

ADMAIL SPECIFICATIONS

General Information

- All creative subjected to review by Chicago Tribune Interactive
- All images/graphics served by Chicago Tribune Interactive
- Chicago Tribune Interactive disclaimers appear at top and bottom of e-mail
- Repeat creative sent to the same audience by the same advertiser/marketer is subject to approval

Creative Standards

- Must work in Internet Explorer 5.5 and Netscape 4.7
- File size (images + graphics + html) < 40k (6+ seconds on standard modem) Recommended size < 30k (5 seconds)
- Overall width = 600 pixels
- All animation subject to approval, no strobing effects
- No Flash
- The use of white or light text is prohibited. Some e-mail clients do not support html and will only display the text of the e-mail on a white background.
- Important information in the message must be displayed in text. Images are to be used to enhance the look and feel only. E-mail clients are moving towards image blocking as a default setting.

Include something special for Chicago Tribune Interactive members – Customer value should drive design

Think service, not marketing. This works to your advantage. Choose one of these tactics:

- Highlight an offer

When appropriate, offer a discount, free gift, or rebate; it's the most powerful producer of customer response. Make sure the offer has an expiration date; more people respond to an offer when there's a limit on the amount of time they have to do so.

- Emphasize benefits (value), not features (information)

Features are what the product has. Benefits are how it improves your life. The "7-horsepower engine" in a snow blower is a feature. "The horsepower to clear 10 inches of snow from 40 feet of sidewalk in 20 minutes" is a benefit. If you have an important, valuable benefit, you may want to put this in the headline instead of an offer.

- Tie in with a timely product

Is the hot summer the talk of your town? Invite people to stop by your store for iced tea. You're not just a merchant, you're a member of the community.

Client provides:

- Subject line
- All copy for text version
- All html for graphic version
- All graphics and images
- Mailing address and electronic opt-out information

Please supply electronic versions of all materials. Production will not start (nor production timeline) until all materials are received.

Subject line

Subject lines should include the name of advertiser and the specific offer. Be direct and to the-point, honest and straightforward. Do not trick the reader; they will feel taken advantage of. The subject line determines if your e-mail gets opened or immediately deleted.

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Avoid looking like spam – we will not send out messages that look like spam

- DON'T USE ALL CAPS
- Don't use hyperbole or make offers that seem too good to be true
- No dollar signs, asterisks, emoticons :)
- Don't use exclamation points!

If an exclamation point or other unusual character is part of your brand name, put your name in the middle of the subject line, not at the end.

Example:

Be the first to see Mamma Mia! in Chicago

instead of

Be the first to buy tickets to Mamma Mia!

Good design principles – Use these as a guideline

- One thing dominates the page

Could be a headline or a picture but not both. When you emphasize everything, you emphasize nothing. Too many voices is noise.

- A combination of graphics and text is compelling

The image draws you in, the text explains why. Use html for text instead of text as graphics to save file size.

- The primary message should be in the top 1/3 of the e-mail

This often determines whether your entire message gets read.

- Use white space

If something is too dense, it's overwhelming. If it's open and airy, it's friendly and inviting.

- Make the logo/branding and the call-to-action clear

Make sure you can see these without searching. You want to leave a lasting impression, even on someone whose attention is divided.

Other guidelines

- Be credible

The voice of the message should be friendly, down-to-earth and honest. Don't be pushy, over-promise, or oversell; a casual tone is best. Use proper punctuation and grammar, correct spelling.

- Make certain your contact information is clear

It enforces the sense that this message is coming from someone, that it's a personal Relationship. Personal connections are more successful than bulletin broadcasts.

- Benchmark performance over time

Measure response rates. Customer response diagnoses health of brand relationship.

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This admail does a number of things right. It is designed well and its message is clear as a result. The reader's attention is immediately drawn to the headline and graphic and then taken logically through the information in order of priority. The admail is designed with a good balance of images and html text to ensure that the message will be received despite image blocking devices. This kind of design has a history of producing better results in direct mail pieces.

from: chicagotribune.com advertiser message Sent: Tue 2/7/2006 11:26 AM

To:

Cc:

Subject: Get Hairspray tickets before they go on sale from Broadway in Chicago.

To ensure delivery of Chicago Tribune communications, please add chicago_tribune@email.chicagotribune.com to your address book.

If you have trouble viewing this e-mail, please click this link to see the e-mail.

GET TICKETS BEFORE THE GENERAL PUBLIC!

hairspray

• BROADWAY'S BIG FAT MUSICAL COMEDY HIT •

Photo: Norman Jean Roy

You can get some of the best seats in the house to the January 20 - February 15 performances BEFORE they're available to the general public!

Click [HERE](#) and order your tickets now!
Be sure to type in the code TRIBUNE in the promotional code field.
Or order by phone at (312) 902-1400 and mention the code: TRIBUNE

HURRY! Tickets go on sale to the general public September 12!

Offer valid for January 20-February 15 performances only.
Subject to availability. Restrictions and handling fees apply.

December 16, 2003 - February 15, 2004

**Ford Center for the Performing Arts, Oriental Theatre
24 W. Randolph, Chicago**

Broadway's 2003 Tony Award-winning Best Musical takes you back to 1962 Baltimore, as 16-year-old Tracy Turnblad sets out to dance her way onto TV's most popular show. Can a big girl with big dreams - and even bigger hair - change the world - and still have time to win the boy she loves? This musical comedy mega-hit is piled bouffant-high with laughter and romance - and enough deliciously tuneful new songs to fill a frontstop platter party. As The New York Times says, "If life were everything it should be, it would be more like HAIRSPRAY. It's irresistible!"

Offer valid for January 20-February 15 performances only. Subject to availability. Restrictions and handling fees apply.

"IRRESISTIBLE! FRESH, WINNING AND DELICIOUSLY TUNEFUL!"
-Ben Brantley, The New York Times

"So many numbers bring down the house, it's a wonder the theater is still standing!"
-Jeremy Gerard, New York Magazine

To contact Broadway in Chicago, write to xxxxx, Chicago, IL 60611. If you do not wish to receive solicitations from Broadway in Chicago, send and e-mail to xxx@xxxxxxx.com with "unsubscribe" in the subject line.

About this communication:

As a registered user of xxxxx.chicagotribune.com and/or xxxxx.chicagosports.com, located at 777 W. Chicago Avenue, PC300, Chicago, IL 60612, you may occasionally receive e-mail on behalf of xxxxx.chicagotribune.com and/or xxxxx.chicagosports.com and/or www.chicagosports.com, our affiliates and select third party advertisers. For more information on how we protect your information, please read our [privacy policy](#).

If you do not wish to receive commercial e-mail solicitations, [click here](#) and change your preference at the bottom of the page. We reserve the right to send you non-commercial communications on behalf of www.chicagotribune.com and/or www.chicagosports.com and our affiliates (e.g., CareerBuilder.com), when consistent with our privacy policy. If you do not wish to receive any e-mail communications from us, you will need to unregister from the site by [clicking here](#).

Subject line

Clear and to-the-point. The reader knows what to expect and exactly who the message is from: *Get Hairspray tickets before they go on sale from Broadway in Chicago*

Chicago Tribune Interactive standard disclaimer (required)

One thing dominates

Here it's an html text call-to-action, headline and graphic. The bold imagery draws the reader's attention.

Links

Text links and graphics that link to the advertiser's website throughout, but especially towards the top of the admail.

Primary message in top 1/2

This mail gets right to the point. The call-to-action is clear and at the beginning of the message

Whitespace

If this area were filled with dense information, you might lose readers in detail. They may never make it to the call-to-action.

Must include mailing address and electronic opt-out information (required)

Chicago Tribune Interactive standard disclaimer (required)