of bulk promotions with the same corresponding offers of 20 percent off and 30 percent off.

Friends-and-family had 3 times the transaction rate on 20% offers



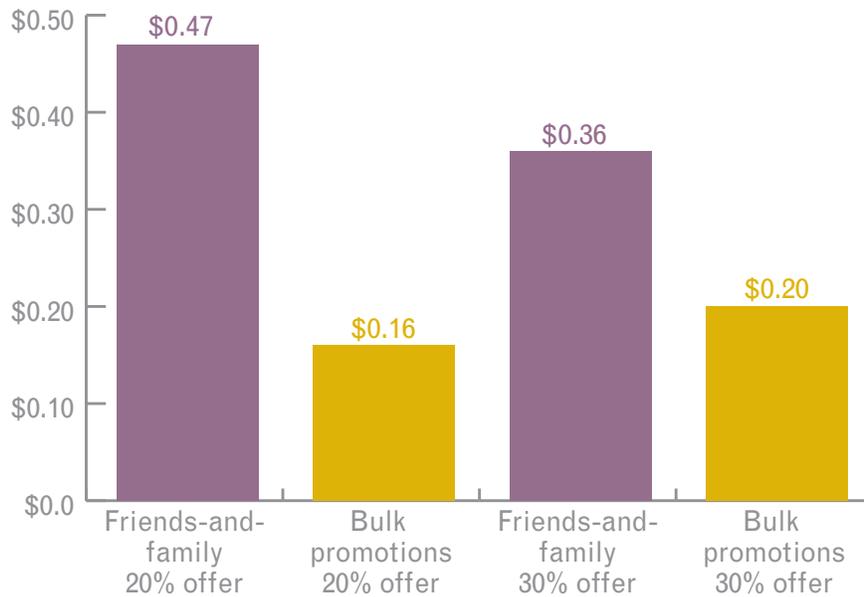
Friends-and-family emails

Friends-and-family had double the transaction rate on 30% offers



In addition, revenue per email averages two to three times higher for friends-and-family campaigns.

Revenue per email is much higher for Friends-and-family campaigns with the same offer



Friends-and-family emails

Women Intimates Juniors Men Baby & Kids Shoes Jewelry Handbags & Accessories Beauty & Fragrance Home Bed & Bath

Shop for great items and help the fight against breast cancer. [The Pink Shop](#) 

FREE standard shipping on any online purchase of \$75 or more. Surcharges may apply.

a special shopping event just for our
FRIENDS & FAMILY
Friday, October 22 through Tuesday, October 26

extra 25%* off REGULAR AND SALE price items when you shop your way: online with promo code: **CTBFRIFAM10** or in our stores with coupons [PDF].
*Get the details.

Or text **"FF" to 266866** to get the coupon sent to your phone.

 **3 ways to share, 2 ways to save!**  

Send to a Friend Share on TWITTER Share on FACEBOOK

Consumers are very accustomed to sharing friends-and-family offers, so it's important to make it easy for them to do so.

Friends-and-family emails

Friends-and-family tips and best practices

Friends-and-family campaigns are a good choice all year long

Friends-and-family emails should become part of your overall promotional playbook. They connect with subscribers and generate more revenue directly, while also providing referrals to potential new email subscribers and customers. These campaigns perform all year long — even during the fiercely competitive and discount-heavy holiday season.

The words are important

The aforementioned findings indicate that including the words “Friends and Family” will enhance the performance of campaigns deployed by the same brands, offering identical discount values. Ensure that the three words “Friends and Family” appear in the subject line and that the messaging is clearly promoted in the body of the email.

Enable sharing

To increase the potential of reaching new and existing customers who might not have received the initial email campaign, maintain sharing features in their usual location (i.e., forward to a friend, share) while also adding larger call-outs that enable sharing within the body of the email, near the offer. Consumers are very accustomed to sharing friends-and-family offers, so it's important to make it easy for them to do so.

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Marketing
forward 

The graphic consists of two overlapping, right-pointing triangles. The front triangle is dark grey, and the back triangle is a lighter shade of grey, creating a 3D effect.

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