



The 2020

Small Business Email Marketing Statistics Report

Email marketing data and insights from over 1,000 small businesses and 10 email marketing experts

 **AWeber**

Introduction

Email marketing remains one of the most powerful growth tools for small businesses.

After working alongside millions of small businesses over the past 20+ years, our team can verify this. We've seen email marketing's undying and immense impact firsthand.

Although email marketing has been around for decades, it's everchanging. The most effective email marketing strategies adapt, grow, and innovate with these changes.

To help small businesses create truly innovative strategies and see growth with email marketing, we surveyed over 1,000 small businesses to discover how they're running their email marketing strategies.

We then asked 10 of the top email marketing experts in the world to share their insights and guidance about our findings.

You can use the insights from this report to guide your own email marketing strategy. Find out where you should focus, where you're succeeding, and where you can improve.

Tom Kulzer
CEO and Founder
AWeber



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Small Business Email Marketing Statistics

How do your open rates, click-through rates, and email list compare to other small businesses?

This overview of small business email marketing statistics will show you.

The data below sheds light on how small business owners view the effectiveness of email marketing and how they use it as part of their marketing strategy.

If you find you're not quite where you want to be, don't worry! We included many free resources within this report to help you improve and innovate your email marketing strategy.

Rob Patterson

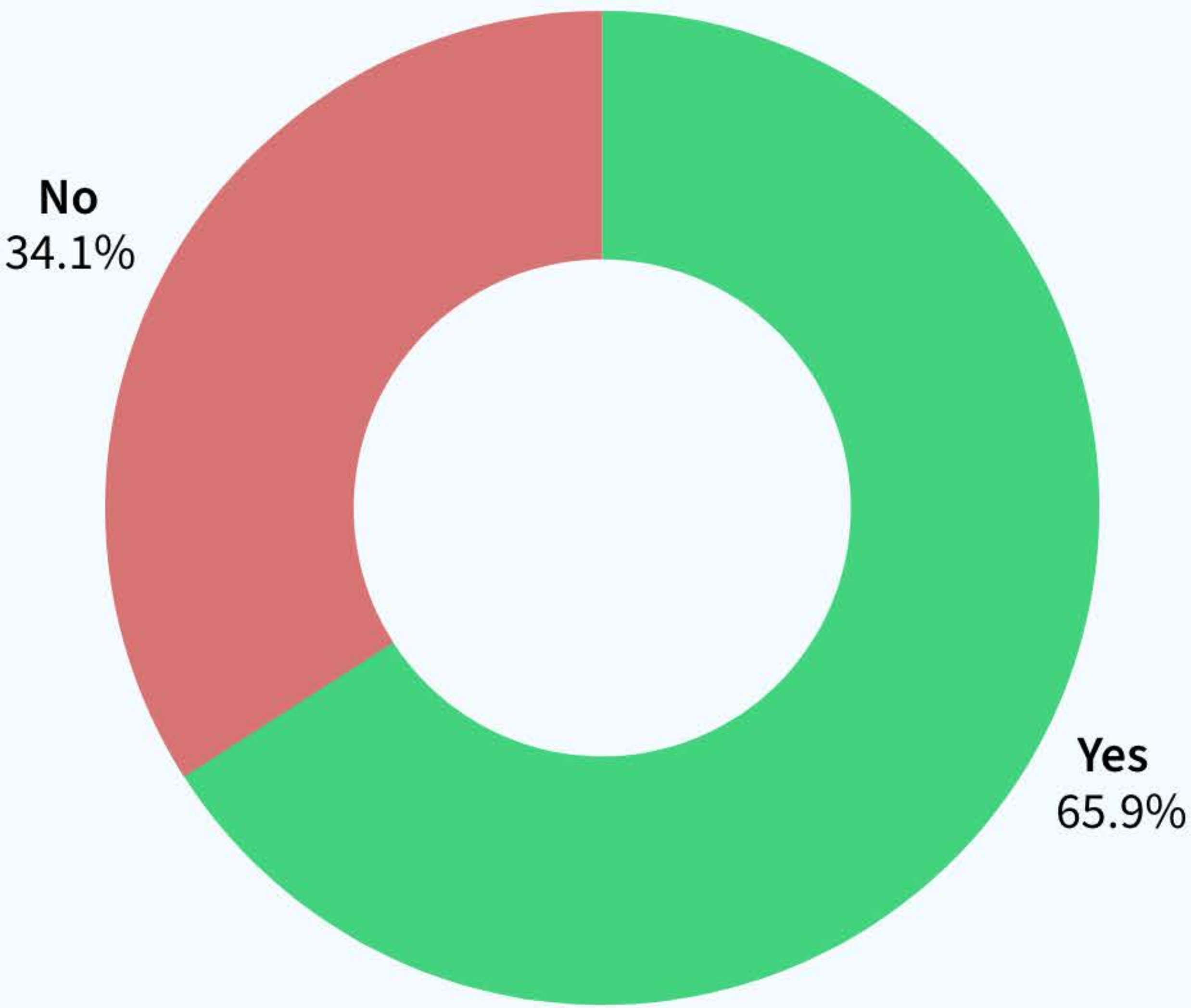
CMO

AWeber

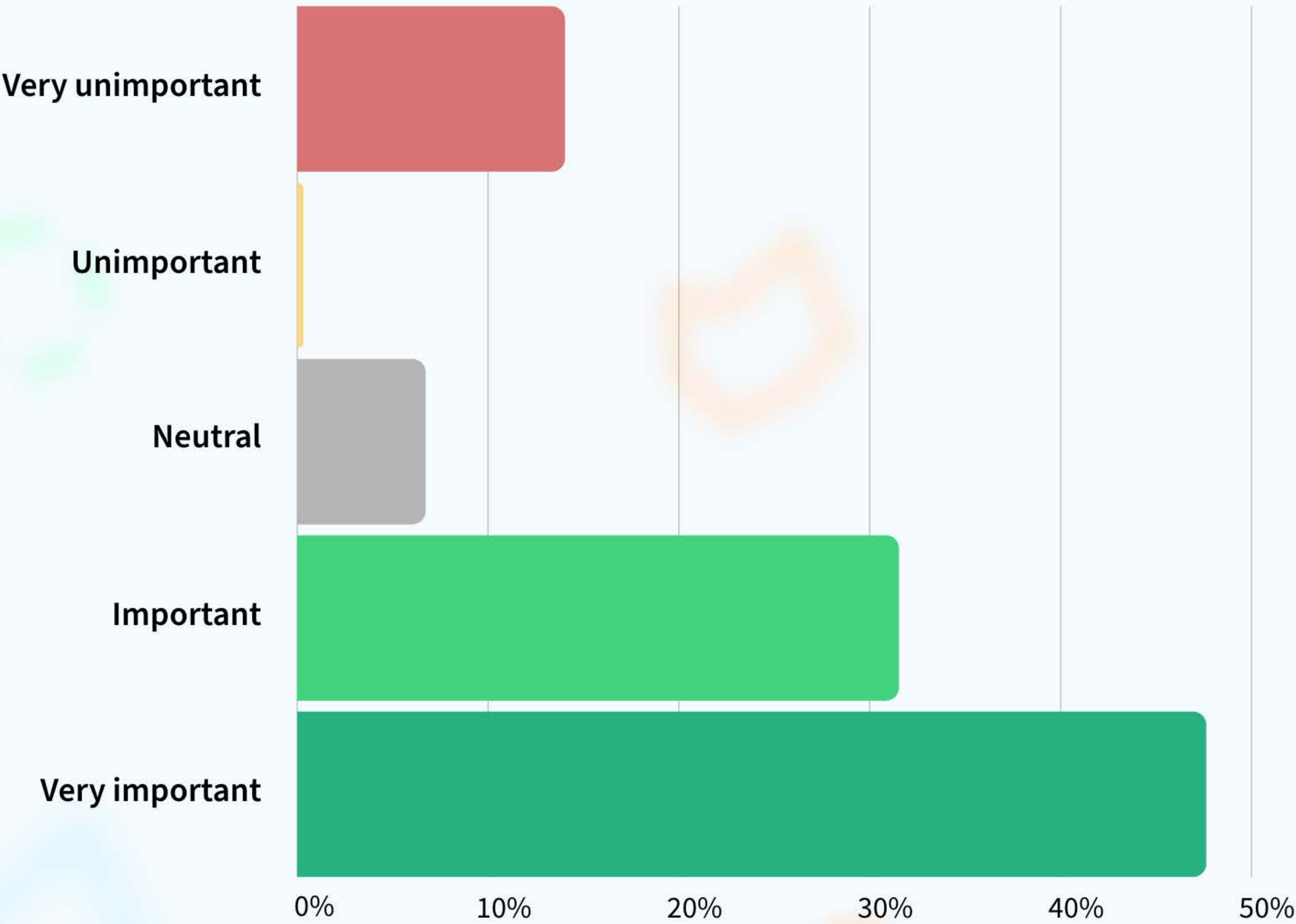


Are you currently using email marketing to promote your business or communicate with leads and/or customers?

66% of small businesses said they use email marketing to promote their business or communicate with leads and/or customers.



How important is email marketing to your business strategy?



79% of small businesses said email marketing is important or very important to their business strategy.

How effective is your email marketing strategy?



60% of small businesses say their email marketing strategy is effective or very effective.

26% of small businesses say their email marketing strategy is ineffective or very ineffective.



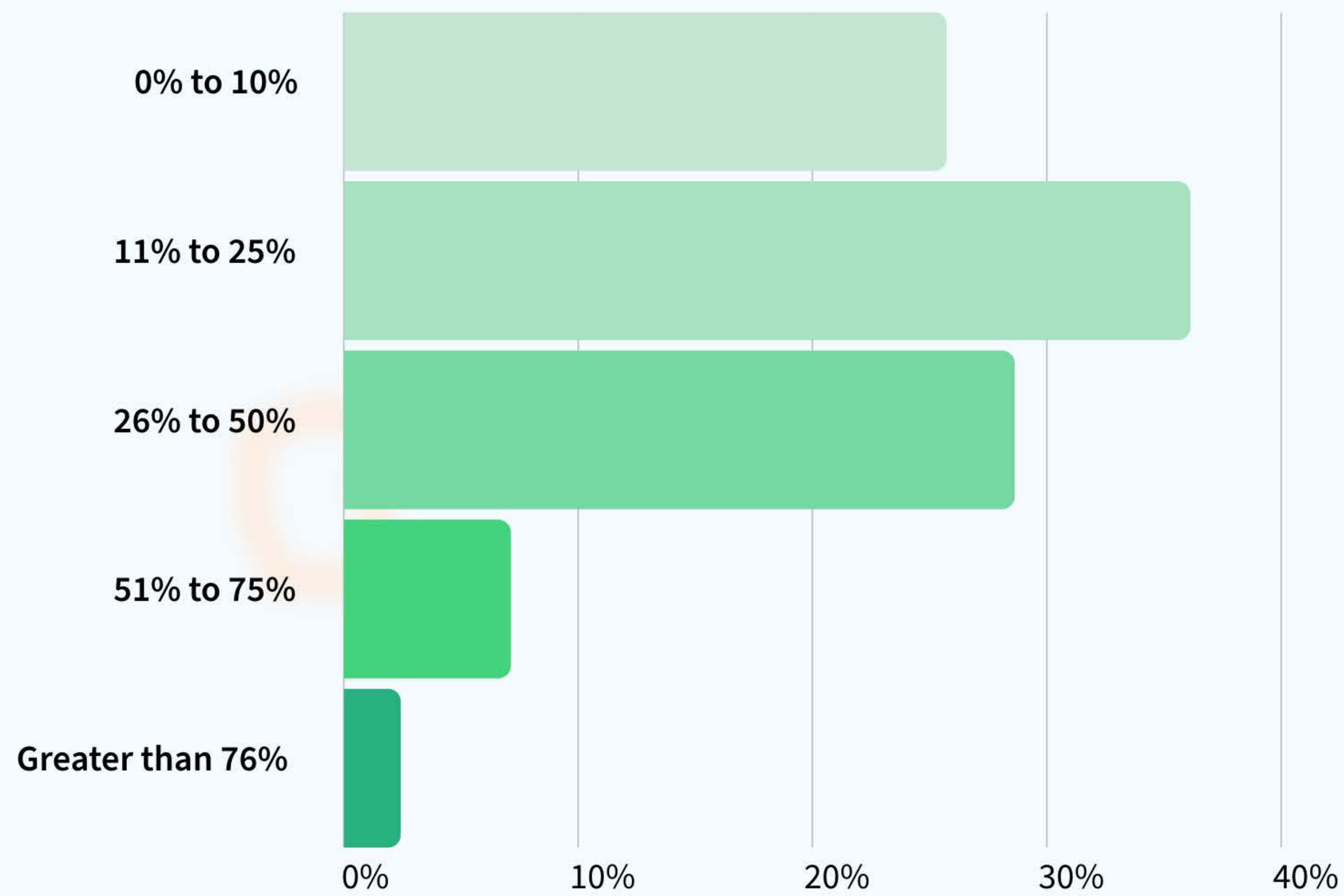
For email to be effective today it must be personal, targeted, and crafted with the prospective reader's objectives and objections in mind.

John Jantsch

Founder & President, Duct Tape Marketing

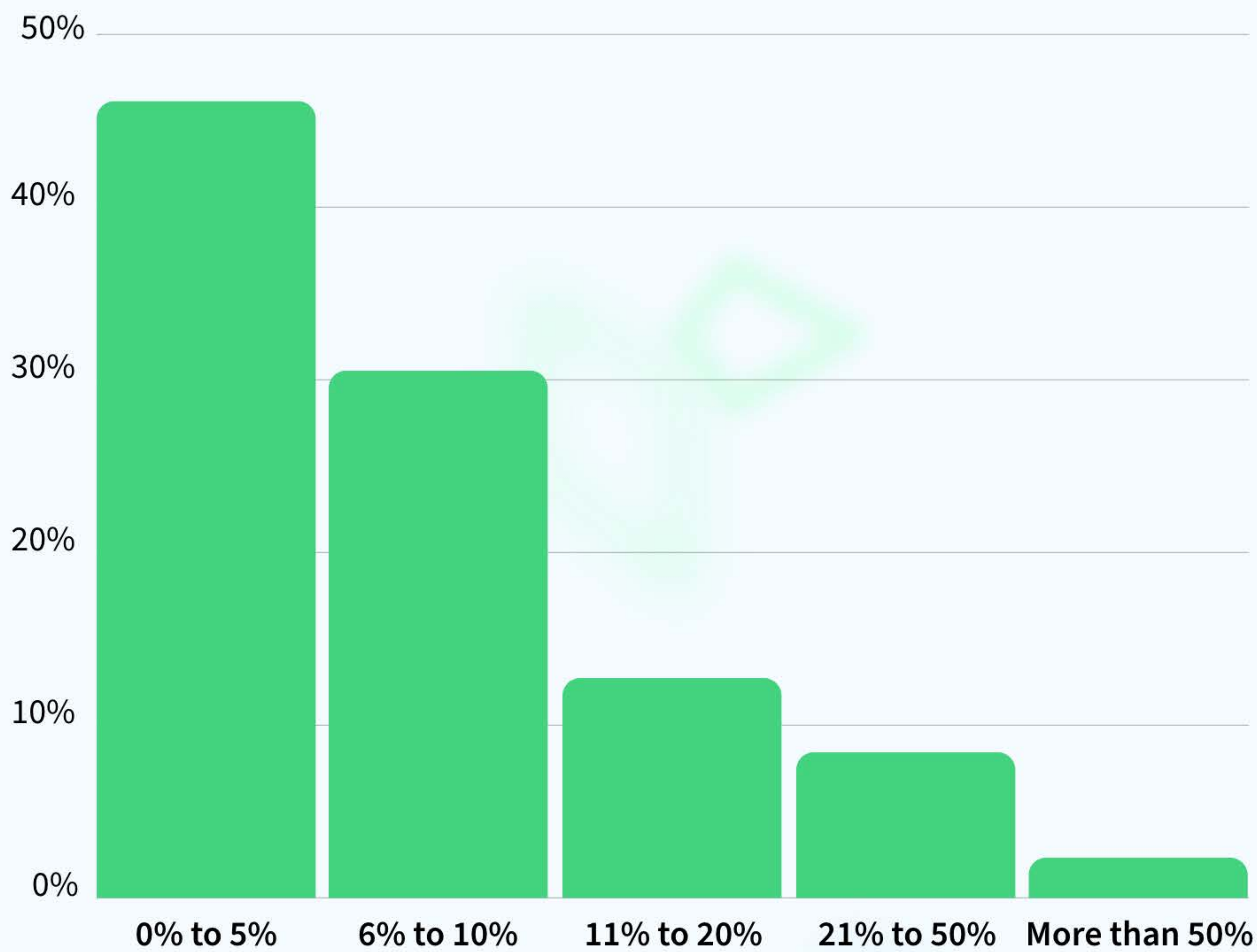
What is the average open rate of your emails?

65% of small businesses average open rates between 11% and 50%.



What is the average click-through rate of your emails?

77% of small businesses average email click-through rates between 0% and 10%.



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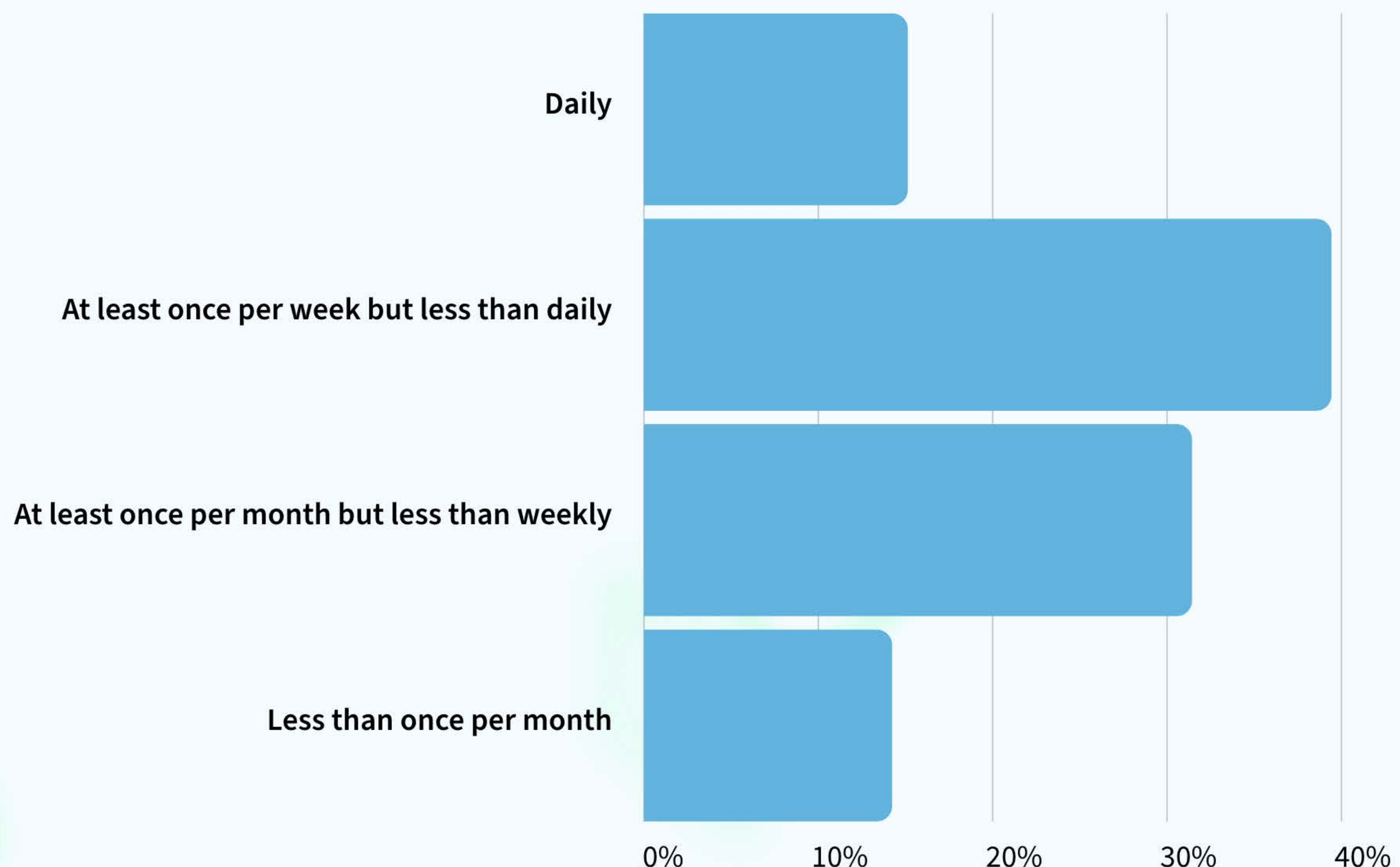


I believe a weekly email is the place to start. Rather than sending more, test what you already do. Then test frequency. There’s no sense sending more of what doesn’t work, nor less of what does work. Test, test, test!

Mark Asquith

Co-Founder & CEO of Rebel Base Media

How often do you send emails?



54% of small businesses send emails at least once per week.
86% of small businesses send emails at least once per month.



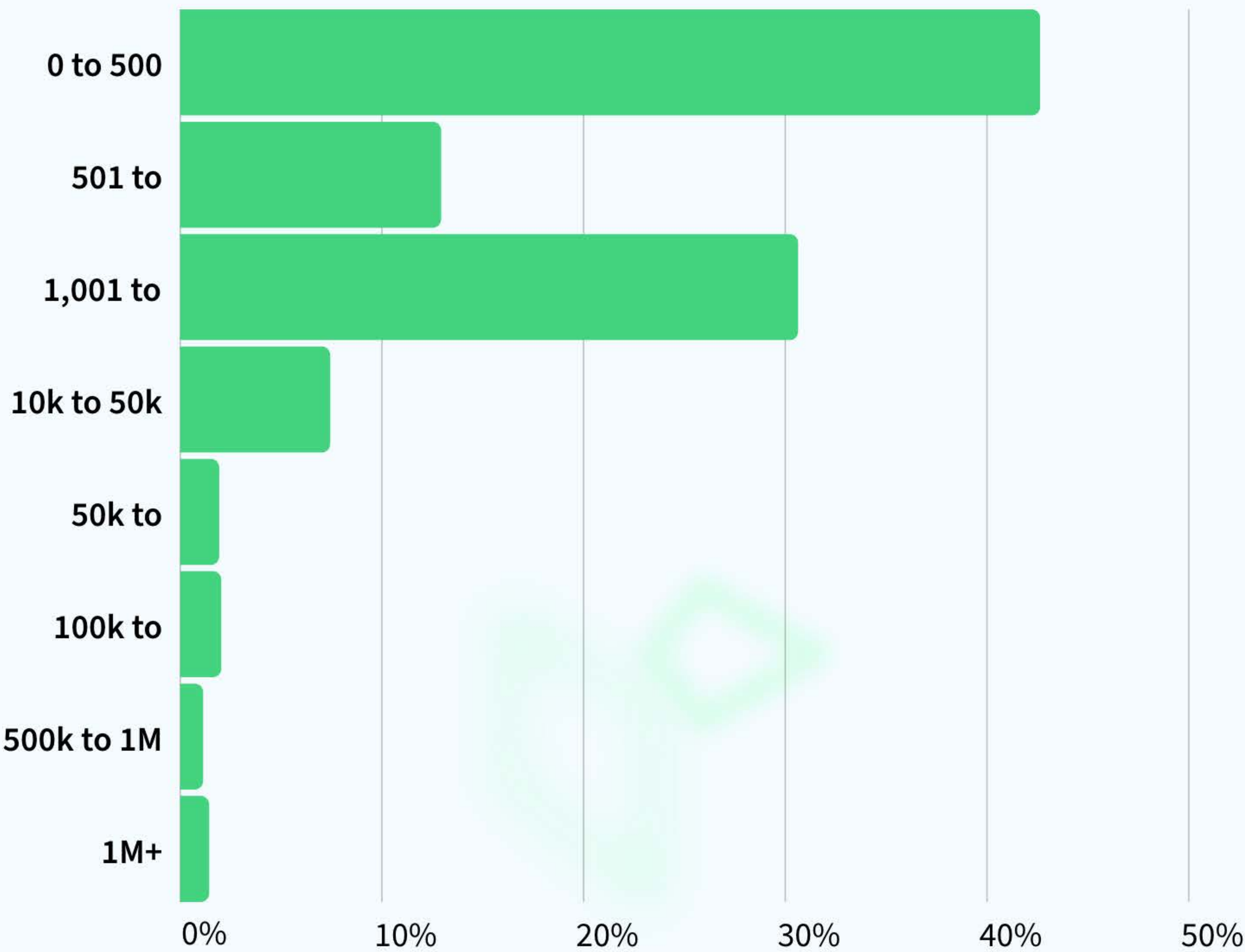
Frequency isn't the primary issue. Writing amazing emails that provide value is. If your emails are incredibly entertaining, informative, and engaging, you can send as many emails as you want. Our best customers want us to send more emails – even twice a day. Yes, you should watch your open rates and unsubscribe rates closely, but some of this won't show up in the metrics. You just know it when you see it.

Ramit Sethi

Author & Founder of I Will Teach You To Be Rich

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How many email subscribers do you have?



43% of small businesses have 0 to 500 email subscribers.
Less than 7% of small businesses have more than 50,000 email subscribers.

How list size impacts email marketing strategies.

42% of small businesses with over 500 subscribers have effective or very effective email marketing strategies.

Only 20% of small businesses with 500 or less subscribers have effective or very effective email marketing strategies.



Use every opportunity and touch point you can to grow your list. It goes without saying that the bigger your list, the more conversions you can achieve. Ensure your subscribe form is above the fold, in a prominent, easy-to-access position on your website. Have this form available on every page of your site.

Kath Pay
CEO and Founder of Holistic Email Marketing

Learn how to grow your list in just minutes a day!

Enroll in AWeber’s free online list growth course to discover the must-have tools for kickstarting list growth.

[Enroll today](#)

Small Business Email Copy Statistics

Your email copy has a huge impact on whether or not your subscribers open, click, and convert. Good copy performs better — always.

And as more and more emails flood the inbox, masterful copy matters more than ever. If your team can write well, you'll stand out in a sea of average emails.

In this section, you'll see how small businesses write their copy, how effective it is, and how copy affects open and click-through rates..

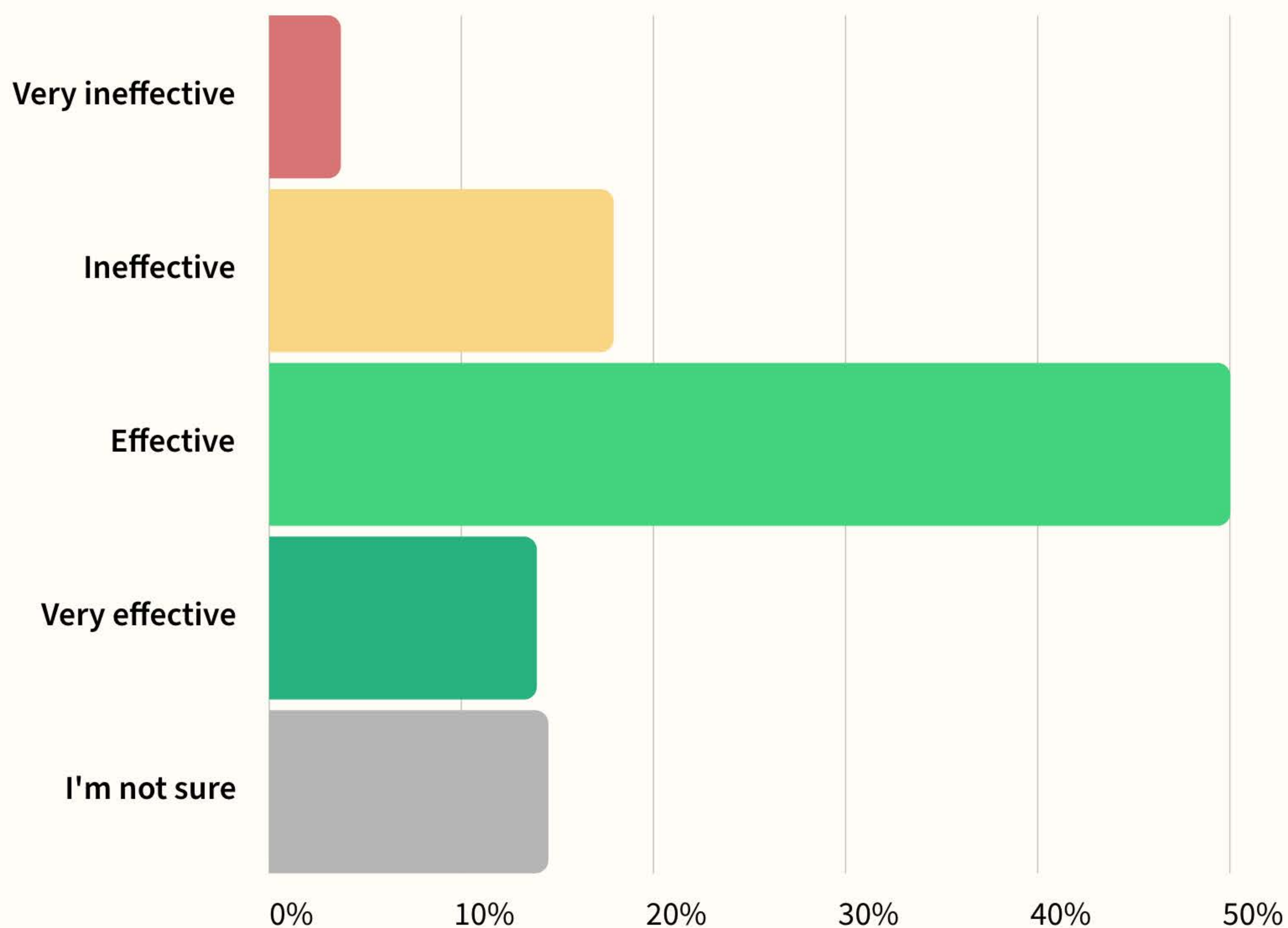
Plus, professional writers share their advice for writing copy that convinces your subscribers to take action.

Liz Willits

Senior Content Marketing Specialist
AWeber



How effective is your email copy?



64% of small businesses say their email copy is effective or very effective.

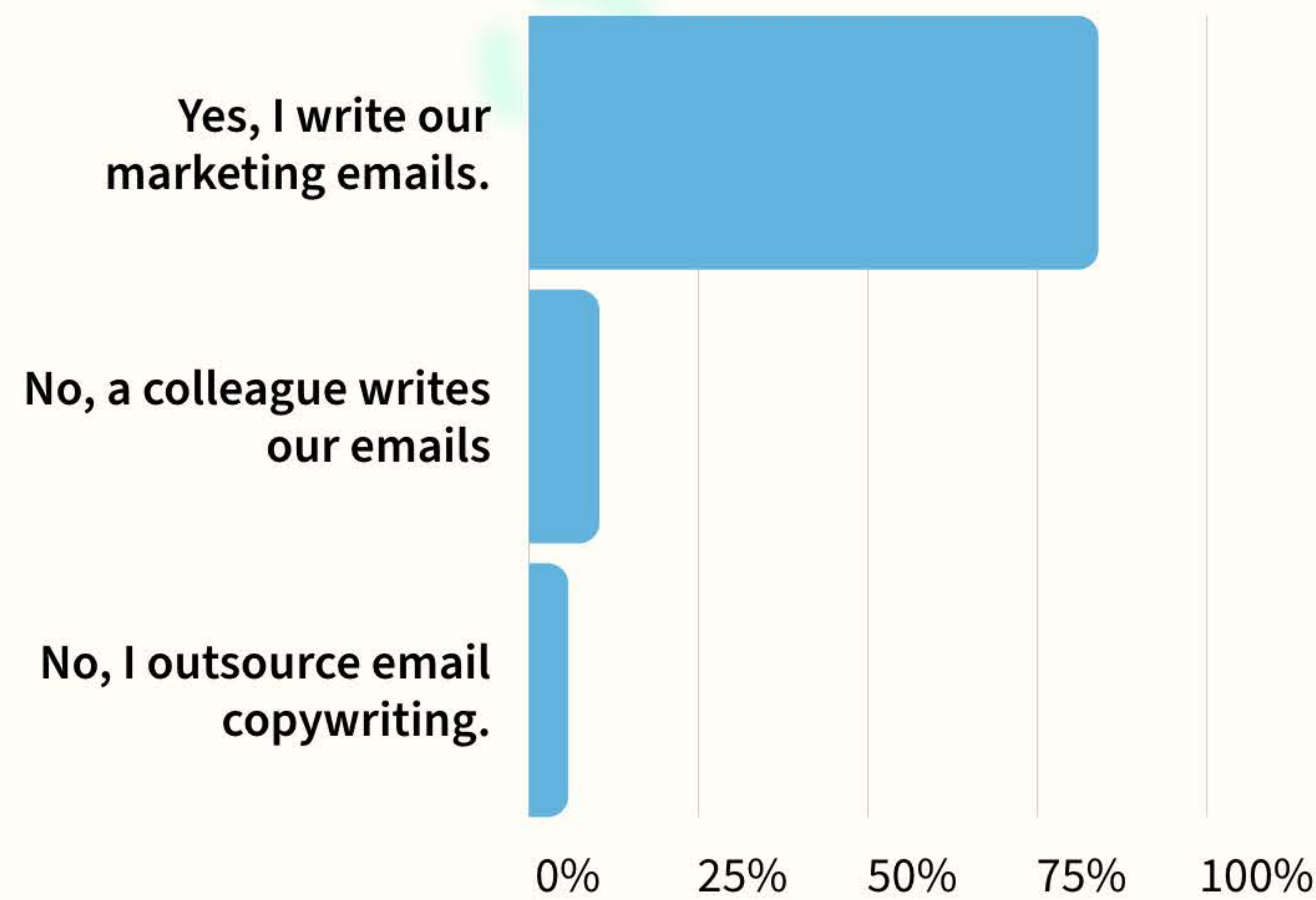
22% of small businesses admit their email copy is ineffective.



Get to know your customers. Do interviews, learn more about them. What keeps them up at night? What matters most to them? Ask them questions with long-form answers and record those answers. Then use that voice-of-customer copy in your emails. Put it in subject lines and body copy and CTA buttons. Fill your emails with a blend of their voice and your brand voice and your customers will instantly feel connected to your brand.

Val Geisler

CEO of Fix My Churn



Do you write your marketing emails?

94% of small businesses write their own marketing emails instead of outsourcing their copywriting.



Write to one person. Not a segment or customer base or persona. One. Person. At. One. Time.

Ann Handley

Chief Content Officer of MarketingProfs

Does effective email copy increase open and click-through rates?

61% of small businesses with effective or very effective email copy have click-through rates of 6% or higher.

45% of small businesses with effective or very effective email copy have average open rates of 26% or higher.

Small Business Email Design Statistics

For small businesses, email design often plays a secondary role. But it shouldn't.

Brand consistency and effective email design make it easy for readers to recognize and trust you. On top of that, email design impacts whether or not your subscribers take action or convert.

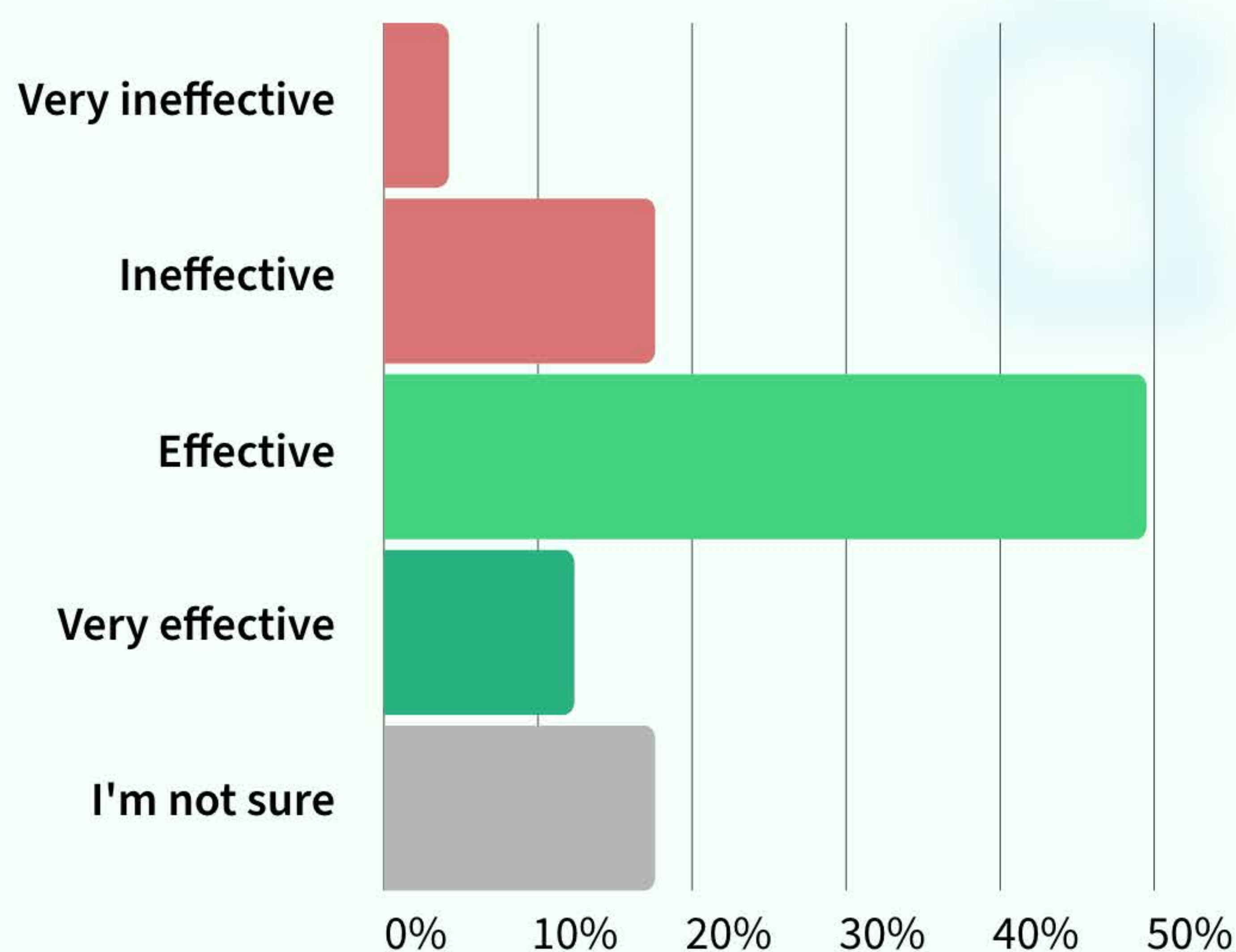
In this section, we'll investigate how small businesses use imagery, links, plain-text emails, HTML emails, and more in their email marketing.

Plus, you'll see how these design choices impact email engagement.

Jesse Kennedy
Creative Director
AWeber



How effective is your email design?



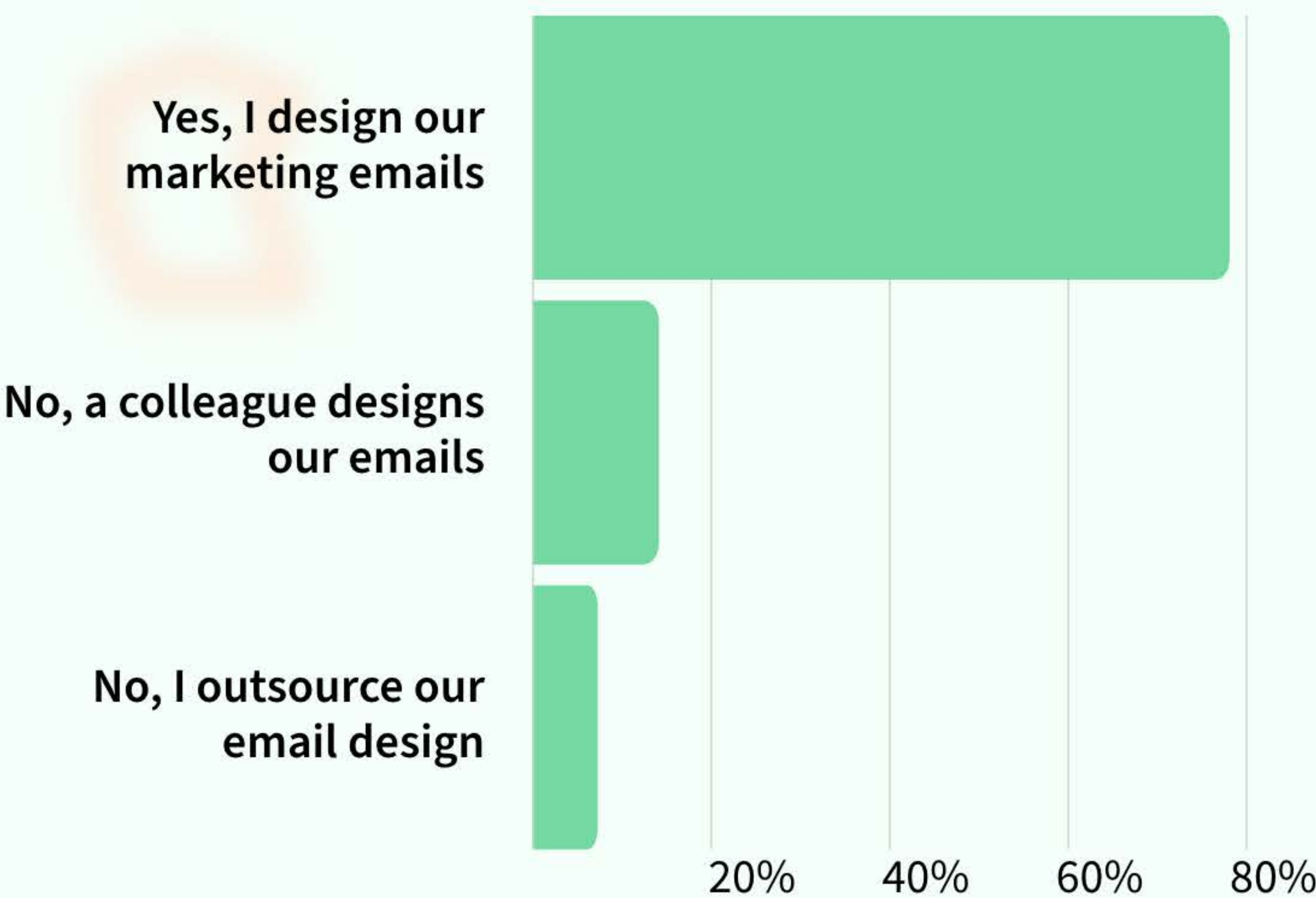
62% of small businesses say their email design is effective or very effective.

21% of small businesses admit their email design is ineffective or very ineffective.

60% of small businesses with effective or very effective email design have average click-through rates of 6% or higher.

Do you design your marketing emails?

90% of small businesses design their own emails instead of outsourcing their email design.

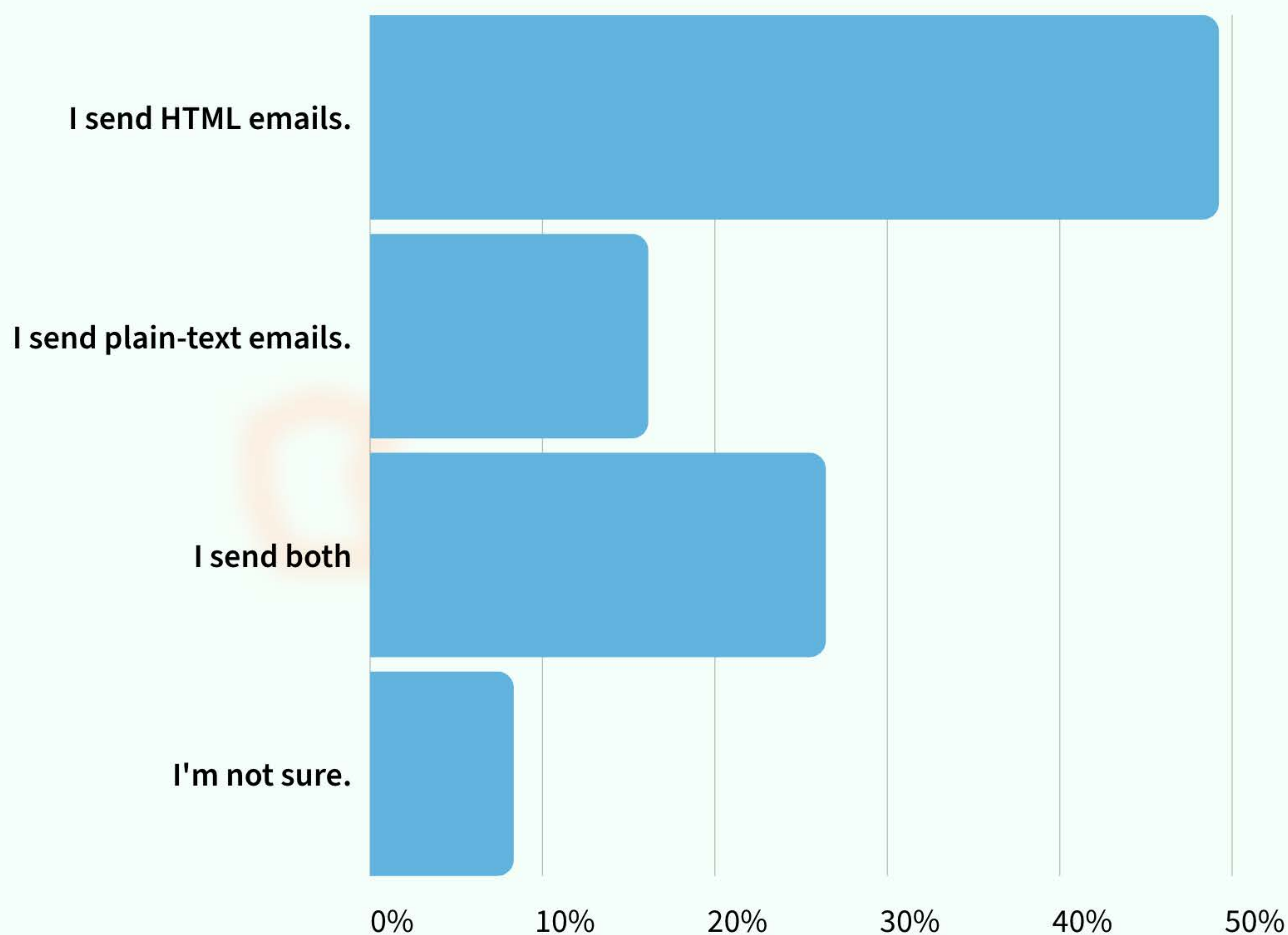


Need help designing an email template?

Use AWeber’s Smart Designer to build a custom email template in seconds.

Try it today

Do you send HTML or plain-text emails?



HTML emails are the most used email type for small businesses.
Only 16% of small businesses send plain-text emails alone.



The old adage that a picture is worth a thousand words is more true than ever in the age of Instagram. That’s why nearly all promotional emails — from both B2C and B2B brands — are HTML emails with images. Visual communication is essential to selling physical products, most services, and anything lifestyle-oriented. Plain-text emails are best for simple messages like password-reset emails, and for urgent, quick messages like alerts.

Chad White

Head of Research at Oracle CX Marketing Consulting and author of “Email Marketing Rules”



The most important element in any email design is the message — make sure what you say is useful and engaging for your audience. Design can help you get your message across in an easy-to-understand way. But without a solid message, a strong visual design alone won't deliver results.

Elliot Ross

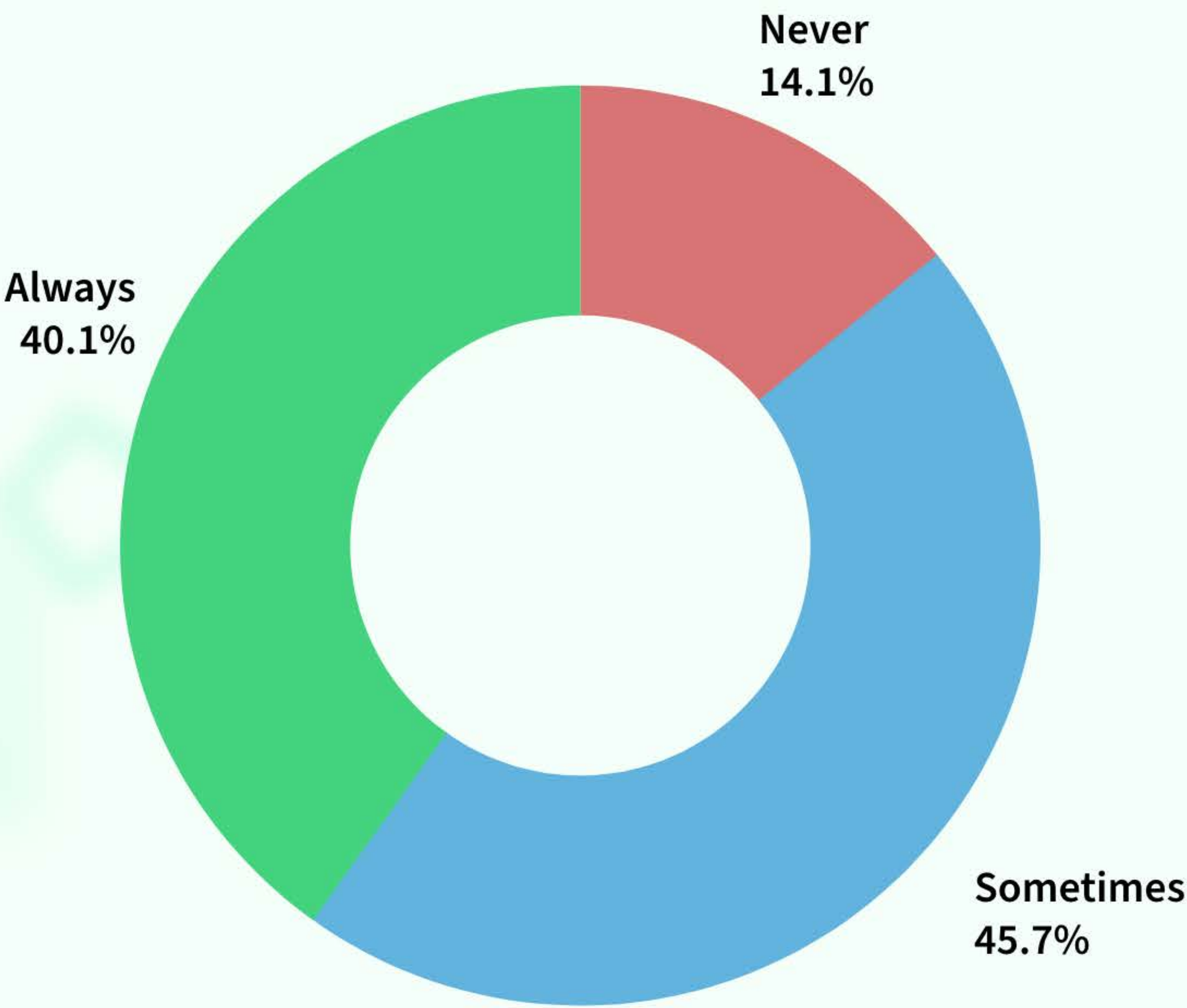
CEO and Founder of Taxi for Email & Founder of Action Rocket

Do you use images in your emails?

86% of small businesses use images in their emails sometimes or always.

88% of small businesses with effective or very effective email marketing strategies use images in their emails sometimes or always.

57% of small businesses who always include images in their emails get average click-through rates of 6% or higher.



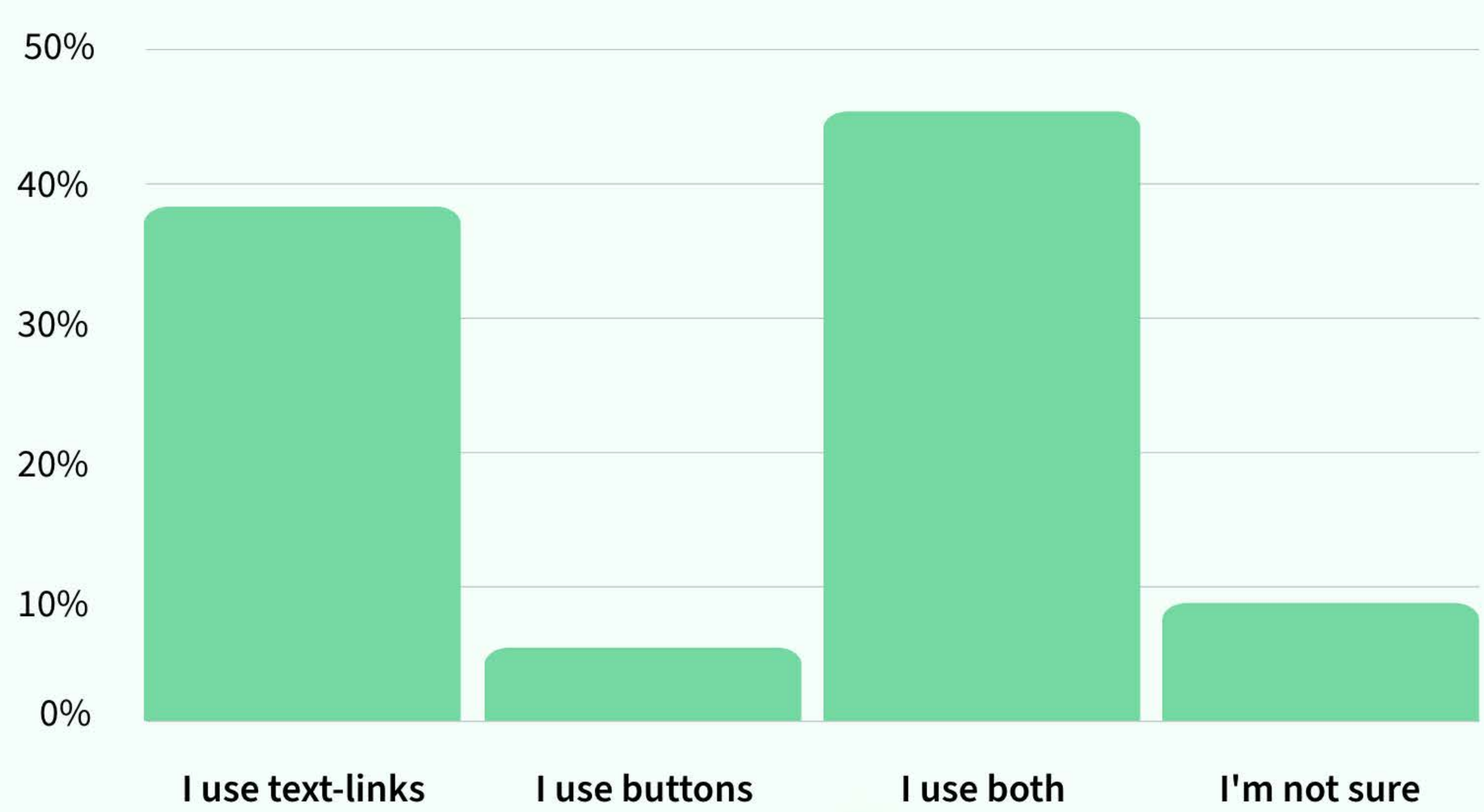
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When you understand your customers' needs, you'll understand if images serve that need more expediently, or more fully than words. Make a decision based on what you know about the customer.

Matthew Smith
 Founder of Really Good Emails and Fathom & Draft

Do you use hyperlinked text, buttons, or both for your email calls to action?



38% of small businesses use hyperlinked text for their email call-to-action links.

58% of businesses who use only buttons for email call-to-action links have click-through rates of 6% or higher.

47% of small businesses use both hyperlinked text and buttons for their email call-to-action links.

Only 49% of small businesses who use only hyperlinked text for their email call to actions have click through rates of 6% or higher.



Now more than ever we need a tool like email to build connection and intimacy with our audience. They want to be seen above anything else, and emailing is one of many ways you can do that for them. The advantage of email over social media is that it's not a fleeting post. You don't have to 'figure out the algorithm.' Your subscribers proactively chose to build this relationship with you and they want to know what's going on in your life and your business. Let them in.

Cathy Heller

Host of Don't Keep Your Day Job Podcast

Methodology

The data in this research was collected from an online survey of over 1,222 small business marketers.

The survey consisted of 20 total multiple-choice questions.

Top Email Marketing Experts



Ann Handley

Chief Content Officer of MarketingProfs

Ann Handley is a Wall Street Journal bestselling author who speaks worldwide about how businesses can escape marketing mediocrity to ignite tangible results. IBM named her one of the 7 people shaping modern marketing. She is the Chief Content Officer of MarketingProfs; a LinkedIn Influencer; a keynote speaker, mom, dog person, and writer.



Val Geisler

CEO of Fix My Churn

Val Geisler is ridiculously obsessed with email. An Email Marketing Conversion Copywriter and Strategist, Val spent over a decade on the inside of companies from non-profits to 7-figure businesses to tech startups. She brings her background in content creation, customer experience, and digital strategy to her incredible clients every day.



Chad White

Head of Research at Oracle CX Marketing Consulting

Chad S. White is the author of Email Marketing Rules and more than 3,000 posts and articles about email marketing trends and best practices. Over the past 14 years, he has served as an email marketing researcher at four of the largest email service providers—Oracle, Salesforce, ExactTarget, and Responsys—as well as at Litmus and the Direct Marketing Association.



John Jantsch

President and Founder, Duct Tape Marketing

John Jantsch is a marketing consultant, speaker, and author of Duct Tape Marketing, Duct Tape Selling, The Commitment Engine, SEO for Growth, and The Referral Engine and the founder of the Duct Tape Marketing Consultant Network. His latest book, The Self-Reliant Entrepreneur: 366 Daily Meditations to Feed Your Soul and Grow Your Business, is a daily reminder to entrepreneurs that a better you makes a better business.

Top Email Marketing Experts



Mark Asquith

Co-Founder & CEO of Rebel Base Media

Mark Asquith is CEO and co-founder of Rebel Base Media, a leading podcast company in the United Kingdom. One of today's most-experienced podcast experts, he helped create and grow Captivate.fm (a podcast hosting, analytics, and distribution platform), Podcast Websites (the world's #1 managed WordPress platform for podcasters), and Podcast Success Academy. Mark speaks internationally at tech, business, and podcast events.



Ramit Sethi

Author & Founder of I Will Teach You To Be Rich

Ramit Sethi is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of iwillteachyoutoberich.com, which helps people automate their finances so they can get on with their lives. He combines his experience in social influence and persuasion with personal finance to focus on the tactical and psychological aspects of behavior change. He's been featured on the Today Show, The New York Times, and The Wall Street Journal.



Matthew Smith

Founder of Really Good Emails and Fathom & Draft

Matthew Smith is either two wily bear cubs stacked in a trenchcoat or a full grown man—some days it's hard to tell. He runs Fathom & Draft and Really Good Emails, two businesses born from his obsession with designing the relationship between customer and organization. He's worked directly with clients like Walmart, Seth Godin, Gates Foundation and MIT to blatantly name drop. All of this feeds his talks on design, emotional intelligence, email, business, the euphoria of Japanese Ramen, and The Golden Age of Email—it's coming, so strap on your spam pants and brace yourself.



Kath Pay

CEO and Founder of Holistic Email Marketing

Kath Pay is CEO and Founder of Holistic Email Marketing. With over 21 years of email marketing experience and 10 years on the UK DMA Email Marketing Council, she has participated as a judge numerous times for DMA Awards and she is regarded as an international industry thought leader.

Top Email Marketing Experts



Elliot Ross

CEO and Founder of Taxi for Email & Founder of Action Rocket

Elliot Ross is passionate about pushing email design to provide the best experience possible for audiences. He founded ActionRocket, the creative studio for email, and co-founded Taxi for Email, a platform that helps marketers make great email campaigns. Over 15 years he's designed award winning campaigns for brands including London 2012, BBC, IKEA, British Airways and Sky. He speaks on email design at conferences for Litmus, eBay and IBM, authors the Email Design Review blog and hosts the EmailTalk Podcast.



Cathy Heller

Host of Don't Keep Your Day Job Podcast

Cathy Heller is the host of the popular podcast Don't Keep Your Day Job, which was given the #1 spot on iTunes recommended list of shows in 2018 and 2019. Each week on her show, Cathy encourages thousands of listeners to find more purpose in their life and coaches them on how to get paid full time to do what they love. Cathy's podcast has been featured in Forbes, Entrepreneur, HuffPost, the NY Times, and Inc., and has more than 11 million downloads. She has interviewed dozens of celebrities and famous entrepreneurs, like actress Jenna Fischer, marketing guru Seth Godin, Starbucks former CEO Howard Schultz, and more!