

# What email updates from Google, Apple, and AI mean for marketers, according to an expert

Article

Email marketing has been threatened recently by changes from Apple and Google, and email marketers are working to stay on top of industry shifts. Here are four burning questions about

email marketing's recent shifts.

**Key stat:** 62% of US B2B and B2C marketers **increased their email marketing budgets** in the past 12 months, according to an April 2023 study from SeQuel Response and ISG.

### **What ended up happening with Apple's iOS 17 email changes?**

Marketers raised concerns in June when **Apple announced its iOS 17** would provide "even greater protections against trackers," but those issues have not panned out.

"Nobody cares. It doesn't affect email. It's not affecting email," said Ryan Phelan, managing partner at marketing company RPEOrigin. "I have not seen any effect."

### **What do Google's new Gmail spam protections mean for marketers?**

Last week, **Google announced new rules for bulk senders**, requiring authentication of emails, easy unsubscription, and a spam rate threshold enforcement. If email marketers are already following best practices, these changes won't be cataclysmic, Phelan said.

"What Google is doing is just putting the screws to people that are not responsible senders. I don't see this as a big impact. I see this as more definition of how they block spam at the door," said Phelan, who noted that high-quality senders already adhere to these practices.

That could be good news for email marketers who are doing things right. "It's designed to make it easier for consumers to manage their inbox and the flood of information that comes to them," said Phelan, meaning users may be more willing to pay attention to those emails that make it past the spam protections.

And for those who aren't adhering to Gmail's rules yet, "get authenticated. **Get your DKIM [DomainKeys Identified Mail], SPF [Sender Policy Framework], and DMARC [Domain-based Message Authentication Reporting and Conformance]** setup." said Phelan. "Make it easy to unsubscribe, don't make it hard. Don't be slimy."

### **What KPIs should email marketers be watching now?**

Since Apple's AppTrackingTransparency shook up the email marketing industry in 2021, marketers have had to rethink what metrics matter most.

"Opens are dead for all intents and purposes," said Phelan, noting that opens can still indicate directional trends, but marketers should be looking at click-based activity.

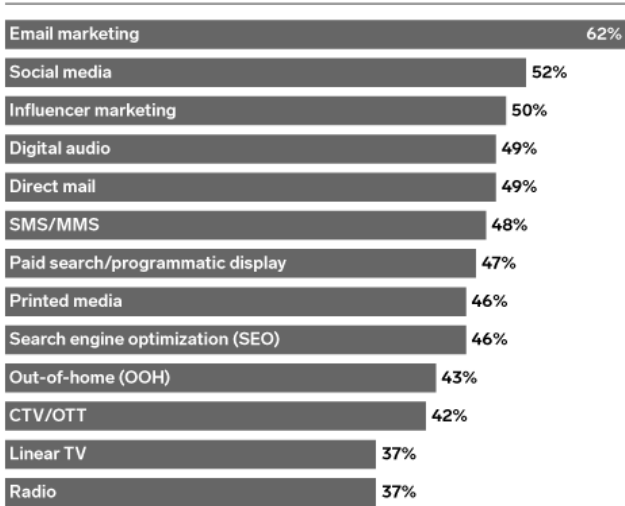
## What is the future of email marketing?

AI. As marketers send more and more emails, senders will be using AI for better segmentation and email service providers will use AI to prevent inboxes from getting even more cluttered.

“AI presents an incredible opportunity for us to get at-scale growth through technology,” Phelan said. “It's not mature now, but I think in the next four months, you're going to see a maturity of solutions that come to the email marketers aid to make things easier, make things smarter.”

### Areas of Their Direct Marketing Budget That Has Increased in the Past 12 Months According to US B2B and B2C Marketers, April 2023

% of respondents



Note: Respondents were asked, "How has your budget for the following direct marketing strategies changed in the last 12 months?"  
Source: SeQuel Response and ISG, "The 2023 Direct Mail Marketing Benchmark Report," Aug 29, 2023

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