

# Restaurant Email Marketing *Inspiration Guide*



When it comes to the restaurant industry, we all know that food is the main attraction. But as our culture continues to lean into social media and digital sharing, it's become clear that the lure of a restaurant isn't always just the food — *it's the experience.*

From browsing online reviews when making a reservation to taking a picture of the dining room before ordering appetizers, restaurants are now on display more than ever, consequently making digital marketing even more important than it was before.

While almost every industry is seeing a huge shift in their marketing tactics and results, the restaurant industry faces many unique challenges and opportunities. Unfortunately, since restaurant or franchise owners don't always have a large marketing team to research and execute upcoming efforts, businesses may miss out on learning best practices for their marketing strategies

After talking to many of our friends and customers in the restaurant industry, we realized that time is the most valuable form of currency—from greeting guests at the door to following recipes on repeat to making sure a table's order arrives promptly, you don't have many seconds to spare.

And at the end of the day when you're finished sweeping the floors and organizing receipts, the last thing you want to do is scour the internet for marketing inspiration and think about what you could be doing better. That's why we decided to round up some of our favorite restaurant email examples and put them all in one place. After all, we're on your team.



# What's *unique* about restaurant marketing?

In the age of social media and digital marketing, restaurants remain the brick-and-mortar kings because, well, we can't virtually eat (yet?). Because food is a basic human need, the demand for restaurants is always high, but it's the type of restaurant that fluctuates in popularity. That's why it's incredibly important for restaurant owners and marketers to keep their ears to the ground and continually make tweaks to remain relevant.

# Why email marketing?

In a world where technology changes by the day and there's always a new social platform to join, it can be easy to believe email marketing is a thing of the past. But not so fast—the statistics say otherwise. In the last year, a whopping 50% of consumers have made a purchase because of an email they received. That's more than social media ads (48%) and posts (43%)!

*Have you made a purchase from any of the following in the last 12 months?<sup>1</sup>*

**Email (50%)**

**Social media advertisement (48%)**

**Social media post (43%)**

**SMS/MMS message (24%)**

**Banner advertisement (21%)**

And with real-time data integrations and advanced segmentation capabilities, email remains a crucial channel for delivering the right message to the right customer at the right time.

<sup>1</sup> Marigold's 2024 Global Consumer Trends Index  
<https://go.meetmarigold.com/2024-global-consumer-trends-index-plus-mg>

# Defining your restaurant's email marketing strategy

First things first: Although we know you're probably excited to send your first email or improve your existing messages, you need to think long-term about a few things:

**Your brand identity:** Regardless of if you're a new business with one location or a franchise with multiple restaurants, your brand identity is important. This will affect how people perceive and remember your business, how you talk to your customers, and why they want to come back for more.

Consider these questions when brainstorming:

- How do I want customers to feel when they interact with my brand?
- How can I extend the restaurant experience to my digital communications?
- What do people already know about my brand, and how can I change or maximize those thoughts?

Next up, you need to consider your target audience. While it would be easy to say "anyone and everyone willing to come to my restaurant," you need to get a little bit more specific. Is there a specific demographic you're catering to? What pain points or motivations does your restaurant address?

Determine your target audience by considering these questions:

- Who is most likely to enjoy my restaurant?
- What about my restaurant is important to them?
- What would motivate them to be a regular customer?

After you get a good picture of your brand identity and target audience, think about where the two intersect. How can you meet your target customer where they are to meet their needs?

Maybe you own a new smoothie shop in town that focuses on organic ingredients. Your target customer may hang out at the gym or in an organic grocery store, so that's where you should focus your messaging. While emails don't place you in a physical location, you can think about the best time to send them, as in when your target customer would be most likely to need a smoothie. Is it at breakfast time or after an afternoon run?

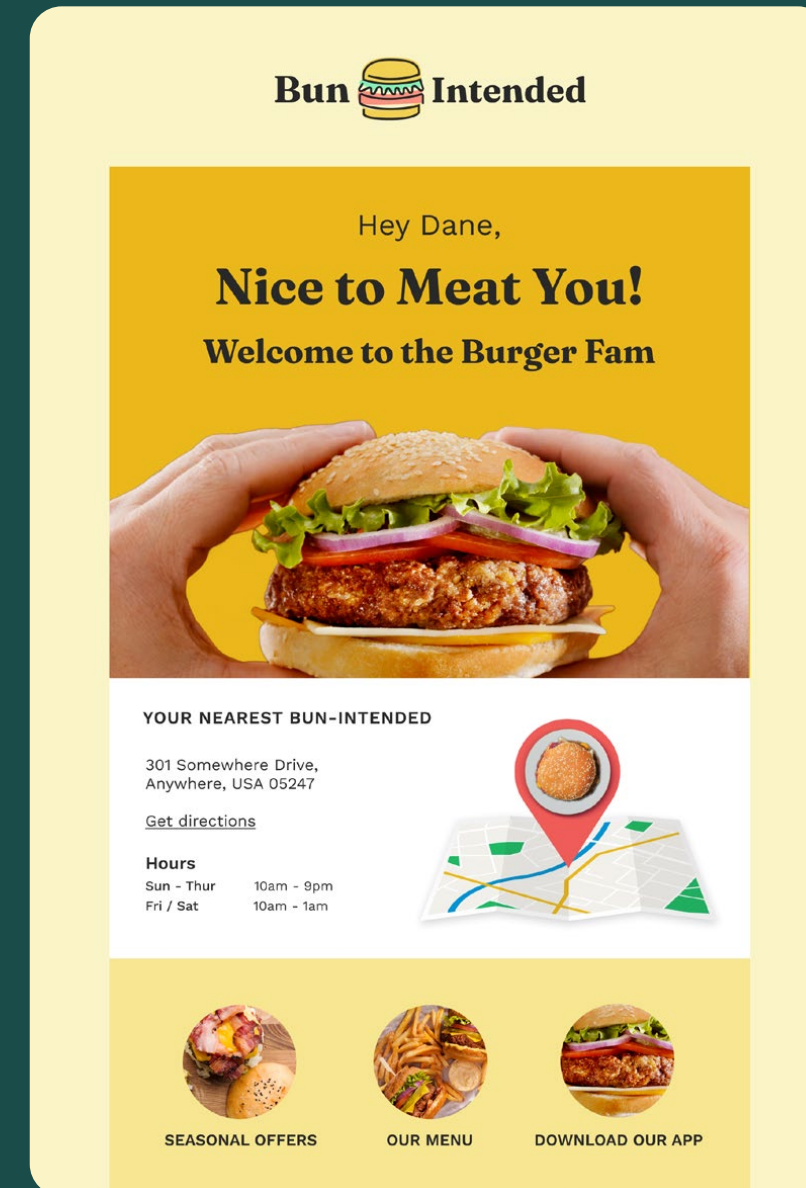


Once you know who your customer is, the need your restaurant fulfills in the market, and how to make the two intersect, you're ready to start thinking about specific emails you want to send. Brainstorm specific times or occasions you want to show up in your customers' inboxes. For example, you could send:

- A welcome email
- A thank-you email after an online order is placed
- A birthday email with a discount code
- A survey to learn more about a customer
- A gamified email to spice up your marketing
- A holiday card via email
- An email to announce a new menu item
- An email to announce a special promotion
- A "We miss you!" email with a coupon code

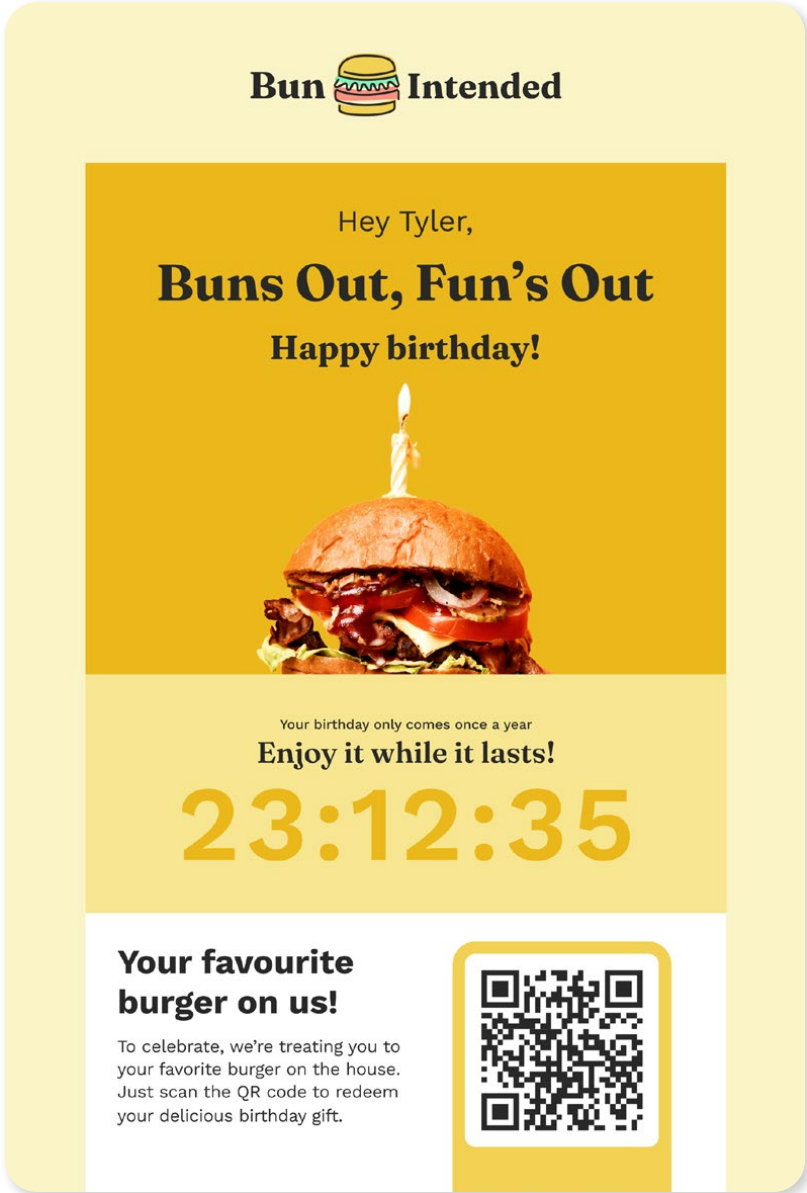
While your ideas start to flow, we've created some email examples for inspiration. *Let's go!*

## Start the relationship off right with a welcome email.



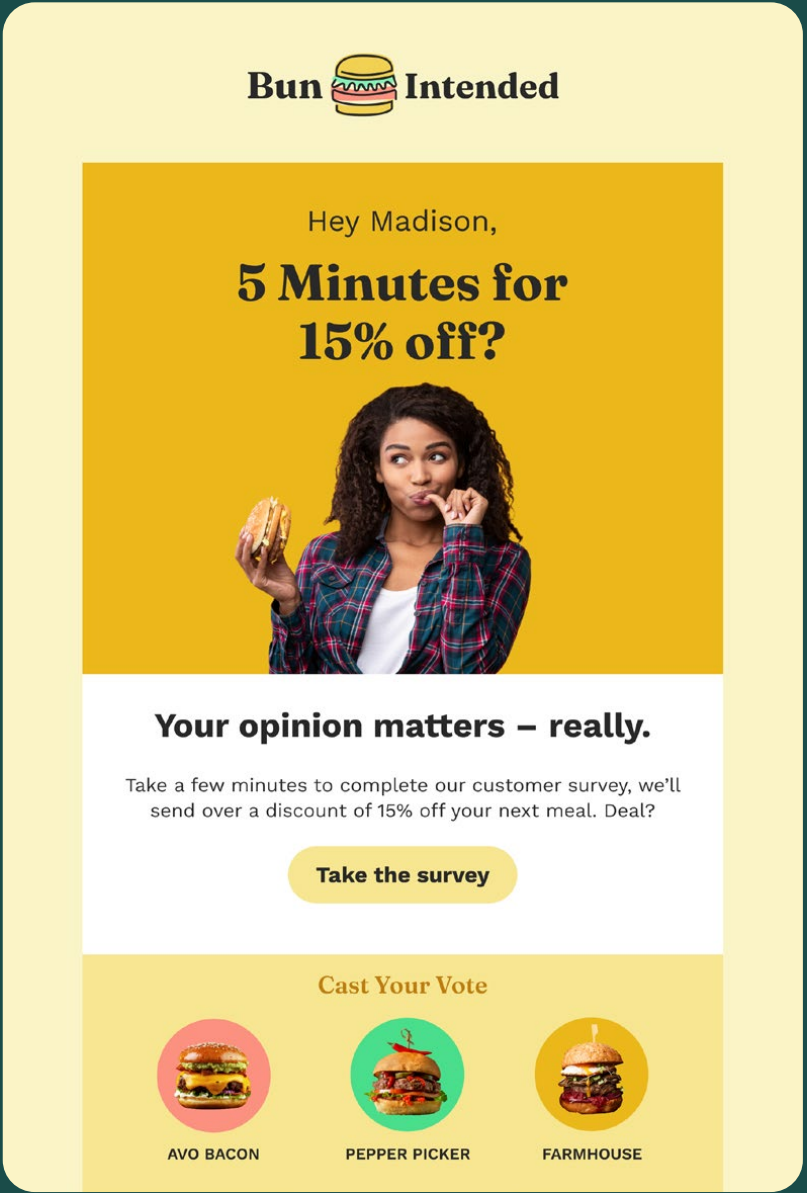
**Why we love it:** A great first impression is oh-so important. This email thanks the customer for signing up for Bun-Intended's rewards program, and includes its nearest location for convenience. It also features clickable menu options, presenting an opportunity for additional engagement.

Make your diners feel special.



**Why we love it:** Customers love special treatment, and birthday offers are a great way to deliver that treatment at scale. Throw in a live countdown timer for an extra sense of urgency, and you've got the winning recipe for encouraging the customer's next visit.

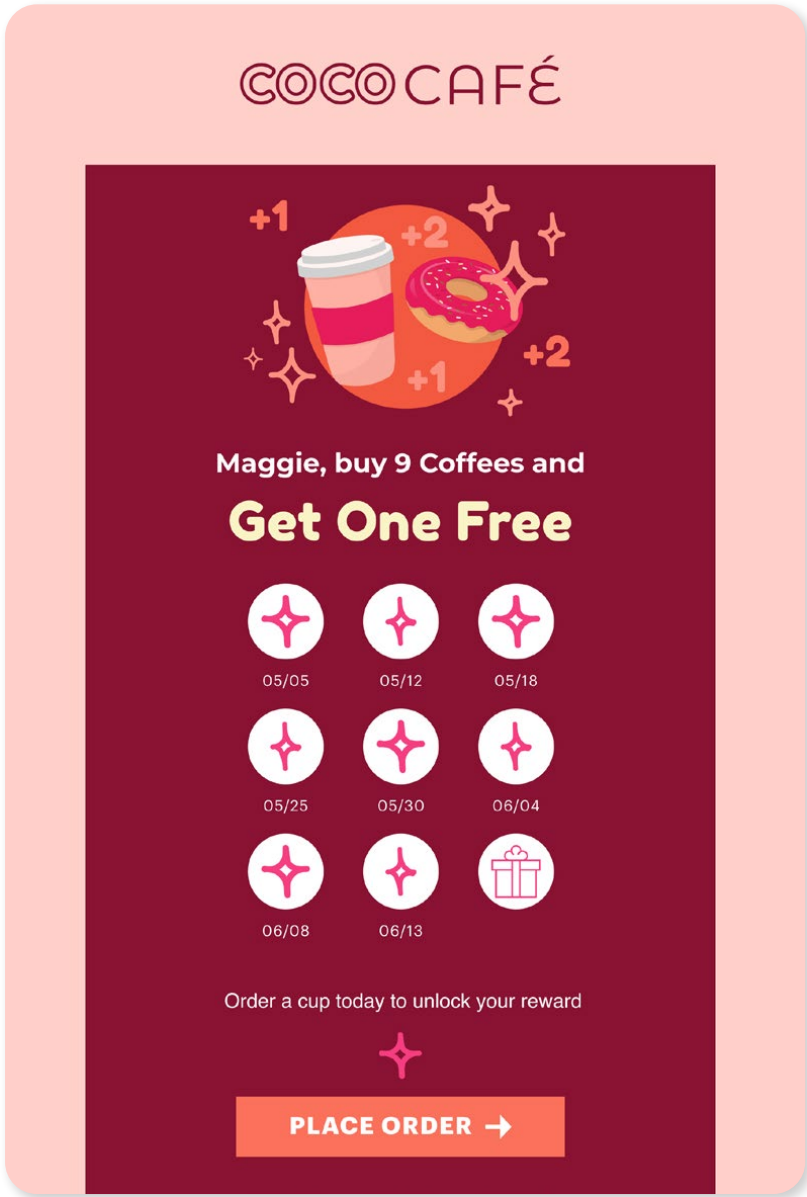
Incentivize data sharing to deliver better personalization.



**Why we love it:** To curate personalized messages, you need customer data. Surveys, quizzes, and polls are all great ways to get it. This example makes the value exchange very simple: the customer will take a short survey, and they'll get a 15% discount in return.

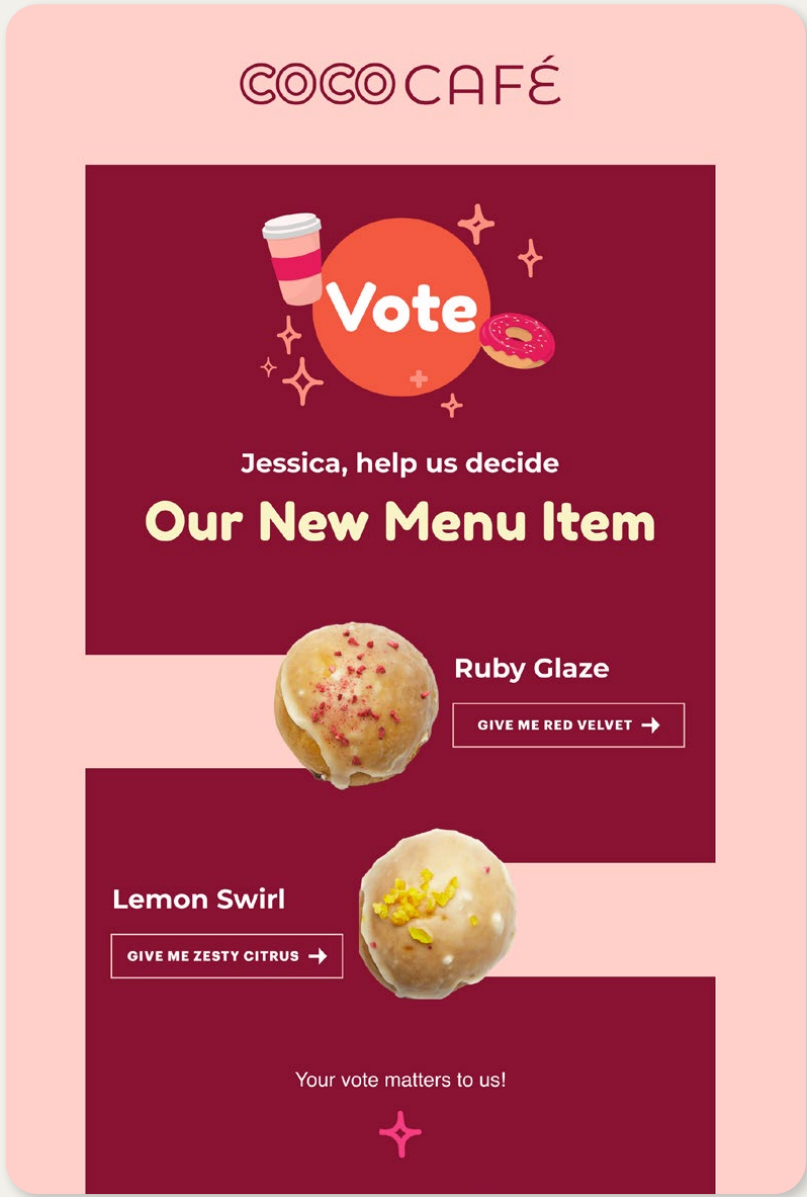


Sprinkle in some fun with gamification.



**Why we love it:** This punch card-style email recognizes the customer’s existing business, and illustrates just how close they are to reaching their next reward. It’s a great tactic for showing appreciation and driving purchase frequency simultaneously.

Engage your customers beyond the transactional.



**Why we love it:** Efforts to build a brand community will seem much more genuine if you diversify your marketing beyond transactional opportunities. This email is simple, fun, and doesn’t require a financial incentive to generate engagement. It also gives the recipient an opportunity to participate in something – a common denominator among brands with robust communities.

Use real-time data to your advantage.



**It's cooling down in Atlanta!**



Grab a warm hug of Butternut Delight Soup at the Piedmont Park location today for half price!

\*\*At downtown Atlanta locations only


**ORDER NOW**

**Why we love it:** Using localized weather data is an easy way to deliver personalization that feels real. This email takes the cold weather of the recipient's location, and leverages it create a relevant, witty offer that's far more engaging than a generic promotion.

Give customers a gentle nudge.



**Hey Noelle, your order isn't quite complete**



Let's make it easy for you to finish and enjoy your meal!

**COMPLETE ORDER NOW**

**Why we love it:** Potential customers abandon orders. It happens. To win them back, you need to make the process of finishing the order as simple as possible. This email serves as a reminder for the recipient, and allows them to return to their existing order page with a single click.



# Wrap Up

At Marigold, we've talked to thousands of restaurants and franchises to understand their unique concerns and partner with them to create solutions.

*Here are some of the pain points we've worked hard to address:*

**Your problem:** “We need a way to keep brand consistency across locations. For example, our restaurant in New York needs to send consistent branding with our restaurant in Los Angeles.”

**Our solution:** Done and done. With Marigold, you can easily share templates, set and lock brand colors, fonts, and more, making it easier to keep brand consistency across all communications being sent. Your locations will be empowered to send and grow, and you'll never find an old logo in your emails again.

**Your problem:** “We want to see all of the communications going out in a given day, week, or month.”

**Our solution:** Here's visibility into your entire email program. See what's happening across all subaccounts and drill into individual sends with ease. The at-a-glance view of recent activity and results helps you identify which teams are nailing it (and which ones could use a little help).

**Your problem:** “I'm a marketing manager who wants to review and approve an email before it goes out.”

**Our solution:** We hear you! With Marigold, you can approve every send, from any location or team member. Before each email is sent, it's delivered directly to the approvals dashboard so you can quickly review the content, comment to suggest changes, and quickly approve or deny the mailing.

**Your problem:** “I wish an expert could help with my email strategy.”

**Our solution:** Meet our Global Strategy and Services teams. They can provide strategic advice, compelling content, and design custom email templates for your brand. Plus, our deliverability experts will ensure you're maximizing the number of emails that land in the inbox..

**Your problem:** “I feel like this is too good to be true.”

**Our solution:** Nope, it's just email marketing that works for you. Pull up a chair – **let's talk.**

# Where *relationships* take root.

Marigold's approach to Relationship Marketing stands alone in a world of one-size-fits-all marketing technology companies. Our solutions are designed for your specific size, industry, and maturity, giving you the technology and expertise you need to grow the relationships that grow your business, from customer acquisition to engagement to loyalty. And, with a team of strategists that provide insights into what's working, what's not, and what's changing in your industry, you're able to maximize ROI every step of the way.

Great marketing isn't just about conversion, but true connection. Learn why 40,000 businesses around the world trust Marigold to be the firm foundation they need to help relationships take root.

Find out more at [MeetMarigold.com](https://www.meetmarigold.com)

