Transactional vs. Commercial Emails

TRANSACTIONAL EMAILS
Transactional emails contain essential information about university business with a direct or immediate impact.

- Recipients are members of the campus community with umass.edu email addresses and cannot opt-out from transactional emails. Messages are based on their affiliation with the university and/or a specific department.

- CAN-SPAM does not apply to transactional messages. Messages need to be ADA-compliant and meet current best practice, branding, accessibility & usability requirements.

- EXAMPLES:
  - Messages from dean or department head
  - Emergency announcements
  - Notifications of bills due
  - HR announcements
  - Password reset messages
  - Advising & other instruction-related messages

- Transactional emails do not require an opt-out link in the message footer. Subject lines are descriptive and indicate that the email contains important information. Messages include a reply-to email address.

- RECIPIENTS DO NOT HAVE TO OPT-IN

COMMERCIAL EMAILS
Commercial emails contain non-essential, but still relevant information, usually intended for marketing and promotional purposes.

- Announcements, promotions, and advertisements for events, programs, or other initiatives. Recipients are not restricted to the campus community and have the ability to opt-in and out of commercial emails.

- Commercial messages must adhere to CAN-SPAM regulations and meet current best practice, branding, accessibility & usability requirements.

- EXAMPLES:
  - Newsletters
  - Event invitations
  - Athletic event promotions
  - Messages to prospective students
  - Reminders about application deadline to prospective students
  - Promotional offers

- Commercial emails provide a clear opportunity to opt-out of receiving future emails. Subject lines indicate the email is commercial. The footer includes the physical postal address of the institution or department.

- RECIPIENTS CAN OPT-IN & OUT

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www.umass.edu/it/policies/digital-comm/email