Sprint Education

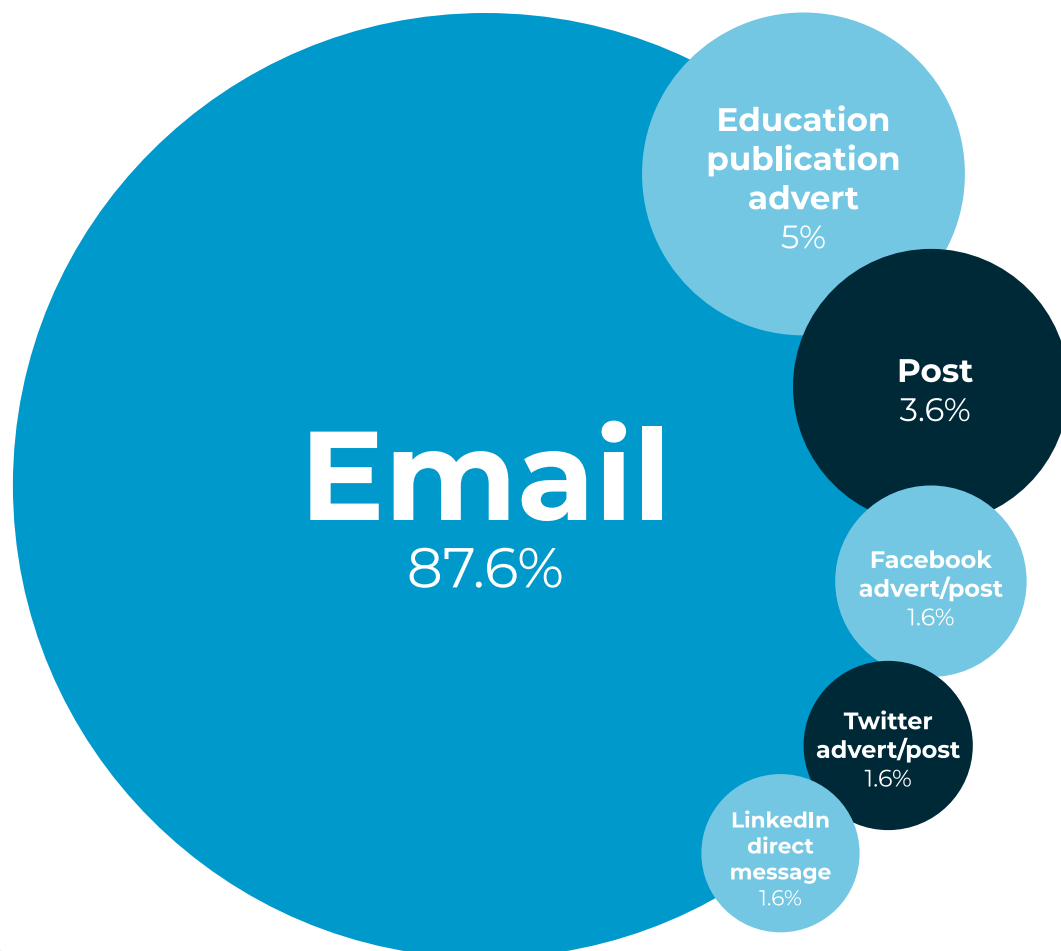# THE TOP 7 EDUCATION MARKETING TRENDS
FOR 2024

Contents

2024 marketing trends introduction

Step into the dynamic world of education marketing in 2024, a space that's constantly adjusting to meet the unique needs of schools and educators. Amid the ever-shifting landscape, let's unravel the emerging trends you can harness to add rigour and focus to your education marketing campaigns this year.

Despite ongoing changes, one certainty remains beyond a shadow of a doubt – email marketing reigns supreme when connecting with schools.

Our report found that 87.6% of teachers, school leaders, and education staff view email as their preferred means of communication when receiving marketing from education businesses.

With this in mind, we've unpacked seven compelling digital trends that go hand-in-hand with email and are worth utilising in your marketing-to-schools strategies.

Email
87.6%

Education publication advert
5%

Post
3.6%

Facebook advert/post
1.6%

Twitter advert/post
1.6%

LinkedIn direct message
1.6%

1. Account-based marketing

Finding savings in your budget whilst securing high-value sales can be a challenge. However, the Account-Based Marketing (ABM) approach can alleviate this challenge. It involves prioritising personalised outreach to specific accounts rather than a broader one-size-fits-all approach, and due to its cost-effectiveness, it is increasingly popular.

ABM provides significant advantages. It involves tailoring your marketing efforts to specific accounts more likely to convert. Not only does this improve engagement, as you speak directly to their priorities, but ROI increases as you convert higher-value contacts into customers. ABM can help you build stronger relationships with schools that can see the value in your targeted approach, making long-term retention more likely.

Successful ABM campaigns can yield insights into the preferences and behaviours of high-value clients, enriching your overall marketing strategy when pursuing similar targets. Success depends on aligning how your sales and marketing teams collaborate, especially around messaging. Communications with the same client need to be consistent, to ensure they feel the full effect of your optimised ABM approach.

Keep an eye on our LinkedIn posts or join our mailing list to ensure you don't miss out on any of our account enhancements coming soon..

To fully leverage ABM, combine it with other marketing trends to increase its impact, such as personalisation of email strategies.

2. Personalised engagement strategies

Crafting effective marketing strategies for schools requires a keen understanding of personalised engagement. Studies show that 95% of marketers have experienced success using personalisation strategies (Statista, 2023).

Consumers respond favourably to emails that mention a birthday or anniversary (54%) and share local/regional events and offers (53%), (Gartner, 2022). When we apply the personalisation methodology to the education sector, we see increases in audience engagement, for example, when using details relevant to the school you're emailing, such as regional projects, positive case studies from similar schools, and funding opportunities relevant to that school's needs.

Consumers are more willing than in the past to share their email addresses for a personalised experience and incentives. This means that in 2024, you can use email automation to respond to subscriber actions more successfully, creating opportunities for an advanced segmentation strategy.

Personalisation Strategies

Birthday/Anniversary
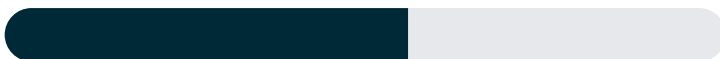
Local/Regional Events and Offers

3. Segmentation by firmographic data

Beyond basic automation, segmentation categorises customers based on shared characteristics, allowing for tailored messaging. We've been using and enabling segmentation theory for years, yet the wider marketing industry is only now cottoning on to its impact. We know targeting schools' firmographic data properties is especially effective for segmenting your education marketing.

If you know the school type, size, and location, you can adjust your campaigns to find your ideal audience. Then, using a responsive database, you can size up the potential market in which to expand. Firmographic data segmentation is already a part of our advanced email list builder. It allows you to use firmographic filters to identify which contacts to prioritise from our list of 621,000 teachers, senior leaders, and school staff.
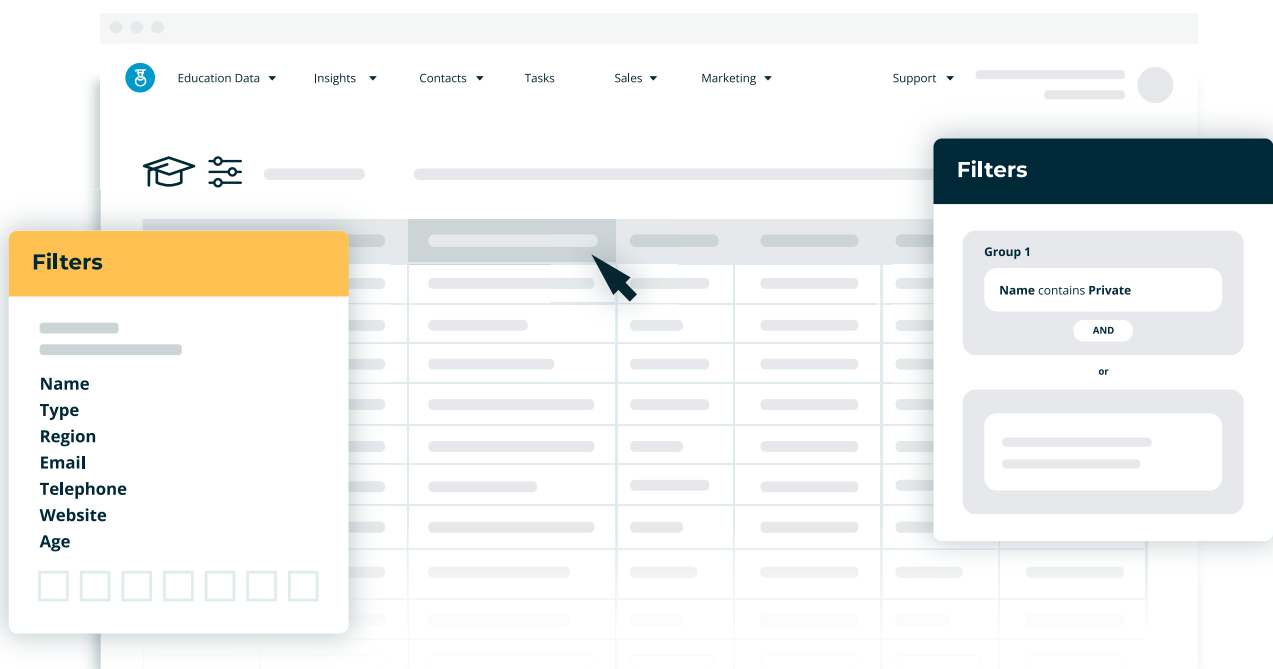
However, basic school firmographic properties just scratch the surface of what's possible through segmentation. Many education solutions solve specific problems in schools, be they premises-related, subject content, or dependent on technological infrastructure.

Targeting firmographic data that informs you about which schools have higher proportions of land use will enable you to make your grounds maintenance solution more popular. Similarly, sending your EdTech phonics solution to literacy leaders in certain primary year groups helps, but filtering roles based on their school's ICT facilities will indicate a greater likelihood of campaign success.

Keep an eye on our LinkedIn posts or join our mailing list to ensure you don't miss our planned developments coming soon.

This precision in firmographic segmentation ensures that marketing messages to schools are not just personalised but also highly relevant and, therefore, more likely to achieve sales.

4. Leveraging intent data

Being able to respond dynamically to consumer intent makes identifying education-buying personas possible and much, much quicker. Plus, it means your follow-up emails are aligned with the most pressing needs of recipients.

If you're new to intent data, it refers to the buying intent of consumers. Data used to determine intent comes from internal (first-party) data sources and external (third-party) data sources.

Internal data is collected in-house, often through marketing automation platforms or web app logs. It includes anonymous data (e.g. website visits without form submissions) and known data (e.g. downloaded content). You can control these types of collection methods, allowing customisation and classification of a contact's purchase intent.

External data can be derived from third-party website interactions, including visits and downloads. Many companies sell third-party intent data and may form partnerships to enhance product offerings in the target market.

Utilising both types of intent data enables you to gain insights into the interests of schools, facilitating personalised and effective marketing strategies.

Discover our extensive UK and international schools databases to reach up to 3.9 million educators.

5. Education-sector intent intelligence

While intent data, as previously described, can indicate the intentions of educators and make targeting contacts with similar job roles an informed way of planning your campaign, there are other education-specific uses for it.

In 2024, marketing to schools will begin to leverage future purchasing intent data. This involves employing intelligence about a school's upcoming needs to proactively target educators and school staff. For example, anticipating when a contract will expire for specific equipment, such as student laptops, or predicting the remaining lifespan of school facilities such as playgrounds.

Intelligence on larger premises projects, software and hardware rollouts, and major resourcing changes means

you can organise smart marketing campaigns to address decision-makers planning for their larger purchases.

Much of this intelligence is industry-specific. In the education sector, it often requires outreach methods to collect it. This is where smart surveying comes into play, something we have some history of conducting, such as through our State of Selling to Schools reports that identify upcoming teacher purchasing priorities.

We have expanded our market research services to ensure our clients can now locate those schools with purchasing intent, keeping those education brands that partner with Sprint Education or use our Campus software ahead of the curve when marketing to schools. Keep an eye out for more exciting developments surrounding this in 2024.

The State of Selling to Schools

6. Incorporating artificial intelligence tools

The Collins Dictionary has named "AI" as its Word of the Year for 2023, which is unlikely to come as a surprise considering the coverage it has had. But tellingly, the Cambridge Dictionary has opted for "hallucinate" as its Word of the Year.

Why and how is this connected? Well, because AI can generate false information known as "hallucinations". Viewed side-by-side, both Word of the Year choices succinctly capture the dual nature of using AI in marketing content – it's a mixed bag!

There are clear benefits to using AI in marketing. For instance, 38% of marketers use AI to write emails (Hubspot, 2023), from generating subject lines to writing body content. In sales, 32% use it for adapting content to new audiences (Hubspot, 2023). AI can save time and make workflows more efficient, but when used bluntly, it can lead to formulaic text generation or even false details: hallucinations.

A trend for 2024 will be an increase in companies using AI as a limited tool to enhance their marketing output, not as a blanket replacement for human-written marketing. If you've experimented with AI already you'll know using it alone does not create the best quality content. Human decision-making and original idea creation are still the main drivers of quality; AI simply tries to imitate the best of what we can produce.
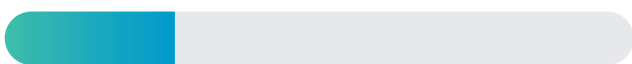
In 2024, those who use AI as one tool in their marketing-to-schools toolkit will experience the greatest success, especially when pairing it with deeper insights.

7. Importance of deeper reporting insights

Gone are the days of using basic open rates to measure the success of email campaigns. Not only are open rates less reliable, but thanks to developments such as Apple's Mail Privacy Protection, which effectively stops senders from measuring open rates consistently, there are reporting insights available that delve much deeper and offer greater insights.

For instance, our new Advanced Reports available to our managed strategy clients provide users with detailed campaign analysis statistics, such as unique clicks, and contacts who have clicked on a link more than once. Not only that, you can also compare your email performance with industry benchmarks and soon, even against the performance of your past campaigns.

Open rate **37.4%**

This email's open rate is **7.4% ↑** on your average and **70.0% ↑** on the industry average

Total Opens	37.4%	14,959
Unique Opens	34.1%	13,635
Opened Once	32.0%	12,793
Open > Once	2.1%	842

Click to Open Rate **18.0%**

This email's open rate is **6.0% ↓** on your average and **199.5% ↑** on the industry average

Total Clicks	18.0%	2,688
Unique Clicks	17.7%	2,645
Clicked Once	17.5%	2,624
Clicked > Once	0.1%	21

Education marketers can now easily customise their analysis based on audience demographics and firmographic properties. Utilising filters means nuances among different roles can be fully understood. What's more, firmographic filters can allow you to identify trends in counties and the school types to target when writing follow-up content.

In other words, reflecting on campaign performance and diving deeper into what's happening can eliminate the guesswork when prioritising follow-ups. Reporting insights streamline your workflow and mean that you can focus your efforts on the engaged recipients more likely to lead to sales.

Lessons for education marketers

Navigating the beginning of this decade has not been straightforward for schools. But for education brands, a new wave of empathetic marketing strategies can build secure relationships with educators.

As schools struggle to recruit effectively, teacher burnout remains in the news, and the cost of living applies pressure to already constrained budgets, considerate marketing approaches are essential. By adopting the lessons of the trends above, personalised strategies, data-driven targeting, and account-based marketing approaches, you can speak effectively and directly to the needs of school decision-makers.

To build intelligent education strategies and increase your leads across schools, there's no better place to start than by join our mailing list.

We'd be delighted to discuss your education marketing aims with you, and provide clear advice on if an outsourced marketing approach is best suited to your needs, or if THE platform for connecting with schools – Campus, our all-in-one education marketing engine room – can empower you to drive campaigns yourself.

Speak to our team today about how we can ensure your marketing to schools campaigns are aligned with the trends that will achieve your sales targets.

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