

Forum:[Hack Forums](#)

Thread: [HF Newsletter via Email](#)

Omniscient - March 30, 2022, 10:08 am

Currently HF doesn't send marketing emails. Basically in 15 years I believe I have only sent an email blast out 3 times and once was to alert of a security breach. All the emails sent from HF are transactional for things like registration, notifications of PMs, member opt-in subscriptions (threads and such) and Password Resets.

I'm curious to get feedback on how HF members would feel if I did have an official newsletter that went out either monthly or weekly. I may even work with the HF Writers and HF News group to create a good format and provide content.

Would you consider this spammy or actually read the emails?

My fear is that members would too often "Unsubscribe" from all HF emails which even prevents them from getting PW resets and they have to subscribe again. Often I have to walk them through it but if they just read they'd see how to fix it themselves. I am also not the biggest fan of email marketing.

What's your view on some of this?

Intent for example might include some sponsored content, important new threads, contest info, and whatever else I can find appropriate.

Nachfolger - March 30, 2022, 10:11 am

I couldn't care less about HF news content, it's just weeb trash now. Maybe if it was actually interesting again, this would be neat.

MavenGradle - March 30, 2022, 10:13 am

Definite no from me if it's opt-in by default. I get so many newsletters and they all end up in spam folders anyway.

I think the best option would be to send a system-wide notification instead when a newsletter is released on HF and have an optional feature to get an email if the user chooses to subscribe to said feature.

The system-wide notification could be a user-option as well (but I'd like that one to be enabled by default because I actually enjoy watching the HF statistics evolve over time). Furthermore, I believe that it's already a feature to get notified about certain sections of the forum, so it looks like that feature is already present as-is, but not enabled by default for the news section.

Marketing emails that are useful for both the consumer and business, in terms of revenue, like for example: '50% discount for L33T now' is something I can actually see happening and would appreciate but again, opt-out by default and only when the user likes to receive them.

I would definitely underline the functionality of the HF notification system. Luring members back to the site with emails might have some value, but old members that already have a lifetime Ub3r won't be particularly profitable to have back. There are ways of increasing member activity, by for example

having a marketing team that is active on social media platforms like Twitter, etc. that are luring new people in. The right tweet, or the right shout out or the right reply on a social media platform at the right time can seriously boost member registrations and activity.

You could even use the HF API to create a twitter/facebook/whatever bot that sends out 'tweets' about the 'hottest' HF topics at the moment.

Lrrr - March 30, 2022, 10:14 am

Hard pass on anything email related, I just won't read it. Email is for password reset codes and purchase receipts...

bronzegods - March 30, 2022, 10:16 am

We already have a news section to get the latest information. I can't figure how it would be any different from what already exists.

Lrrr - March 30, 2022, 10:18 am

(Mar 30, 2022 10:16 AM)bronzegods Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) We already have a news section to get the latest information. I can't figure how it would be any different from what already exists.

and as other members in this thread have already pointed out..... the news section has certainly seen better days.

Is it the content? Is it the direction of the content? Is it the news staff?

These are all good questions

Riggs - March 30, 2022, 10:20 am

(Mar 30, 2022 10:08 AM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) My fear is that members would too often "Unsubscribe" from all HF emails which even prevents them from getting PW resets and they have to subscribe again. Often I have to walk them through it but if they just read they'd see how to fix it themselves. I am also not the biggest fan of email marketing.

If you're concerned about complying with things like GDPR, password resets are considered 'transactional emails', and so would satisfy the necessary legitimate interest conditions to remain in place even if a user opts to unsubscribe from all, providing you include a clear notice within the process explaining why certain transactional emails cannot be opted out of.

You would also need to update the privacy policy to reflect this.

Omniscient - March 30, 2022, 10:23 am

I ain't worried about GDPR. It's more about increasing engagement. Getting the tens of thousands of members who don't visit HF often enough to know what's happening here. Example is that big \$2200 giveaway I did. It might have had more impact if it reached a larger audience.

But I can see from the feedback so far that my gut instinct that email marketing won't be well received is probably accurate.

Pat13nt_Zer0 - March 30, 2022, 10:51 am

I think its a great idea, I know personally I would subscribe and read as I believe most of HF users would. Definitely worth a shot, I hope to see this happen ??

I misread the original post, marketing emails no. Some kind of info related email yes.

123 - March 30, 2022, 11:42 am

Personally I never read Newsletter sent via Emails. They just end up in spam folder or get ignored.

False King - March 30, 2022, 12:40 pm

This could be enabled for opt-in, and for actual usage simply just target those with low engagement. That way you won't annoy any users which are active anyways, and it might give a notch to lesser engaged members (In that case, you could go with an email like "This is what you've missed last month" with some of the best/most active threads linked in them.

Kavalli † - March 30, 2022, 12:55 pm

Is there no way to separate transactional/function emails like pw resets etc and newsletters? From a marketing stand point I think it'd be great for HF to have a newsletter and have all the members automatically opted in (with the option for them to opt out), and you can send them the newsletters, offers, etc.

Of course this would only be beneficial if members can opt out AND still receive password resets and transactional emails. Maybe you can incentivize staying opt in by giving out random prices, bytes, awards, and ub3r upgrades.

SUI-3183372 - March 30, 2022, 1:36 pm

Bi-yearly email blast to users who haven't logged in > 6/12/* months letting them know what they've missed out on and what's coming up.

peldon - March 30, 2022, 1:50 pm

As others, I never read newsletter sent via emails. Except for HF ? I don't know

Skorp - March 30, 2022, 2:29 pm

I can see email marketing working back in the day, when everyone was more revolved around it.

But in current times now, I agree with [mention=1306528] that a (modern) on-site alert/news system be implemented as he said earlier in the thread, will be your best bet IMO. But I will modify his wording slightly and not just make it for RANF and HF News threads, but for the entire forums just incase we do have an attractive/sponsored/important thread that is outside of those sections. But more importantly, so we can reach "everyone" and not the same circle of active members currently. Hope to see this happen!

I know when I say "(modern) on-site alert/news system" can be vague from a point, but just something more engaging to the member instead of a little number that pops up on the notification bell icon.

jcole - March 30, 2022, 2:30 pm

I would love this because eventually I don't want to be as active on the forums because of the amount of trolling I receive, but would love to read a newsletter sent out each month, and even each week if there are enough participants.

Artichoke - March 30, 2022, 5:14 pm

The core idea with an email-blasted newsletter is to reengage users who might have forgotten about/lost interest in HF, right? Because active users can see what's going on.

It would probably be more useful to send out an email blast every 6 months to members who have not logged in in x time (3, 6 months, 1 year, whatever). Maybe with some news, maybe just a reminder HF exists. Even if the vast majority of them don't see or don't care about the emails, not like you're losing anything, they already aren't active on the site. Worst case they can unsubscribe. Like others have said, as a semi-active member I would not care about a news service.

Pyro - March 30, 2022, 6:01 pm

(Mar 30, 2022 10:14 AM)Lrrr Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Hard pass on anything email related, I just won't read it. Email is for password reset codes and purchase receipts... this goes for me too

POLY MATH - March 31, 2022, 12:26 am

As multiple members before me has said, system (Global) announcements. Using a varying degree of system (Global) announcements would be much more appropriate although I don't think it'll achieve your original goal of increasing engagement as effectively as email newsletters.

OxaByte - March 31, 2022, 7:06 am

I think its a good idea, I would love to receive weekly newsletter from HF, It would be amazing if it highlights the top informative trending threads of hackforums.

Wafflemonger - March 31, 2022, 7:21 am

I personally wouldn't subscribe to a weekly e-mail. I already get enough that I would likely just blindly delete it, given that unsubscribing would kill any chance to get a pw reset e-mail. That being said, if I can disable it manually in my profile, then that's what I would do.

If I could have one every month or every quarter, I would be more interested in that.

Uriel Septim - April 1, 2022, 6:19 am

I like the email newsletters where you can chose forums categories and it lists the last 5 - 10 threads or the threads with most replies in those categories. I always start my morning routine by checking my emails and it would allow me to have a sum up of the categories I like to browse in one single email, but I hate generic newsletters.

Prince™ - April 1, 2022, 7:07 am

(Mar 30, 2022 10:11 AM)Nachfolger Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I couldn't care less about HF news content, it's just weeb trash now. Maybe if it was actually interesting again, this would be neat. Truth has been spoken.

skull - April 1, 2022, 7:55 am

I would subscribe to it.

Like, in worst case it's topics I already saw within the forum, then a simple delete will do it. Best case, I see some important or interesting topic that I previously missed.

SwimmingPool - April 1, 2022, 12:17 pm

I usually ignore most marketing emails.

G?df?t?? - April 1, 2022, 5:08 pm

I consider going through my email as work; probably because almost all mail I get is work related. I assume most others are the same or just get spam. For this reason, I could not see this being popular.

Cryptic™ - April 2, 2022, 10:20 pm

I'd prefer threads the way it's always been.

Wont read an email newsletter

Vibe - April 2, 2022, 10:32 pm

If you sent out weekly I'd probably unsubscribe monthly I probably wouldn't read it but would keep

getting it.

I do think it could help for old members who see it even if they don't read it might make them check out the site again and recover their password just for shits and giggles

?-Elision- - April 3, 2022, 12:01 pm

Once a month would be fine I believe especially since you've never done this before. Initially for the first 2-3 blasts it might be a good idea to entice old members to visit the forum/sign in once. Not only will it warm them up for future emails but they won't see it as spammy if they warm up first + some or many members might decide to become active on the forum again.

With email marketing the biggest fear usually is unsubscriptions so its best to keep it light especially in the initial stages/initial year until the human mind registers emails coming from HF as 'normal'.

Wannacry - April 3, 2022, 1:41 pm

I get fed up reading my emails now so would be a pass from me

Carl Elias - April 4, 2022, 12:49 am

I feel like an opt-in email newsletter would be the best maybe to test it. I know I get about 100 emails Monday alone, about 60-70% of which being newsletters and ads. I do think some way to share news would be beneficial and would increase engagement, but I am not sure an email newsletter would be the best method.

Another possibility is to use the notification system part of HF, and auto opt-in to a notification for any of the news letters posted on HF (that I would assume include most of what you are thinking for the emails). Only thing that may need to be updated then at that point is for daily or weekly notification recap emails that include what notifications you had that period (which would fall into the transaction emails I also assume. I do not really check my email I use for HF so I'm not sure if this is already a thing). Maybe make the newsletter notification stand out in this email from the others??

This would possibly be a good middle ground of not being a "newsletter" email but still notifies the user of the newsletter. This could reach online users quicker, and the daily/weekly/monthly notification recap would possibly bring back in-active users when they get the email.

hotwheels52 - April 4, 2022, 6:26 pm

I agree with others such that an on-site notification might be a little more appealing.

x0n - April 6, 2022, 10:53 am

(Mar 30, 2022 10:14 AM)Lrrr Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Hard pass on anything email related, I just won't read it. Email is for password reset codes and purchase receipts...

Yeah I agree with you.

Omniscient - April 6, 2022, 11:03 am

Thanks everyone for the feedback. It's as I thought, that basically no one wants this. I still might do once or twice a year annual blast but I'll pass on something that's sent out regularly.