



# Influencing Consumer Response in Email Marketing

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<b>Abstract:</b> <p>Email marketing is one of the most applied methods of communication in digital marketing. This is interesting, because today's consumers are surrounded by a constantly developing digital landscape and yet email marketing has remained similar for decades. Email is a cost effective and optimized platform that can be automated efficiently. There do exist possibilities to develop email marketing further. This can be done by personalizing the marketing messages in detail. Personalizing and timing the emails correctly is important. Timing emails correctly with personalized message will enhance consumer response in email marketing.</p> <p>Another aspect of email marketing is to integrate email marketing campaigns with other platforms such as SMS messaging, web site registering or social media following. This method is called cross-channel integration. Cross-channel integration has not been vastly studied in this context; thus, it is relevant to study in this master's thesis. Ultimately email marketing allows for influencing consumers and this thesis will study various possibilities to do so. The key focus is how it would be possible to affect consumer response, ergo actions in email marketing efforts.</p> <p>The research questions are about the three presented categories: timing, personalization, and cross-channel integration in email marketing. These variables are all compared against how this influence consumer response. The research methods of this thesis are quantitative methods. Online survey was used to get the data for the study with snowball sampling methods.</p> <p>The empirical findings of this research contribute to the existing studies and the results indicate that there is a possibility to enhance high level of personalization and timing in email marketing. The results indicated that the highest method of influencing consumer response is to develop satisfactory cross-channel integration methods in email marketing.</p>	
<b>Keywords:</b> consumer response, timing, email marketing, cross-channel integration, personalization, consumer satisfaction, digital marketing, automation	

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Email marketing is one of the most common methods of digital marketing. Email allows direct marketing communication, longevity, and integration with consumers that function seamlessly. Some social media trends vary and trend momentarily, but email has remained as one of the most optimized and utilized digital marketing tool (Khedkar & Khedkar, 2021). The reasons why email as channel of communication has remained as one of the most essential parts in digital marketing are several. Billions of marketing emails are sent daily, and email marketing has countlessly proven to be effective (Kanich et al, 2008). Automation is simple to implement in email marketing campaigns and the costs are low in general. However, email marketing has some disadvantages as a communication channel, one being, on how to distinguish an email as marketing effort that the whole email is read (Bostanshirin, 2014). Another aspect is to differ enough that the email does not bury into the clutter in consumers' inbox. Consequently, additional disadvantage is to certainly get through the default spam filter of the email service provider (Kanich et al, 2008). However, the advantages are larger, hence the nature of email where customization and low cost is the most probable solution. Therefore, there are factors that can positively influence received email marketing. As email is highly measurable, it is also, a great channel to test run certain tools like machine learning and AI. Hence, it is interesting to study email marketing and examine how expectations are met in consumers in general and does there exist any strong factors that can influence consumers effectively. For instance, how is hyper personalized content, timing, and multi-platform cross-channel integration experienced and how does it impact on consumer response (Wang, 2021; Hartemo 2022, Thomas, Chen, C. & Iacobucci, 2022).

All online digital marketers are depending on collected and purchased data to be able to tailor their messages in email marketing (Hartemo, 2022). Automation and exact computation can achieve high level of personalization in email marketing that could be even created in real time by the marketer to a consumer (Yun et al, 2020). What email marketing does provide is large quantities of data. This allows for a great way for market segmenting of dividing a large customer base into smaller groups based on certain characteristics. These characteristics include demographics, behaviour, needs, timing, and preferences (Wang, 2021; Hartemo 2022, Thomas, Chen, C. & Iacobucci, 2022). Additionally, this is generally useful for email marketers, since they can personalize their email marketing campaigns to each group, in a best time to trigger the mail, and truly

making them more effective simultaneously increasing the chances of converting acquired data or leads into new customers.

Digital market segmentation helps companies to better understand their customers and create more personalized, relevant, and effective email marketing campaigns. That leads to interactions, and possibly greater engagement, and conversion rates. Ultimately this can generate superior customer satisfaction, and loyalty towards a company (Goic, Rojas, & Saavedra, 2021; Deligiannis, Argyriou & Kourtesis, 2020; Thomas, Chen, C. & Iacobucci, 2022). In today's increasingly developing digital landscape, mobile apps and interactive gamification practices have emerged as strong contenders to traditional email marketing. However, despite this competition, email marketing remains a vital aspect for any company. As marketing in digital environments becomes increasingly complex, it becomes necessary to examine more closely into the structural understanding how consumers perceive email marketing as a medium. The email format holds a unique position in the realm of personal communication, offering a distinct and special experience to its receivers. Therefore, exploring the dynamics of email marketing and consumer response becomes an intriguing endeavour in the field of digital marketing.

Companies exert control by maintaining an email mailing list, which is a highly effective and easily implementable strategy. The basic purpose of email marketing is to promote a business and build a great relationship with the consumer. More importantly, email marketing includes multiple aspects that are measurable as different outcomes. One of the most important aspects to measure is that does a consumer open the email and read it (Barbosa & Carneiro, 2022). Email marketing provides a way for low-cost targeting, leading to marketing with ease, and it is applicable in multiple scenarios (Bhatia, 2020; Barbosa & Carneiro, 2022). Therefore, email marketing provides a platform for marketers to be relevant, nurture customer relationships and influence consumers (Barbosa & Carneiro, 2022; Sahni, Wheeler & Chintagunta, 2018). However, today privacy matters more than ever before in history, and certain regulations such as GDPR need to be taken into consideration when discussing about email marketing. Consequently, it has been encouraged that companies that sell to consumers, should often provide lucrative incentives to subscribe to email newsletters to keep the customers interested in their emailing efforts (Bhatia, 2020; Barbosa & Carneiro, 2022). It matters that the consumer feels that they have control over the content they receive.

Characteristics of email marketing efforts vary from business to business with the end results, hence according to Rejón-Guardia and Luna-Nevarez (2017) online stores have

several advantages over traditional stores and can vastly support email marketing practices with great relevance. Firstly, personalized email campaigns are effortlessly obtainable, hence as consumers visit essentially any online retailers' websites online store retailers can personalize email campaigns based on their browsing and purchase history. They can also use email marketing tools to segment their audience carefully and send personalized product recommendations, promotional offers, discounts, and newsletters.

Secondly, according to Rejón-Guardia and Luna-Nevarez (2017) the trend of webrooming grows, retailers can send abandoned cart recovery emails to encourage customers to complete their purchases. And, yet again, these emails can include personalized recommendations and incentives to bring customers back to the online store. Other methods of reminding consumers about the brand it to have product launch and loyalty programmes with credible social proofing that include customer reviews and feedback to establish a credible brand. Nowadays, email is only a part of this interactive online presence with social media, gamification, and video platforms but it is considered relevant (Hartemo, 2022). Especially, since its nature is highly customizable and open for automation. This is a part of cross-channel integration, when other forms of communication and media is used with email marketing, such as traditional TV advertisements. Therefore, it is not a deviation or an exception that online stores offer newsletter subscriptions and more when a consumer checks out. Furthermore, another characteristic of email is to be fast and low-cost tool, and it can be utilized for brand's self-promotion and marketing discounts, informing, and educating company's customers of newer product lines or available services, and to build brand awareness in general. On the other hand, email marketing can be utilized to retain current customers, for instance by offering personalized content, ads and offers. Email as a driver for purchase intentions is mentioned multiple times in the reviewed literature, most likely having a positive effect for purchasing products (Ugonna, Victor & Jeft, 2017).

Ultimately, email marketing is an effective way to reach a large audience quite effortlessly and to develop and build relationships that lead to increased performance for a company. However, email marketing enables targeting specific segments of an audience, and can also provide valuable data and give insights about customer behaviour (Labanauskaitė, Fiore & Stašys, 2020).

## 1.1 Research problem

The research problem is built from the framework that how do consumers perceive and react to the confluence of high-level personalization, optimal timing, and seamless cross-channel integration in their email marketing interactions? For example, to what specific extent do these integrated email marketing practices influence consumer response, engagement, and general satisfaction? Ergo, how does a consumer perceive the general email marketing efforts in today's setting. It would be relevant to understand these dynamics to fabricate effective email marketing practices. The aim in email marketing could be in fostering meaningful, effective communication with the consumers themselves, hence from a consumer's perspective, email marketing plays a vital role in fostering their willingness to engage in word-of-mouth (WOM) promotion, intentions for repurchases, and their willingness to pay higher prices in the future. Also, there have been studies regarding how different demographics behave online. For example, generation-z might act differently towards marketing efforts than a millennial consumer. (Bhat, Islam & Sheikh, 2021). Therefore, there are multiple aspects to keep in mind when building a marketing relationship through email, one being informative and meaningful to the consumer that they could respond to it. Brands are constructed through stories, and email, being primarily a text-based format, requires effective storytelling using clear language while maintaining the brand's image in the consumer's mind. According to Song, Tao, and Wen (2021), story-based marketing has a substantial impact on consumers by enhancing satisfaction and contributing to a positive brand image experience. In today's consumer landscape, impactful messages that convey transparent information, such as stories about tree planting initiatives or efforts to save children, capture consumers' interest. The ultimate objective is to establish a meaningful connection with the consumer, leading to increased satisfaction and loyalty. By effectively leveraging the storytelling potential of email marketing, companies can enhance consumer satisfaction and cultivate a positive brand image that resonates with consumers.

The consideration of consumer devices plays a significant role in email marketing effectiveness. Prioritizing mobile devices is particularly relevant (Barbosa & Carneiro, 2022). However, there is a lack of comprehensive research on email marketing specifically tailored for smartphones. In one study conducted by Barbosa and Carneiro (2022), the researchers examined this aspect and made several noteworthy observations. The study revealed that mobile phones are the preferred medium for reading brand emails, especially those pertaining to consumers' personal lives. It was also found that

smartphones are extensively used, with users frequently checking their emails even during work breaks. Furthermore, the study indicated that opening emails on smartphones is convenient and easy, suggesting that recipients are more likely to open brand messages when the subject line is relevant and includes time-limited offers. To optimize email marketing for mobile devices, it is crucial to design emails that are compatible with smaller screens. Since smartphones are the preferred channel for consumers, simplicity and clarity are key when delivering messages on these devices. Moreover, the study emphasized the significance of subject lines, as they play a critical role in encouraging users to open emails. Despite these findings, Barbosa and Carneiro (2022) suggested the need for further research in this area. Future studies should explore how consumer profiles influence their behaviour towards mobile email marketing. Additionally, investigating the types of interactions that emails should provide, in comparison to the interactive marketing methods available on other platforms, would be beneficial.

However, the current trends in email marketing revolve around hyper-personalization, machine learning, finding a balance between informative and promotional emails, conducting A/B testing, and implementing automation (Zimek, 2023; Birch, 2022; Bhatt, 2023). To stand out in this competitive landscape, it is crucial to personalize marketing messages. Hyper-personalization is achieved through a combination of micro-segmentation and artificial intelligence, which track consumers' preferences, purchases, and interactions with emails. This approach leads to desirable outcomes very often (Bhatt, 2023). Furthermore, ensuring a mobile-friendly design, cohesive language, and creative interactive elements in emails can enhance communication. With the increased use of mobile platforms to read and check emails a standard has been developed called BIMl. The implementation of brand indicators for message identification (BIMl) is a rather new standard that allows brand logos to appear alongside the sender's name. This feature enhances the trustworthiness of an email and addresses potential deliverability concerns (Bhatt, 2023). The consumer perception of BIMl is yet to be fully explored, but its potential impact is promising.

Machine learning plays a significant role in the future of email marketing. Recommendation algorithms are widely employed to optimize click-through rates and conversions, ultimately leading to consumer purchases (Cui, 2021). To achieve these outcomes, incorporating interactive elements such as questionnaires, surveys, or gift cards in email campaigns becomes essential to encourage consumer participation and

satisfaction (Cui, 2021). Moreover, the use of visuals in email design plays a significant role in triggering consumer decision-making processes and influencing conversion rates. Wang and Chau (2021) suggest that employing image processing techniques in promotional pictures can provide additional visual incentives, ultimately leading to more effective consumer decision-making. Therefore, personalization and the strategic use of various digital tools available for email crafting will continue to be crucial in the future of email marketing. By leveraging recommendation algorithms, interactive elements, and visually appealing designs, companies can enhance the effectiveness of their email marketing efforts. The incorporation of personalized experiences and the seamless integration of multiple digital tools will be needed for achieving higher conversion rates, increased purchases, and overall success in email marketing strategies.

Email platforms provide easily accessible and analysable data, making machine learning an integral part of analysing and utilizing that data effectively. Maintaining a balance between promotional and informative emails is essential to keep consumers engaged and prevent them from feeling overwhelmed by excessive marketing efforts. A commonly used method to assess the success of an email is A/B testing, which is a part of conversion rate optimization (CRO). A/B testing involves comparing two or more versions of an email or a landing page to determine consumer actions and preferences (Mailchimp, 2023). This approach allows for precise measurement of specific conversions, thereby avoiding inconclusive results. Furthermore, including a clear call-to-action, such as a "shop now" link, in marketing emails is crucial to ensure desirable conversions. This feature provides recipients with a direct and convenient option to make a purchase, contributing to improved conversion rates. A/B testing, and automation are probable to play a significant role in future email marketing trends. Automation continues to advance, offering marketers more complex possibilities and integrations, while A/B testing, combined with micro-segmentation, can yield interesting insights.

Previous studies have focused mostly on data on consumer response from the data gathered via email campaigns (Goic, Rojas, & Saavedra, 2021; Deligiannis, Argyriou & Kourtesis, 2020; Thomas, Chen, C. & Iacobucci, 2022), therefore it would be relevant to study this further by understanding consumer response from the side of consumers themselves. For instance, one matter is to study cross-channel integration, ergo to examine the effectiveness of integrating email marketing with other marketing channels, such as social media or SMS, in the context of the Finnish consumers and their response in the context of email. Additionally, it would be able to assess how timing and

personalization impact consumer response. Consumer response includes everything from clicking a link or responding in any way with the received marketing email (Mende et al, 2019).

Furthermore, optimal timing of emails could be research in this same context by researching optimal send times, intervals between emails, and strategies for effectively managing email fatigue and maximizing consumer responsiveness. Lastly, with the increasing use of smartphones and mobile devices, according to previous studies it should be important to explore the effectiveness of mobile-optimized email marketing campaigns in the Finnish market. Analyse how factors like responsive design, mobile-friendly content, and call-to-action placement affect email opening rates, engagement, and conversions consumers (Barbosa & Carneiro, 2022; Sahni, Wheeler & Chintagunta, 2018; Hartemo, 2016). It is also relevant to think what kind of devices consumers use when reading the email. The most common method of cross-channel integration is by using SMS and email together as a marketing communication method, therefore mobile devices should be prioritized (Barbosa & Carneiro, 2022). This has not been widely studied and there are some research gaps towards email marketing on smartphones, with cross-channel integration in mind, but one study by Barbosa and Carneiro (2022) examined this. Their results were that mobile phones are the preferred medium for reading brand e-mails, especially those related to personal life of a consumer. The study also found that smartphones are used intensively, and e-mails are checked very frequently on them, for example at brakes at work.

Consumer scepticism towards marketing efforts delivered through email can significantly impact consumer behaviour and satisfaction. When consumers lack awareness or familiarity with a brand or company, their level of scepticism and disbelief tends to increase. Demographic factors also play a role in this regard, as highlighted by Thomas and Kureshi (2020). A crucial aspect contributing to consumer scepticism is the collection and utilization of consumer information. Consumers are concerned about how their data is collected, stored, and used by marketers. Transparency regarding data practices becomes essential to address these concerns. Legislation such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) plays a vital role in ensuring consumer protection and reinforcing transparency in data handling practices. To overcome consumer scepticism and build trust, marketers need to prioritize transparent communication about data collection and usage practices. Implementing robust data protection measures and complying with relevant regulations, such as GDPR, are critical steps in

instilling consumer confidence. By establishing transparency and demonstrating responsible data handling, marketers can foster trust and mitigate consumer scepticism, leading to improved consumer satisfaction and more favourable responses to email marketing efforts. Additionally, it seems that it is convenient and easy to open e-mails on smartphones, indicating that recipients are more likely to open these brand messages when the subject line is relevant and includes limited time offers. Furthermore, the email design should be able to fit mobile devices, since it is the preferred channel for consumers. Additionally, consumers prefer simple and straightforward messages on their smartphones, and the subject lines are critical to encourage to open an e-mail. According to Barbosa and Carneiro (2022) there should be future research and the research should explore the effect of consumer profiles on their behaviour towards mobile email marketing and what kind of interactions the email should provide compared about interactive marketing methods available in other platforms.

### **1.1.1 Research questions**

The main goal of the presented three research questions (RQs) are to address key factors that influence consumer response in email marketing. By exploring the impact of personalization, cross-channel integration, and timing. This should generate results that marketers can utilize to enhance their email strategies, improve consumer engagement and response, and drive desired actions. This will ultimately lead to more successful email marketing campaigns and practices.

**RQ1.** How does personalization of email marketing impact on consumer response?

Personalization in email marketing involves tailoring the content, offers, and recommendations to individual recipients based on their preferences, behaviours, or demographic information. This RQ is crucial because understanding the impact of personalization on consumer response can help marketers optimize their email campaigns. The findings can guide the design of personalized email strategies, leading to increased engagement, higher conversion rates, and improved customer satisfaction.

**RQ2.** How does cross-channel integration influence consumer response?

Cross-channel integration refers to the coordination and alignment of email marketing efforts with other marketing channels such as social media, SMS, or offline channels. This RQ is significant because it explores the impact of cross-channel integration on various metrics, including email opening rates, engagement, and conversion rates.

Understanding the effects of cross-channel integration can help marketers optimize their multi-channel marketing strategies and achieve synergy among different channels, leading to improved response rates and overall campaign effectiveness.

**RQ3.** How does email timing affect the consumer response?

Timing is a critical factor in email marketing campaigns. This RQ investigates the impact of timing on consumer response rates, such as email opening rates, click-through rates, and conversion rates. Understanding the relationship between timing and consumer response is essential for optimizing email send times to maximize the likelihood of engagement and conversions. Insights from this research can inform marketers about the optimal timing strategies to enhance the effectiveness of their email campaigns.

### **1.2 Aim of the study**

The purpose of this study is to generate deeper insight to the cause-effect structure of email marketing. Essentially the main aim is to explore the effects of factors that influence consumer response in email marketing. The chosen factors are personalization and timing of email communication is to be researched. Additionally, cross-channel integration, ergo the use of multiple platforms as marketing communication tools including email marketing as a medium, is studied.

### **1.3 Delimitations**

Delimitations is a part of research and studies as they provide clear boundaries and focus to ensure the study remains manageable and impactful. In the context of this study, the delimitations have been set to enhance the understanding of everyday Finnish consumers who receive marketing emails. By narrowing the scope to a specific consumer group within a particular geographical location, the study aims to delve deeper into the unique characteristics, behaviours, and preferences of them. This targeted approach recognizes the importance of cultural, social, and economic factors that may influence consumer behaviour in a specific context, allowing for more accurate and meaningful findings (Nayeem, 2012).

The most significant delimitation of studying everything from the consumers' point of view provides a comprehensive understanding of their experiences, perceptions, and attitudes towards email marketing that is varied in nature. By setting these delimitations, the study ensures a focused and targeted investigation, which can yield more specific and meaningful, and valid results drawn from the data generated from the research.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that these delimitations are not without limitations. The findings may not be representative of all consumers. However, by clearly defining the scope of the study, researchers can provide valuable insights and directions for future research to build upon.

## **2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical framework used in this study is based on digital marketing and email marketing research. The focus revolves around personalization, cross-channel integration, and timing, in the scope of email marketing. Consumer behaviour is examined from demographic and behavioural perspectives to be able to study consumer response further.

Digital marketing has shaped the whole surrounding world around people and the change is constant. What is great about digital marketing is that it is most likely easily measurable and customizable (Kannan, 2017). Digital marketing is marketing executed in digital environment and it is implemented through different digital platforms and channels. Digital marketing allows marketing communication to reach a large audience and target groups. Common aspects of digital marketing include search engine optimization (SEO) and per-click advertising (PPC) (Kundu, 2021). Digital marketing materializes online. Digital marketing refers to the utilization of digital platforms, channels, and technologies to promote, advertise, and build relationships with an audience or customers. Unlike traditional marketing, which relies on physical channels such as print, television, and radio, digital marketing campaigns are primarily executed through online platforms (Kundu, 2021).

Email marketing is part of direct digital marketing that appears as an electronic mail (email) in a message medium is transmitted through marketing communication messages. This is generally achieved by sending the message to a targeted group of individuals. In email marketing lies many possibilities of customization, personalization, automation, and creative efforts for marketers to use (Aydin:65, 2019) Additionally, email marketing does have a cost-effective targeting possibility with communicating the marketer's agenda to very specific group of customers. According to Fattah (2021) email marketing is trending and cross media marketing with it. Interactivity is a notable characteristic of contemporary marketing, but email marketing has remained a method of one-way persuasive marketing communication (Wang, 2021). According to the study by Al-Azzam and Al-Mizeed (2021) email marketing is heavily tied into to aiding consumers on making purchases online. Essentially, this is a simple realization of that when a brand or certain company has approached the consumer it can enhance the awareness of a brand and boost after sales and engagement with the brand, too.

According to Al Asheq et al (2021) marketing managers should focus on email marketing as an effort to develop better market position and recognition, hence email marketing can also be used to gain knowledge of customer satisfaction as queries are easy to send with email. Nevertheless, purchase decisions can be influenced by email marketing (Al-Azzam and Al-Mizeed, 2021, Kumar, 2021). This is called conversion rate when email marketing efforts are turned into purchases. This is important metric in the context of email marketing. Conversion rate also means call to action where an email creates call to action such as opening email, filling out a form, signing up for vouchers and buying from the sender (Mailchimp, 2023).

### **2.1 Personalization of email**

Personalization is one of the key elements in email marketing. Generally, personalization of an emailed marketing message is always beneficial for marketing campaigns and response rates (Sahni, Wheeler & Chintagunta, 2018). Consumer response rates are referred to as a customer clicks a link or proceeds somehow with the content of the email itself. However, the role of the sender is important since even if the message is personalized, if the sender is unknown to the receiver the effects might be negative (Trespacios & Perkins, 2016).

Email is regarded as personal communication and regulations and legislation change annually regarding digital private matters. Therefore, it is important to follow these guidelines set by governments and act within the set standards. Nevertheless, email should be personalized, and it is its' one of the biggest advantages against other platforms in the marketing field that emails can be composed directly to consumer personally. The lack of interaction that email has compared to social media platforms can be turned into advantages instead.

Marketing communication can be executed with myriad of methods nowadays. A company can have social media platform presence, videos, advertisements, promotions, brand campaigns, messages through media and direct communication with its' audience. Why should a company focus on email as a communication tool in marketing? In email marketing it is always important that the email is delivered correctly and in the desirable case an email triggered meaning is the email opened and read (Goic, Rojas, & Saavedra, 2021). In the best case this leads to purchase conversion from clicking through the email to purchase something. How many consumers' routine checking email belong to? Even professionals use work time to check personal marketing emails (Barbosa & Carneiro,

2022). Email can be heavily automated too, and with the advancement of marketing automation technology enables B2C businesses acting online and offline to achieve personalized communication with their customers on a large scale based on customers set preferences.

One method of personalization is an approach that uses predictive models trained on historical purchase transaction data and instant messaging engagement data. Briefly put this model allows predictions of the next product repurchase date for each customer and uses a domain-specific personalization algorithm to determine the optimal day and hour to send a repurchase reminder message via email. (Deligiannis, Argyriou & Kourtesis, 2020). The results of a study by Deligiannis, Argyriou and Kourtesis (2020) suggest that there is a significant improvement in marketing effectiveness compared to the standard method of scheduling product repurchase reminders at fixed time intervals, when using this automated method. Therefore, there are different opportunities for companies to engage with the consumers using personalized marketing.

Personalized messages that have been timed by artificial intelligence (AI) could be effective as well. Additionally, the use of memetic marketing that refers to the use of memes to promote a brand or product have been noticed to be important in personalized email content (Vasile, Mototo, & Chuchu, 2021). Nevertheless, memes, when used effectively, can become assets for brands as they can attract a large target audience that identifies with them and enjoys them and with the use of an AI and AI image creation this could be done extremely fast (Vasile, Mototo, & Chuchu, 2021). Consequently, it is challenging to declare what the future holds but it is possible that personalization remains important.

Personalized content in email marketing can include photos that trigger cues in consumers decision making. This is relevant in an email design as they can lead to higher conversion rates and purchases. According to Wang and Chau (2021) by using image processing in promotional pictures it allows for extra lengths in visual incentives and will trigger consumers decision making effectively. Therefore, as mentioned earlier the personalization and use of multiple digital tools available for email crafting is indeed appropriate in the future to be relevant.

### ***2.1.1 Customer relationship management as a part of personalization***

Marketing communication can also include customer relationship practices, one of which is customer relationship management (CRM). The impact of using CRM tools can

influence email opening rates. The findings based on a study by Thomas, Chen and Iacobucci (2022) show that there is a connection between the use of CRM emails and higher email opening rates. The research also highlights the importance of email sequencing, which refers to the order in which emails are sent, in shaping the effectiveness of email marketing campaigns. The study found that counter to the common practice of hard selling with discount promotions, CRM emails that are brand-building and relational are more effective in driving higher email opening rates.

### ***2.1.2 A/B testing and conversion rates as a part of the optimization in email marketing***

Most used methods of testing the successfulness of an email A/B testing are used. In A/B testing a certain email is being tested with a similar focus group and sent out and later examined which email has performed better. This is essentially like pilot episode for a tv series for a test audience, which ever gets the best reaction continues onwards. This is part of conversion rate optimization (CRO) that compares two or more versions of an email or a landing page that consumers are willing to make action on (Mailchimp, 2023). In A/B testing certain conversion is measured at a time to exclude incomprehensible results. Usually, it is great to have the option to shop now as a link in the marketing email to ensure desirable conversion.

To conclude the personalization aspect of email marketing the key variables that impact the most on consumer response as outcome variables are sender's identity, clicking a link on the email, presence of attachments or other media that can be interacted with and general satisfaction to the personalized content. Personalization includes timing and cross-channel integration of emails as well as nowadays different CRM tools and machine learning able personalization to very high level.

## **2.2 Timing in email marketing**

Timing as concept in email marketing is the variable which is perceived when the email should be sent to get the desired results from consumer. Often, timing could be often overlooked as a variable in email marketing when utilizing any marketing campaigns (Byun & Kirsch, 2021). In dissimilar circumstances emails are responded differently, hence timing does influence the consumer response in general. For instance, when the message is received, read, or perceived as an act fast opportunity, like a limited time offer. Nevertheless, in a general setting, a corporate worker checks emails and prioritizes tasks differently than a student does (Byun & Kirsch, 2021; Sutton et al, 2017). Therefore,

demographic variables matter in this case. It has not been thoroughly investigated which is the best time to send marketing emails, and this could be personalized in detail in the future (Goic et al, 2021).

Timing a marketing message is crucial in determining the effectiveness of a promotional message in email marketing. Other contextual elements, such as audience segmentation, play a significant role in determining the right moment to reach the recipient's inbox. Unlike traditional communication media that struggle to balance reach and audience segmentation, email marketing offers the flexibility to tailor the content of the message based on sociodemographic data and reach a targeted audience. Advertisers can use this to their advantage by using the recipient's profile to create personalized campaigns, leading to better engagement and response rates. (Chaparro-Peláez, Hernández-García & Lorente-Páramo, 2022).

Another method of discussing the future of email marketing is to use several algorithms that are developed constantly and the effort of acquiring them is relatively effortless by the minute. The most common recommendation algorithms optimize click through rate and conversions when a consumer end up purchasing from a received email (Cui, 2021). However, this phenomenon has not been investigated thoroughly in the context of consumers and how they perceive firmly tied messages. Furthermore, one of the most effective ways that ends up in this result is to have limited time questionnaires, rafts, gift cards or something that encourages involvement. This will possibly generate a satisfied consumer on the other end (Cui, 2021).

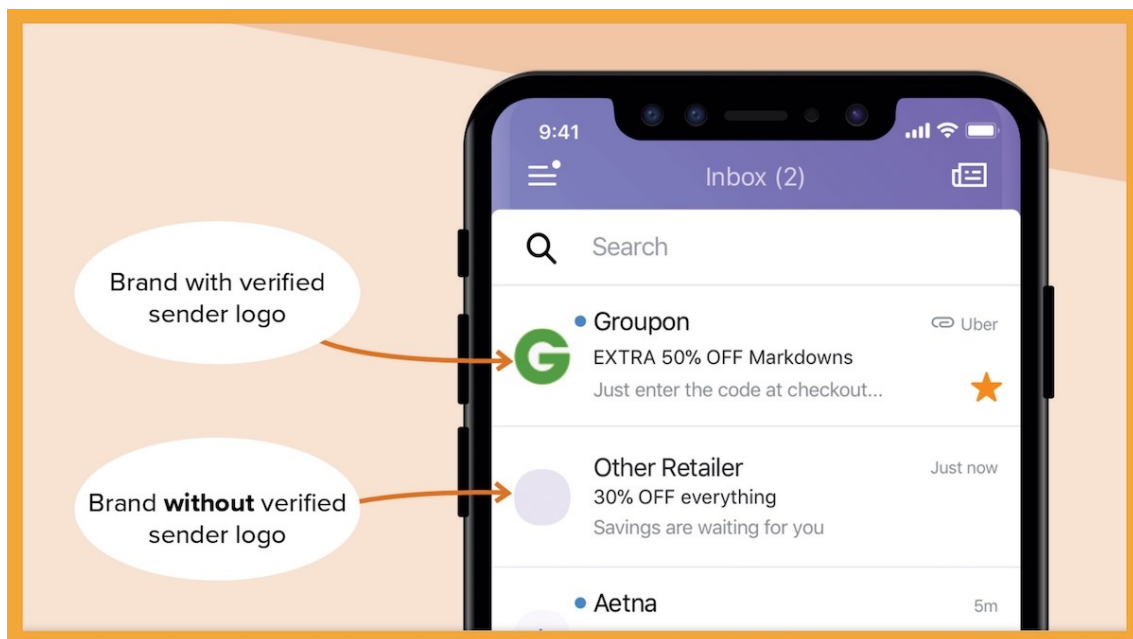
### ***2.2.1 Forecasted trends in email marketing regarding timing, personalization and experience in email environment***

There are few themes that occur more often in the reviewed literature for this area of timing. One of them is the use of AI in in email marketing. If discussing about the future that has one of the most interesting possibilities available, hence according to Davenport et al (2020) AI is set to have a major impact on the future of marketing, affecting various aspects of the industry such as business models, sales processes, and customer service options, as well as customer behaviour. In the transportation industry, for example, the advent of AI-enabled, driverless cars could significantly alter both business models and customer behaviour. The same can be derived to email marketing. AI has the potential to improve a company's predictive ability, allowing companies to predict customer behaviour and adjust their business models accordingly (Davenport et al, 2020).

Current trends in today's email marketing world will be about hyper-personalization, machine learning, balancing informative and promotional emails, A/B testing and automation. (Zimek, 2023; Birch 2022; Bhatt 2023). However, it is important to stand out as a marketer and to do so, one of the greatest methods of implementing this is to personalize marketing message. Hyper-personalisation is part of an amalgamation of micro segmentation and AI that track consumers preferences, purchases, interactions with the email and lead to desirable results (Bhatt, 2023).

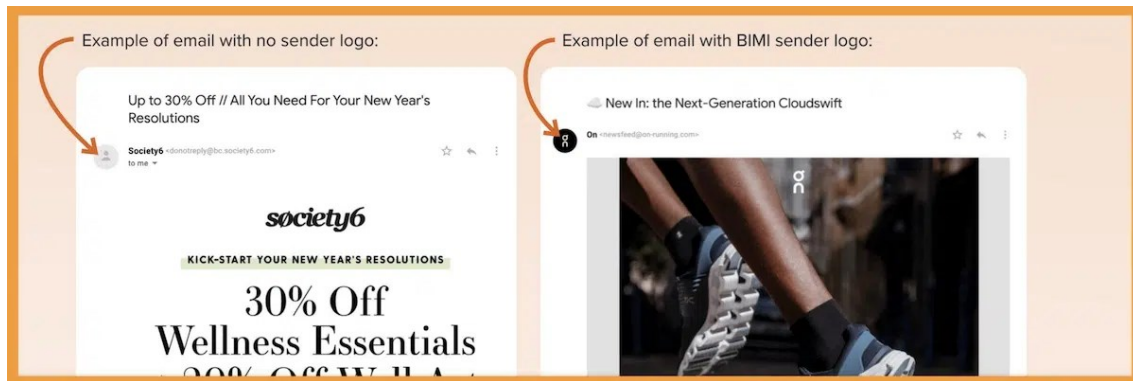
Mobile friendly design, cohesive language, and creative interactive emails enhances the email marketing experience and possibly constitutes to greater experience. On the other hand, machine learning is a big part of future trends in email marketing, since email platforms give data that is easily accessible and analysable later. It is relevant to understand the balance between promotional and informative emails to be able to keep the interest of a consumer rather than exhaust them with marketing efforts only (Bhatt, 2023).

Additionally, brand indicators for message identification (BIMI) are a new standard that allows brand logos beside sender's name that will enhance the trustworthiness of an email and overcomes possible deliverability matters (Bhatt, 2023). There is yet to be discovered how consumers feel about this but there certainly is potential.



**Figure 1 Litmus getting started with BIMI Guide (Huang, 2022)**

As seen in the Figure 1. It certainly makes a difference if a brand is verified BIMI user and the boost that it might have to brand recognition, visibility and trust are unquestionable. BIMI aids consumers to identify trustworthy senders and as today's email deliverability is built on authentication and reputation of a sender will the users of BIMI gain a certain advantage (Huang, 2022).



**Figure 2 Litmus getting started with BIMI Guide (Huang, 2022)**

In figure 2. An example of a sender logo is presented. With BIMI the sender has direct control over what logo is displayed compared to traditional methods of email clients. The technology is quite recent as it was officially published in 2019. However, it has been adapted by seven service providers, which are Apple, Fastmail, Pobox, Gmail, Yahoo, AOL and Netscape (Huang, 2022). Many other service providers are also considering BIMI. A major note to make is that Microsoft Outlook does not support this, and Microsoft has not made any suggestions to support this in the future.

### **2.3 Email marketing as a part of cross-channel integration**

Cross-channel integration in marketing means that multiple platforms are used to distribute the same marketing communication. This could be for example SMS and email in use. A brand or a retailer can nowadays efficiently use cross-channel integration in their marketing efforts and there are multiple platforms that allows this. Cross-channel integration can also include traditional offline marketing efforts and might be more cost effective than focusing narrowly to one or two platforms of marketing (Tagashira & Minami, 2019). Most often online stores offer a possibility, when checking out from the virtual store, an option that a consumer could subscribe to a newsletter. In this section it also possible to give out a phone number, preferably with additional benefits to the customer and include this as a cross-channel integration practices. This is perhaps the

most common strategy they use to be able legally use their data to send consumers newsletter, which most often is marketing in practice. Interesting factor when consumer decides to subscribe is that the marketer then knows that the consumer is really interested in the brand (Hartemo, 2016). In this scenario, there is no need for guessing when preferences can be set by the consumer.

In email marketing empowering the consumer is crucial, since by having these opting boxes to subscribe gives the consumer autonomous feel and it can lead into stronger relationships and loyalty (Hartemo, 2016). Empowerment creates a feeling that the decisions person makes are autonomous. In management literature this can be seen as an effective method to give workers accountability in the terms of empowerment which creates personal growth and career development later (Gautam & Ghimire, 2017). In consumer behaviour theories empowerment can be seen that consumers become more loyal to a certain brand when they feel that they are in control. In email marketing context this means that they do not receive spam but instead mail that they really subscribed for (Hartemo, 2016). Long-term empowerment is challenging to obtain and maintain. To be able to achieve a sustained empowerment marketing strategy many matters need to be considered. In terms of email marketing literature does not suggest clear solutions to this, hence it could be studied more comprehensively.

Regarding consumer response in cross-channel integration all kind of response that link to cross channel integration from consumers side can be viewed as dependent variables. For example, giving away consumer's phone numbers or following a brand on social media based on the email request. Everything related to acting in cross-channel integration other than email itself can be seen as consumer response variable.

#### **2.4 Different demographic's consumer behaviour**

This is a second part of the theoretical framework with a perspective and focus on how consumers perceive marketing efforts when approached by email. Firstly, consumer behaviour in different demographics is examined, for instance boomers, generation X, millennial and Gen-Z perspective is investigated. Secondly, consumer satisfaction and its' relevance are reviewed. Thirdly, the most common challenges in email marketing with a consumer perspective are discussed.

The reason why consumer behaviour is examined through different age groups is that different generations might have different worldviews, attitudes and values that are worth looking into while crafting effective email marketing to enhance consumer

response. Also, it is relevant to request consumers side of experience and study how email marketing makes them behave and feel today.

#### ***2.4.1 Millennials' and Gen-Z's consumer behaviour***

There have been several studies regarding how different demographics act online (Bhat, Islam & Sheikh, 2021). Demographic variables are perhaps the most commonly used variables when examining online shopping behavior or email marketing practices (Lubis, 2018). Millennial and Gen-Z consumer behavior varies from boomer or Gen-X consumer behavior. Millennials, typically defined as individuals born between the early 1980s and the mid-1990s, have distinctive characteristics and behaviors that influence their purchase intentions and online behavior. Millennials grew up during the rise of the internet and are considered digital natives. They are comfortable using technology and rely heavily on digital platforms for various activities, including shopping. Their familiarity with online platforms makes them more likely to engage in online purchasing (Fitri & Wulandari, 2020). Additionally, millennials value convenience and efficiency in their shopping experiences. Online shopping provides them with the convenience of browsing and purchasing products from anywhere at any time, without the need to visit physical stores. The ability to compare prices, read reviews, and access a wide range of products online influences their purchase intention. Millennials are highly influenced by their peers and social networks (Akkucuk & Turan, 2016). According to a study by Spáčil and Teichmannová (2016) Gen-X has a more conservative attitude compared to millennials, and it seems that millennials are not as conservative. This naturally depends also on where the geographical location is set but could be stated as so. However, millennials sometimes actively seek and trust recommendations and reviews from others, both in-person and online, when deciding to purchase.

Social media platforms shape their purchase decisions, as they can see what their peers or influencers are buying and recommending (Akkucuk & Turan, 2016). Millennials do appreciate personalized experiences as well as consumers in general (Zimek, 2023; Birch 2022; Bhatt 2023). They are more likely to engage with brands that tailor their offerings and recommendations based on their preferences and past behaviors, too. Furthermore, millennials are more conscious of social and environmental issues compared to previous generations (Zheng, Burrow-Sanchez & Drew, 2009). They often might prefer to support brands that align with their values, such as those focused on sustainability, ethical sourcing, or charitable causes (Mandić & Vuković, 2022). Millennials have experienced

significant societal, technological, and economic changes throughout their lives. This has made them adaptable and open to new ideas and innovations (Mandić & Vuković, 2022).

Generation Z, the cohort born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, exhibits distinct consumer preferences and buying behavior that significantly impact the market. Gen Z individuals are known to be "informed consumers." They exhibit a penchant for researching and carefully evaluating options before making purchasing decisions (Bewicke, 2023; Ayuni, 2019; Tiwari & Joshi, 2020). Unlike previous generations, they are less attached to specific brands and instead prioritize finding the best deal. This trend highlights their price consciousness and their inclination to shop around for competitive pricing and value. When it comes to brand preferences, Gen Z places a high emphasis on brand ethics and corporate responsibility. In fact, they prioritize these factors even more than their Millennial counterparts (Bewicke, 2023; Ayuni, 2019; Tiwari, & Joshi, 2020). According to Bewicke (2023) companies that demonstrate strong ethical practices and a commitment to social and environmental responsibility have a greater chance of capturing the attention and loyalty of Gen Z consumers. Social media plays a fundamental role in the purchasing decisions of Gen Z. They are the most likely among all generations to shop via social media platforms (Bewicke, 2023; Ayuni, 2019; Tiwari & Joshi, 2020). The influence of influencers and the ability to discover new products and trends through social media channels greatly impact their consumer behavior. In conclusion, Generation Z exhibits unique consumer preferences and buying behavior that require a thorough understanding by marketers and businesses (Bewicke, 2023; Ayuni, 2019; Tiwari, & Joshi, 2020). And on the other hand, millennials are the early adopters and living in constant change throughout their lives.

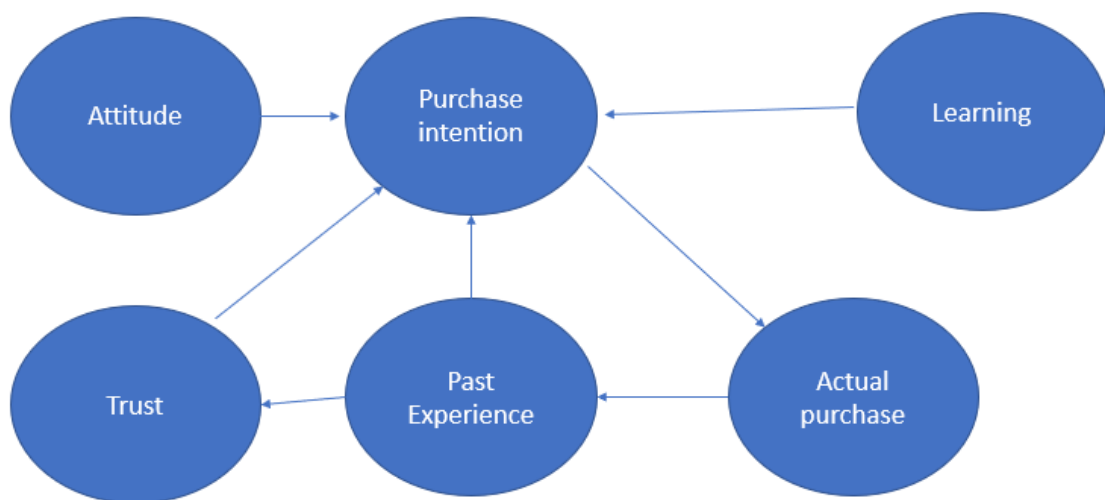
Both generations are socially conscious, but they approach matters such as activism differently (McCargo, 2021). Millennials are known for championing causes through online petitions, sharing articles, and engaging in discussions on social media. Gen Z, on the other hand, is characterized by their active involvement in grassroots movements, organizing protests, and using social media platforms to amplify their voices and effect change (Alfirević, Potočan, & Nedelko, 2021). They both share similarities as well as generations both value their digital fluency and desire for convenience. Furthermore, both often compare prices, read online reviews, and engage with brands through social media before making a purchase.

Ultimately different age group demographics are good to inspect in research, hence different behavioral patterns might be recognizable from the data. Overall, email

marketing segmentation can be performed based on consumer behavioral patterns rather than age. This of course depends on the case, but this method allows possibly higher consumer response and leads to enhanced results in email marketing.

## 2.5 E-consumer behaviour

Consumer behaviour has been studied rather vastly in the past and continues to develop further understanding behind consumers mindset and actions. According to Dennis et al (2009) e-interactivity is almost equivalent to a real-life salesperson in e-shopping and same behavioural aspects are impacting in consumers behaviour.



**Figure 3 Model of E-consumer Behaviour (based on Dennis et al, 2009)**

As seen in the figure 3. Consumers attitudes will be affected when influenced by e-retailers image. The most critical factors are past experiences and trust, which contribute to ease of use (Dennis et al, 2009). However, the key takeaway from this figure includes the common attitudes of a consumer that it is important that the e-retailer provides variety, convenience and possibilities to create individual circumstances for consumer. As a marketer it is good to educate the consumer which can lead to purchase decisions and ultimately trust and purchasing again. This supports the earlier mentioned aspects of email marketing and the relevance of personalization in the marketing communication., consumer perspective in digital marketing can be examined from several viewpoints how to become a loyal consumer (Dennis et al, 2009).

In digital marketing the effort is to educate and attract consumers to purchase the service or product a company provides. One of the most effective methods to control consumers is to affect to their feelings. By creating a certain kind of image of a brand and having a certain community around a brand boosts brand loyalty and is desired by a company that acts in B2C space. Nowadays one of the best methods to exist is as a B2C company that sells directly to consumers using digital tools. For example, when all or most of the marketing occurs online, also the business benefits from the platform as there is no long way to the purchase itself. Additionally, online shopping has been made so effortless that consumers sometimes regret purchases. According to Lubis, Lumbanraja and Hasibuan (2022) purchase regret might occur when dealing with digital market plays that are available 24/7. Impulsive buying or other undesired actions might happen, and this leads to unsatisfactory feelings for the consumer. Nevertheless, e-marketing efforts by communicating for example with email can lead to better consumption experience when crafted masterfully. This means that when consumers are aware of the prices, customer support, product, and services from a company they can be free of unplanned actions through email marketing.

### ***2.5.1 Influencing consumer response by different variables***

In email marketing, variables that affect in consumer response are many. One mentioned key factor is timing. The day, the time, the season, or just certain time influences whole email campaigns (Paulo, Miguéis & Pereira, 2022). This is part of personalization. Consequently, word embeddings, subject lines and possibilities for engagement affect how consumers will behave further with the email (Paulo, Miguéis & Pereira, 2022; Valenzuela-Gálvez, Garrido-Morgado & González-Benito, 2022). Various media types enhance positive consumer behaviour. Essentially, in a digital marketing field multiple media types can be used in an email such as gifs or emojis. According to the study by Valenzuela-Gálvez, Garrido-Morgado and González-Benito (2022) emojis provide an effective marketing tool that gains attention of consumers with low attention. Hence, they suggest strategies that include emojis in marketing emails to gain better CRO and engagement in general. Making messages easy to interpret is extremely crucial in email marketing and emojis are one way of implementing this method.

Thankfulness and gratitude are a part of consumer satisfaction. According to Huggins et al (2020) gratitude creates an emotional aspect toward e-marketers from the consumers point of view that allows for their willingness to spread word-of mouth (WOM), intentions for repurchases and pay higher prices in the future. This is a part of

relationship management that can be achieved with email marketing as consumers can be thankful for the informational and meaningful promotional content a company can offer them.

Brands are built upon stories. Email is mostly a text-based format where stories need to be expressed effectively with a clear language and keeping the image of a brand clear to the consumer. According to Song, Tao and Wen (2021), story-based marketing has significant impact on the consumer, and it enhances satisfaction and aids the brand image experience. For example, consumers are interested today in impactful messages that can include matters such as, trees planted, children saved or other exemplar stories of transparent information. The main idea is to create a meaningful connection with the consumer that leads to satisfaction.

There is possibility to affect consumer behaviour positively, ergo affecting to the consumer by several methods to make the consumer act as required by a company. For instance, in email marketing it has been noticed that when argued clearly with certain details the conversion rates from the email are higher, ergo it has affected to the consumer behaviour (Wang et al, 2023).

In email marketing consumers can also feel that they have control over the marketing material they receive. Thus, for consumers it is more satisfactory. Email as a format is free from ad-blockers, and since many consumers do use ad-blockers, which reduce purchase spending, can email be seen as more penetrative option of marketing (Todri, 2022), which can be seen as a positive. However, a lot of weight on the side is email noticed or opened at all by a consumer deal with the matter of email sender's recognition and reputation (Paulo, Miguéis & Pereira, 2022). Receiving marketing emails, over the consumers needed "limit" can lead to negative thoughts about the email marketing efforts and it is not great for any company. This is essentially fatigue that is perceived by overstimulating amount of marketing emails reaching one's inbox. Therefore, the saturation of marketing type email content can be important that the content varies from informative to promotional to educative (Bewicke, 2023; Ayuni,2019; Tiwari,& Joshi, 2020).

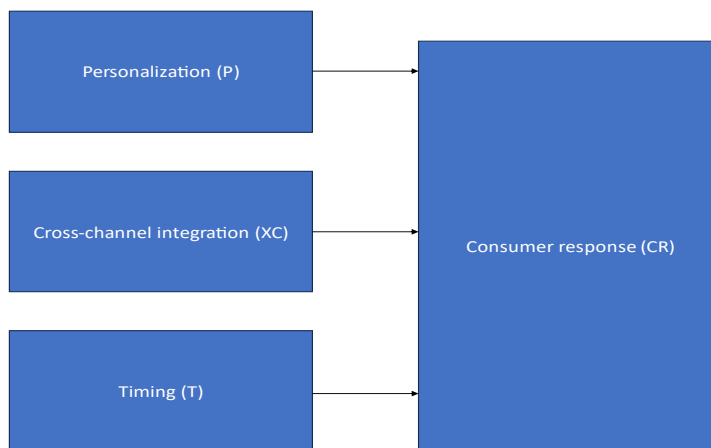
One factor that affects consumer response and consumer satisfaction is scepticism towards the marketing efforts a marketer provides via email. If there is not enough awareness about the brand or a company in hand that markets their selves there might

be increased level of scepticism and disbelief amongst consumers. There are also differences in demographics in this sense, according to Thomas and Kureshi (2020).

## 2.6 Summary of theoretical framework

The theoretical framework consists of main themes in email marketing as well as the key variables used in this thesis. To summarize the theoretical framework there are a lot of overlapping theories, where the most relevant framework is about personalisation, timing, cross-channel integration, and its' effects on consumer response. These variables also include sub variables which are presented in this summary.

Discussing about consumer response can be done in a matter of dividing it into three categories that the RQs provide. These are personalization, timing and cross-channel integration. In personalization consumer response is based upon behavioural triggers and personalized content that encourages to a certain behaviour derived from personalization. In timing it is mostly the timing of the email that creates the opportunity for different consumer response. Ultimately, in cross-channel integration the use of multiple different platforms or sites other than email can be viewed as how the consumers react. On top of this geographical location and age group matters as well as explained earlier in the text. Anything that can trigger something in consumer counts as a consumer response in this study in the context of these three independent variables.



**Figure 4 Variable model of P, XC and T influencing CR**

To summarize this theoretical framework this variable model is presented above (Figure 4.). This is the dense model that is based on the three RQs. The model aims to provide deeper understanding of the topic of email marketing by examining the relationships that do possibly occur between personalization, cross-channel integration, and timing

with consumer response. Essentially, this will be used to study the relationships on how these major variables; personalization, cross-channel integration, and timing can influence consumer response. The outcome response that are measured are categorized by clicking a link, following the email to a website, giving contact information, following the email marketed content on social media or conversing in another way with the email.

### **3 RESEARCH METHODS**

This chapter will present the research methodology that includes research design, sampling techniques and data collection. Also, the tools that are used in data analysis are briefly presented. Eventually this chapter will end in a discussion of research ethics and quality of the research itself.

#### **3.1 Research design**

The research is done by using quantitative methods. The method has been suggested by previous literature and it has viewed fit in the context of email marketing (Wang, 2021; Hartemo 2022, Thomas, Chen, C. & Iacobucci, 2022). Deductive approach is chosen to redefine the gathered data and give it relation to previous studies (Yu,2015). The aim is to have generated enough data to conceptualize an answer to the three RQs. Delimitations are present and hence most of the theoretical framework has been conducted based on global sources and the research itself is based on Finnish respondents. Due to the available resources, Finland has been chosen for context to implement the study and to get relevant results, and it will be interesting to compare them to the globally sourced theoretical framework.

Quantitative methods are used to analyse the data. There are various scales and questions in the survey distributed to respondents that will help to answer the RQs and solve the problem set to this paper. Furthermore, the literature presented in the theoretical framework suggests that when studying the topic of email marketing quantitative studies are often suggested (Barbosa & Carneiro, 2022; Goic, Rojas, & Saavedra, 2021; Deligiannis, Argyriou & Kourtesis, 2020; Thomas, Chen, C. & Iacobucci, 2022; Hartemo, 2022; Li & Meshkova, 2013). Therefore, a quantitative study will be the chosen method for this research.

It is established whether the respondents are from Finland by only distributing the survey to Finnish citizens, and preferably consumers that actively use email. This is rather valuable to make the study relevant. The survey is also designed that the respondents clearly understand how they should respond and what they are answering for. Pre-test survey was made to test with a small group of nine respondents and according to their feedback the survey was developed further. The clarity of the questions has been checked and the survey went through a testing time, where the details were checked and given feedback. This testing time had a two-week window to be

implemented. After the piloted survey the real survey was published and distributed as the sampling methods later imply.

### **3.2 Online survey**

The online survey's purpose is to study the topic further. The survey is designed so the data will be comparable to the theoretical framework presented earlier. The survey is composed to gather information about the three RQs. The survey is divided into four main parts, which are, basic information, personalization, cross channel integration and timing. These are the themes in the theoretical framework that are the most prominent. The main idea is that all these themes include variables, which can be compared against each other in the results and then analysed.

To ensure that the empirical findings are consistent, reliability is followed. Therefore, it is important to ask if anything is missing during the design process to ensure the best possible empirical data. Furthermore, the feasibility of the survey should be appropriate in the context of email marketing and the intended population should be justified (Jameel & Majid, 2018). Lastly, the design should be formed that the survey can be completed relatively fast in today's environment. Afterall the real world is hectic for respondents.

The survey has been designed with the XM Data Qualtrics tool. It suits for this research purpose; hence they claim that they are a trusted platform for both academic and corporate research. For instance, corporations like Coca-Cola and Toyota use Qualtrics. Additionally, the platform distributes over a billion surveys yearly and boasts xpertReview, which harnesses artificial intelligence to optimize survey designs and provides real-time insights (Qualtrics XM, 2023). The survey was designed with multiple testing and with the note that it would perfectly fit into mobile devices. The survey consisted of blocks and animations that were minimized to enable the ease of use for the respondents.

The survey itself starts with basic demographic collection and then proceeds into the main themes. There are multiple choice questions and Likert scale (1-5 scale or 1-4) questions. Regarding timing there is one open feedback question that requires different analysis methods.

Next sub-subchapters will open the survey design even further by assessing the foundational elements of the survey. The discussion why the design has been chosen as it is and how is discussed as well. Dissection of all specific components of the survey has been constructed with care. The aim is to provide understanding why certain methods of questions or multiple-choice questions were selected into this survey and how it can be later analysed in the data analysis section. It is essential to give out a complete review of the design of this survey to be able to comprehend the topic further of email marketing.

### ***3.2.1 Survey design: Basic information***

In the first block of the survey demographic information is asked from the respondents. (see appendix). In this case it means age. As noted earlier in the theoretical framework different age groups act differently in similar settings. Therefore, age will be one of the variables in this research. According to Rughini and Hum (2015) age is an important socio-demographic variable that gives a certain richness to building cross tabulation or possible explanatory occurrences of variance in the results. Different age groups might also have varied values, worldviews and attitudes that will be worth to investigate in the empirical findings.

The next block of basic information in the survey consists of three basic email marketing polling inquiries. Firstly, frequency of checking an email is inquired. This creates the opportunity to study the response rate that has been discussed in the theoretical framework. Also, it creates a foundation to investigate possible engagement patterns that are later examined and possibilities for correlation analysis.

Second, the survey continues by inquiring how often does a respondent receive marketing related emails. This question is meant to be able to give an insight of understanding email frequency and the overall saturation of received email. In this section it is also possible to analyse fatigue of received marketing emails, but for closer look of this phenomena, the fourth question is formed.

Thirdly, the last question is about how often a respondent receives promotional marketing emails relevant to their needs and desires. This question aims to give the insight of the fatigue and the possible saturation of marketing emails even further. Additionally, this leads naturally into to the field of personalization and targeting effectiveness of marketing efforts perceived by the consumer. This question is often used for brands themselves and was suggested by the XM Qualtrics platform when enabling AI suggestions while crafting the survey. Usually, this question aims to optimize

trustworthiness and segmentation insights, thus it is truly a great topic to inquire in this research.

### ***3.2.2 Survey design: engagement and personalization***

The second block of the survey focuses on personalization and engagement in email marketing. The first question needs an introduction to be comprehensible to the respondent. It begins by explaining this statement: In today's digital age, marketing emails are a common tool used by brands to communicate with their audience. These emails can vary in content, design, and purpose. Now it is time to think about personal preferences and experiences: What are the most important aspects to you when receiving marketing emails? The question is a multiple-choice scale from 1-5 engagement pattern sighting question that has multiple options to answer to. This question aims to gain knowledge about the engagement patterns and awareness of current email trends. The second question in this block is about how satisfied the respondents are with the level of personalization in marketing emails that they receive. This question is straightforward and now the respondents should be more familiar with the topic of personalization of email that is why it is inquired so straight. The last question in this block aims to inquire if any marketing emails are found too personalized or invasive. This is a part of the scepticism and fatigue analysis that with this question can go through from the empirical findings.

### ***3.2.3 Survey design: cross-channel integration***

The third block of the survey is about the theme of cross-channel integration and response in cross-channel platforms. This survey block begins by inquiring what is most preferred device to consume emails. Only one option is allowed, and the options are mobile phone, computer, and a smart watch. The reason this is the first question is that it fractures the preferred devices that are relevant in cross-channel integration.

The next question is broader. It pictures a scenario where action is or would be required. The measurements go from extremely unlikely to extremely likely. The options are selected which would be the most obvious ones to exist in email marketing efforts, such as, providing phone number or clicking a link. Lastly, in this cross-channel integration section the most preferred platform for action after email is examined. Here the options vary from social media platforms like TikTok to websites. Both questions create a possibility for analysis of how email marketers could act for maximum cross channel

optimization. On the other hand, the voice of consumers is also recorded with these questions.

#### ***3.2.4 Survey design: timing preference***

The last section of the survey is the timing block. It begins by inquiring the frequency of checking one's emails. Here multiple options are possible if checked throughout the day but the choices are divided into general times such as lunchtime and middle of the night, specifying the time itself, of course. Next the critical timing is inquired by surveying about limited time offers or marketing emails and would one open such a message. This is followed time pressure themed section, where the respondents are inquired have, they ever missed sale or offer by acting too late. Lastly, there is an open-ended question that asks about specific times or days when a respondent would prefer not to receive marketing or promotional emails? This question is chosen to be able to broaden the analysis by sentiment analysis and give possible emotional tones out of the respondents in a form of written text.

### **3.3 Sample**

Sampling methods used in this research are convenience sampling methods, essentially, sampling methods will be purposeful sampling methods to be able to conduct this empirical study. Later it will develop into snowball sampling when sending the survey to peers is allowed (Emerson, 2015). This essentially means that the respondents are increased by other respondents sharing the survey with their peers suitable for the survey. In the case of survey-based study snowball sampling is often used (Leighton et al, 2021). According to, Leighton et al (2021), snowball sampling allows for an increased sample size and decreased time to complete the research. The online survey is sent by email and distributed by electronic word of mouth (eWOM). It is a form of snowball sampling, where the sample is gathered from individuals that belong into a predetermined population pool (Goodman, 1961). This is implemented due to the nature of this paper and limited resources. Snowball sampling allows to start with smaller number of participants who fit the research criteria then to snowball it to a larger pool of participants (Parker, Scott & Geddes, 2019). This method is suitable for this research; hence it has been proven to be effective in earlier studies.

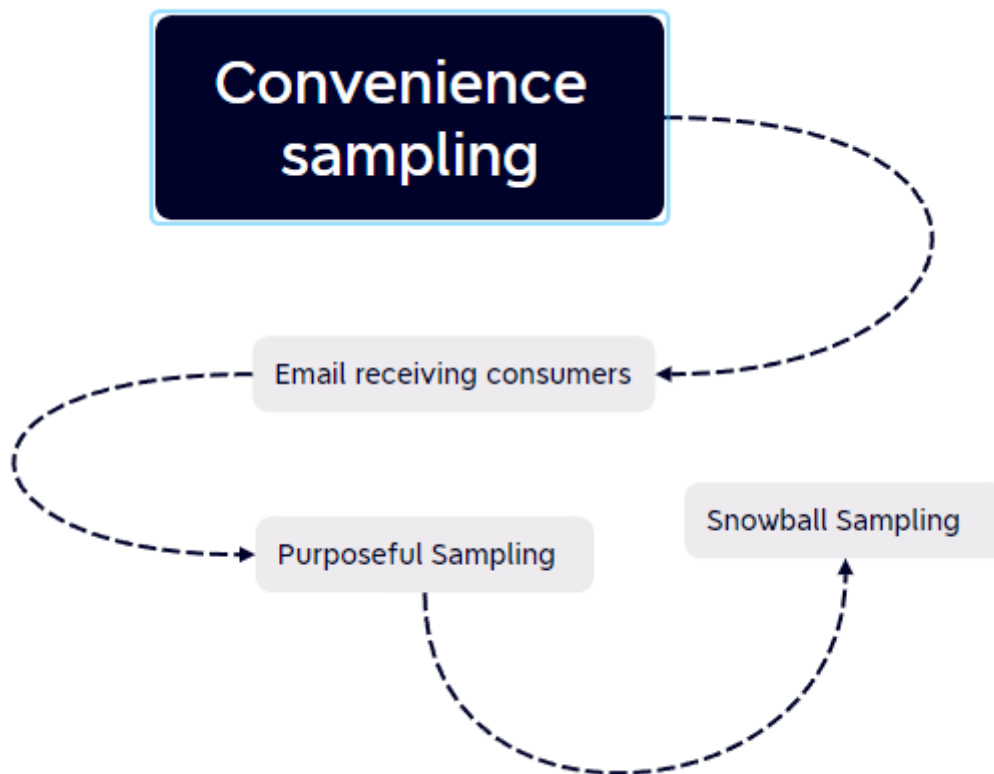
Convenience sampling, as the initial sampling method, is often employed in research studies for its practicality and accessibility. It involves selecting participants based on their availability and willingness to participate, rather than employing random or

systematic selection procedures. In the context of this study, convenience sampling will be used to facilitate the recruitment of Finnish consumers who receive marketing emails. This method allows for a relatively quick and straightforward data collection process, as participants can be easily accessed through various channels such as online forums, social media groups, or existing customer databases. However, it is important to acknowledge that convenience sampling may introduce bias, as the sample may not be fully representative of the target population. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with caution and their generalizability may be limited. However, as the study progresses, purposeful sampling methods will be incorporated to enhance the representativeness and diversity of the sample. Purposeful sampling involves selecting participants based on specific characteristics or criteria that are relevant to the research objectives. In this case, the researchers may consider factors such as age, gender, previous purchasing behaviour, or frequency of engagement with consumer response. By purposively selecting participants who exhibit a wide range of characteristics, the study can capture a more comprehensive understanding of the consumer perspective in relation to email marketing. This sampling method allows for targeted recruitment, ensuring that the sample represents the population of interest more effectively.

Furthermore, snowball sampling will be utilized as the study progresses and expands. Snowball sampling involves participants referring or recruiting others who meet the study's criteria, thereby creating a network or chain of participants. This sampling method can be particularly useful when studying a specific population that may be challenging to reach through traditional sampling methods. In the case of this research, snowball sampling may be employed by allowing participants to share the survey with their peers or contacts who also receive marketing emails. This approach not only increases the sample size but also facilitates access to individuals who may have similar experiences and perspectives. Snowball sampling can be especially valuable in survey-based studies, as it enables researchers to reach a larger number of potential participants within a shorter timeframe (Leighton et al., 2021). By integrating snowball sampling, the study can leverage the participants' social networks, leading to a more diverse and comprehensive sample.

The sampling methods employed in this research involve convenience sampling initially, purposeful sampling methods to enhance representativeness, and eventually snowball sampling to expand the sample size and diversity. While convenience sampling provides practicality and accessibility, it may introduce bias and limit the generalizability of the

findings. Purposeful sampling allows for targeted recruitment based on specific criteria, enhancing the representation of the population of interest. Snowball sampling further expands the sample through participant referrals, enabling access to a wider network of consumers.



**Figure 5 Sampling methods visualized**

This visualization of figure 5. represents the progression of sampling methods used in the research. It begins with convenience sampling, where the study initially recruits millennial and Gen-Z Finnish consumers who receive marketing emails. However, it was later expanded to baby boomers and generation X to gain over 50 respondents. As the study progresses, purposeful sampling is employed to select participants based on specific criteria, such as demographics and purchasing behaviour. Finally, snowball sampling is introduced, allowing participants to refer or recruit others who meet the study's criteria, leading to an expanded and diverse sample. Nevertheless, it is important to discuss the possible weakness of this sampling method. Just by implementing common sense it can be discussed that one weakness of snowball sampling is the

potential for biased or non-representative samples. Since participants are responsible for referring or recruiting others, there is a risk of creating a sample that is not truly representative of the target population. Additionally, participants may refer individuals who share similar characteristics or perspectives, resulting in a lack of diversity and generalizability in the sample. Furthermore, snowball sampling may suffer from the issue of self-selection bias. Participants who refer others may have a vested interest in the study or a specific viewpoint, leading to a biased sample that overrepresents certain opinions or characteristics. Another limitation is the potential for social influence and network effects. Participants within the same social networks may have similar attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours, which can lead to clustering or homogeneity in the sample participants (Parker, Scott & Geddes, 2019). This can limit the variation and diversity of perspectives within the sample and may not accurately reflect the broader population. The reliance on participants to refer others introduces potential limitations in reaching individuals who are not well-connected or who may be more difficult to access through existing social networks. This can result in underrepresentation of certain subgroups or populations, leading to sampling biases. Lastly, while snowball sampling allows for an expanded and diverse sample, its weaknesses lie in a summary in the capacity for bias, deficiency of representativeness, constrained generalizability, and, the stimulus of social networks on the sample composition being to similar participants (Parker, Scott & Geddes, 2019).

According to Palinkas et al (2015) data collection sampling can be implemented by mixing available methods, too. It is possible to have purposeful sampling, but then random variation might occur in the sample size and with the sample itself. The priority should be to keep the sample as presentable as possible for this selected case and discourage extreme variations by advising the respondents if snowball sampling is needed. This is the way to gain valid data for analysis later.

### **3.4 Data collection**

Data for this study will be collected through social media platforms and messaging systems as well as email itself. Data collected for this research follows Hanken's Guidelines and GDPR in general. All the survey results are anonymous. Data management is done properly and effectively by the author and all the data will be stored only temporarily after the Thesis is complete. Confidentiality of the respondents are explained thoroughly in the survey and in the attached information of it as a description.

The data has been collected that the survey link was first distributed via purposeful sampling via email and then via social media. Snowball sampling occurred after this, and more respondents were gained during this period of data collection. During snowball sampling selected purposeful snowball samplers were informed that the survey should be kept inside Finnish citizens to ensure the quality of the collected data.

Other matter to note in collecting data is the data storing. The data collected for this uses high access control security. This method has been suggested when using any data collection method. Backup of the data is also needed at any given point that the erasure might not occur. It is highly important to have protected backups and if possible, encrypt the backups to be secured. Only secure hardware has been used also while collecting this data and personal computer of the research for this master's thesis. Bi-daily the researcher checked that the data had been securely stored and possible vulnerabilities where checked. Eventually, it is relevant to secure the data for the research to complete.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

Data analysis will be conducted with certain comparison tests as suggested in the previous studies (Li & Meshkova, 2013). The data analysis is built upon three main analysis methods. Cross tabulation analysis, correlation analysis and content analysis. The data analysis begins with analysis of the sample in general, which is followed by cross tabulation analysis. Cross tabulation enables to understand the relationship between two or more categorical variables in a study. In this study a table is formed based on the relevant variables such as age and how often emails are checked. This enables the Thesis to check how the distribution has occurred empirically. Cross-tabulation is chosen, since it reveals patterns in how variable values relate. There is also a possibility that certain highlights are found as preferred cross-classifications among respondents. That can contrast different cross-classifications to be examined (Pontius Jr & Cheuk, 2006).

This is followed by regression analysis that identifies relationships between different variables. Regression analysis should allow for findings that will determine which variables move in tandem, guiding possible strategic findings. Lastly, as there was one open-ended question in the survey, and it is examined through sentiment analysis. This method is picked to be able to understand the possible emotional tone of responses. This is possible of the nature of open-text feedback. According to Hamborg, Donnay and Merlo (2021), sentiment analysis is great in certain topics where the expression is clear.

Thus, it is usually greater method for longer texts. However, it is possible to examine the sentiment of a word or sentences with this method.

The analysis continues by results and previous studies comparison to contrast current results with historical data. Comparative analysis is often great because it allows for detailed discussion and therefore enhances the findings (Rose & Mackenzie, 1991). By comparing results with previous studies, the researcher can establish trends, developments, and possible anomalies. Eventually, this comparative approach ensures the research is anchored in historical context. This aims to synthesize three theories which are experienced personalization techniques, experienced cross channel integration and relevance of experienced timing in email marketing for a Finnish consumer. To conclude, the mentioned sections are chosen to provide a thorough overview of email marketing.

### **3.6 Quality of research and ethics of the study**

The quality of the research has been ensured by following the instructions by Cong et al (2007). They claim that two key aspects of research quality come from data consistency and data accuracy. Data accuracy means that the collected data is accurate for the purpose of the conducted study, whereas data consistency means that the data should be handled in a understandable and consistent way. This is not a problem since the survey is designed so inconsistencies should not occur as everything is preplanned. Often real-world data is dirty, but in this kind of data collection it is avoided by carefully designing the survey.

Ethical guide of Hanken has been followed throughout this research (Hanken, 2023). The data gathered is confidential and anonymous. Consent has been asked for every participant before completing the survey. The collected data does not include personal details or private matters. The survey is designed so that the ethical considerations are implemented to gain participants trust and have academic integrity in the research. It is relevant to ensure that the research remains ethical, hence it is not a matter of compliance, but it is integral to building trust of the participant willing to respond. But to remain objective and follow regulations it is to be noted that every bit of data collected for this master's thesis is deleted after final submission.

In the table 1. below (Jameel & Majid, 2018) information and components of a research guideline followed is formed. Research protocol is crafted through this and by following set guidelines by Hanken. By the nature of research, it is relevant to inform the

participants why they are selected and whether it is voluntary to participate in the research. By following this table 1. the data consistency should improve, and no respondent should feel ransomed to participate in this research. Additionally, the topic is explained thoroughly and understandably to the respondents that they know where they are participating in. in this master's thesis this was done by informing the selected respondents by the email or with oral discussion. This also minimizes the risks of seeming spam when discussing email distribution. Lastly the survey and distribution has been reviewed in line with the guidelines of Hanken and this Table 1.

**Table 1. Specific components of consent that is informed to the participant**

Information	Components
Nature of Research	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Informed why research is conducted.</li> <li>2) Pupose of the study described</li> <li>3) Reason for being selected</li> </ol>
Procedures of Study	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Procedures that differ from standard are explained</li> <li>2) Topics in survey explained</li> </ol>
Risks and Potential Benefits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Alternatives to participation explained</li> <li>2) Free admittance expressed</li> <li>3) Any risks explained if present</li> </ol>

In this master's thesis no different procedures occurred, thus this was redundant, when discussing about this table 1. But in any other work this might have been more relevant. Alternatives to participation have been just not to participate in this case as no interviews were present in this master's thesis. However, it is to be noted that during the sampling period two respondents called the researcher about the email that it seemed like the researcher email has been corrupted. The researcher explained that this was not the case and why they were so keen to inform me is that they work at high level security corporations and are highly sceptical of any anomalies. They consented the researcher that this information is fine to be shared in the master's thesis. Therefore, it is to be noted

that the research has been conducted ethically and without any other disturbances and the guidelines where followed.

## 4 RESULTS

In this chapter analysis of results will be the focus. This will be done by discussing the results by comparing it to previous research regarding this subject, essentially reflecting the data gathered to the theoretical framework of this paper. This is followed by a summary of the results and discussion. Furthermore, managerial implications are generated of the results.

### 4.1 Descriptive statistics of the sample

Total respondents of the survey were 90 consented to response to the survey. However, after excluding responses with missing replies to some questions the total results into 77 respondents. Therefore, the number of the respondents is counted as 77. The incomplete responses were removed from the handled data to keep the data as valid as possible for further analysis. The data was gathered during September and October of the year 2023. The survey was active for 25 days and was closed until it did not gather anymore respondents.

The survey begins with a basic information poll. Demographic information is followed up with a few questions regarding email marketing. The sample collected consisted of four different generations.

**Table 2. Demographic information of respondents (N=77)**

Generation	Count	Percent
Gen-Z (Born between 1997-2005)	18	23,4%
Millenials (Born between 1981-1996)	23	29,9%
Gen-X (Born between 1965-1980)	28	36,4%
Baby Boomers (Born before 1965)	8	10,4%

It is possible to examine that roughly third of the respondents were millennials and Gen-X. The representation of the sample is decent in this kind of study, but it could have generated more responses from all age groups if resources would have allowed for that.

In table 3. below the general statistics can be viewed. These have been divided into four main categories that include the major variables. Consumer response (CR) includes email checking, email received, clicking a link, following a brand on social media, and watching promotional videos. Timing (T) includes limited time offers and time received. Essentially acting upon timed requests. Cross-channel integration (XC) includes presence of attachments, providing phone number and downloading applications. Personalization includes email relevance, senders' identity, subject line, content clarity, email design and layout, relevance to needs, personalized content, informative content, logo of a sender and content reflecting consumer's behaviour.

**Table 3. Consumer engagement levels**

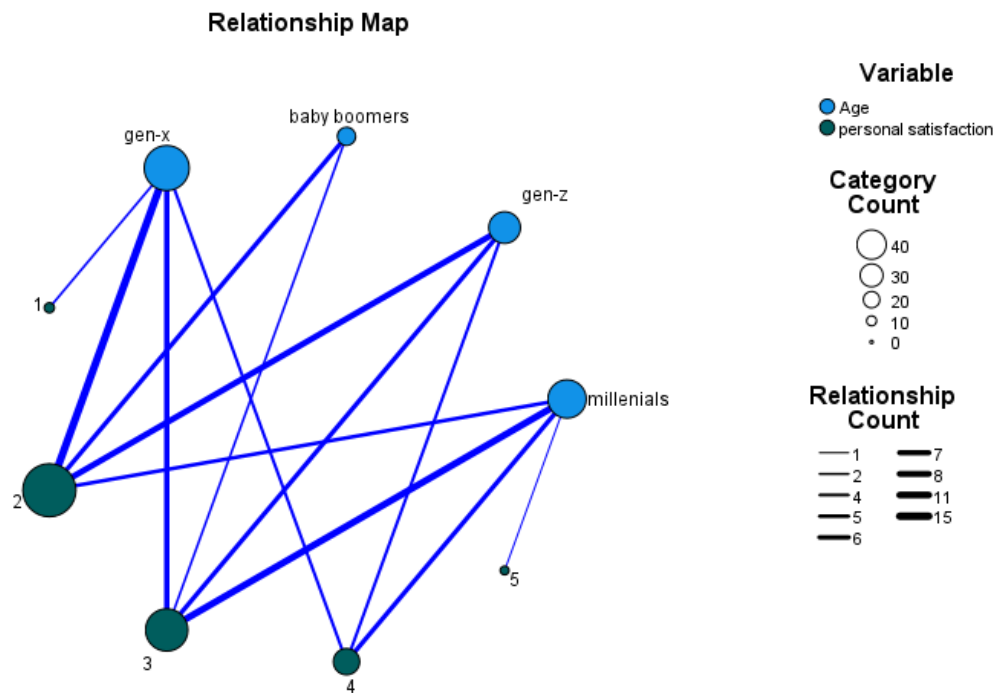
Engagement category	Average	Std. Deviation
Email check (CR)	1,25	0,632
Email received (T)	1,21	0,592
Email relevance (P)	3,35	1,233
Senders identity (P)	3,56	1,198
Subject line (P)	3,57	1,129
Content clarity (P)	3,96	0,952
Email design and layout (P)	3,32	1,081
Presence of attachments (XC)	2,18	1,132
Videos (XC)	1,92	1,061
Relevance to current interests (P)	4,17	0,849
Relevance to current needs (P)	4,30	0,779
Time received (T)	2,47	1,283
Personalized content (P)	3,01	1,262
Content reflecting your past behaviour (P)	2,62	1,193
Logo of a sender (P)	2,58	1,218

Informative content (P)	3,84	0,919
Promotional content (P)	2,88	1,192
Personal satisfaction (CR)	2,71	0,841
Provide your phone number (XC)	1,60	0,950
Follow the brand on social media (XC)	1,90	1,119
Share their content on social media (CR)	1,39	0,797
Watch a promotional video (CR)	2,09	1,041
Download an application (XC)	1,64	0,902
Click a link (CR)	2,40	1,340
limited time (T)	3,26	1,218

The average number in the table 3. is from the responses of answering between a scale from 1-5. The scale goes from not important to extremely important, 1 being not important and 5 extremely important. In Table 3. the top three of the most important aspects to the respondents affecting engagement levels were relevance to current needs, relevance to current interests and content clarity, all belonging into the personalization category. On the other hand, the most negative concerns affecting consumer response were, email received, sharing their content on social media, and providing your phone number. These variables are from timing and cross-channel integration categories.

The survey continued by polling the satisfaction next. The questions asked in this part begins with by asking how satisfied the respondents with the level of personalization in the promotional emails are you generally receive.

**Figure 6 Generational demographic relationship map of personalized email satisfaction**



In figure 6. It can be established that gen-z and gen-x were somewhat dissatisfied with the personalization in their inbox, whereas millennial and baby boomers were more neutral towards the satisfaction. This figure 6. is read as the higher the ball node or thicker the line the more respondents answered so from their respective groups. Satisfaction levels vary from 1-5 scale and most popular responses were between 2,3 and 4. This means that somewhat dissatisfactory and neutral remained the most popular options in this case when discussing about general marketing email satisfaction levels.

**Table 4. Cross-tabulation of satisfaction between demographical groups and symmetric measures**

		Personal satisfaction					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
Age	Gen-Z	0	8	6	4	0	18
	Millenials	0	5	11	6	1	23
	Gen-X	2	15	7	4	0	28
	Baby Boomers	0	6	2	0	0	8
Total		2	34	26	14	1	77

In table 4. satisfaction levels of personal satisfaction and email relevance is examined as part of the personalization and consumer response. This is the same data as seen in the figure 6., thus the results are the same as mentioned earlier.

**Table 5. Satisfaction levels of received marketing emails**

Model		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>			t	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta		
1	(Constant)	2,337	0,330		7,091	<,001
	Personal satisfaction	-,024	0,077	-,038	-,313	0,755
	Email relevance	-,138	0,053	-,319	-2,631	0,010

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer response

Further analysis has been done with email relevance and personal satisfaction. In this table 5. it is possible to interpret that email relevance is statistically significant. The measured variables are part of personalization independent variables, against the dependent variables in consumer response. The p values of personal satisfaction and email relevance are 0,755 and 0,010 respectively. Email relevance is significantly affecting consumer response (Kim, 2022).

## 4.2 Cross-channel integration

The next part handles the empirical data about cross-channel integration in email marketing. The first section surveyed about the preferred device of reading emails. Multiple options were available here, thus mobile phone was the most popular and second, computer and lastly smart watch by only two votes out of 77. Next the likeliness of action was explored with the cross-channel integration in mind. The following section continued with inquiring the preferable platform after receiving promotional email. Only one could be selected here to ensure the quality in the data and asking the most preferred method. Websites had 66 % of the responses, email response 27% and 7% for Facebook. Interestingly YouTube, LinkedIn and X were 0% representation. This could be because only the most preferred was enquired, but still all except following a link to the websites were found majorly to be extremely unlikely to act upon. Here it is possible to see that the variable in cross-channel integration is normally distributed. These will be later discussed in the analysis chapter.

## 4.3 Timing of email

This next section will go through the timing preferences of respondents and when they do check their inbox. The most popular time to check email among respondents were mid-morning and mid-afternoon. Lunch time and evening were the second favourite and early morning also got 18 votes out of 77 responses. Here multiple options were possible, which makes this variable to be view later in ordinal regression analysis. Below there is a table 6. where quick response time is examined. Most significant portion of responses gathered from opening the email during the same day, but secondly popular was that within few days. Detailed look is seen below.

**Table 6. Limited offer table with Std. Deviation of 1,283**

If you receive an email about a limited time offer or sale, how quickly do you typically open it?	Count	Percentage
Immediately	5	6,5%
Within a few hours	12	15,6%
Same day	26	33,8%
Within a few days	23	29,9%
I rarely open time-sensitive offers	11	14,3%

On the last multiple-choice question missing out a sale based on timing was explored. As seen in the table 6. Limited-time sales were checked within few days and mostly in the same day. In table 7. as it can be seen that 64 out of 77 respondents said that they check their email inbox daily. There seems not to occur any significant generational difference.

**Table 7. Age: email check Crosstabulation (std. deviation 0,632)**

(1=daily, 2=4-6 times a week, 3= 2-3 times a week, 4=once a week)

		1	2	3	4	
Age	Gen-Z	13	4	0	1	18
	Millenials	20	2	0	1	23
	Gen-X	23	3	2	0	28
	Baby Boomers	8	0	0	0	8
Total		64	9	2	2	77

The last part of the survey was about specific times or days when the respondent would not like to receive marketing or promotional emails. To summarize the open answers the general trend did lean into not receiving marketing email in evenings, nights, and weekends. However, a major representative part of the respondents explained that the issue of receiving unwanted marketing emails is not so much about the timing as it is about informational content. Several respondents simply wrote "NO", suggesting no preference whatsoever. Few answers were longer in nature as "I really don't care. I always set up spam filters accordingly." and "Preferably never any marketing content." Thus, the disinterest in this case is the finding.

#### **4.4 Regression analysis**

To interpret the results further the relationships of the variables were explored. This has been done by labelling the gathered data into four different variables. First there are the independent variables which are personalization, cross-channel integration and timing, the dependent variable in this case is customer response as the measuring is the effects on customer response. Ordinal regression is used here since the data varies on nature and different scales are used between variables (Greco, Mousseau & Słowiński 2008). The dependent variable is anticipated to be ordinal, and, in this case, it differs to be

numeric or string variable, as there are multiple choice and Likert-scale questions, and even the scale differs between questions. All these variables are based upon the survey and put into groups, which are consumer response (CR), timing (T), cross-channel integration (XC) and personalization (P). These are analysed and tested in regression analysis with consumer response in mind as it is the aim of the study to gain understanding can consumer response be affected by these different variables.

#### ***4.4.1 Regression analysis of personalization influencing consumer response***

Email marketing is a cost-effective tool it is most often chosen to communicate with the consumers. Additionally, as according to Fattah (2021) email marketing is trending and cross media marketing with it. This is understandable as the empirical findings of this thesis indicate that consumers do like to check emails but not to converse themselves any further. However, in this case some of the marketing agenda has already been implemented into the consumer. It could be that if the content would fit the consumers' needs more specifically and current needs would match the interactions with the personalized content could lead to greater results. However, it seems that higher interactivity is only reached when the content is extremely well crafted and personalized and email marketing might have remained, because of this, still in a one-way persuasive marketing communication format (Wang, 2021). Below in the table 8. The possibility to influence consumer response with personalization is studied. Independent variable here is personalization and dependent variable is consumer response. In this table 8. The p is 0,363, thus it is statistically insignificant, therefore goodness of fit is redundant in this case (Chernoff & Lehmann, 2011).

**Table 8. Regression analysis of personalization influencing consumer response****Model Fitting Information**

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
CR	246,562	0,829	1	0,363

Link function: Logit.

**Goodness-of-Fit**

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	250,135	224	0,111
Deviance	183,908	224	0,977

In table 9. email checking and email relevance are normally distributed. Therefore, a linear regression can be made with these variables. However, the p value is 0,370 and therefore it is not statistically significant that email received would affect email checking, as it is to be expected in today's environment. This might be due to the notifications and habits of checking the inbox regularly.

**Table 9. Personalized emails received with relevance affecting consumer response (CR=email checking)****Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1,380	,164		8,391	<,001
	email received	-,111	,122	-,104	-,903	,370

a. Dependent Variable: email check=CR

Next in table 10. the most important personalization variables are explored individually and how they affect consumer response in general. The scale was from not important, somewhat important, neutral, important, and extremely important. In here the most comprehensible way of examining the data is to look at averages. The scale is from 1-5 and level of importance grows as the scale goes higher. Customer satisfaction of received marketing emails is a part of personalization. In this study only two variables, which are email design and layout ( $p=0,02$ ), and informative content ( $p=0,02$ ) are influencing consumer response significantly. In table 10. It is possible to interpret independent samples test.

**Table 10. Personalization engagement levels influencing consumer response (single regression analysis)**

<b>Engagement in personalized emails</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P value, Sig.</b>
Email relevance	0,677	0,413
Senders identity	1,627	0,206
Subject line	0,033	0,857
Email design and layout	5,627	0,02
Relevance to current needs	0,424	0,517
Personalized content	0,164	0,686
Logo of a sender	0,104	0,748
Informative content	5,655	0,02
Promotional content	1,275	0,263
Personal satisfaction	0,428	0,515

To summarize as personalization is one of the key elements in email marketing and personalization has been proven to increase any response rates (Sahni, Wheeler & Chintagunta, 2018), this study also enhances this phenomenon. The most important part in personalization is the design and layout and having informative content according to the consumers in this study. Therefore, these aspects should be heavily considered, when executing email marketing campaigns. However, email personalization techniques could be further enhanced and all the data available should be thoroughly studied as it is now simpler than ever to execute.

#### 4.4.2 Regression analysis of cross-channel integration influencing consumer response

Cross-channel integration is an important part of email marketing as its' possibilities are still to be explored. Cross-channel integration is not vastly studied in the context of email marketing. Mostly previous studies have focused on linking one or two platforms of marketing (Tagashira & Minami, 2019). Other aspect of cross-channel marketing is to keep the control, at least the perceived control in the hands of the consumer as suggested by Hartemo (2016). This has been proven important in this master's thesis' empirical results, too. Nevertheless, the most special aspect to note in this research's cross-channel integration part is that consumers are resistant to give mobile phone numbers ( $P < ,001$ ) or to proceed further from email as platform like in social media ( $P < ,001$ ). This indicates that, while implementing cross-channel strategies in email marketing a marketer should be either careful or forceful to get the desired results but within the limits of giving the options to the consumers.

Ordinal regression has been conducted in order to see if the relationship between cross-channel integration and consumer response do exist. It certainly does as the results are in the table 11. below to be seen as significant the p-value being 0,003, this means that cross channel integration does have an effect on consumer response, but in a way that cross channel integration is not very well liked in general as it is clearly expressed through the results, and this justifies it even more. Furthermore, in the goodness of fit test suggests the model fitting, since the values are nonsignificant there (Chernoff & Lehmann, 2011).

**Table 11. Cross-channel integration influencing consumer response**

<b>Model Fitting Information</b>				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	142,569			
Cross-channel integration	133,550	9,019	1	0,003

Link function: Logit.

<b>Goodness-of-Fit</b>			
	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	67,775	71	0,587

Link function: Logit.

### **Pseudo R-Square**

McFadden	0,026
----------	-------

Link function: Logit.

In table 11. as in ordinal regression R-square is not possible to compute as it is in linear regression a Pseudo R-square is presented (McFadden, 1973). However, Pearson correlation being 0,587 as a parameter estimate does not enhance the significance of this model.

#### ***4.4.3 Regression analysis of timing influencing consumer response***

Timing could be one overlooked variable of email marketing that could be further enhanced. As there are preferred times to read emails, as suggested by the empirical results, more focus could be put into timing in general. As noted in the theoretical framework, timing is overlooked when developing marketing campaigns (Byun & Kirsch, 2021). Here “newer” tools such as AI could be a great help to develop effective marketing campaigns. Perhaps another possibility could be to ask directly from the consumers in email, and it would be important to keep the format in email as suggested in the empirical results, in a survey format. This could be a method of gaining personalization timing insight of consumers to be further developed in the future marketing campaigns. On the other hand, by sending email only during peak engagement hours might lead to clutter and only trusting the consumers voice in this could be risky. However, in this study there seems not to be any significance between timing and consumer response as seen in the table 12. In ordinal regression model the p value is 0,804 and the goodness of fit test supports the non-significance of the model as well.

**Table 12. Ordinal regression of timing influencing consumer response**

<b>Model Fitting Information</b>				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	144,220			
Final	144,158	,062	1	,804

Link function: Logit.

<b>Goodness-of-Fit</b>			
	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	69,400	71	0,532
Deviance	66,514	71	0,629

Additionally, more relevant empirical findings to look at when making correlation analysis about timing and cross channel integration are the links in between the two themes. Mostly, the respondents did not care to act fast for as a marketing incentive ( $p=0,804$ ). Mobile phones being the leading platform to read emails states for the convenience and being able to check the mails often, but the incentive for extreme limited time sales have been found not relevant. Weekdays are most convenient for the majority to check the emails and within the first hours of the day. It could be that consumers are paying more attention during commuting hours, or they have then the most optimal time to spend browsing their mobile devices email being one of their routines.

Ultimately, email is found as personal and official platform to interact with and mostly websites are preferred as far as conversion goes. This is interesting, hence otherwise the survey indicates that emails are consumed with mobile devices, but the majority do not prefer apps or other platforms or websites. This could be that the email is found as a more professional or official platform as indicated in one of the open-ended sentient questions, when a respondent claimed to use email only on work related tasks. In table 13. It possible to see that clicking a link was the most preferred action as a part of consumer response but comparing it against timing practices the results were non-significant ( $p=0,888$ ).

**Table 13. One-way Anova of timing influencing consumer response**

Dependent=consumer response, independent=timing

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1,088	8	0,136	0,448	0,888
Within Groups	20,628	68	0,303		
Total	21,715	76			

However, by adapting and following consumer behaviour and mobile usage patterns, there is a possibility to recognize the best possible times to communicate the marketing message. This could lead into higher conversion rates and better engagement. Lastly, it would be important to analyse regularly all this generated data and adjust accordingly to enhance the email timing practices.

#### 4.5 Sentiment analysis of timing

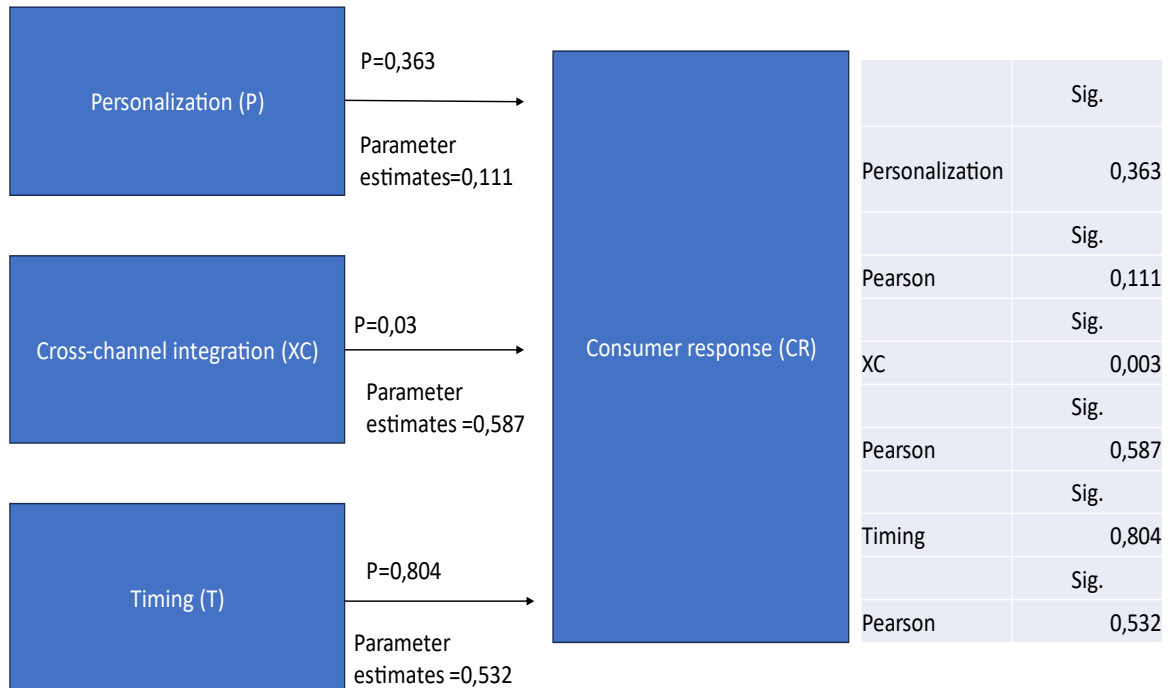
Sentiment analysis is explorative in this section and various sentiments can be divided into three main categories in this open-ended question. The categories follow the same set framework as the whole survey as basically dividing the 1 to 5 scale into simple 1 to 3 scale, 1 being the positive, 2 the neutral sentiment and 3 the negative sentiment. The aim by using sentiment analysis in this last question of the survey, is to gain knowledge of any aversions or possible preferred timings of receiving marketing emails. Firstly, it needs to be stated that the answers were rather short, as asked, but the most popular were to leave it blank or simply writing “no” or “weekend”. The respondents who told that their preferred time of checking the emails occurred early mornings wrote that emails should never arrive to their inbox midnight, which is totally understandable. The positive sentiment in this case is the simple “no” answer as it is neutral. Negative sentiments were if there is any suggestion of any given time that there should not be marketing or promotional emails appearing into the inbox of a respondent. One respondent claimed that holidays should be absolutely marketing email free, whereas another devised product or service launch to be the worst topics to be introduced in the marketing emails. The longest answer was that: I really don't care. I always set up spam

filters accordingly. I have zero interest in promotions, and I use email for work only. This answer can be tracked from an individual, who is a millennial and checks email only in the mornings at work and answers directly via email and if the email is used for work only the other answers from this respondent are a little redundant at least. Nevertheless, the remaining sentimental topics revolved around weekends and nighttime. Therefore, the data varied a lot gained from the survey and no definitive conclusion could be drawn from this. The most neutral answer was just to check email when they have time for it and does not really care for anything else. However, for marketers it should be important to use as much A/B testing, since that is one of the most cost effective and fast method of gain data if a marketing email is effective. Also, sometimes direct feedback could be politely asked during mid-day to weekdays to ensure that as possible regard the email to be worthwhile.

#### **4.6 Summary of the results**

The empirical findings create a great platform for the next chapter to analyse and discuss further. Totalling over 90 respondents is a decent achievement, although only N=77 were usable in this study. But with the available resources and the generated data, it gives an opportunity to analyse the gathered data with the methods presented in the earlier chapter. As expected, email is still a very popular medium and it does have impactful place in consumers life. The use of mobile devices has been the most popular method of reading email, and this was also expected. However, in this study only variable that is supported in ordinal regression is cross-channel integration. Cross-channel integration has direct impact on consumer response. Also, in personalization design and layout and informative content are regarded as important variables influencing consumer response as presented earlier in this chapter. However, timing could have been examined more thoroughly as now the survey mostly survey about limited time offers and fear of missing them out.

**Figure 7 Summary of correlations on consumer response**



In figure 7. the p values and parameter estimates can be seen as summarized model of P, XC and T influencing consumer response. The only significant value being in XC, but if taking a closer look, the Pearson correlation there is 0,587, which means that the strength is not that strong (Sedgwick, 2012). Overall, the parameter estimates strength were weak.

## 5 DISCUSSION

In this section the general aim is to have an offered solution to the research problem. As the research problem has been constructed from the theoretical framework, which briefly is how do consumers perceive and react to the confluence of high-level personalization, optimal timing, and seamless cross-channel integration in their email marketing interactions. There are empirical findings and results that already assert strong suggestions regarding this problem. The three RQs will be answered as well. This part is divided so that the three RQs are studied and answered first. This is followed by extensive research problem discussion reflecting and aiming to study the solution for the research problem.

### 5.1 Breakdown discussion of the research questions

The main purpose of the research questions is to research the impact of personalization, cross-channel integration, and timing in email marketing. The breakdown analyses chronologically the three RQs.

#### 5.1.1 *RQ1. How does personalization of email marketing impact on consumer response and trust?*

Personalization has the highest impact on consumers according to this master thesis' empirical findings. However, the significance was low but according to the respondents it gained the highest relevance in the context of the results in the average values in table 3. Consequence of the content and personalized content has been found to be the most sought-after aspects of email marketing according to the respondents. Personalized content should increase the possibilities to respond with email and strengthen the relationship with a certain company or brand. The relevance of the content reflecting consumers' interests is also important and it does have a positive effect on how the marketing communication is received. However, the strongest aspect in this study is email design and layout, and informative content received in consumers' inboxes.

Consumer response is enhanced by personalization, since consumers find that it is better that the content is timed and personalized to reflect their current interest. Mostly consumers do receive relevantly reflecting promotional email at least weekly according to the results, but sometimes there is a possibility that the content is to be found invasive. However, this is rare and seems to depend on the demographic group of the consumer and perhaps the general critical thinking possibilities. Nonetheless, there was no notable difference between age groups in consumer response while using personalized content.

This result might simply indicate that it is convenient to have personalized marketing emails and therefore satisfactory. Lastly, one of the most effective methods of personalization and total trusted methods seem to be included links in the marketing emails, but all other materials (attachments, tasks), even if personalized, are found extremely unlikely to act upon.

### **5.1.2 RQ2. How does cross-channel integration influence consumer response?**

Cross-channel integration does influence email opening rates, engagement, and conversion. Email opening rates are generally not affected by cross-channel integration efforts, but engagement and conversion are perceived negatively. Mostly this seems to be that relevancy is poor and fragmentation of different platforms and marketing communication produces confusion according to consumers. It is possible that overcommunication is observed by the consumer, which leads to annoyance or irrelevance. The results indicated that there is a strong significance in cross-channel integration that consumers do not want to be cross-channel integrated in email marketing. To avoid skepticism as previous study by Thomas and Kureshi (2020) indicated, data privacy must be taken into heavy consideration. Data privacy is a relevant concern, hence consumers in this research were not excited to give out additional information outside of the email address. Consumers are increasingly careful about sharing their personal information and the results indicate that email is viewed as a very neutral non-intrusive platform that, getting SMS messages or other forms of communication is to be found invasive. Therefore, it is important to give control (Bhatia, 2020; Barbosa & Carneiro, 2022) to consumers to even be able to implement cross-channel integration in email marketing. (Hartemo, 2016).

### **5.1.3 RQ3. How does email timing affect the consumer response?**

The timing of emails is perhaps an overlooked or less studied phenomenon in the email marketing field. The general aspect of email timing consists of limited time campaigns or sales that are offered briefly, but their usefulness seems to be low according to the consumers of this research. This study did succeed in advancing to understand the importance of daily routines when it comes to email and behavioral patterns within them. As urgency and fear of missing out seems not to be relevant in the email platform, the respect of consumers "boundaries" by sending daytime or noon-time email are perceived to be the most positive. Frequency does matter as well as the content that

maintains equilibrium between informative and promotional content, frequently. Appropriate timing with relevant content leads to higher response from the consumers, consequently creating a more nurtured relationship completely. Night times and weekends should be avoided, and general holiday times might also be found inappropriate by the consumers. Therefore, careful assessment and thorough A/B testing would be the responsibility of the email marketer to achieve the desired results in email marketing by using the aspect of accurately suitable timing.

## **5.2 Research problem interpreted**

The main aspect of the research problem really is how consumers perceive and react to personalization, optimal timing, and cross-channel integration in email marketing. As the RQs are now answered there is still room for problem discussion.

Starting from the beginning as the companies and brands are built upon stories, email marketing should follow the same agenda. Consumers do feel that by using clear language that is relevant to their current interests and needs, does reflect and engages them most prominently. Therefore, as Song, Tao, and Wen (2021) indicated earlier in their study, story-based content heavy marketing has impact on consumers in many levels. However, the background needs to be thoroughly investigated to be relevant in today's consumer landscape. A few impactful messages are not enough to keep interest and too many can feel invasive. Thus, it is a challenging situation where balancing between consumer-controlled information and messaging, simultaneously keeping information and other aspects transparent can reach the objective of establishing a meaningful connection with the consumer. This will lead to increased satisfaction and loyalty towards the email marketer.

The second aspect of consumer devices and cross-channel integration as well do possess a significant role in email marketing effectiveness. Prioritizing mobile devices is particularly relevant (Barbosa & Carneiro, 2022), it was the case in this research as well as the majority of consumers emails with their mobile devices such as smart watches and mobile phones. In the theoretical framework it was stated that there is a lack of comprehensive research on email marketing specifically tailored for smartphones. But this study proves that smartphones are the most relevant platform for email optimization and naturally also websites as they were the most preferred method of conversing the consumer to response by any means. However, earlier studies have found that emails are mostly read with mobile devices such as a one study conducted by Barbosa and Carneiro

(2022), where the researchers examined this aspect a bit and made noteworthy observations such as checking the phones on limited time sales. This is true with this study as well and it did not deviate from generation to another, smartphones and mobile use is the most relevant method of consuming emails. Additionally, in this thesis' research phones were mostly preferred but limited time fear of missing out events were reviled. But optimizing email marketing for mobile devices is a must. Since smartphones are preferred by ease of use as also suggested by Barbosa and Carneiro (2022).

In this study it is found that consumers do not like their email marketing messages to "spread" in other formats, ergo cross-channel integration is not regarded as relevant to consumers. This is an interesting result, since mostly it seems to be that email marketing efforts should be kept in email according to the consumers. SMS integration and social media integration should be made more lucrative options with exceptional incentives even to be considered. However, websites should be extremely optimized for mobile and easy to use to reflect the whole marketing efforts fully. But in this case clicking a link was viewed only as consumer response and not as cross-channel integration.

Hyper-personalization is achieved through a combination of micro-segmentation and artificial intelligence, which track consumers' preferences, purchases, and interactions with emails. According to this thesis' research personalization is highly preferred in every category. It seems that this proves the concept, where personalization approach leads to desirable outcomes very often (Bhatt, 2023). BIMI however seems to be more neutral for now, but perhaps more relevant in the future. The content is more important than the sender's identity. However, unknown senders are not welcome in consumers' inboxes.

The interactive elements could have been more relevant, but according to the findings, this is not the case in email marketing. However, clever use of visuals in email design plays a significant role in triggering consumer positively. Therefore, here A/B testing should be the focus that involves comparing two or more versions of an email or a landing webpage to determine consumer actions (Mailchimp, 2023). With renowned testing the best results for both parties, marketers and consumers should be achievable.

The topic of personalized optimal timing of emails has the most significant results. Effective timing can be done by sending frequent but not too frequent marketing and informative promotional emails during the day. This should have the most positive effect on consumers according to this research. By sending personally timed messages with the help of A/B testing and machine learning this should be an effortlessly achievable task.

Individualist culture desires hyper personalized content and taking individuals into consideration. Weekend and nighttime emails should be avoided, and the content of the emails should be crafted exceptionally and carefully to wake the interest of a consumer. Consumers are ever so demanding and want to be heard and marketers should act as such. Urgency and time-limited marketing communication should be guided to softer aspects of communication with a simple interface for the consumer to act upon. Behavioral patterns and daily routines of a consumer are relatively easy to find out as a marketer when using email and this data should be analyzed regularly. Optimization of all the mentioned aspects is relevant and to be considered continuously in email marketing.

### **5.3 Theoretical contributions**

This thesis presents original framework and synthesized theories that encapsulates the essence, dynamics and relevance of personalization, timing, and cross-channel integration in email marketing. This framework functions as a roadmap for future researchers and marketers, offering a comprehensive overview of email marketing's complicated nature. Moreover, the thesis' research introduces a set of metrics that provide a granular understanding of consumer engagement in regards of email when using, for example personalization based on previous studies (Sahni, Wheeler & Chintagunta, 2018).

Email is used daily and therefore it is an important aspect to study. Marketers can do a lot when it comes to enhancing email marketing practices. There was not a notable difference between demographics in this study and their consumer respective behaviour. This study proves that personalization and mobile optimization is the key in email marketing to all consumers. This was anticipated in the theoretical framework as well. (Sahni, Wheeler & Chintagunta, 2018; Barbosa & Carneiro, 2022). Timing of the email should also be calculated to achieve higher engagement within the consumers (Byun & Kirsch, 2021; Sutton et al, 2017). When it comes to different age groups the respondents of this study did not deviate that much from each other. Most importantly every generation seems to check their inbox daily and desires personalized content into their inbox.

More contributions come from the study derive from the aspect of ever important economic growth. Technological advancement is the key to development and to be sustainable as a society. This study provides ground for enhanced promotion possibilities

in the field of email marketing and therefore possible leading to vast economic growth if considered. Email marketing is cost effective tool and part of digital marketing, which should not be overlooked. Consumers read emails daily. Email marketing has also environmental benefits as it does not use paper but digital content. In best case scenario this research creates opportunities for companies to build loyal communities and even create new email analytics workplaces (Goic, Rojas, & Saavedra, 2021; Deligiannis, Argyriou & Kourtesis, 2020; Thomas, Chen, C. & Iacobucci, 2022). To conclude all the research's contributions are positive and strengthen the earlier research about email marketing.

#### **5.4 Managerial implications**

The main purpose of this research and the main idea is to find what are the key factors that email marketers should remember when marketing to consumers with delimitations in mind. Possible managerial implications include themes from theoretical framework. To enhance their email marketing strategies and build stronger loyal relationships with consumers in Finland, marketers can consider the following strategies in email marketing.

Firstly, companies need to be careful with the strategy how to approach consumers with cross-channel integration in mind. There should be incentives to give personal information and assure the consumers about their private safety. Regular analysis of email marketing campaigns should be made and frequent A/B testing as well (Zimek, 2023; Birch, 2022; Bhatt, 2023). Additionally, all the available tools and developing new ones, regarding email marketing, should be a key focus.

Second, personalization should be extremely well implemented. This means that segmentation and timing, and every possible aspect should be personalized if possible. This should be done because the results indicated that it engages the consumers and keeps their interest tight. Content relevance should also be personalized and even evert informational email could be personalized in the future with the help of predictive AI tools As Davenport et al, (2020) suggested in the theoretical framework. The conversion and response rates should be analysed systematically and regularly to gain the best possible insight for email marketing. Design of the email from title to BIMBI logos are relevant, too (Bhatt, 2023). It is important to be official but to be loyal to the brand image, while email marketing. This differed from demographic to demographic, but the major representatives of the respondents did deem this as significant variable.

Third, timing aspect of emails should not be overlooked. Emails should be frequent in consumers inbox, but not too frequent to avoid clutter and possible uncertainty or invasive feels towards a company. This study also proves that consumers claim that there are peak times should be the best times to receive emails, but this should be studied further as peak digital traffic times could result to be ineffective. This was predicted by Byun and Kirsch in the earlier study (2021). However, it seems that timed deals are perceived as exhausting and new methods of peaking interest should be developed. Also, there was no difference on different generations in this behaviour.

### **5.5 Limitations and future research**

The main limitations of this research consider that the gained empirical results were completely based on consumers respondents. They gave out their opinions as they remember or want at the given moment but might not truly be experts of their own behaviour. Like all research, in this thesis, too has its constraints. Another notable limitation was that most of the data was not normally distributed and therefore ordinal regression has been used. Also, the variables differed and were not the best possible as they could have been. For example, before crafting the survey the explored variables should have been established more clearly and then designed as similarly that the data could have been easier to interpret and generated more significant results. Also, the quantitative study had 77 respondents after cleaning the data. Most of the data cleaning occurred when the survey designer realized that not all of the survey questions were mandatory to answer. Without this occurring the survey could have had more respondents, and it could have generated more viable data. The sampling methods were also purposeful and convenient, which is a certain limitation due to the nature of this being a master's thesis. Meaning that a more detailed sampling method could generate varied results. For example, by using expert sampling or modal instant sampling methods. These methods would allow for gaining superior expertise knowledge from this field or giving opportunity to gain only recent instances as samples to be used to generate comparable samples in the study (Etikan, Ilker, and Kabiru, 2017; Epstein et al, 2024). It would be interesting to compare these two methods and what kind of findings they would offer. Additional limitation also is in the survey that, some of the wordings in the survey might have been too extreme. For example, regarding the promotional email call to action likeliness, it might have been that the terminology was too extreme as the both ends where extreme ends. Additionally, in the survey some of the questions could have been from a category that you can choose multiple options rather than the favourite one

of reading email, as for example the question of most preferred platform to consume emails.

This thesis' findings indicate that there occurs a rich potential for further exploration in email marketing. Future research could focus on the use of different email tools and services. Additionally, as this study generated results that inbox is checked frequently it could be studied further is this a habit from using mobile devices or specific to email and how cross-channel integration could be enhanced in this area? Also, companies could be studied that practice email marketing. Some future research problems could be about, how can email marketers in Finland enhance their email marketing strategies according to consumers and to build stronger loyal relationships with consumers? Other aspects of future research could focus on how to implement effective cross-channel integration and interactive emails that consumers would like to interact. That seems to be a challenging aspect to develop and should be studied further.

Future research should converge on studying timed emails with the help of machine learning and AI-predicting consumer behavioural patterns. Also, more research could be done regarding cross-channel integration and what possible ways could be used to utilize it effectively to consumers' everyday life without causing too much trouble or annoyance.

## **5.6 Conclusions**

The main purpose of this study is to examine the current email marketing and these practices and their overall effectiveness to consumer response. The goal was to understand how certain variables influences consumer response in email marketing environment. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that email marketing is important digital marketing communication method, and it can be developed further to influence consumer response even more. Although being one of the older methods of digital marketing, email has kept its position as a marketing communication tool that is respected and utilized daily. On the contrary social media platforms and direct mobile phone messaging have had their massive moments but email marketing is regarded as more respectful means of approaching the consumer.

To conclude, this study did contribute to the discussion of email marketing and its sub themes and possible future developments. There is room for improvement in higher level of personalization and timing of the emails could be studied further. Personalization could be implemented with timed emails with machine learning algorithms and development of cross-channel integration methods could also be included. Furthermore,

cross-channel integration could also be studied further as how it could be implemented without possible frustration to consumers. Eventually, in direct digital marketing email as medium of communication has its apparent place today and it can be developed further.

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## **Appendix**

### **Online survey**

Welcome to the email marketing research study!

In this survey you will be surveyed about information relevant to email marketing. This data is gathered for a Master's Thesis focused on marketing. The survey will take up to two minutes to complete, so take your time. The main focus is to study the relevance of email marketing and the possibilities it offers nowadays. Therefore, the questions that are presented will revolve around the efficacy, relevance, and possibilities of email marketing in today's digital landscape, where social media and other mediums are competing with our attention.

Your data, that is generated by this survey, will provide valuable insights into the evolving nature of email marketing and its place in modern marketing business strategies.

The researcher assures that your responses will be kept completely confidential and anonymous. Individual responses will not be shared or published.

By completing this survey you will grant permission for the researcher to use the data in the Master's Thesis research at Hanken University.

Thank you for participating in this survey.

1. Demographic information
  - Born between 1997-2005
  - Born between 1981-1996
  - Born between 1965-1980
  - Born before 1965

2. How often do you check your email?

- Daily
- 4-6 times a week
- 2-3 times a week
- Once a week
- Never

3. How often do you receive marketing or promotional emails?

- Daily
- 4-6 times a week
- 2-3 times a week
- Once a week
- Never

4. How often do you receive promotional emails relevant to your needs and desires?

- Daily
- 4-6 times a week
- 2-3 times a week
- Once a week
- Never

## Personalization 5.

In today's digital age, marketing emails are a common tool used by brands to communicate with their audience. These emails can vary in content, design, and purpose.

Now it is time to think about your personal preferences and experiences:

What are the most important aspects to you when receiving marketing emails?

	Not important	Somewhat important	Neutral	Important	Extremely important
Sender's Identity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Subject line relevance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Content clarity (short text)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Email design and layout	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Presence of attachments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Presence of videos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relevance to current interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relevance to current needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time received	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personalized content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Content reflecting your past behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Logo of a sender	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Informative content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promotional content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. How satisfied are you with the level of personalization in the promotional emails you generally receive?

-Extremely dissatisfied

-Somewhat dissatisfied

-Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

-Somewhat satisfied

-Extremely satisfied

7. Have you ever felt an email was too personalized or invasive?

-Frequently

-Occasionally

- Rarely

-Never

8. What is your most preferred device to read promotional emails? (you can choose multiple, if you feel that you distribute your time equally among devices)

-Mobile phone

-Computer

-Smart watch

Cross-channel integration

9. How likely are you to act on a promotional email if it requires you to...

(scale 1-5, where 1 extremely unlikely and 5 extremely likely)

Provide your phone number

Follow the brand on social media

Share their content on social media

Watch a promotional video

Download an application

Click a link

10. Which platform do you prefer to engage after receiving promotional emails?

- Website

-Directly within the email

-TikTok

-Youtube

-Facebook

-Instagram

-X (former twitter)

-LinkedIn

11. Timing preference: At what time of the day do you usually check your emails?  
(you can choose multiple)

- Early morning (5-8 am)
- Mid-morning (8-11 am)
- Lunchtime (11 am-2 pm)
- Mid-afternoon (2-5 pm)
- Evening (5-8 pm)
- Middle of the night (11 pm-5 am)

12. If you receive an email about a limited-time offer or sale, how quickly do you typically open it?

-Immediately

-Within a few hours

-Same day

-Within a few days

-I rarely open time-sensitive offers

13. Have you ever missed out on an offer or sale, because you saw the promotional email too late?

-Often

-Sometimes

-Rarely

-Never

14. Are there any specific times or days when you'd prefer not to receive marketing or promotional emails? Answer shortly.