



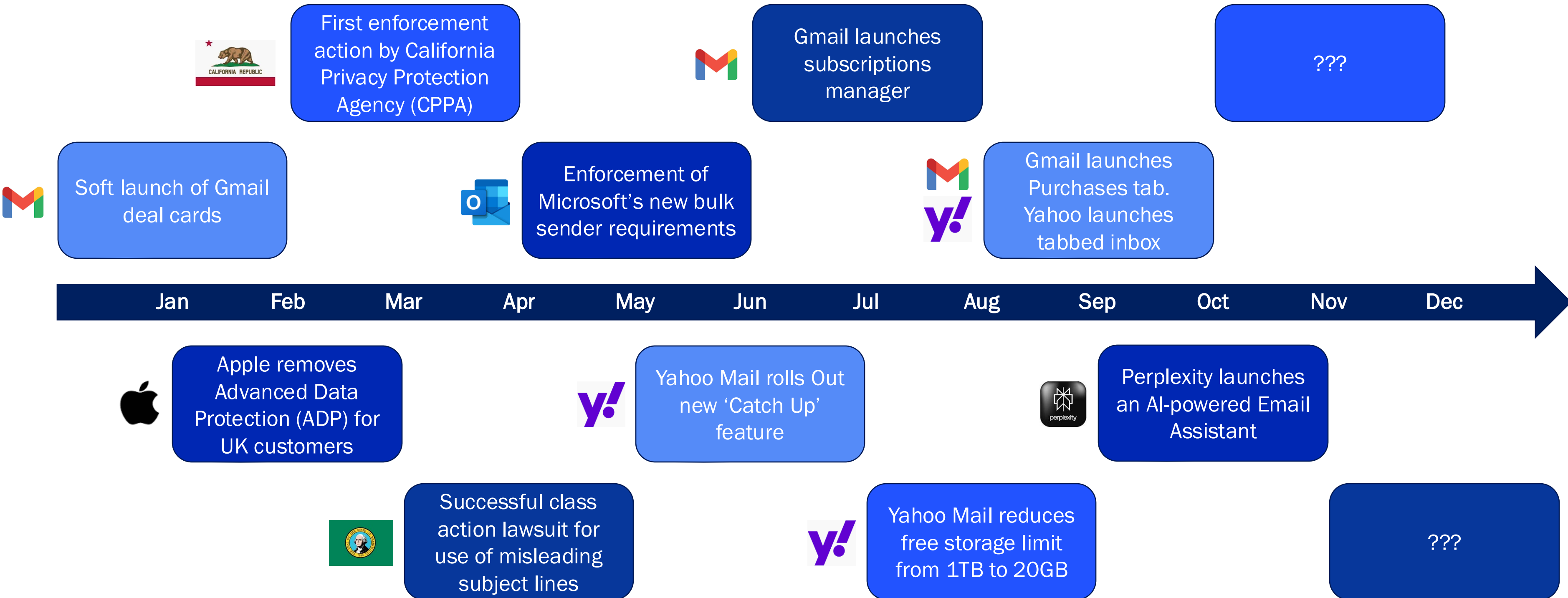
Will Your Black Friday Emails Even Get Seen?

Guy Hanson

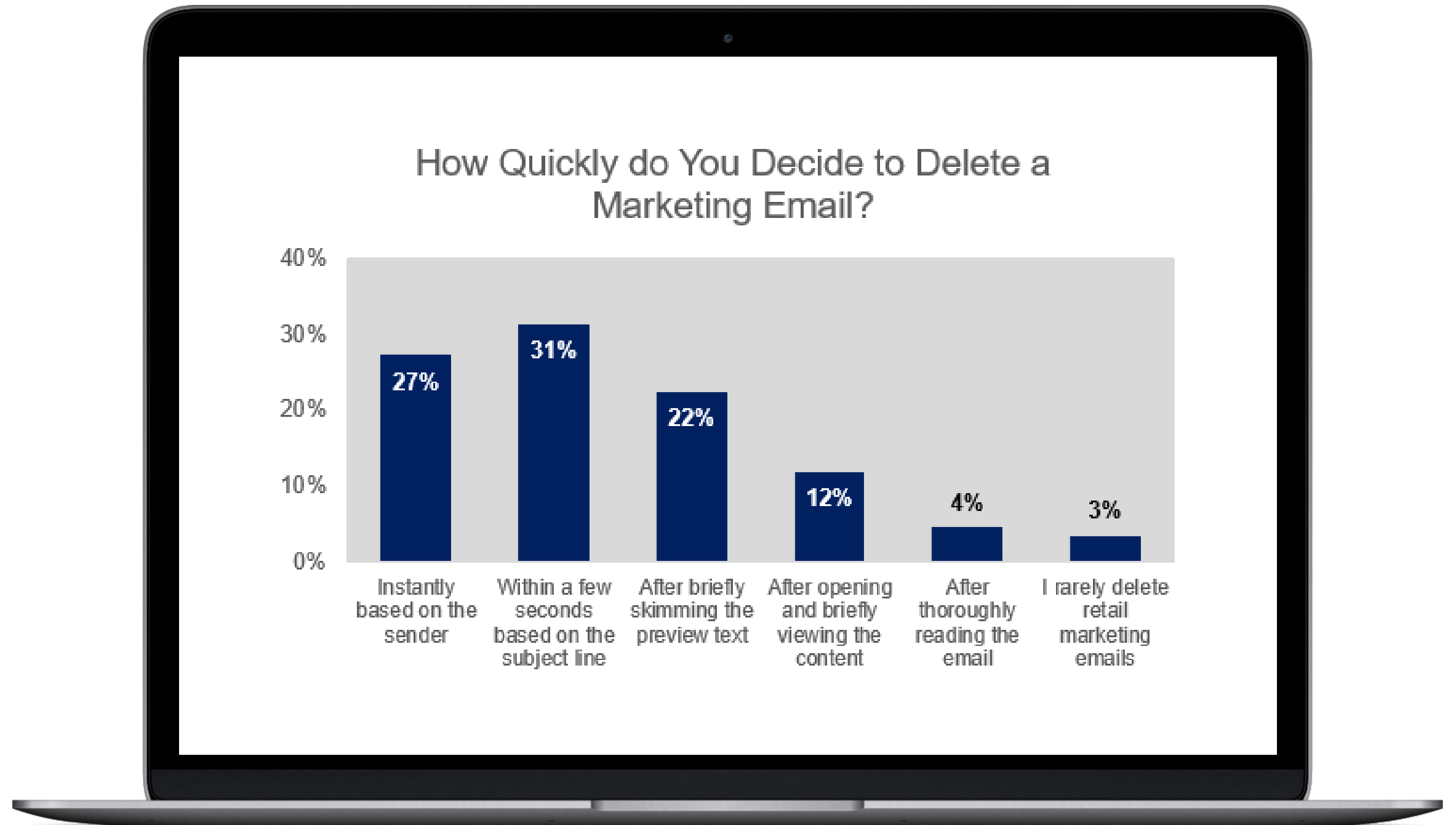
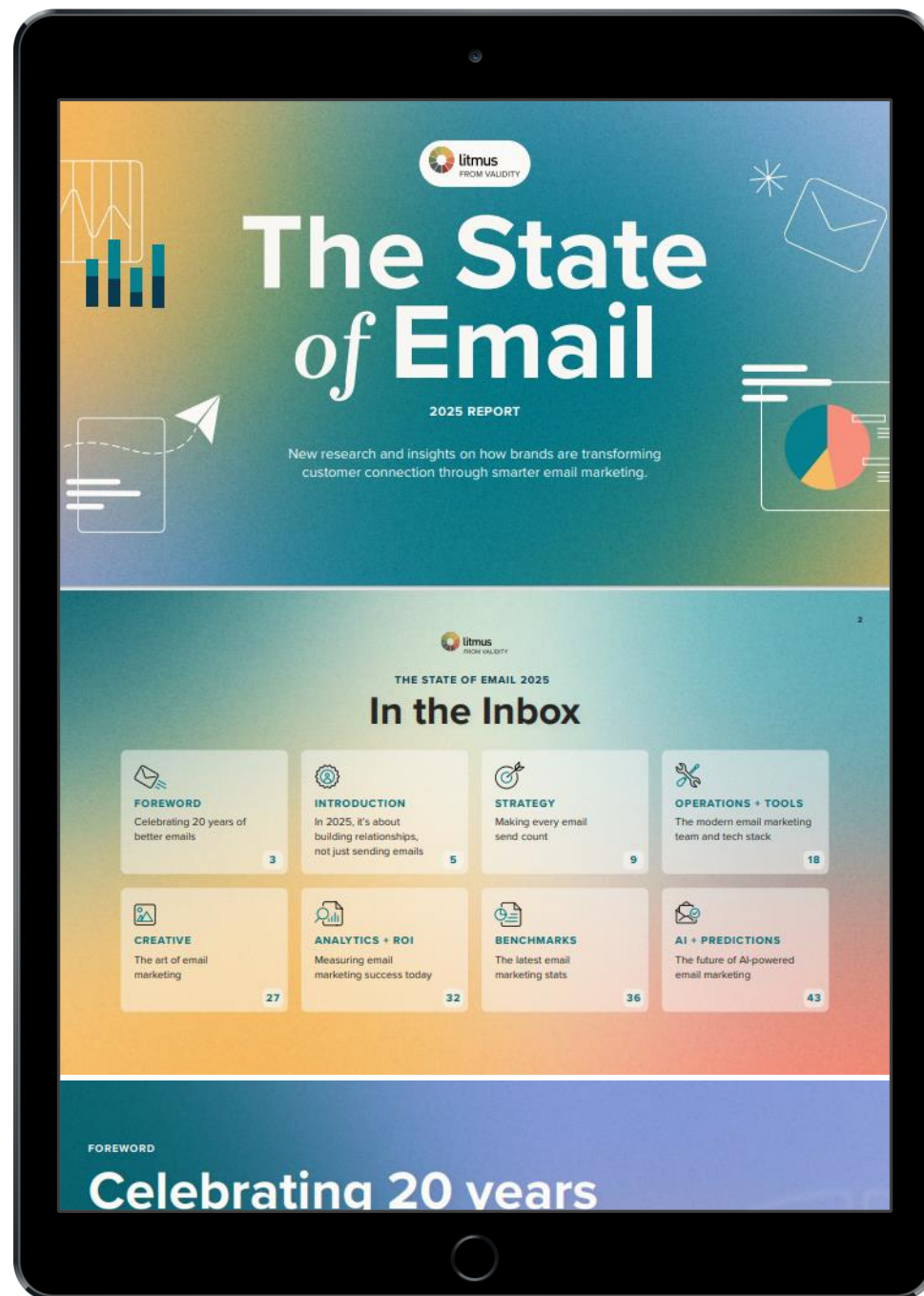
VP of Customer Engagement,
Validity



2025 – Major Developments in Email Marketing



The Microsecond Economy

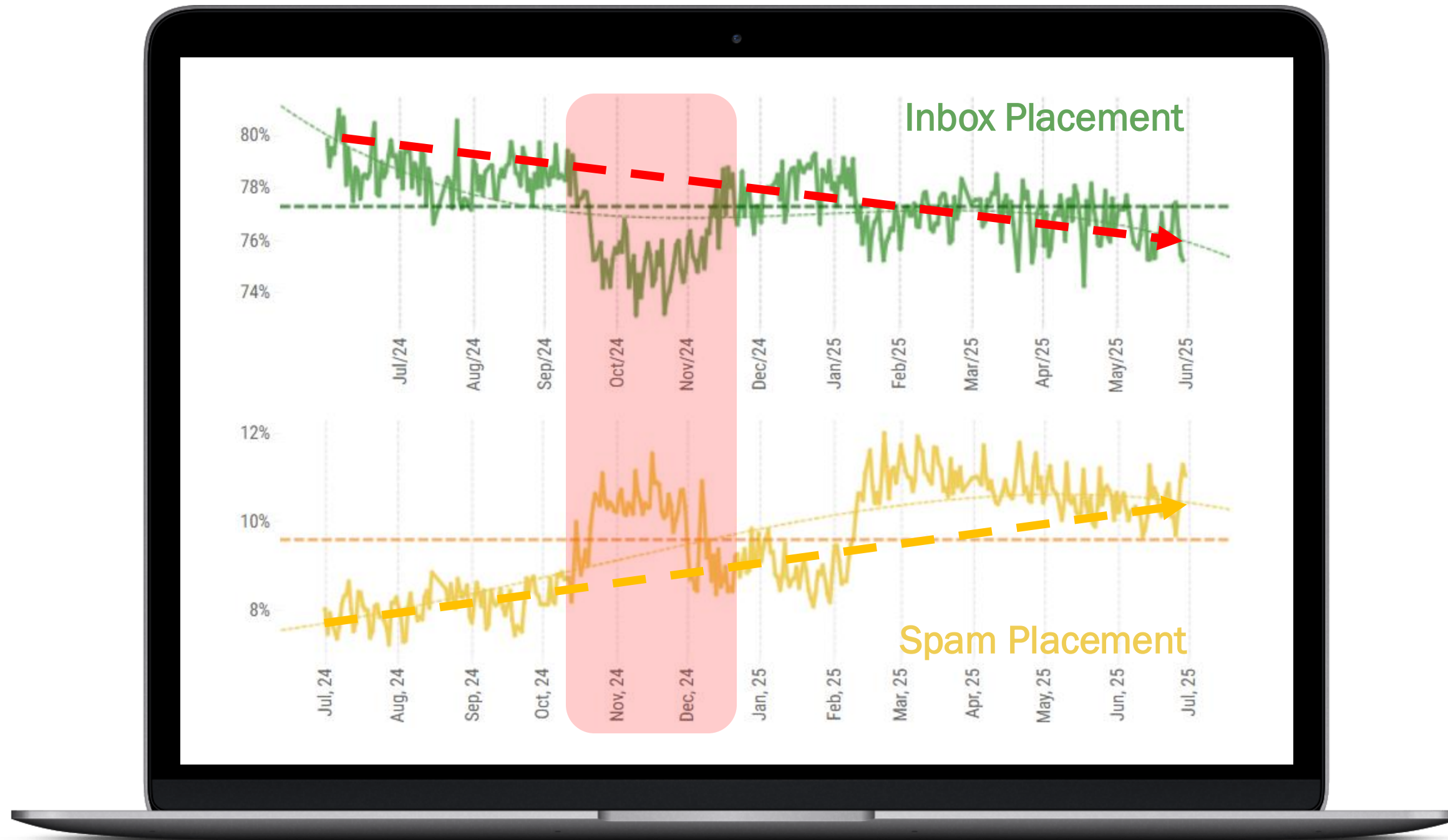


www.validity.com/resource-center/the-state-of-email-2025-from-litmus



Get Delivered

Global Deliverability



Inbox Placement Rates



87%



74%

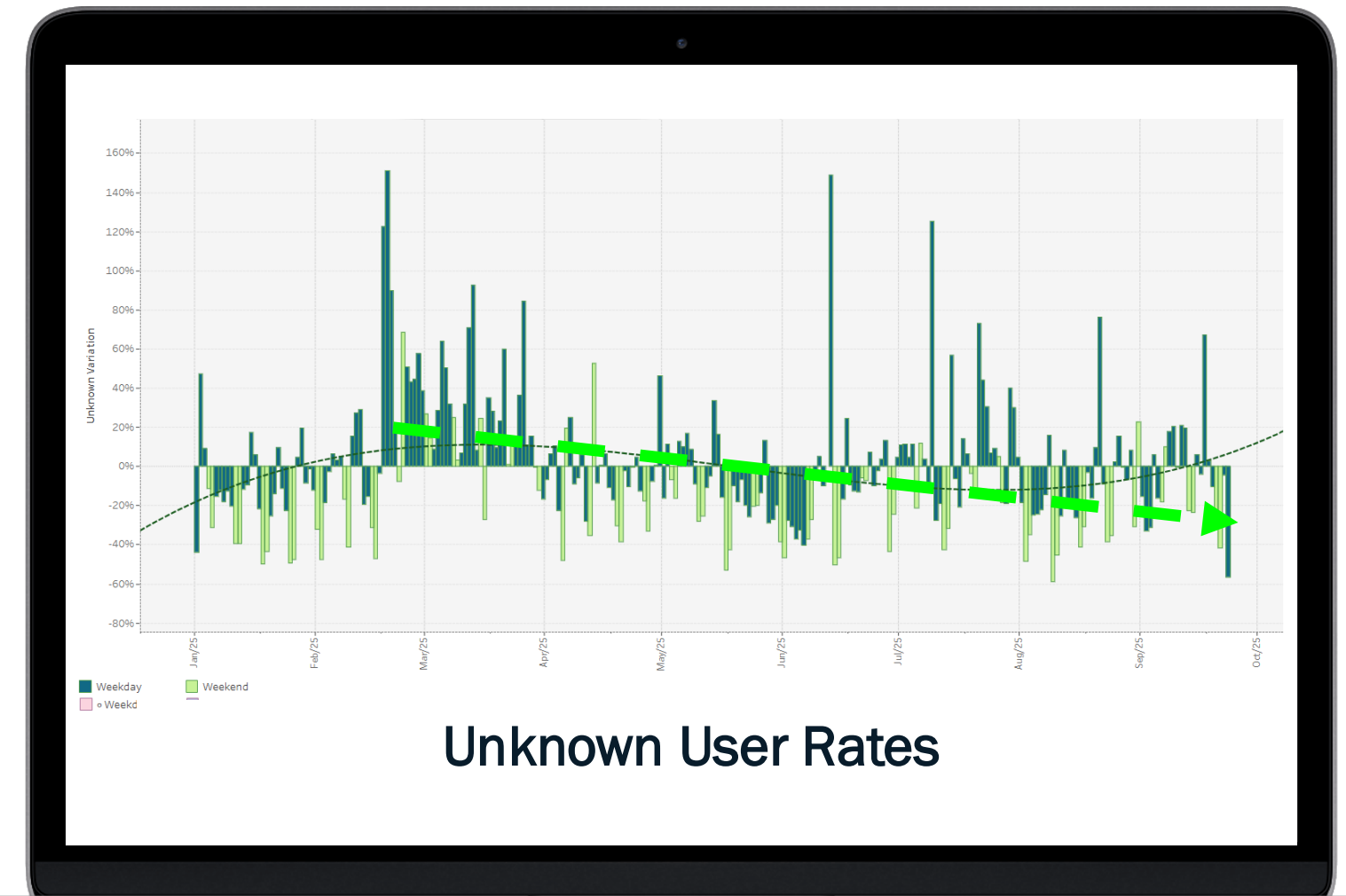
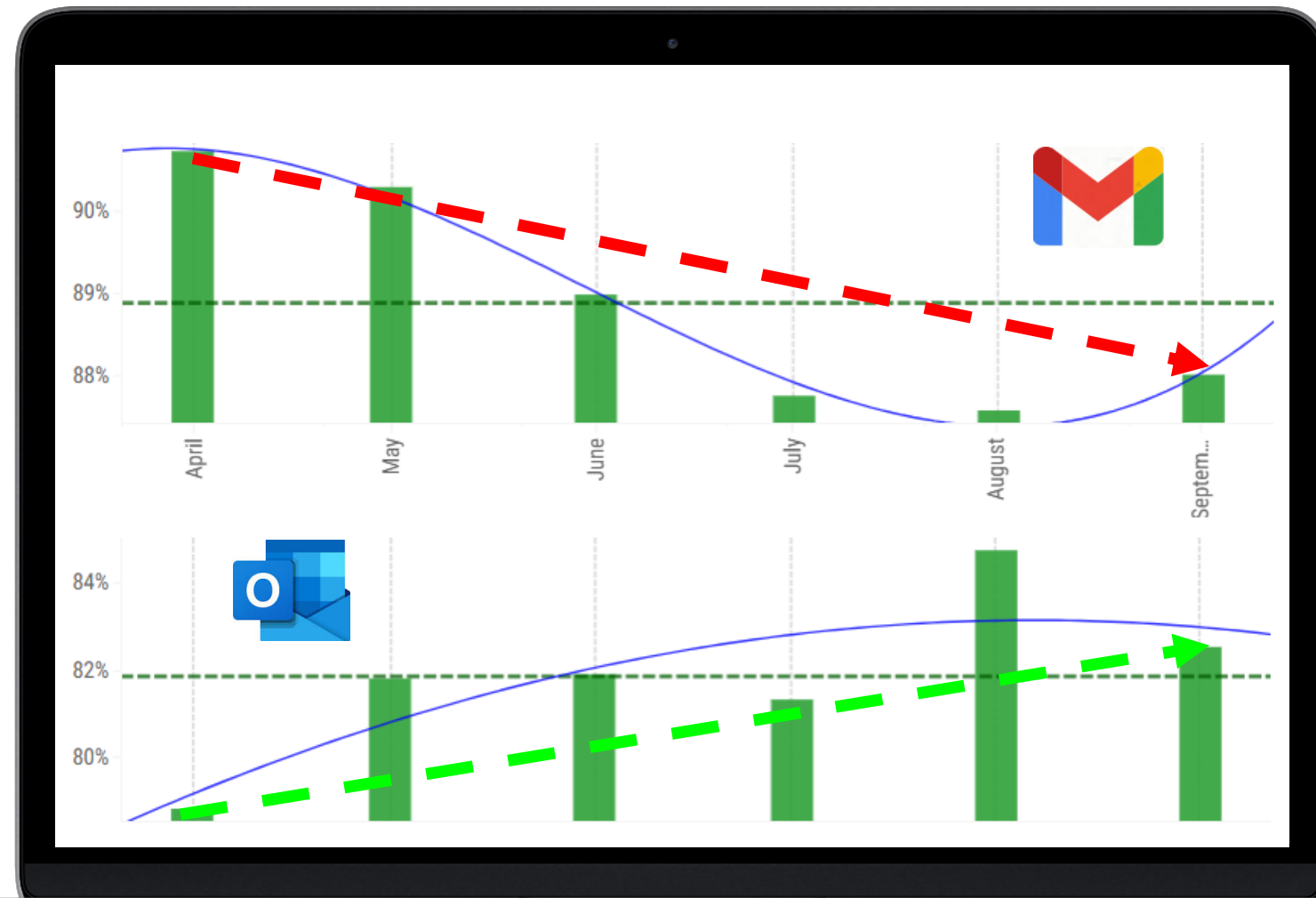


87%



79%

Big Variances by Mailbox Provider



Focus on the *Right* Bulk Sender Requirements

Sender requirement issue	Enforcement
Spam rate is greater than 0.3%	Delivery support or mitigations unavailable
DMARC record is missing (Minimum policy of none, p=none)	Delivery support or mitigations unavailable
Marketing and promotional messages are missing one-click unsubscribe	Delivery support or mitigations unavailable
Unsubscribe requests aren't honored within 48 hours	Delivery support or mitigations unavailable
From: header and authentication don't align	Temporary or Permanent Failure codes, or spam foldering
Messages aren't authenticated with both SPF and DKIM	Temporary or Permanent Failure codes, or spam foldering
Domain doesn't have valid forward and reverse DNS records	Temporary or Permanent Failure codes, or spam foldering
Messages aren't sent with TLS	Temporary or Permanent Failure codes, or spam foldering

Compliance status	Requirement	Status
Spam	SPF and DKIM authentication	SPF and DKIM authentication successfully set up SPF prevents spammers from sending unauthorized messages that owner actually sent the message. This domain: ✔ Meets requirement
Feedback Loop	From: header alignment	From: header aligned with SPF or DKIM For direct email, the domain in the sender's From: header must align. This domain: ✔ Meets requirement
Authentication	DMARC authentication	DMARC authentication successfully set up DMARC lets you tell receiving servers what to do with messages from. This domain: ✔ Meets requirement
Encryption	Encryption	TLS encryption successfully set up TLS encrypts messages for security and prevents unauthorized access. This domain: ✔ Meets requirement
Delivery Error	User-reported spam rate	User-reported spam rate is below 0.3% Spam rate of 0.3% or higher will severely impact your deliverability. This domain: ✔ Meets requirement
Visit old Postmaster Tools	DNS records	Forward and reverse DNS records successfully set up Your sending IP address must have a PTR record. The hostname in This domain: ✔ Meets requirement
	One-click unsubscribe	One-click unsubscribe implemented for marketing email One-click unsubscribe lets recipients easily unsubscribe instead of This domain: ✔ Meets requirement
	Honor unsubscribe	Unsubscribe requests honored If you don't honor unsubscribe requests, recipients are more likely to This domain: ✔ Meets requirement

<https://support.google.com/a/answer/14229414>

A 0.3% Spam Complaint Rate is *Not* OK!



Reputation Measures

Measure ?	Impact on this score ?
✖ Sender Rejected ?	HIGH

Sender Rejected

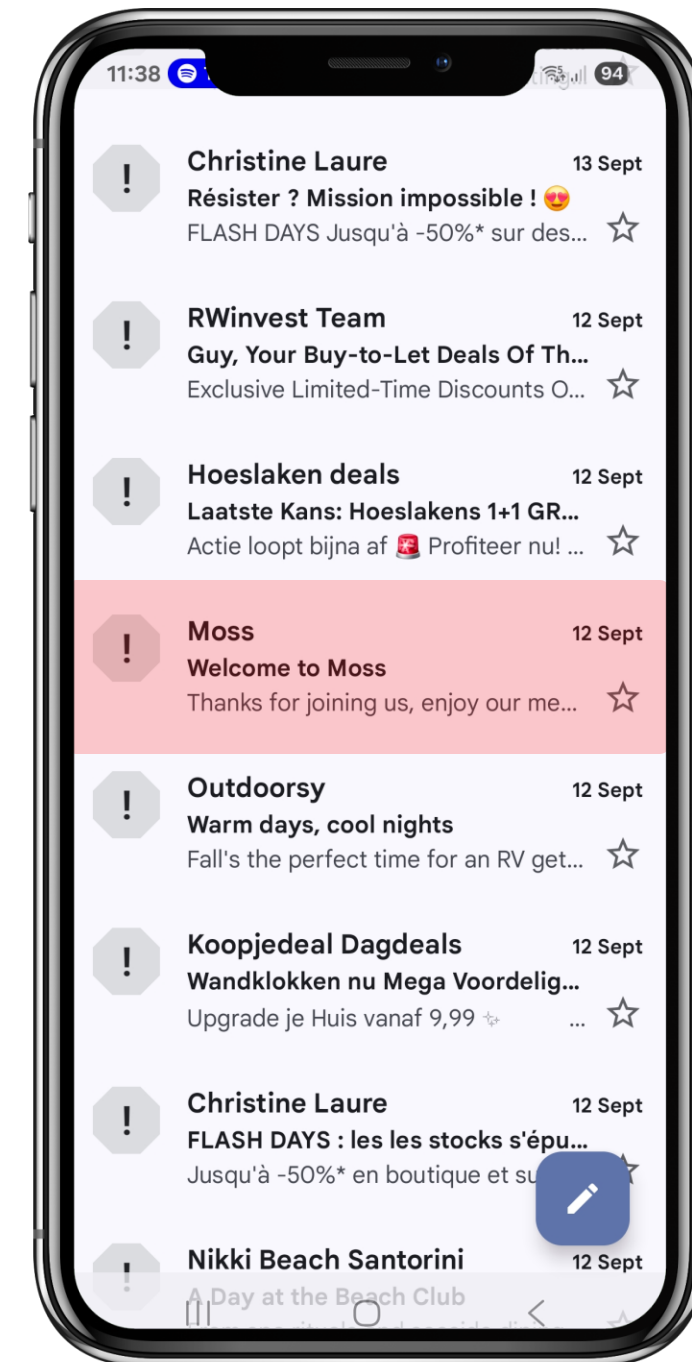
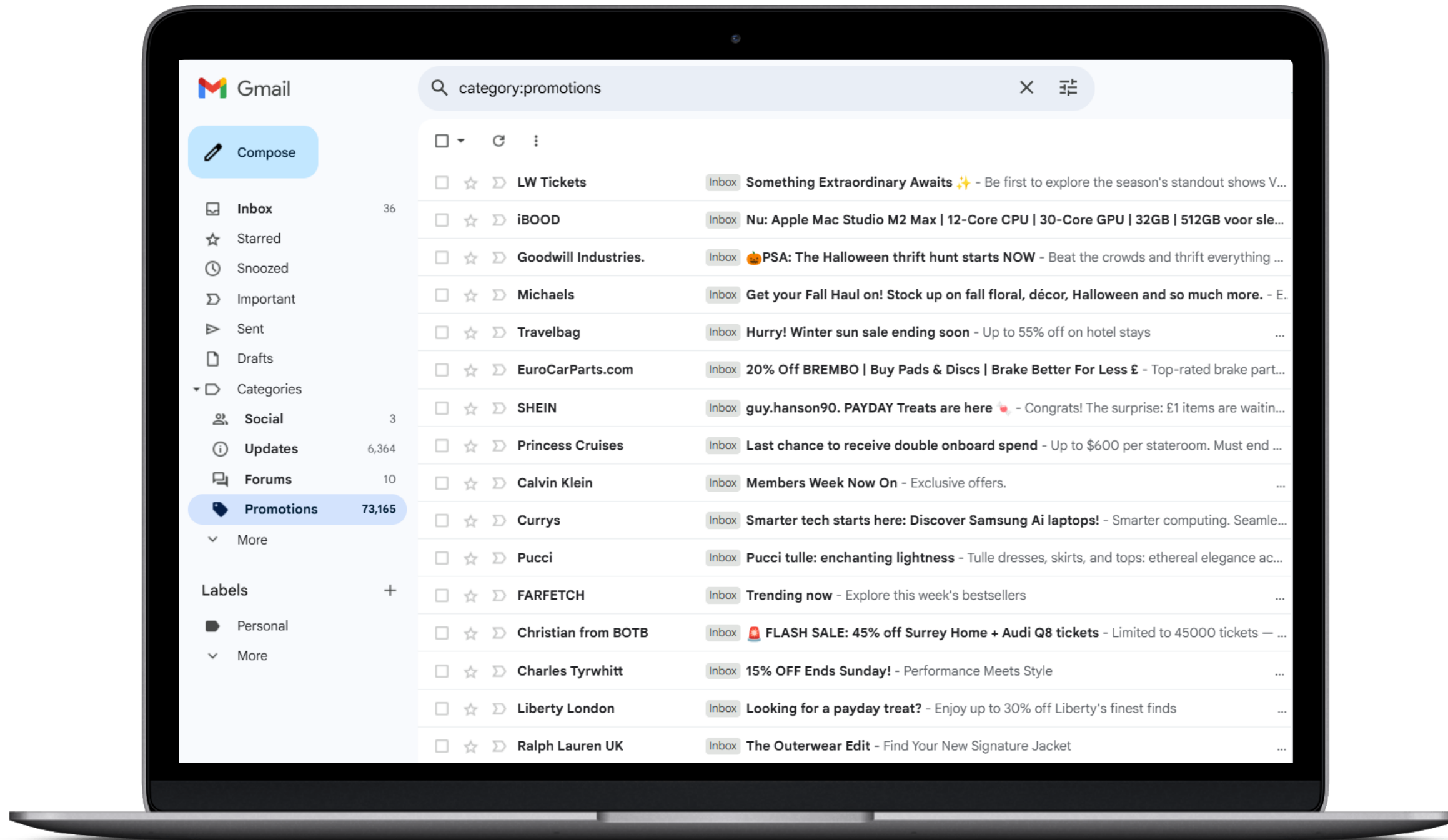
Sender Rejected includes any message blocked during the Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP) conversation. Mailbox providers primarily reject email based on key reputation drivers, such as complaint rates, spam trap hits, unknown user rates, third-party filtering, and blacklisting status.

Scoring Metrics

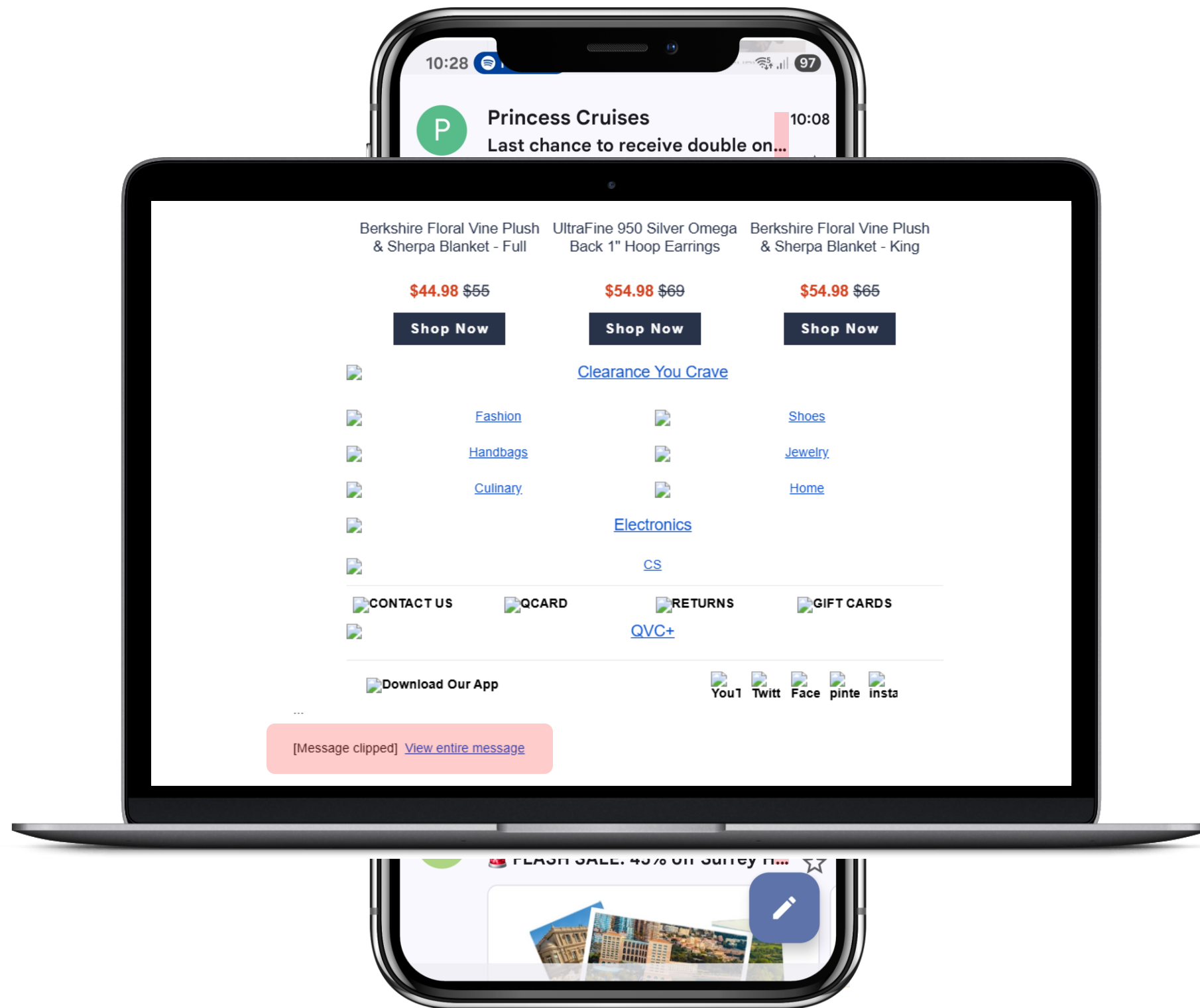
	30-Day	
Complaint Rate	0.23%	?
Sender Rejected	51.48%	?

www.senderscore.org

Engagement Isn't Everything

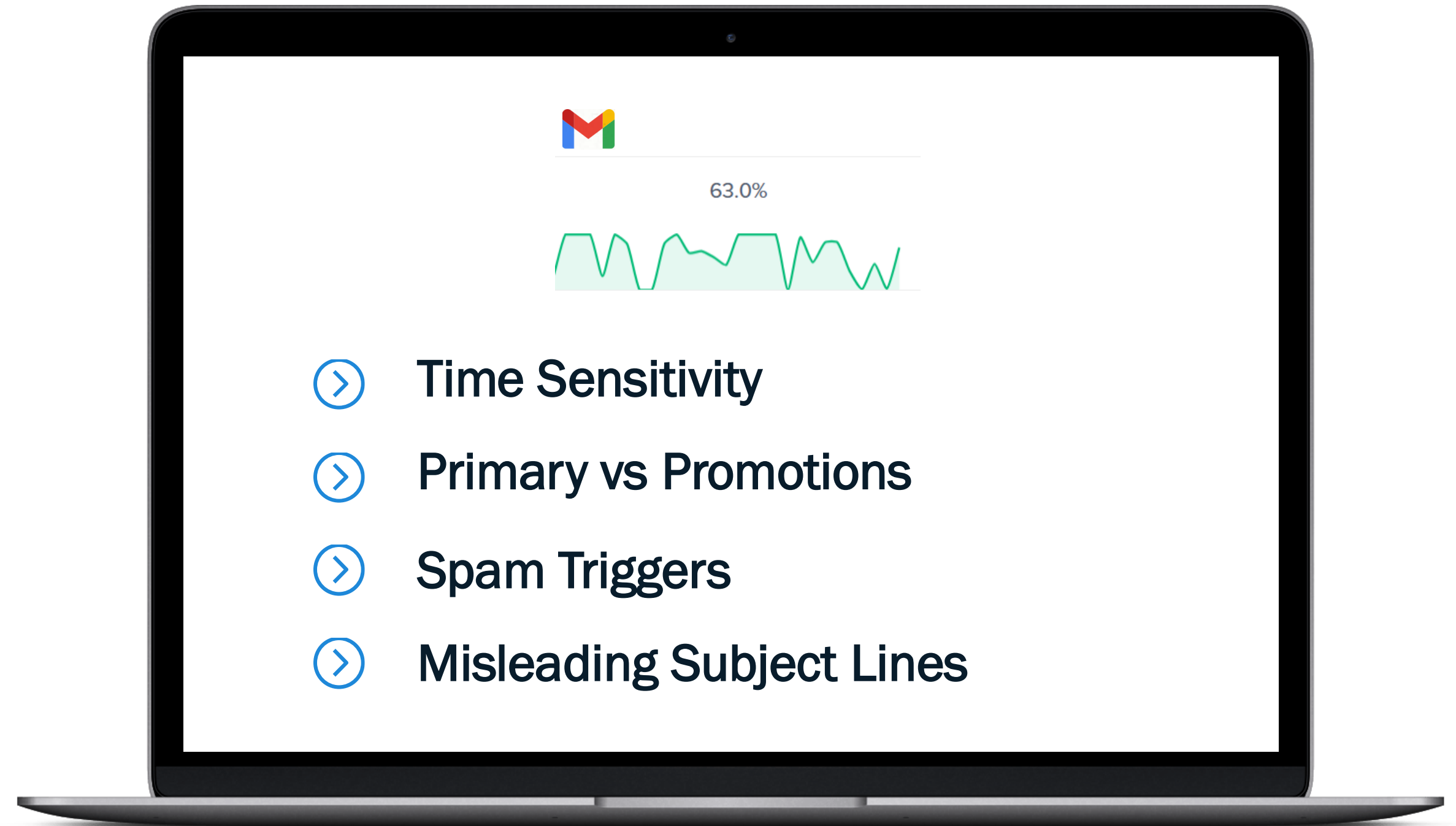


Learnings from my Gmail Spam Folder



- Subject line length
- Pre-header optimization
- Discounting
- Message truncation
- Image sizes
- Language

Gmail Case Study



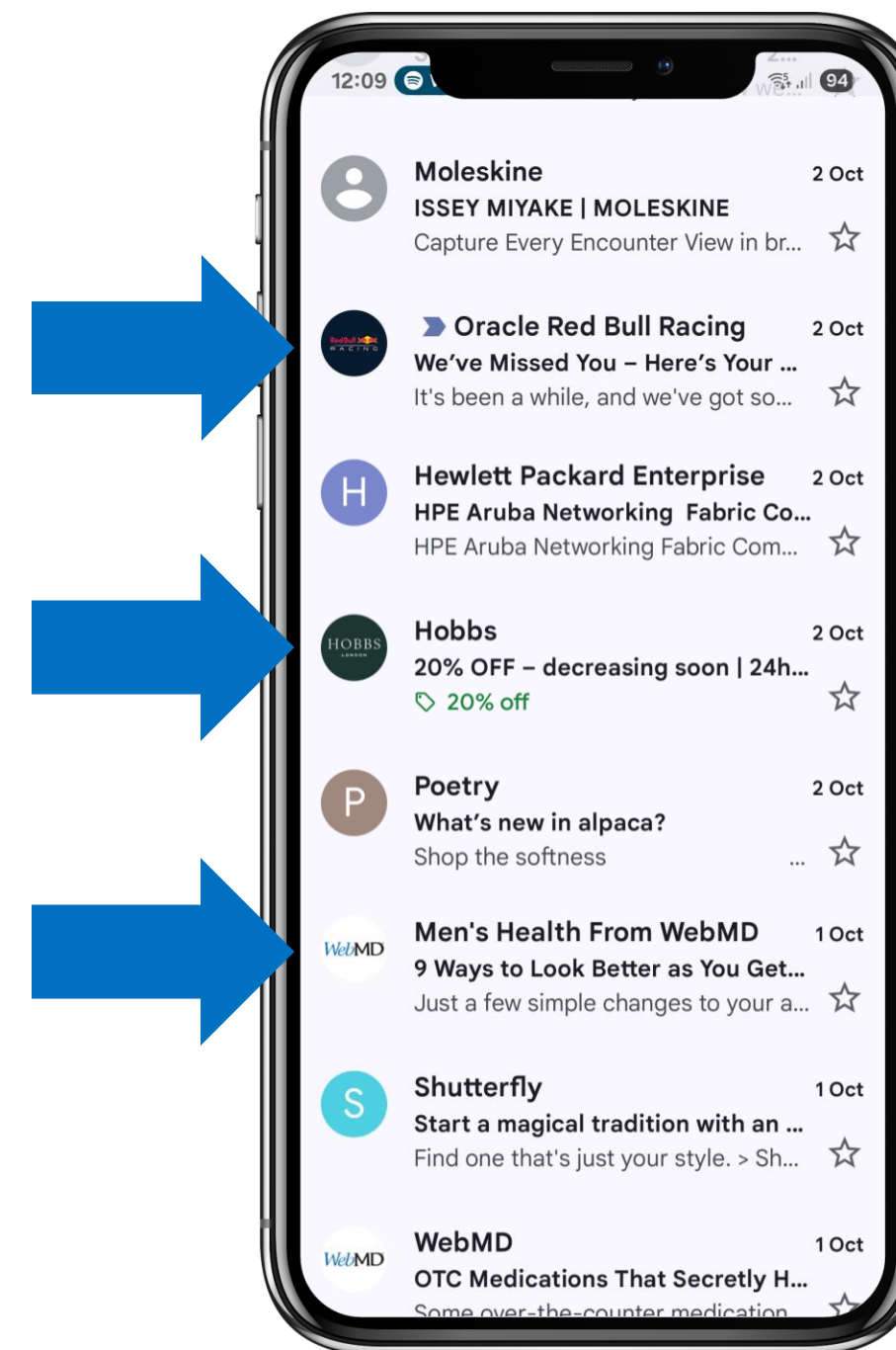


Get Opened

Recognition & Trust

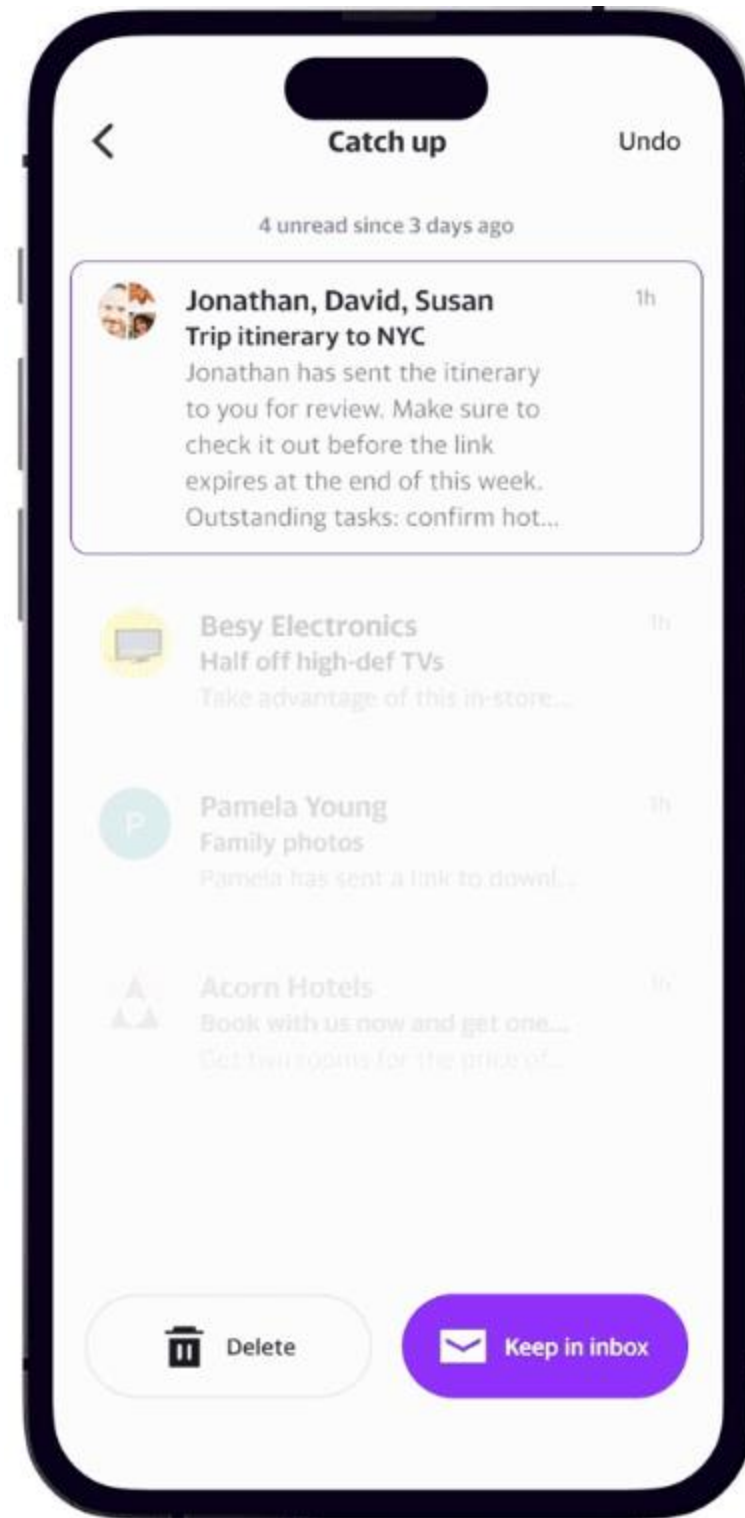
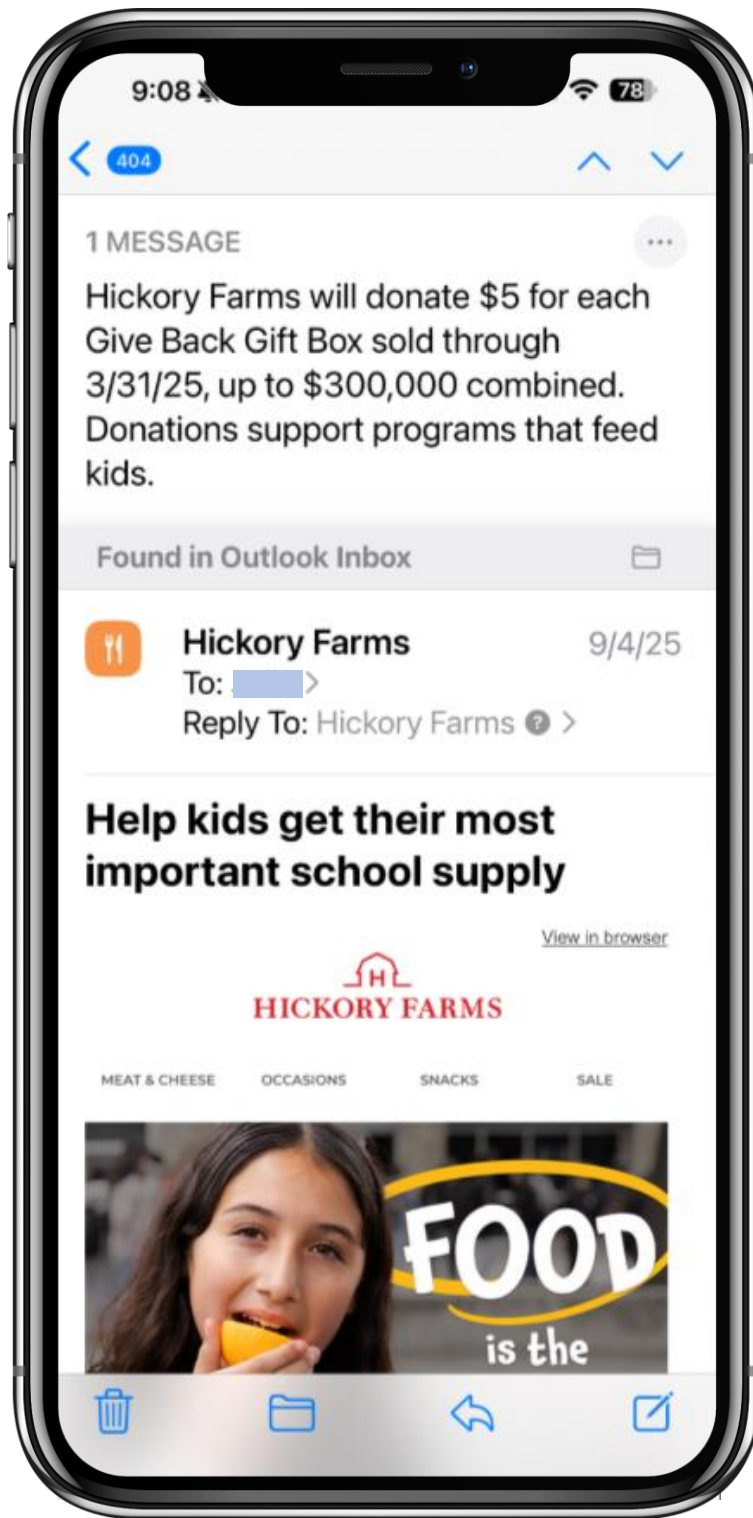
BIMI Benefits

- Greater trust in email legitimacy
- Improved brand visibility & recall
- Increased opens and purchases
- 🍏 Apple branded mail
- 📧 Gmail annotations



Source: DMA Consumer Email Tracker

AI-Generated Summaries



Increased focus on clear, keyword-driven subject lines

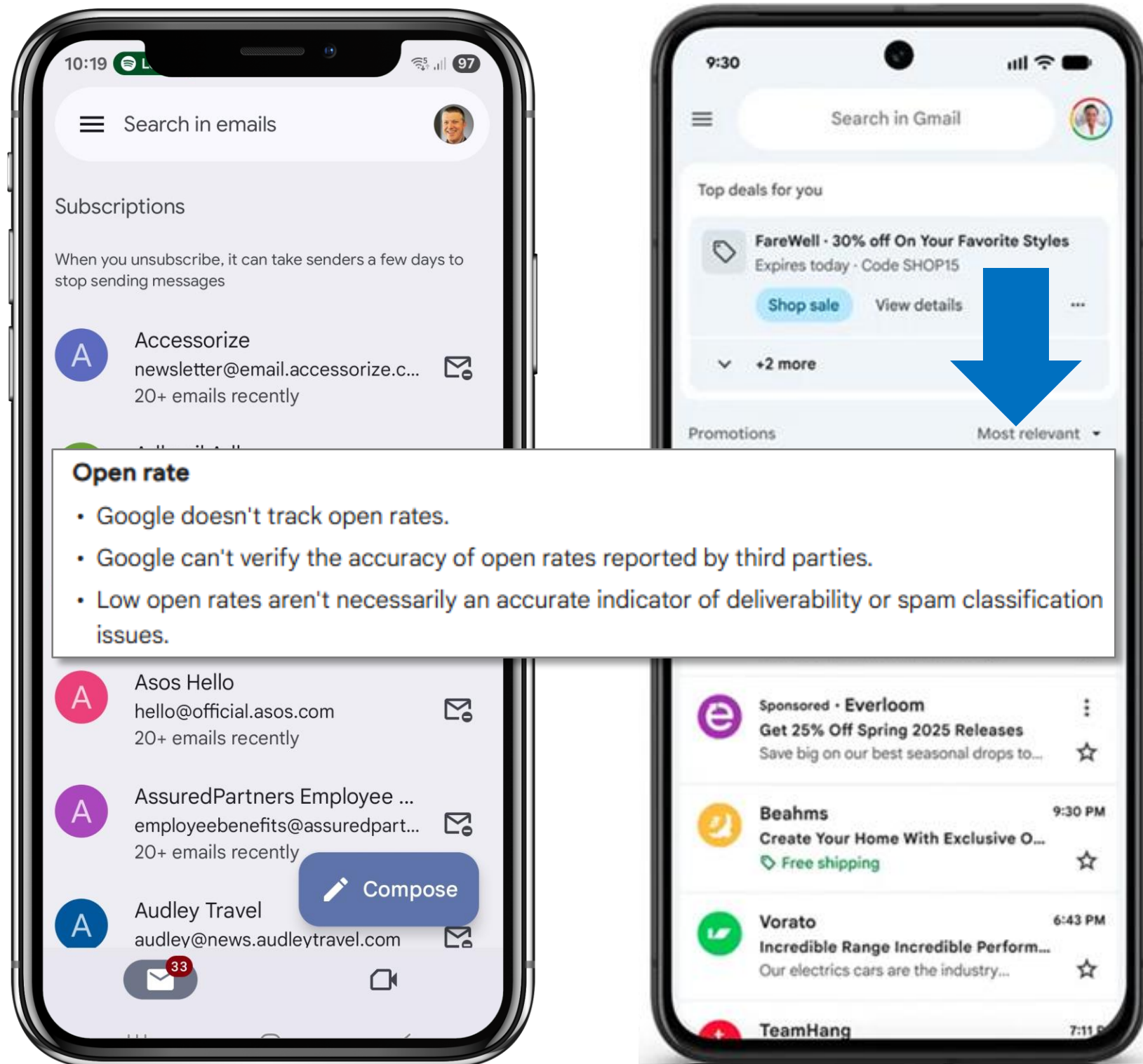


Prioritize most important information in the first few lines



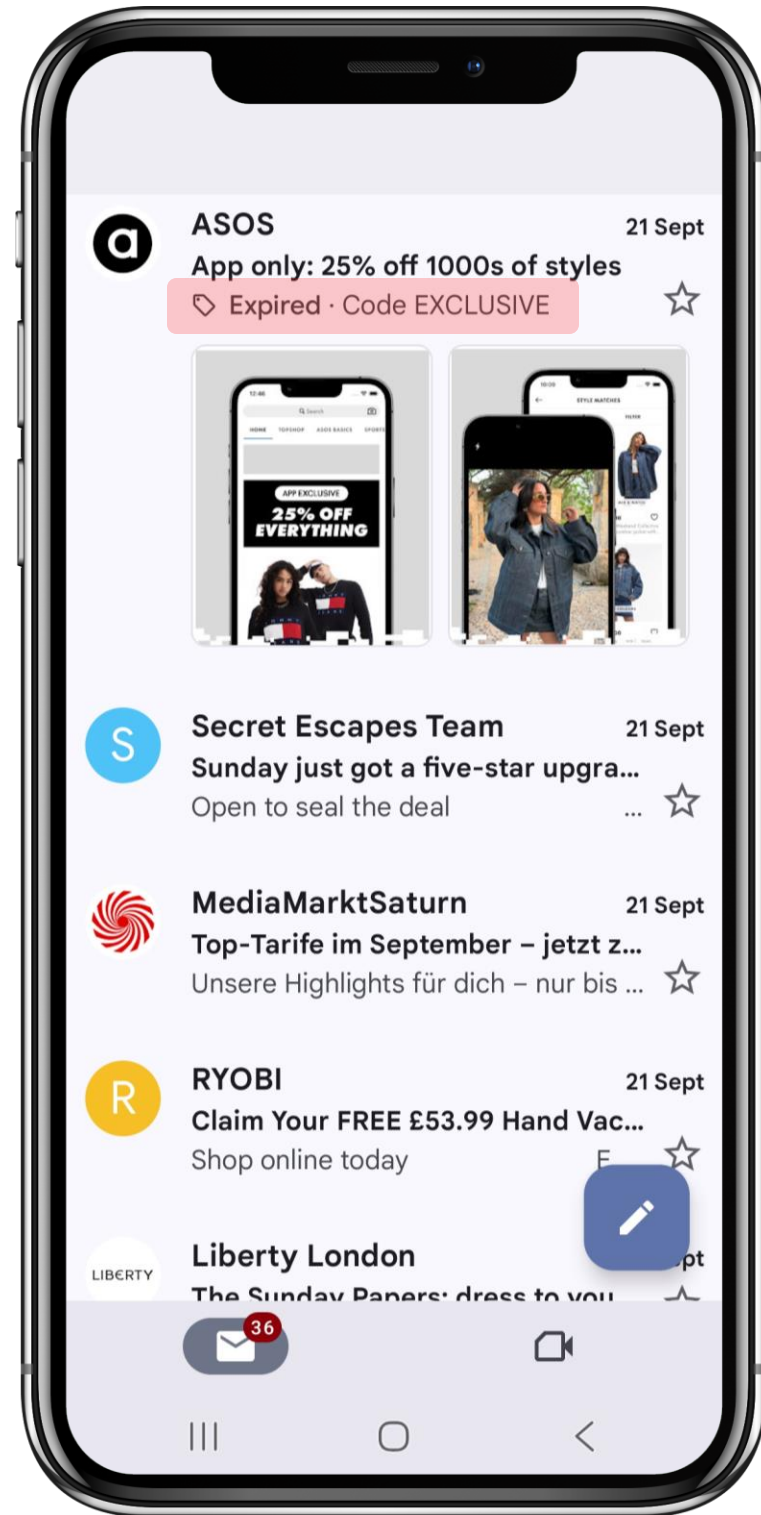
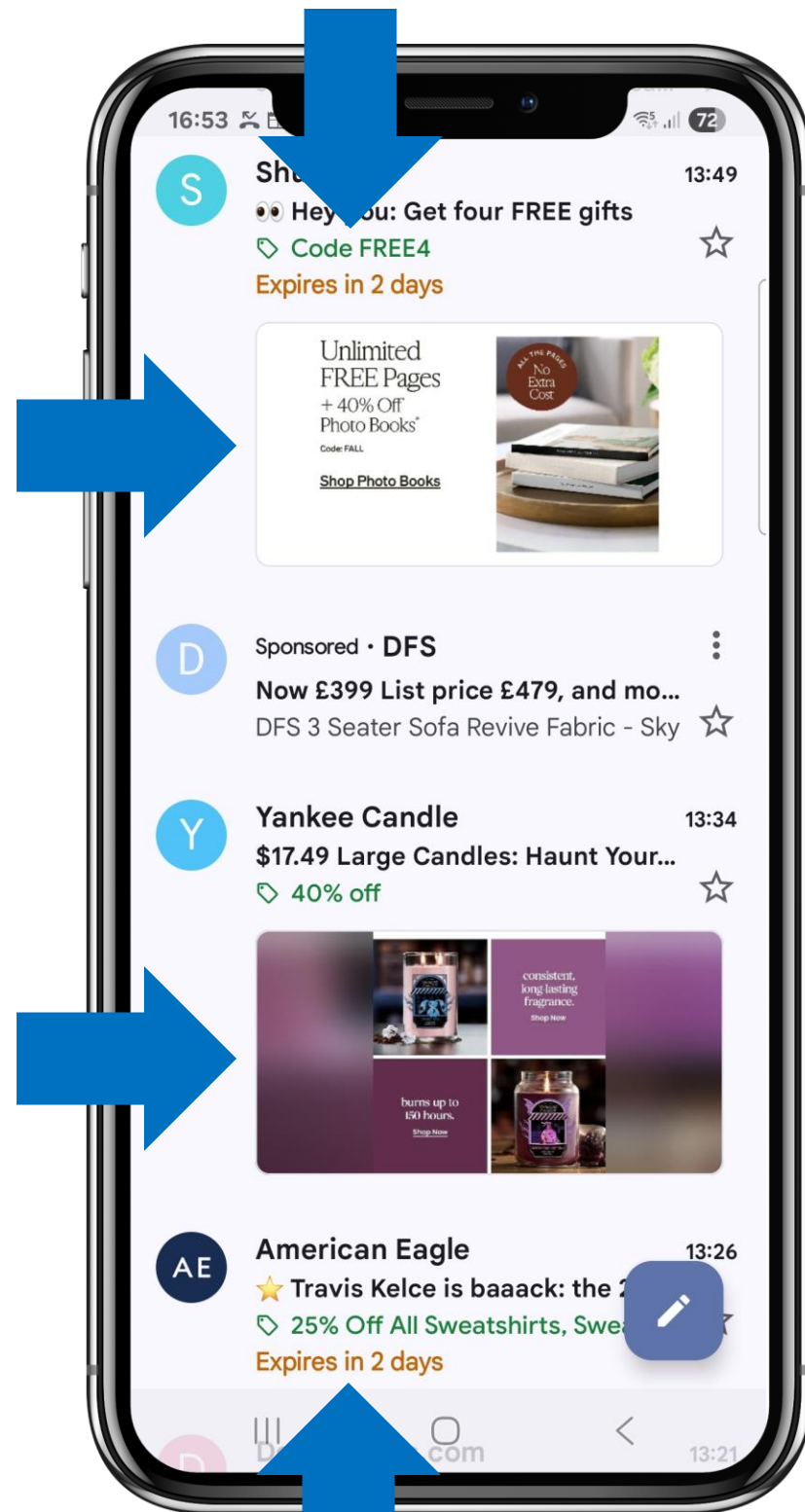
Make messages easy to "crawl" for category classification

Subscriptions Management & Sort by Relevance



- Provide subscribers with more options for managing message frequency
- Measure increased opt-outs against reduced spam complaints
- Think like Gmail when it comes to engagement
- Design with time sensitivity and urgency in mind

Embrace Annotations



Code snippets

```
<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01//EN">
<html>
<head>
<script type="application/ld+json">
  [{
    "@context": "http://schema.org/",
    "@type": "DiscountOffer",
    "description": "DESCRIPTION ✂",
    "discountCode": "DISCOUNT_CODE ✂",
    "availabilityStarts": "START_DATE_TIME ✂",
    "availabilityEnds": "END_DATE_TIME ✂"
  }]
</script>
</head>
```

Images

```
<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01//EN">
<html>
<head>
<script type="application/ld+json">
  [
    // Build the first image preview in your product carousel:
    {
      "@context": "http://schema.org/",
      "@type": "PromotionCard",
      "image": "IMAGE_URL1 ✂",
      "url": "PROMO_URL1 ✂",
    }
  ]
</script>
</head>
```

<https://developers.google.com/gmail/promotab/overview>

Subject Line Effectiveness








www.validity.com/blog/while-were-on-the-subject-10-ways-to-fix-your-subject-lines-before-black-friday

- **Back to basics**
 - Short subject lines that don't truncate
 - Front-end load offers and emojis
 - Simple language for readability & accessibility
- **Optimize pre-header real estate**
- **Use AI-created subject lines carefully**
- **Test for conversions not opens**
- **Don't be misleading!**

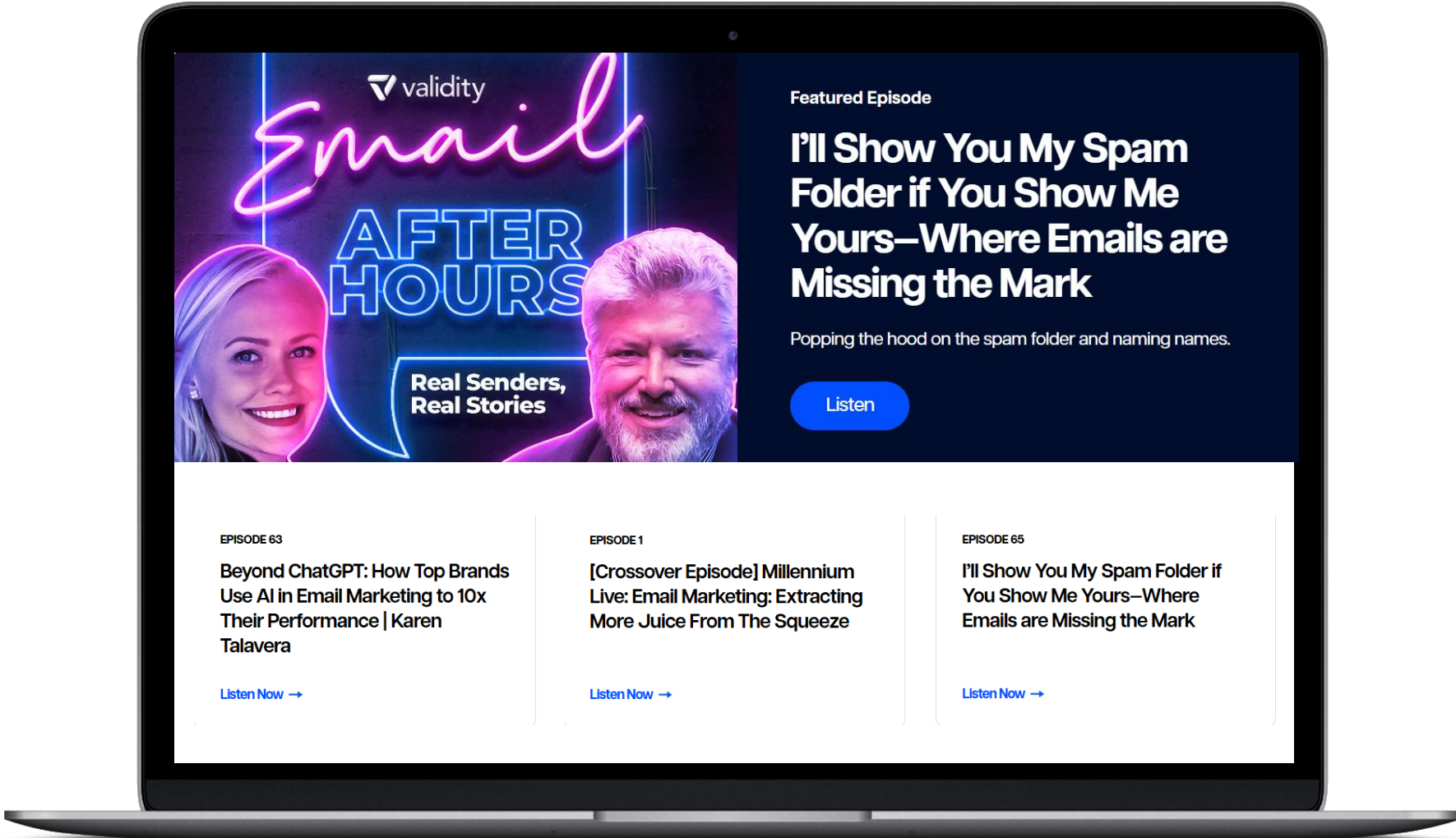
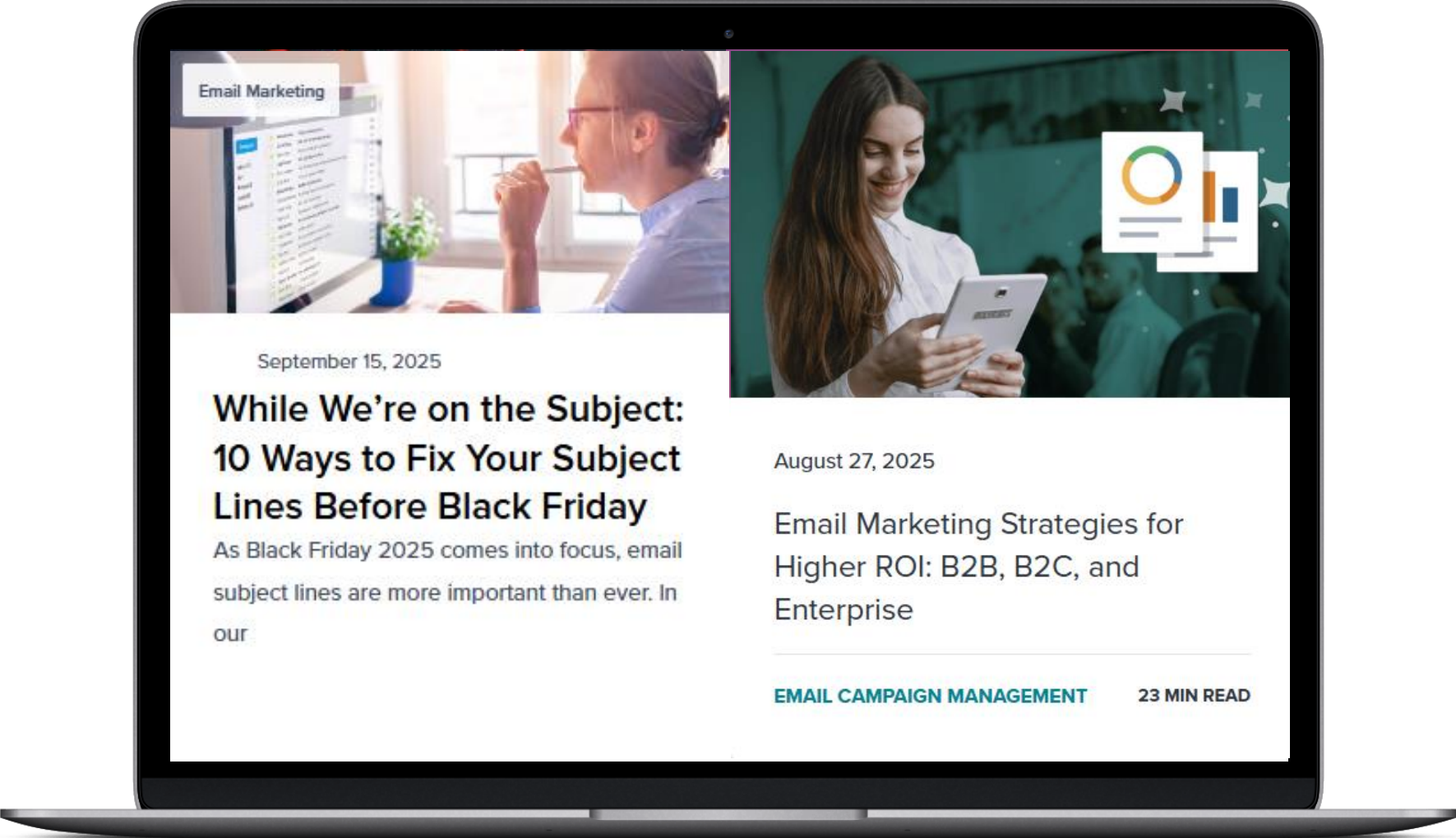


Get Prepared

Straight from the Source

- **Strong email authentication**  <https://support.google.com/a/answer/81126>
- **Forwarding authentication (ARC)**
- **Provide a one-click unsubscribe**  <https://sendersupport.olc.protection.outlook.com/pm/Policies>
- **Maintain low spam complaint rates**
- **Observe RFC requirements**
- **Send to engaged audiences with opt-In**  <https://senders.yahooinc.com/best-practices>
- **Strong list hygiene & bounce management**
- **Use reputation monitoring tools**  <https://support.apple.com/en-gb/102322>
- **Don't be misleading**
- **Offset sending times**  <https://knowledge.validity.com>

Learn More



www.validity.com/blog & www.litmus.com/blog

www.senderscore.org/podcasts/email-after-hours





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