

Should Unsubscribes Be a Cause for Concern?

Shoppers tire of retail emails for many reasons

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No email marketer wants to see an unsubscribe. And even with providing post-unsubscribe check boxes to gather user feedback, motivations aren't always clear.

How concerned should retailers be with email unsubscribers?

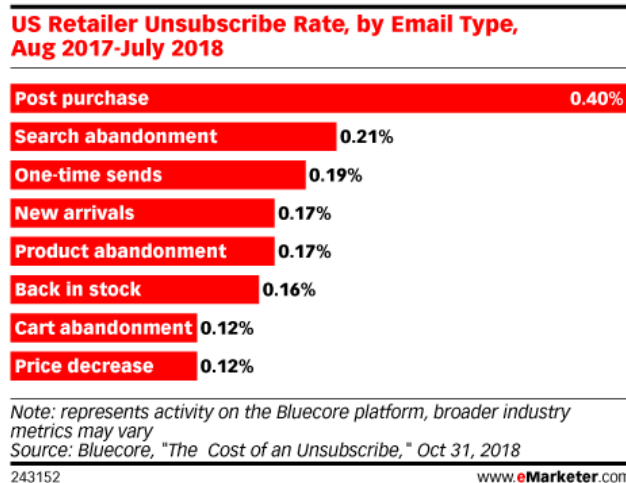
A new study from retail marketing platform **Bluecore** found that a majority of unsubscribers (77%) never bought anything from a merchant for which they signed up for emails. Far fewer were one-time buyers (13%) or multi-time buyers (10%).

All retail verticals aren't equal, though. Jewelry, health and beauty and food and beverage retailers all have a high proportion of unsubscribes from nonbuyers, while B2B retailers have the highest number of unsubscribes from multi-time buyers (44.3%) compared with nonbuyers (53.6%). Toys and gifts retailers had the highest amount of one-time buyers unsubscribing (31.8%).

When compared with email recipients generally, 55% were nonbuyers, 26% one-time buyers and 19% multi-time buyers. The overindexing of unsubscribers who never bought anything means the impact on sales is softened, but it also reflects lost revenues potential.

It's hard to quantify lost opportunities for engagement, brand awareness and obtaining customer data. But according to Bluecore, a retailer with an average order value of \$50 loses \$17.92 in revenues for each unsubscriber.

Looking at types of emails, post-purchase messages trigger the most unsubscribes (0.40%), roughly double the closest competitor, search abandonment emails (0.21%). This implies that shoppers often subscribe to a retailer's email for a one-time discount then lose interest in further messages.



Email is still a preferred way for shoppers to receive offers, after all. But the top reason why a digital buyer would ignore a retailer's email—though not necessarily unsubscribe—is that they simply receive too many emails. Over half (55%) cited this irritant in a survey by YesLifecyle, followed closely by irrelevant product recommendations (50%).

None of this is a secret, yet brands persist in sending generic email blasts. Why?

Partly because personalized email requires sophisticated uses of data and is more costly, according to Allen Nance, CMO of Emarsys, a marketing tech firm. "Marketers run the risk of investing more time, resources and budget and potentially not seeing the same return they get from their weekly blasted promotional code," he said.

Read more about [why people unsubscribe from email lists](#) and see email marketing benchmark data in eMarketer's report "[Email Marketing StatPack 2018: Trends and Benchmarks](#)."

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