

Corporate Email Signatures Best Practices:

5 BEST PRACTICES

for **EFFECTIVE**

Email Communication

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2nd
Edition

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The ways we communicate in the business world have certainly shifted in the past two decades. With the emergence of instant messaging, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) audio/video calling, online meetings, collaboration workspaces, and mobile apps, organizations have many ways to communicate both internally and externally. But let's not forget about email, as it's still the primary business communication method. Email signatures are often not given the attention (read: love) they deserve.

An email signature's primary goal is to identify the sender and provide contact information for the sender and the organization they represent. They can also be used to build brand awareness, as marketing tools, to gather customer feedback, and to ensure compliance.

To help you accomplish these goals, this eBook will cover five best practices to get the most out of your email signatures:



[How to design perfect email signatures](#)
including which information should be a part of a signature, and best practices for optimal results.



[Using an email signature for marketing efforts](#)
and how this can be a cost-effective approach to drive engagement and promote products and other content.



[Using email disclaimers](#)
and how they can help maintain the confidentiality of your communication and even ensure compliance with legal requirements.



[Leveraging email signatures with autoreplies \(including out-of-office messages\)](#)
to provide consistent branding while including the necessary information.



[Centrally managing email signatures](#)
helping your organization elevate their brand with a consistent email signature design and a convenient way to update and deploy signatures.



#1

Design a perfect email signature

The right content, layout, and style are the key ingredients to cooking up the perfect email signature for you and your fellow colleagues within an organization. Think of an email signature as your digital business card. An email signature will have a lot of the same content, with a few digital content source links added in there as well.



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Logo

Company Name
1234 Industry Way
Suite 29B
Somewhere, ST 55555
www.CompanyURL.com



The content of this message is confidential. If you have received it by mistake, please inform us and then delete the message. It is forbidden to copy, forward, or in any way reveal the contents of this message to anyone. The integrity and security of this email cannot be guaranteed.

Let's start with the contact information you should include:

Full Name – first and last name

Job Information – position/job title and department

Contact Information – phone number, fax number (yes, some people still use these), email address, etc.

Organization Information – name, logo, physical address, website link, social media icons with links

You may also want to include:

- Your photo
- Gender pronouns
- Marketing banner
- One-click survey links
- Booking links
- Legal disclaimers
- Legal requirements
- Call to action
- Awards and certificates (yours and/or your organizations)

When designing an email signature, there are things you should try to do:



Place all contents of your signature in a table. This helps with vertical and horizontal alignment and keeps the signature layout from shifting while being viewed from different devices, apps and browsers.



Keep the width of your signature to less than 500 pixels. 300-400 pixels seems to be the sweet spot, as it ensures the signature will display properly on different mobile devices.



Use your organization brand colors. It's best to keep the number of colors to 2 or 3 at the most. A pop of color is great for visual appeal.



Use Web-safe fonts. These are typefaces that are universally available across different devices, operating systems, and browsers. Use only one or two fonts.



Use a JPEG or PNG file type for pictures. If your picture has a transparent background and/or vibrant colors, a PNG format will work better than a JPEG. If your picture is a photograph or an image without a transparent background, the JPEG file type works best. Just don't use too many images.



Use a recent professional-quality headshot image. This is your first impression; the recipient is putting a face to a name!



Include alternative text for each image included. The text should describe what is in the image. A person with a visual impairment can select the image and the device screen reader verbally reads the alternative text description. This is also useful when an image cannot be displayed. Where the image should be, the description displays for the recipient.



After you create a signature [template](#), it's good practice to test the signature on different types of devices – with different email applications and browsers (also: with light/dark mode enabled). If you make additional changes, be sure to put the signature through its testing paces again!

Now that you have learned how to craft perfect email signatures, it's time to learn all about how email signatures can be used for Marketing purposes.

#2

Use email signatures for Marketing

Email signatures are a great vehicle for driving your marketing engagement efforts to a new territory (and rather inexpensive, too). If you consider the number of emails you send each day and the number your entire organization sends, you quickly realize that's a lot of email and a lot of marketing opportunities!

A marketing banner is usually located at the bottom (end) of an email signature and is a clickable link that takes the recipient to a webpage promoting a corresponding marketing campaign.

You can use an email signature marketing banner to promote:

- Products/sales you offer
- Upcoming events such as exhibiting at a tradeshow/conference
- Online or in-person training sessions
- Company news
- Awards & Certifications employees or the organization receives
- Surveys
- and more!

To get the most of your marketing banners and ensure the right marketing message is presented in an email signature, you should:

- Use different signatures and marketing banners to target different business industries and regions of the world (e.g. use banners in different languages).
- Make regular updates to your banners to increase their effectiveness and keep your audience engaged.
- Promote your events in banners ahead of time.
- Tag links with custom parameters to collect web analytics with Google Analytics or similar tools and track clicks on a specific banner.
- Consider using one-click surveys in your email signatures to get instant feedback on your banners.

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New New New
Discounts
Fast Delivery



Now that you have a better understanding of how to drive engagement and promote offerings through marketing within email signatures, let's move on to email disclaimers.

#3 Ensure compliance using email disclaimers

We've probably read an email disclaimer at the bottom of an email message a time or two; it's the information affixed to an email message to fulfill legal or other requirements. Of course, the region and industry your organization is based in, as well as other factors, will determine what you need to inform the email message recipient about.

Here's a short list of potential uses:

- Actions to be taken or avoided for email message content.
- Fulfilling compliance requirements related to various industries such as banking, healthcare, and health insurance.
- Fulfilling legal requirements for data collection and privacy, liability, security, and spam.
- Stating the estimated support response time.
- Providing a way to unsubscribe (with a link) from an email subscription such as a newsletter.

If you're not sure how to word a disclaimer for a specific use case, there are a large number of email disclaimer examples included in [this blog article](#).

For example, many European regulations regarding privacy require organizations to provide the organization name (together with legal form), registration number, place of establishment, as well as other details. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA) Privacy Rule requires that the recipient be informed that the email contents are confidential and to warn them about the consequences of misusing such information.



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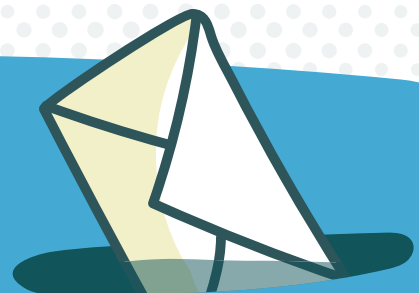
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A disclaimer should be included for all email messages sent from an organization's email accounts. Personally, I like disclaimers that are written in a simple language format, that are direct and to the point (not too wordy). There are many methods to set this up based on the email platform your organization uses, as well as through email signature management solutions.



#4

Use automatic replies

I don't know about you, but I tend to forget to manually turn on an automatic reply for Out of Office messages. Today, it's possible to set start and end dates ahead of your scheduled out of office time and manage turning the automatic reply on and off as intended.

And there are many uses for an auto reply beyond an out of office. You may use autoreplies as an autoresponder to let customers emailing the service desk know that their request has been received, that there has been an increased number of requests and they may experience a longer wait for response, and so on.

Some of the common pieces of information that can be included in your automatic reply are:

- A professional greeting
- The reason you're not able to respond
- The dates you're out of the office
- If you're accessing email during your absence
- An estimated date the sender can expect a response
- Who to contact for urgent requests

Outlook provides a capability to set different automatic reply messages for those within your organization and those outside your organization. This is helpful as there may be different colleagues that coworkers need to contact in your absence than who clients or customers should contact.

You may also require multiple conditions for when to trigger sending an automatic reply; for example, in response to email conditions:

- When email is received from specific senders
- When email is received during certain timeframes (holidays, festive periods, etc.)
- When the email received contains specific keywords or key phrases

To accomplish this, you'll need a third-party email signature management solution.



If you're not sure what to include in an out of office message, this [CodeTwo Squad Blog article](#) covers what to include, what to delete, and has more than 20 examples for you to use (including some funny ones)!



#5 Manage email signatures centrally

So why should centralized email management be important to you? Here are some of the top reasons:

- The signature is uniform across the organization.
- The signature works with all email applications on computers and mobile devices.
- It provides a way for non-technical employees to quickly design a signature template and deploy the signature organization-wide.
- Signatures can be dynamic, providing different signatures for internal and external email messages, and different signatures for various organization units.

While you're choosing email signature management software, here's what to look for:

Easily Accessible – Preferably from a web browser and any operating system such as Windows, Mac, Android, and iOS.

Fast Signature Deployment – Setting up a signature for an entire organization should only take a few minutes. And later on, making changes to existing signatures should only take a few moments.

Signature Creation and Management Delegation – This includes to a non-admin user. Ideally, this can be done without the need to assign admin roles outside of the signature software.

Automation – This capability should present itself in a few ways:

- The ability to set up different signature templates for different senders and recipients,
- Different signatures for new messages and different one for replies and forwards
- A scheduler feature that automates changing signatures organization-wide or for specific users or groups during holidays and other events (*this one is especially useful if you're using email signature for marketing, as mentioned in Chapter 2*).

A Signature Editor – The ability to easily create and modify signatures is an absolute, and include:

- With built-in templates to create signatures without any Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML) knowledge. If you're not familiar with HTML, it's the standard markup language (code) used for web page design. This should also include an ability to preview signatures.
- And for the HTML experts, an option to edit the signature's source code.

An Integration with Identity Management Services, such as Microsoft Entra ID (formerly Azure AD) –

Signatures are automatically personalized with employee details such as name and job title, as well as organization details such as address, logo, website link, and social media links.

Signature Modes – You should be able to select how email signatures are added: after an email is sent (in the cloud) or directly to emails when composing them in an email app, such as Outlook.

Embedded Pictures – Pictures can be embedded in an email signature and will always be viewable (without having to click "Download pictures").

Uniform Deployment – Email signatures are added to email messages sent from all apps and devices (*including mobile*).

Signature Placement – An email signature appears below the latest reply or forwarded email message within a threaded conversation instead of appearing at the bottom of the conversation.

Recipient Engagement – You can include clickable banners, trackable links and customer satisfaction surveys within an email signature.

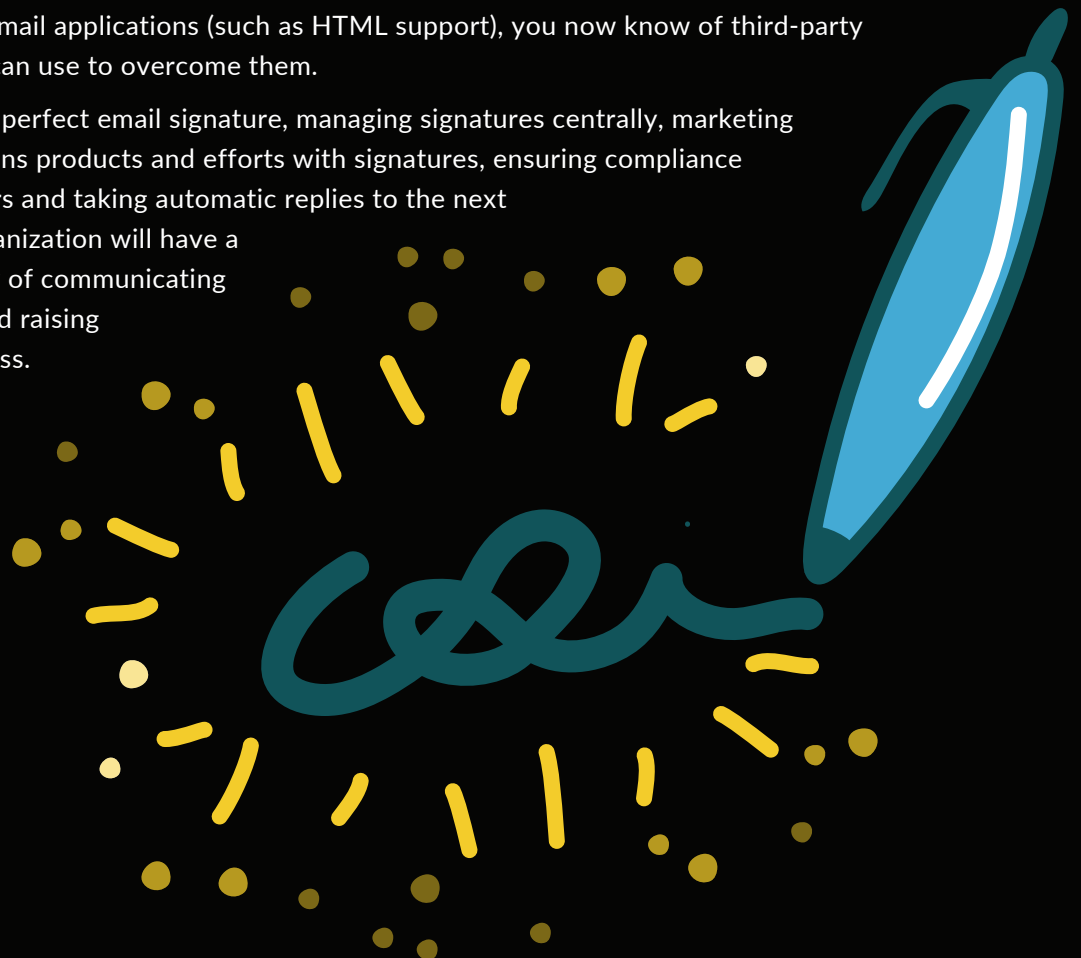
GETTING THE MOST Out of Your Email Signatures

Hopefully by now, you've started giving thought to the design and management of your organization branded email signatures, which template layout and colors to use, what content to include, when to use different signatures for different replies, and considerations for managing signatures in a central location.

There are many marketing opportunities to explore with a clickable banner in email signatures. You can market new products, upcoming events, awards, news and more. Find what's the right fit and give it a go!

Depending on an organization's industry type and location, there may be compliance regulations that need to be addressed with information affixed to an email message. Now that you've learned about affixing disclaimer information to email messages, you should be off to a great start to determine if disclaimers are needed and where to set these up at for distribution. You also learned more about using email signatures to distribute certain contact information to coworkers and a separate set of contact information to customers/clients/partners outside of the organization within an auto reply, including several examples. While there are some limitations with using auto-reply in email applications (such as HTML support), you now know of third-party solutions you can use to overcome them.

By designing a perfect email signature, managing signatures centrally, marketing the organizations products and efforts with signatures, ensuring compliance with disclaimers and taking automatic replies to the next level, your organization will have a consistent way of communicating information and raising brand awareness.





CodeTwo offers award-winning email signature management, migration & backup solutions for Microsoft 365 & Exchange Server. Their products are currently used by over 120k organizations worldwide, including Facebook, Samsung, UNICEF and many of the Fortune 500 companies.

Their flagship product, CodeTwo Email Signatures 365, is the only email signature solution fully certified by Microsoft and developed in compliance with ISO/IEC 27001 and 27018. It's an Azure-based cloud service that allows you to set up and centrally manage email signatures, disclaimers, automatic replies, branding, marketing campaigns and one-click customer satisfaction surveys for all users in a Microsoft 365 & Office 365 organization. It works with all email apps and devices, including Windows, Mac & mobiles.

For more information, visit: www.codetwo.com/signatures