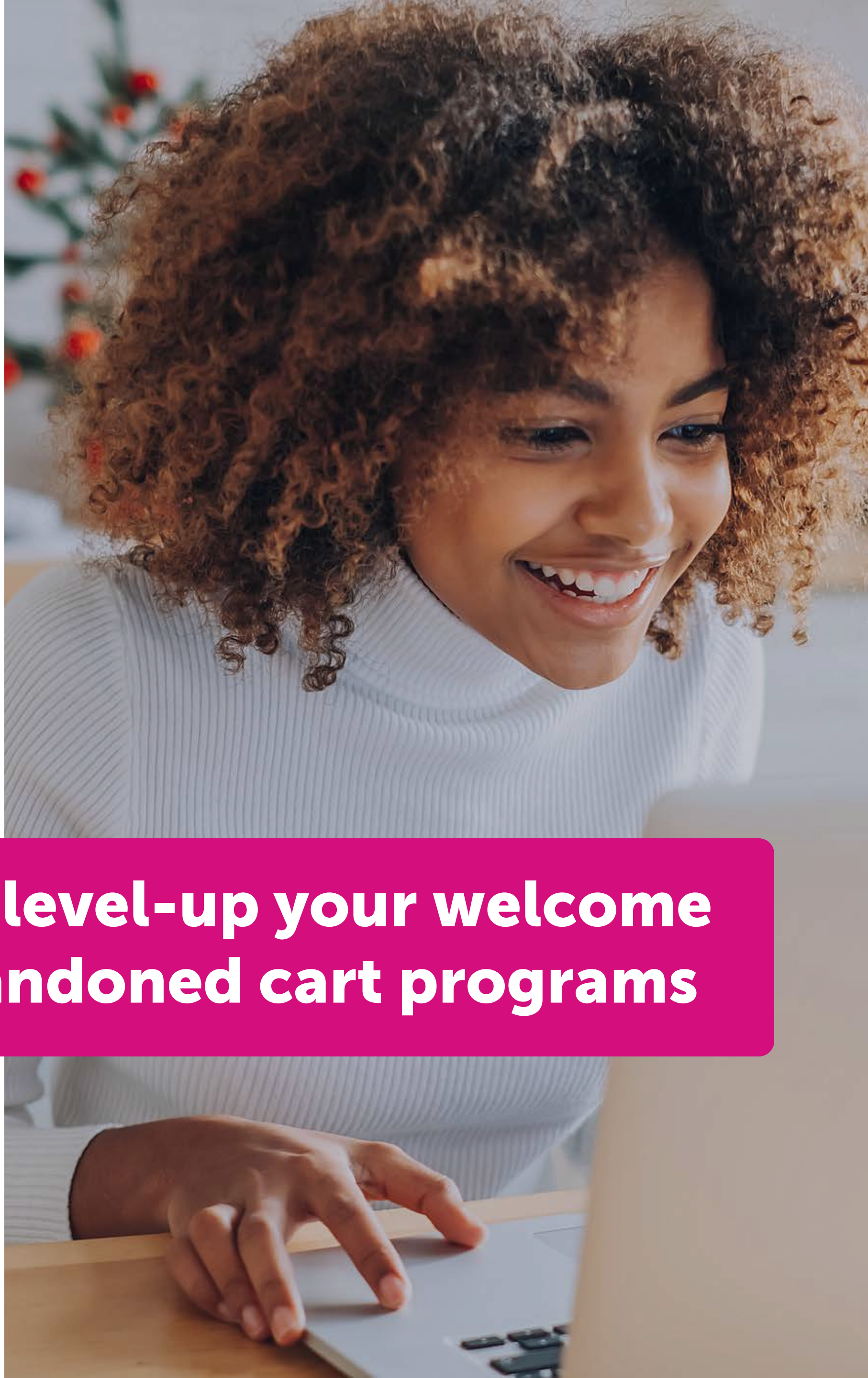


BEST PRACTICE GUIDE

# How to level up your welcome and abandoned cart programs



## How to level-up your welcome and abandoned cart programs

The welcome and abandoned cart programs are the two most important growth campaigns a brand can send its new customers. First impressions count; whether you're introducing your brand in a colorfully branded email or reminding someone about the contents of their cart with an SMS, their next decision is made within seconds.

Those contacts that qualify for a welcome or cart recovery message have previously interacted with your brand. So, it's important to remember that they're likely to interact again, this time more quickly.

These high-intent messages also have unbeatable engagement and conversion rates which other communications can't rival. Getting these two campaigns spot on can set a mutually fruitful customer relationship in motion. It's your moment to sell the sizzle (and the sausage!) and solve your customers' needs.

Using a cross-channel marketing automation platform empowers your teams to create full-scale customer welcome programs and cart recovery series. You can trigger messages across channels like email and SMS to new marketing contacts and prospective customers who've placed an item in their cart without checking out.

## Welcome emails and cart recovery campaigns are for everyone

It's a common misconception that welcome emails, and in particular abandoned cart reminders, are just for ecommerce brands. This couldn't be further from the truth! Whatever your sector, consider what your customers' high intent actions are; then your marketing team can tailor the message, content and channel to convert those interactions into sales and orders. While an ecommerce retail brand might trigger a nudge to shoppers with loaded carts, a B2B company can equally send an abandoned browse email to prospects who have viewed specific pricing or product and service pages. Likewise, when new contacts start to interact with your business, it's only polite to introduce your brand, its products and services, offering potential customers help if they need it.



# Welcome program: 3 top conversion tips

The welcome program is a marketing essential. Once a new contact subscribes to your marketing, enrol them onto an automation program that conveys your brand, asks for preferences, and grows a positive customer relationship. It's your time to shine, and to get to know customers better!

# 1

## Don't wait to say hello

People browsing on your site are probably also looking at your competitors. With so much choice around, it's only natural for customers to compare and contrast their options. So, once a new contact has subscribed to your marketing list, be sure to confirm this with a sign-up conformation straight away. And not long after, send a branded welcome email too. Remember, your brand is fresh in their mind – so your welcome message will be super-relevant.

Consider the fact that new contacts have taken the first step towards forming a customer relationship with your brand. At this point in time, they'll be receptive to your marketing – so it's time to maximize their engagement for mutual benefit: fulfilling customer needs and making sales. Following up quickly with a friendly 'hello' and valuable USPs can help hook new customers.

Since new contacts will have browsed other sites, it's important they recognize you in their jam-packed inbox. What's more, time is all-too precious for busy consumers, so it's a good idea to make the subject line as clear as possible. You're welcoming them to your brand – so just say that. Simplicity is key because you want to communicate what your message is about in as little effort for the reader as possible.



Grommet aced its welcome email; it's easy to read, has a nice flow, and most importantly, outlines the brand's ethos to new members.

# 2

## Take customers on a journey

The aim of the welcome program is to set customers' expectations. Consumers have willingly signed up to your marketing, so the least you can do is set out what you're going to send them. You can give them options to tailor their journey with you as well. Making the program open and flexible will improve engagement and ultimately help you grow more.

Most successful brands send multiple welcome emails before enrolling contacts onto further relevant programs. The welcome program is a journey for brands to get to know customers and vice versa. You wouldn't want to be ahead of yourself after a first date, proclaiming your love to someone you've just met. The initial encounters between a brand and a customer follow a similar logical path: you don't want to drop the BUY NOW bomb during the first interaction. A little time and patience will pay off.

## Content

### Brand merits

What's so good about your brand? As a first step, write down all of the compelling things about your brand, including its products, processes and heritage. If you sell video games, there will be loads of cool things you'll want to showcase. If you sell custom-made handbags on the other hand, it's likely you'll want to prioritize craftsmanship and materials.

### USPs to the front!

It's impossible for you to please everyone. Consider your brand's key differentiators – what stands you apart from your competitors? These nuances can make all the difference in the customer's final decision. So, place importance on communicating what makes your brand unique. Few people will care if you have a friendly support team as a women's apparel retailer. Your flexible refund policy and loyalty perks will prove much more interesting.

## Example stepped approach:



Your first welcome email will follow the standard format which is adopted by most businesses. Be friendly, concise and down-to-earth. No hard-selling please!

- Say thanks for signing up
- Explain who you are and what you offer
- Boast about one or two USPs
- Reinforce the benefits of marketing subscription



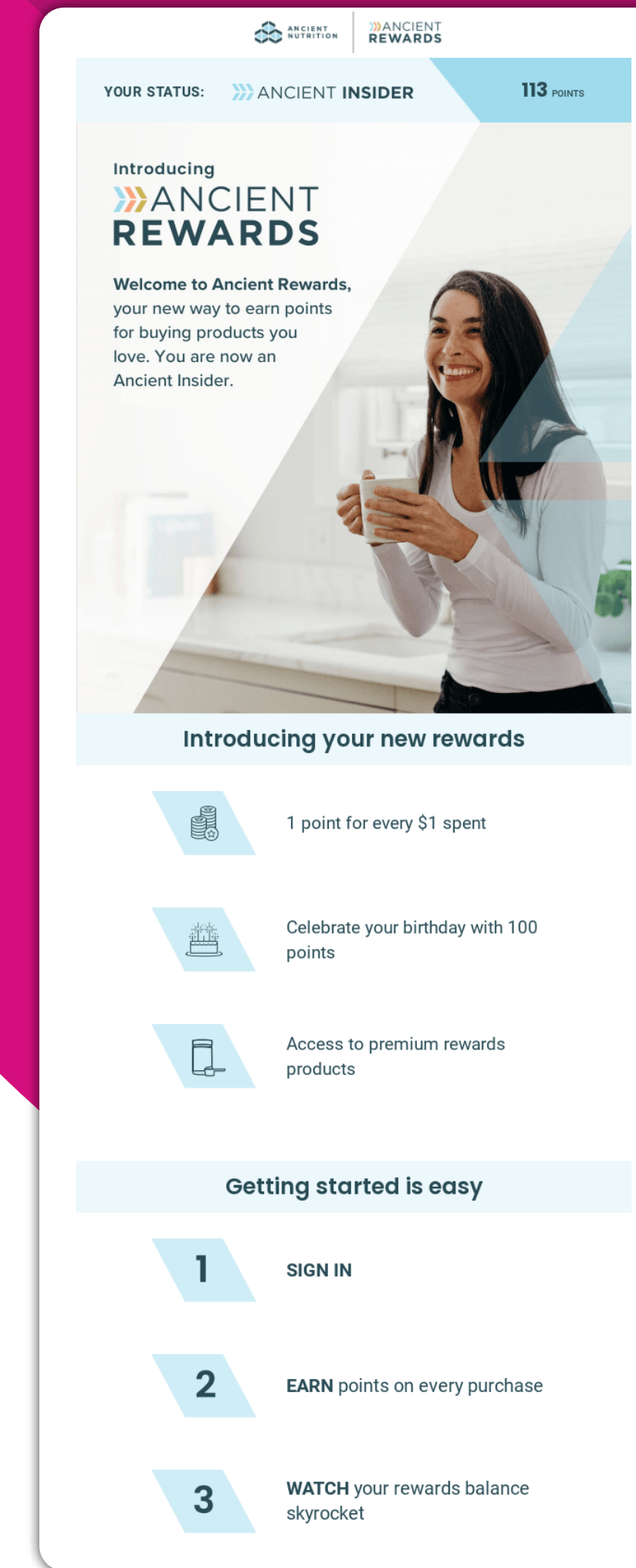
After saying 'hello', it's time to expand your marketing message and capture more data to tailor your future email campaigns and grow more significantly.

- Ask your subscribers for their preferences
- Offer a welcome discount to nab the first buy
- Secure cross-channel sign-ups via social, SMS, and chat



Now that your new contact has got to know you, you can pave the way for a more rewarding customer relationship in the long term.

- Shout about your awesome loyalty program
- Provide useful links to FAQs, the help page and returns policy
- Highlight social proof like testimonials and UGC



Ancient Rewards welcomes new members with an easy-to-read, eye-catching email. The journey is nicely summarized, and the member benefits help to reassure customers that they've made the right decision in signing up.

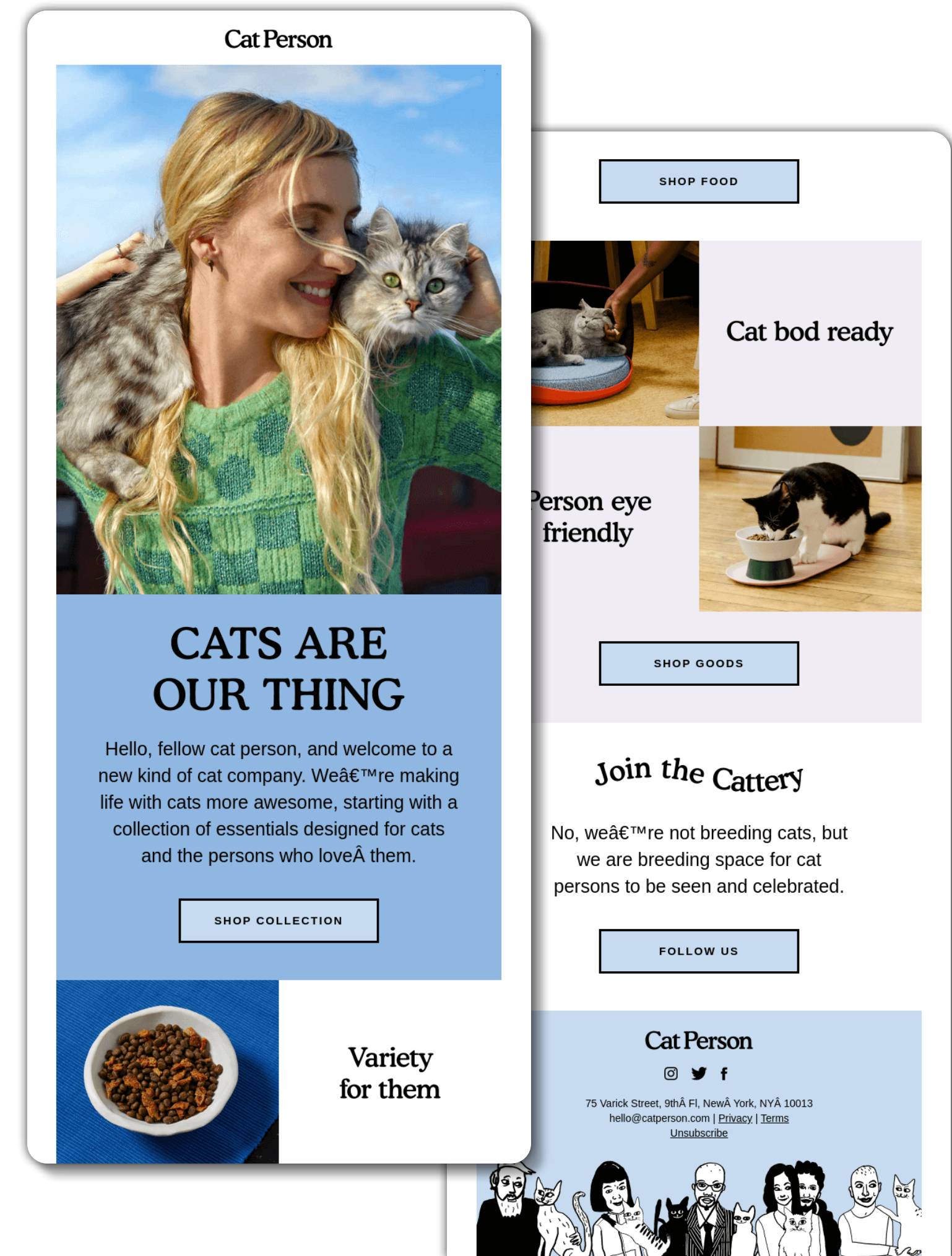
# 3

## Keep it short and simple

While there's lots to say in your welcome program, you don't want to run the risk of boring your subscribers. Emails in particular should be used as teasers, their aim to inspire subscribers to click through to content, products and more.

### Digestible content blocks

Breaking up your emails makes them much more readable. It also helps you to prioritize the most important points you want to make. Making headings as simple as possible can also help with email content flow, readability and communication. These sign-posts catch readers' eyes, helping them identify what's relevant and what's not.



CatPerson's welcome email is made up of digestible content blocks which add clarity to the overall message. The juxtaposed images, content and CTAs help signpost readers, making the whole reading experience effortless.

## Set the stage

The point of sending an email campaign is to bridge the gap between your brand and potential customers. Your key objective is to direct subscribers to your website where they can browse and make a purchase. Keeping your content light is therefore essential. Too much content will damage your click-through rate and hamper your growth. Stick to the best practice of keeping to one or two sentences, linking through to relevant content on your website for further information.

**Over 60% of email opens occur on handheld devices – so refining your mobile email experience is key to business growth. Here are our top tips:**

- 1** Think mobile first – mobile-first design can help maximize engagement and growth
- 2** Use the preheader text to set the scene and make your subject line more impactful
- 3** Keep your subject line short and sweet – stick to 50 characters or less
- 4** Design emails using single column layouts for easy scannability
- 5** Resize images to fit on a mobile screen – test this in platform
- 6** Ensure your CTAs are big enough to click on a mobile screen
- 7** Consider copy size and length on a handheld device – don't obstruct important CTAs
- 8** Place CTAs in a prominent position where it's easily viewed
- 9** Test your templates and measure mobile performance in order to finesse future cross-channel campaigns
- 10** Design complementary landing pages that provide a continuous experience flow when navigating from email to website



# Abandoned cart campaign: 3 top conversion tips

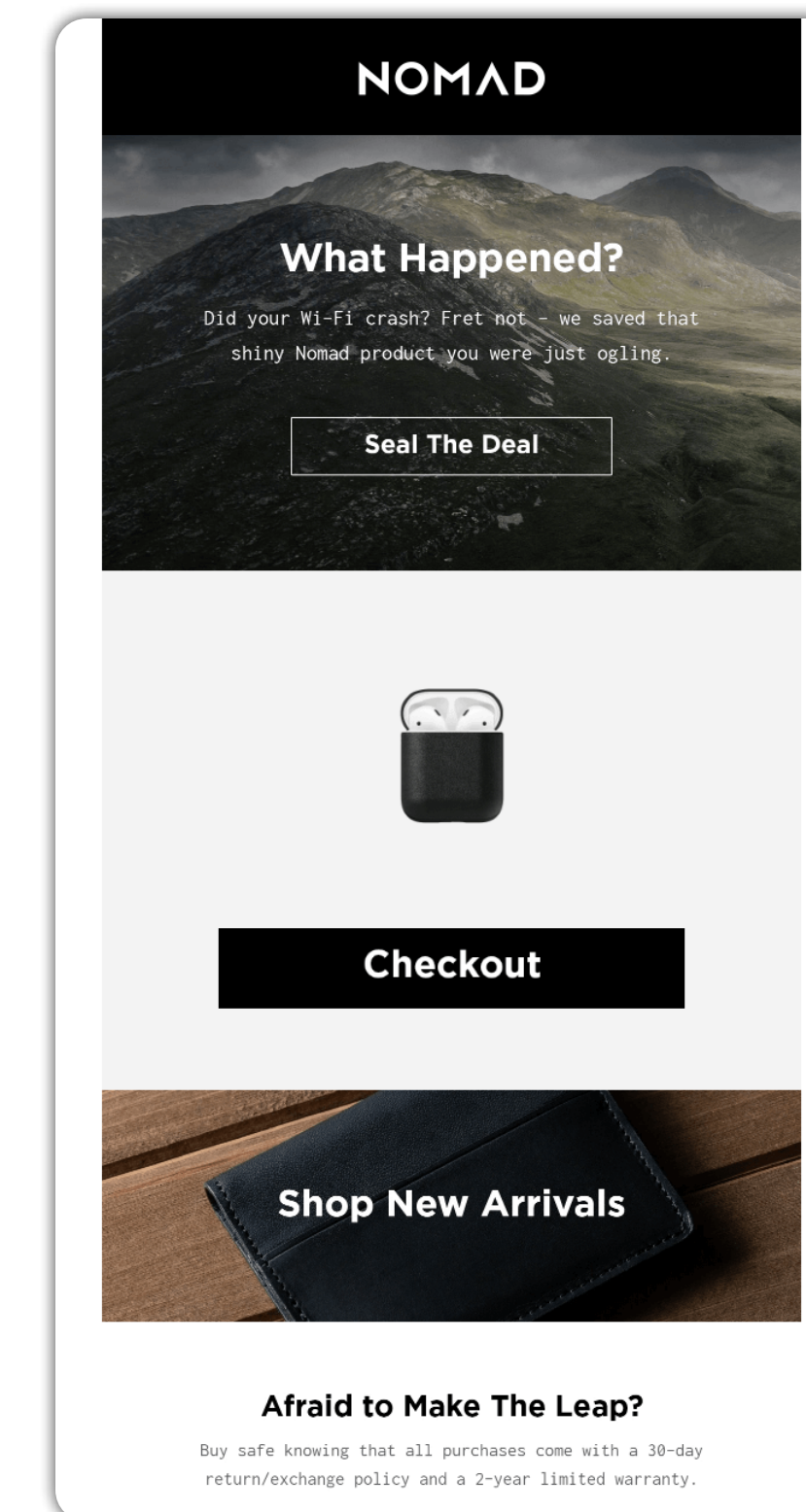
The purpose of the cart recovery campaign is to convert potentially lost sales. When prospective customers browse products, add items to their cart, but then quit their browse, that doesn't mean they no longer want what you offer. While these contacts are still hot, remind them of their cart's contents, citing brand or product benefits, plus positive customer reviews.

# 1

## Sell your brand, not your products

Give customers a reason to choose you. Now that you've already captured their attention – they've browsed your site and signed up to your marketing – it's time to nip the sale in the bud. After all, if a potential customer leaves their cart full, it makes little business sense to let them go. The key component of your compelling message should be: why you? What can your brand offer that your competitors can't? Remember, most customers will pay more for an exceptional experience. In fact, 50% of consumers who earn less than \$75k are willing to spend more for excellent service. Regardless of their income, customers will pay that bit more for awesome service – i.e., easy returns and fast delivery.

While it's crucial to include the product(s) your contact has abandoned in their cart within your email, the selling shouldn't go much further than that. You can always recommend similar products if they've abandoned just one item, but the best way to secure a sale is to remind, reiterate, and return. You want to remind your contact what they've left behind; reiterate your brand USPs; and return them to the path to purchase.



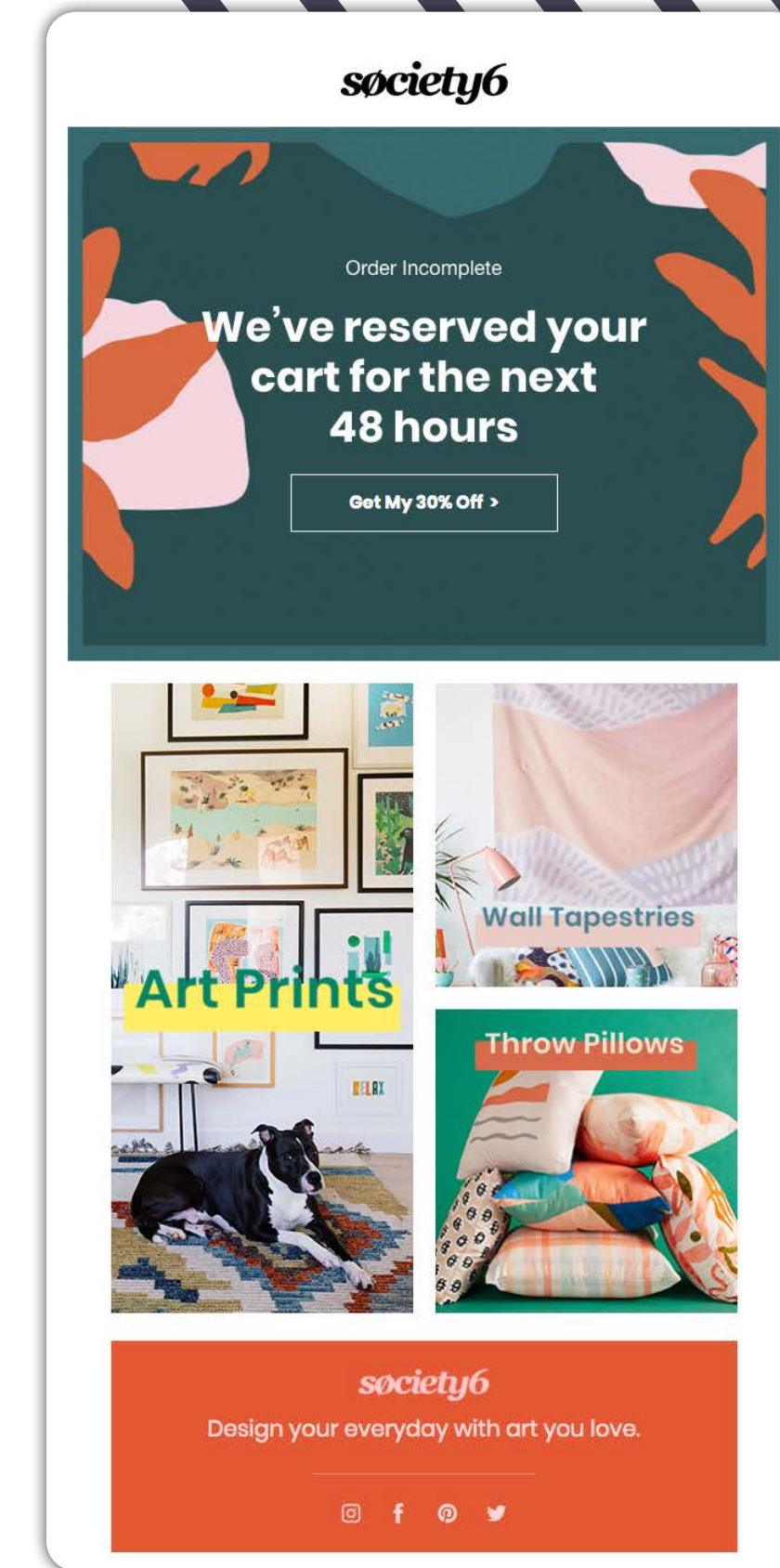
Nomad's abandoned cart email is brand-rich. Everything about it, the color palate, tone of voice and prompts, helps to familiarize customers with the brand's identity. The irresistible 30-day return policy and 2-year limited warranty enhances the customer experience too.

# 2

## Simple language and relevant visuals

The brilliant thing about abandoned browse and cart recovery emails is that they don't need to be long or complicated. The aim is to get your customer to perform a specific action – return to browsing or placing an order left in their cart. So, simplicity wins! There's no reason to muddle the message with chunks of content and superimposing visuals. Obscuring the main call to action with additional CTAs is counter-productive and can hinder your growth.

CTAs should be big, bold, and unmistakable. A touch of urgency in your language can also go a long way, but don't overdo it. Coming across too salesy can put customers off. Why not indicate that the cart is going to expire soon? Time pressure might urge reluctant customers to take action. And with the abandoned product in the spotlight, your email can't get more compelling than that.



We love society6's time-urgent message in this cart recovery campaign which is filled to the brim with relevant imagery. The fact that every purchase pays an artist is a compelling prompt to buy. Top marks!

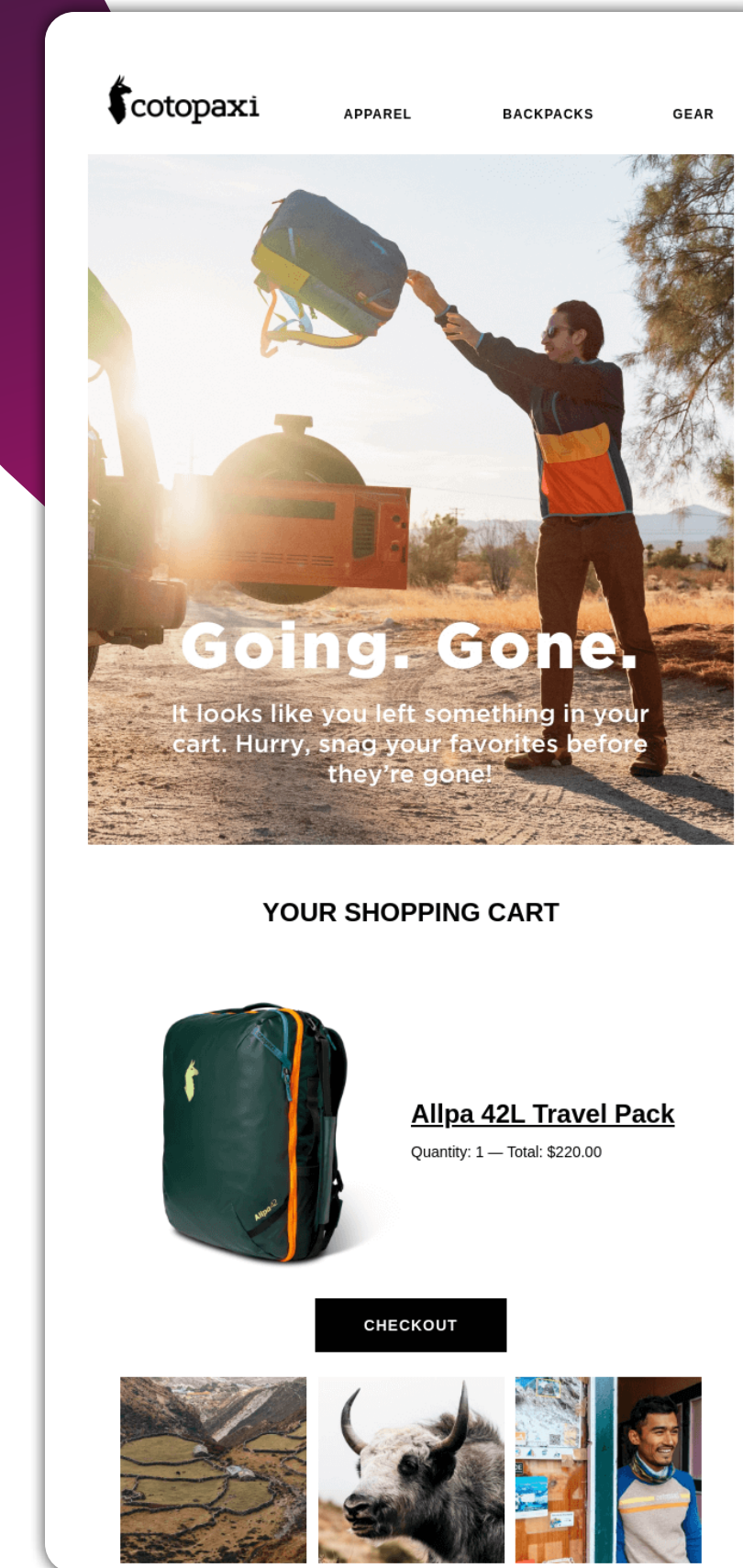
# 3

## Use social proof over discounts

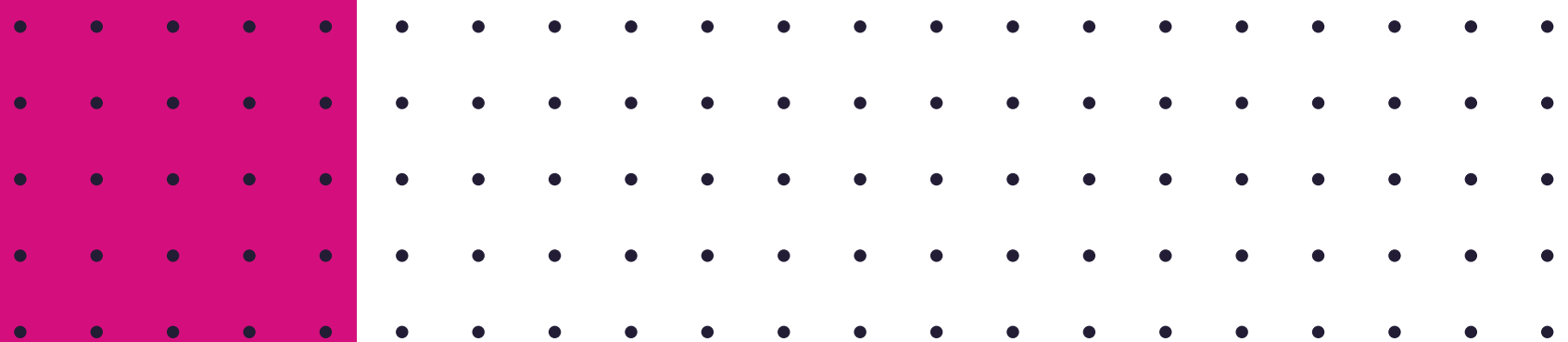
Every marketing team should be harnessing the power of social proof. A whopping 95% of people are influenced by reading reviews. We all do it, right? Including social proof in your abandoned browse and cart recovery emails can enhance the effectiveness of your growth campaign. If your visitors are first-time customers or simply uncertain about placing an order, customer reviews and testimonials can help them make a more informed decision.

As human beings we don't want to miss out. When our parents are away on vacation having a great time, while we're stuck in the office or working from home, we get jealous. Show potential customers who they can be. What's their future potential with your product? Toothpaste adverts get it right every time – positive reviews from everyday people, seals of approval from dental professionals, plus users with gleaming white smiles.

Tap into your audience's fear of missing out (FOMO) to stimulate product or service interest and need. Whether you're B2C or B2B, showcasing existing successful customers to potential customers will make them want to join the crowd. Adding a simple CTA, perhaps with an option to customize their product, service or experience, can give customers more of an incentive to resume their journey.



Cotopaxi's abandoned cart email screams FOMO. It makes you want to go on an adventure. The simple CTA, reinforced with the flexible payment option below, is super-effective for getting customers to click and buy without a moment's thought.





## Employ conversion tactics to grow your brand

Growth in business is about seizing customer possibilities. When new contacts engage with your brand, following up can open up an array of lucrative revenue opportunities.

Start with the welcome program, the bread and butter of every marketing team, introducing new sign-ups to your exciting brand or business. Then once you've captured more contact preferences for other data-driven marketing programs, you can start to tailor the experience because you'll know customer much better. Whenever they quit their browser or ditch their online items, be sure to follow up with a friendly, relevant message that reminds (cart), reiterates (brand) and returns (CTA).

Never be afraid to try something new. You can be nuanced in your growth campaigns. What works for one brand might not work for you, so test, test, test! Measuring your performance will help you improve and make every customer experience unique – the most powerful ingredient for growth.

## Learn more about marketing automation

Dotdigital's data-first marketing automation capabilities make customer engagement easy. From auto-enrolment of new contact, to behavioral triggered programs, you have the power to drive conversions at your fingertips. Discover how you can tap into the power of your data with a quick demo.

[Watch the demo](#)

