



Deliverability 101: Fundamentals



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ITERABLE



Agenda

- 01** Introduction to Deliverability & Reputation
- 02** Group Exercise
- 03** Common Issues
- 04** Questions
- 05** **Break**
- 06** User Inactivity
- 07** Group Exercise
- 08** Re-engagement strategies
- 09** Questions

Housekeeping

Location Logistics

Bathroom break, snacks, drinks,
outlets, get up and stretch...

...take the time you need to for the
things you need!



Housekeeping

Session Info

We will have a portion of **time dedicated for Q&A** but feel free to ask questions for the Iterable folks walking around

We want your feedback! Please be sure to fill out the post event survey in the follow-up email



Slido for questions

Slido.com / code: 2241450



Introduction to Deliverability



What is Deliverability?

A measurement of whether an email ends up in recipients inbox or spam folder after its accepted for delivery.

That online order that requires a signature. Is someone home to sign for it (inbox) or do you have to then go to a specific location such as the post office to collect the item (spam folder)

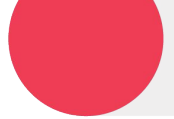
Why Deliverability Matters

1. Only email that makes it to the inbox is likely to be opened
2. Recipients need to see and open that email before they have the opportunity to click
3. Email may be less expensive than other forms of advertising or communication, but if you can't reach your subscribers, the ROI from your campaign will be zero.



**ROI generated by email
for every \$1 spend**

Litmus



Why is Deliverability getting so challenging?

1 Increased Global Sending

- Pandemic changed purchase behaviors
- Competition for eye share in the inbox

2 Ever Extending Holiday Season

- What used to be 6 weeks is now 3 months

3 Health Conditions

- Forecasts around COVID, Flu, RSV etc driving more to shop online

4 Apple MPP

- Misleading impression that many emails are opened
- Inbox placement to Apple can be deceiving

Introduction To Reputation



“

It takes many good deeds to build a good reputation, and only one bad one to lose it.

- Benjamin Franklin



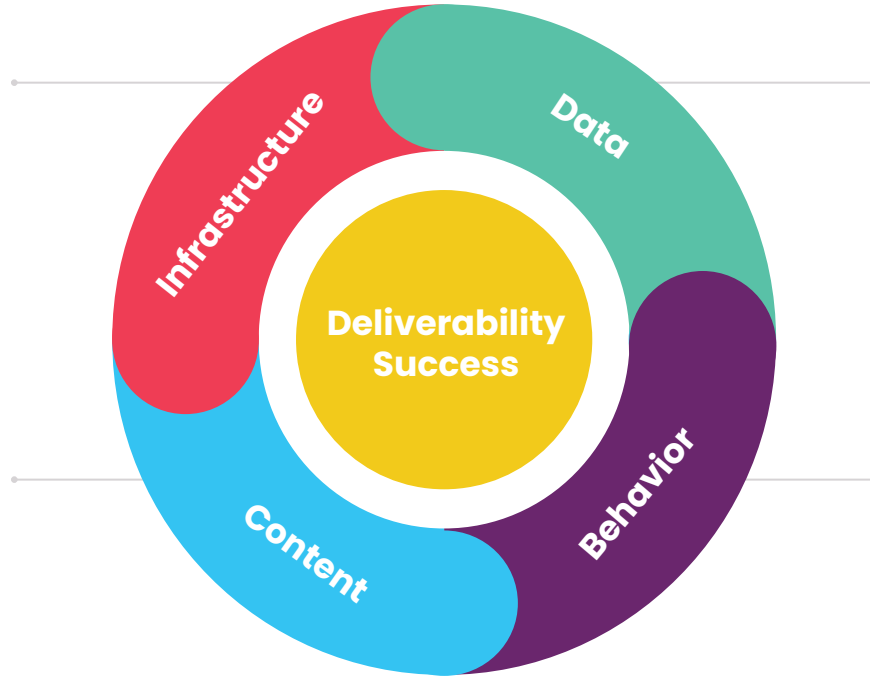
What are Reputation Factors?

Infrastructure

- Authentication
- IP configuration
- IP allocation
- Bounce Handling
- Feedback loops

Content

- Links/ Urls
- Template
- Multiple ESPs



Data

- Acquisition policies
- Selection/segmentation criteria
- Sunset/data hygiene policies
- Data quality

Behavior

- Frequency
- User Interaction
- Domain/IP reputation
- Blocklists

Control what you can control



Email Authentication

SPF

SPF allows senders to define which IP addresses are allowed to send mail on behalf of a particular domain.

DKIM

DKIM provides an encryption key and digital signature that verifies that an email message was not faked or altered in transit from the sending domain.

DMARC

DMARC isn't technically an email authentication protocol. It builds on SPF and DKIM to that allows domain owners to declare how they would like email from that domain to be handled if it fails an authorization test. This helps protect email senders and recipients from spam, spoofing, and phishing.



Shared IP's

Low volume or infrequent senders

Pros

- Cost-effective
- Established IP reputation
- Convenience
- Volume history

Cons

- Uncertain reputation
- Domain reputation
- Lack of control
- Decreased ability to mitigate issues

Dedicated IP's

Higher volume and consistency senders

Pros

- Reputation Ownership
- Accreditation and allow lists
- Monitoring
- Mitigations

Cons

- Volume spikes
- Volume history
- Cost





Opt In Best Practices

Be Upfront at Sign Up

- Set clear expectations with regards to content and frequency

Send to explicit opted in

- Subscribers should have familiarity or existing relationship
- Use DOI
- Sending to purchased, rented, borrowed or scraped addresses is highly risky and not recommended

Start with a Welcome

- Remind subscribers what they signed up for fairly soon after signing up
- Always include an Unsubscribe option

List Hygiene

- A healthy email list can expect to lose an average of 33% or more subscribers every year to unsubscribes, spam complaints, and simple abandoned email accounts.
- Proper segmentation can help keep lists fairly clean and prevent metrics from getting dragged down
- List validation tools can help for one-off or at subscriber sign up





Content & Creative

While weighted less more recently, it can still play a role

1 **Trigger words and exclamation points**

Judged more on user behavior
vs. actual words

2 **Text to Image Ratio**

While there's no hard & fast rule,
about a 60/40 ratio is good

3 **URL's & Links**

Avoid public URL shorteners like bit.ly

4 **Fingerprinting**

Too much recycled content can be
fingerprinted causing spam
placement loop

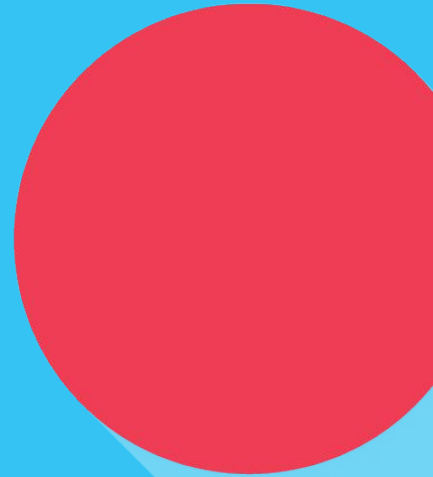
Tracking the metrics back to Reputation

Topline Engagement Metrics

Metric	✓	-	X
Open Rate (Unique)	>10%	3-9%	<2%
Aggregate Open	>20%	6-19%	<5%
Click rate (Unique)	>4%	2-3%	<1%
Hard bounce Rate	<0.5%	0.6-1%	>2%
Block Rate	<2%	3-4%	>5%
Unsubscribe Rate	<0.3%	0.4-0.9%	>1%
Spam/Complaint Rate	<0.08%	0.09-1%	0.2%

Group Break Out

What do the Mailbox Providers look for?





Group Break Out

1. Elect a scribe & speaker
2. Work with your group to imagine yourself in the shoes of the Postmaster at Google/Yahoo/Microsoft. Thinking about how you interact with your own mailbox, what behaviors or actions could you track that might indicate if a subscriber was interested or not interested in their mail coming into their inbox each day?

How does behavior affect reputation?



POSITIVE SIGNALS

- Opened
- Read
- Moved to folder
- "This is not spam"
- Forwarded
- Address book
- Replied
- Starring a Message



NEGATIVE SIGNALS

- Deleted - not opened
- Moved to spam
- Spam complaint

Common Issues



Common Issues

Increased Soft Bounces

Review the bounce response to look for clues

Higher Hard Bounces

Was new data added recently? Or was this existing data starting to trend up?

Decreased Open Rates

Specific to a campaign?
Gradual degradation over time?

Increased Soft Bounces

Did the bounce message mention:

Authentication

Review your SPF, DKIM & DMARC records

Blocklist

Apply for Delisting, if possible, then follow
Decreased Open Rates

Throttled/Rate Limits

Reduce sending volumes, then follow
Decreased Open Rates





Increased Soft Bounces

Did the bounce message mention:

Spam Content

- Run through filter test (Iterable Spam Checker, Litmus, Email on Acid)
- Remove elements and begin testing

Poor Reputation

- Work on improving your reputation as a sender
- Use tips from “Decreased Open Rates”



Hard Bounces

Was new data added?

- Review sources to isolate culprit
- Add DOI to source
- Look into Email Validation service
- Target more recently engage subscribers

Decreased Open Rates

Was new data added?

- Review provider reputation tools
- Higher complaints
- Localized to certain providers

Was it specific to a certain campaign or mail stream?

- Review audience segmentation
- Reduce segmentation

Gradual decline overall?

- Review overall segmentation and lifecycle strategy
- Work on sunsetting & winback campaigns
- Improve personalization and relevancy



Strong engagement starts with good data!

Be transparent

- Set clear expectations
- Don't trick people
- Use list validation on webforms
- Use double-optin

Send a welcome message

- Don't wait too long!
- Remind users what they signed up for
- Include an unsubscribe link

Nurture the relationship

- Provide valuable content
- Mail regularly
- Easy unsubscribe process



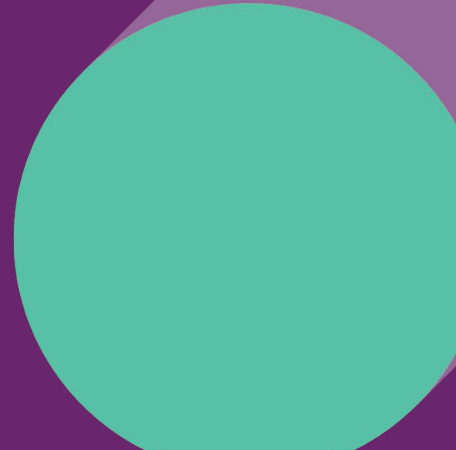
Pay Attention

Reputation affects Deliverability
and Deliverability affects
Reputation

Reputation and Deliverability go hand in hand. Build the foundation with that strong reputation and your deliverability will be solid, but once deliverability starts to falter, the deliverability will slowly erode and chip away.

Continue to review metrics and read the finer details as they might point out minor issues before they become bigger ones which will allow you to course correct much sooner.

Questions?



Slido for questions

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Break



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Deliverability Best Practices: Re-engagement strategies

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**Let's start with
a question**





What is a re-engagement campaign?

A re-engagement campaign is an email, or a sequence of emails sent to inactive subscribers. The goal of a re-engagement email is to get more people to interact with your emails and brand.

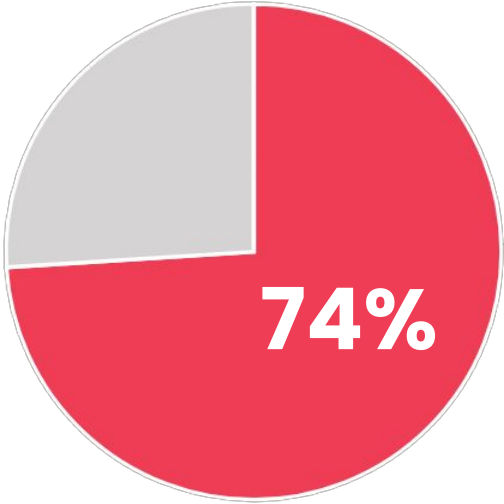





Defining inactivity





The key elements to successful deliverability today



-  Mailing cadence
-  Data Hygiene
-  User engagement



How it looks like to mailbox providers



POSITIVE SIGNALS

- Opened
- Read
- Moved to folder
- "This is not spam"
- Forwarded
- Address book
- Replied
- Starring a Message



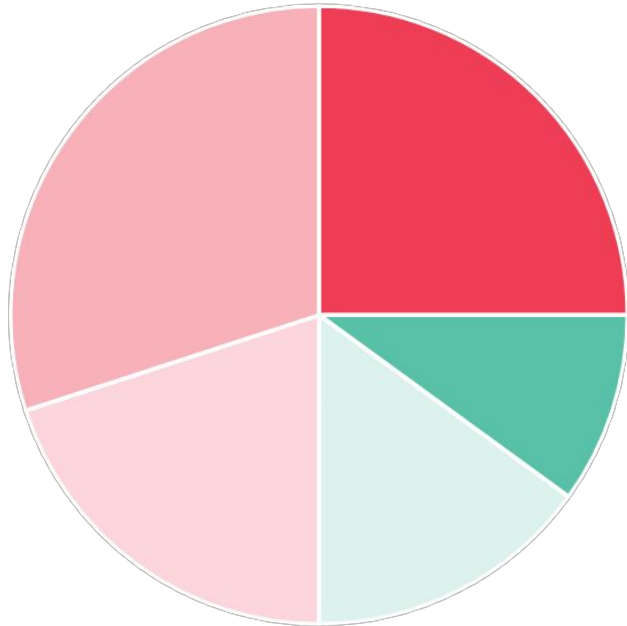
NEGATIVE SIGNALS

- Deleted - not opened
- Moved to spam
- Spam complaint
- Report Phishing

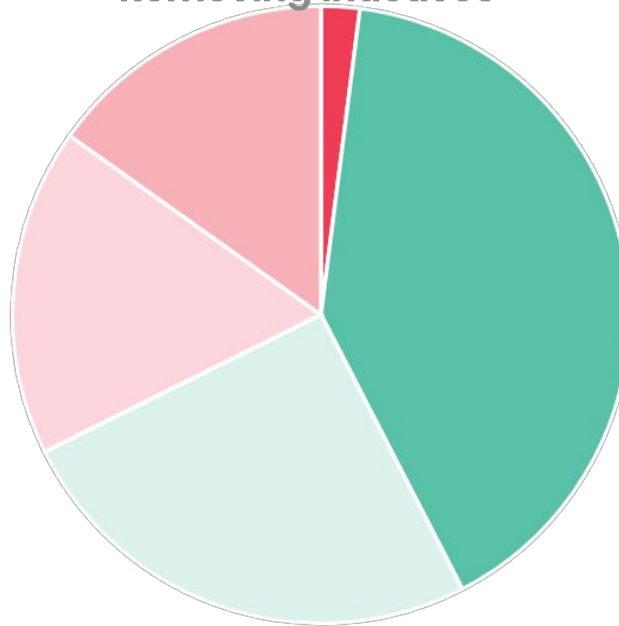


How it looks like to mailbox providers

Not removing inactives



Removing inactives



Last open / click in the last:

- 0-30 days
- 30-90 days
- 90-180 days
- 180 - 365 days
- No open / click



“Inactive subscribers purchase more frequently and are less likely to churn than customers who aren’t subscribed to your email list.”

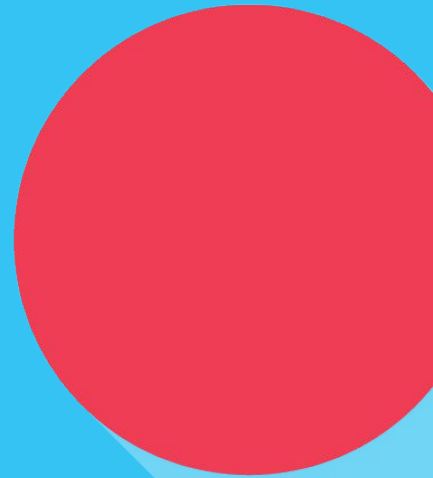
[Alchemy Worx study](#)



“Sending to recipients who haven’t engaged in six months is the kiss of death for your reputation.”

Hotmail’s Anti-Spam Team

Re-engagement Scenarios



Questions to Discuss at Your Table

1. How do you define user engagement?

- How frequently do you send?
- After how long would you consider someone “unengaged”?
- What are the data points available to you aside of email?

2. How can you address the following cohorts?

- Subscribed 30 days ago but has not yet engaged
- Subscribed a long time ago and never engaged
- Not engaging with email, but still generating revenue
- Used to engage but has stopped for a while

3. How do you convince the business to sunset users?

- What data points can you use to demonstrate the importance of a sunset policy when business is pushing to “keep mailing everybody”



“Different types of senders/sectors have different engagement models. For example, right now, your online tax filing company probably gets a ton of engagement, but in October, it may get nearly zero. Should you unsubscribe them after 6 months? Probably not. What about 2 years? Maybe so.”

Comcast Anti-Spam Team



Things to Consider

1

Standalone campaign or re-engagement series?

2

When to send first email?

3

How long between emails?

4

Other channels available outside of email?

5

Inactive types based on email / non-email activity?

6

How long before sunseting?

Engagement framework

Degrees of Risk With Your List

Subscribers with previous sign of life vs. no sign of life

Inactive type	0-3 Months	3-6 Months	6-9 Months	9-12 Months	12-18 Months	18+ Months
Previously engaged: Last open or click event	Green	Light Green	Light Blue	Yellow	Pink	Red
Never engaged: Subscription date	Light Green	Light Blue	Yellow	Pink	Red	Red

Scenario 1

Standalone re-engagement campaign

Preparation

- Consider a list cleanse
- Split volumes per inactivity buckets
- Use a specific creative
- Prepare a deployment plan

Deployment

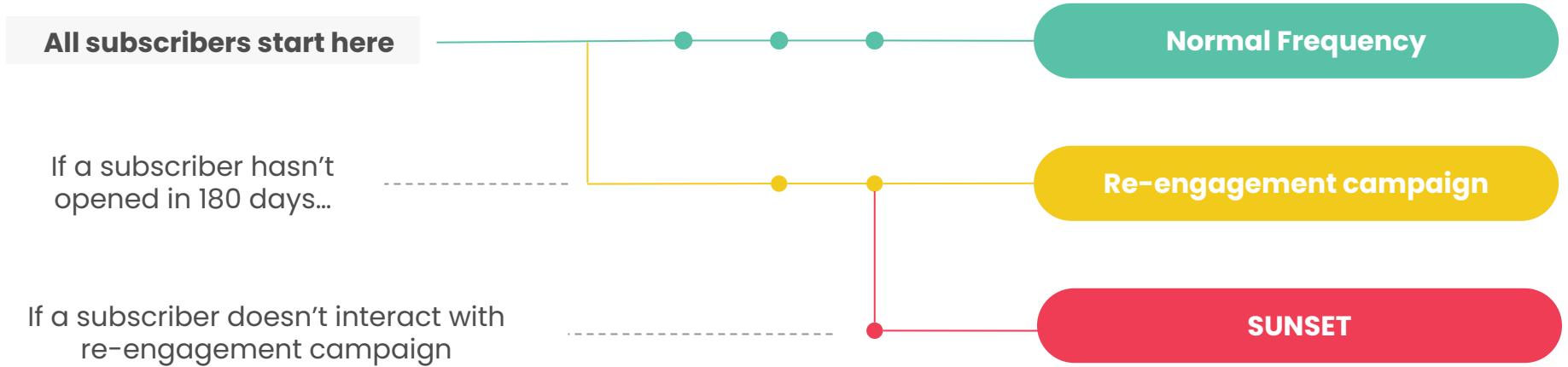
- Monitor
- Adapt the plan if issues

Next steps

- Stop mailing inactives
- Automate your sunset policy

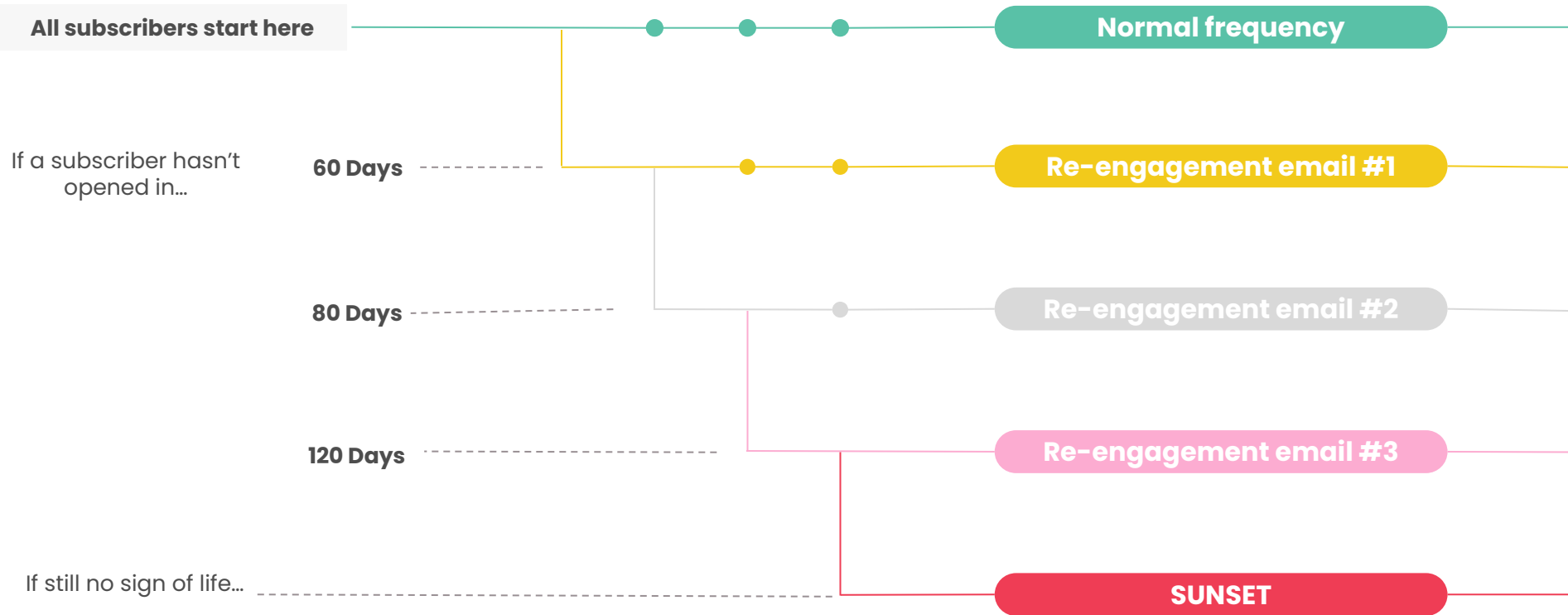
Scenario 2

Simple sunsetting workflow – one email



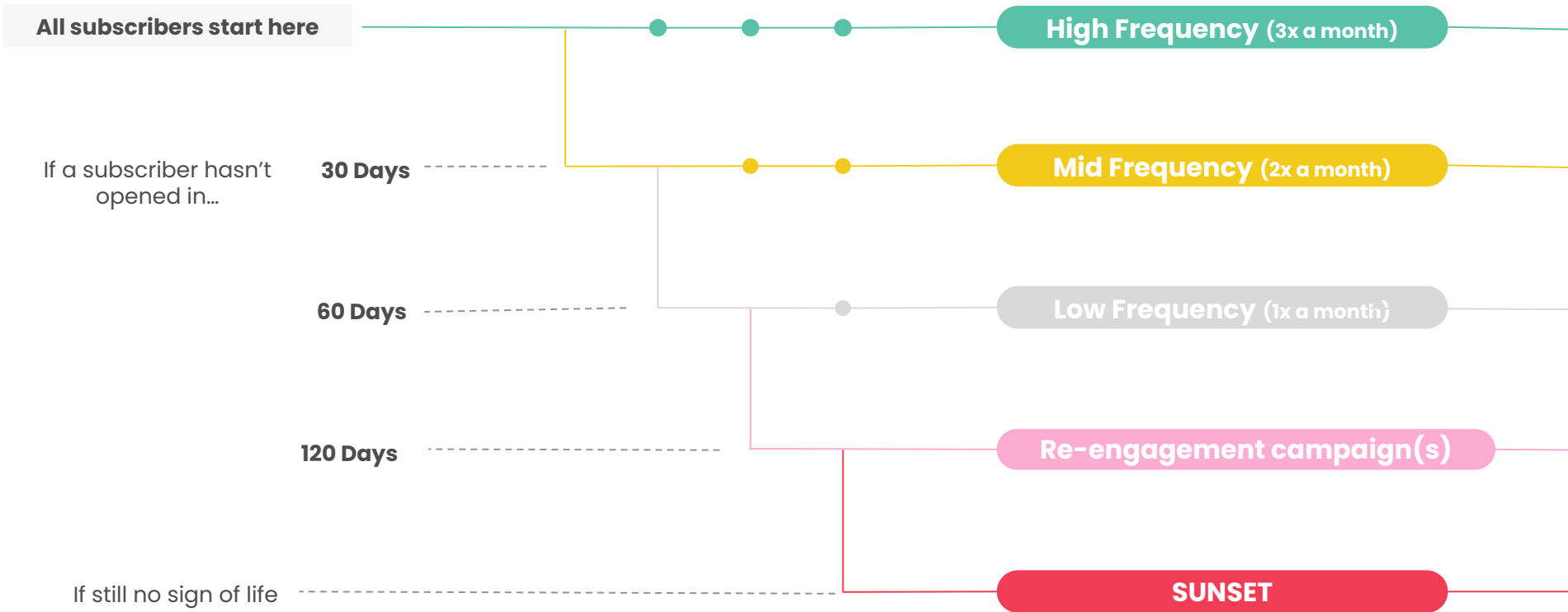
Scenario 3

Simple sunseting workflow – several emails







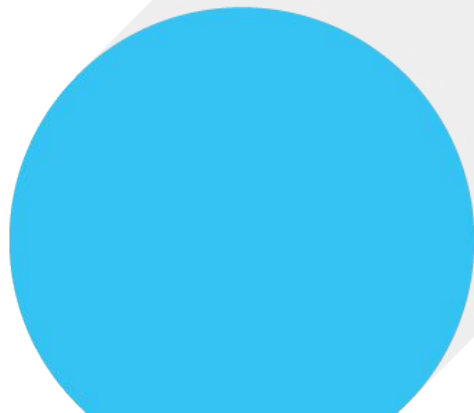
Scenario 4

Advanced sunsetting workflow



Additional tips

-  Use tighter engagement criteria if issues at certain mailbox providers (eg. Microsoft)
-  Address users who fail to engage in the first few weeks after subscribing
-  Adapt message if user is still engaged on website
-  Try leveraging other channels



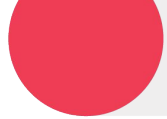
Top Mailbox Providers



Gmail

Things to keep in mind

- 1 Gmail applies more weight on Domain vs IP Reputation**
- 2 They do not reply on 3rd party blocklists**
- 3 Can be sensitive to high frequencies**
- 4 Non-traditional FeedBack Loop**



Gmail

Things to keep in mind

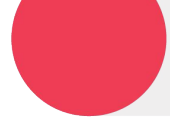
1 Tabs are not punishment

- Don't fight the tabs
- 34% of users use Tabs
(Validity 2022)
- Users are conditioned to find promotions here
- Use Annotations

2 Google Postmaster Tools & Compliance Dashboard

<https://postmaster.google.com/>

https://postmaster.google.com/v2/sender_compliance



Microsoft (Hotmail, Outlook, MSN, Live)

Things to keep in mind

1 Less sophisticated filtering

- IP Based
- Heavily engagement focused
- New senders guilty until proven innocent
- Domain age plays a factor
- Safe Senders generally bypass filters

2 Microsoft SNDS

<https://sendersupport.olc.protection.outlook.com/snds/>

- IP based Reputation monitoring
- Shows SmartScreen filtering status
- *"Sending to recipients who haven't engaged in six months is the kiss of death for your reputation."*
- Hotmail Anti-spam Team



Yahoo/AOL/Verizon

Things to keep in mind

1 Higher deferral likelihood

- Spikes caused by Volumes or Complaints
- Usually temporary
- Feedback Loop is Domain Based


2 Yahoo will filter and throttle mail based on IP, Domain, and Content Reputation

3 DMARC Enforcement

- DMARC is active on their domains so you can't use @yahoo.com as From address

Summary





If you want to learn more about Iterable's Deliverability Services and how we support our customers...

- **Current Customers:**

You can reach out to your Customer Success Manager for more information

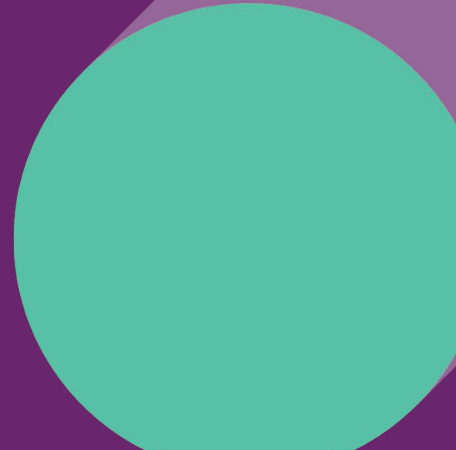
- **Prospects:**

You can reach out to your Account Executive for more information

OR...

- **Talk with me after this session!**

Questions?



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Thank You



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