

Send Time Optimization

Winning the time-of-day game

EFFECTIVE EMAIL MARKETING

As the world gets more advanced, so do the ways that companies market to people. There is a lot of thought put into every aspect of marketing, and email is no exception.

The battle for attention in people's inboxes has grown fiercer in recent years. It's no longer enough to have a catchy subject line. Emails today are filtered and quickly buried. In this challenging environment, it helps to be able to predict when the customer is most likely to check their email.

Send time optimization (STO) can help. By understanding people's email habits, marketing campaigns can deliver on the promise of "right healthcare professional, right time, right message."

SEND TIME OPTIMIZATION (STO)

Healthcare marketers often try to determine what is the best time of day and best day of week, to send an email to healthcare professionals (HCP). While there are some trends that suggest there are better days and times to send emails, these trends can vary widely by segment and individual.

STO leverages past engagement data to give marketers an advantage over their competition. In the past, sending emails at a specific time for one person resulted in everyone getting the email on the same day and at the same local time. If an email were to land in an inbox at 9:00 a.m., it would be sent based on people's time zones.

User behavior and technology have changed the way HCPs engage with email. Today, HCPs have access to their emails 24/7 via their smartphone and other devices. Predicting their habits in aggregate loses sight of their unique behaviors and habits, which can vary across individuals. In all aspects of marketing, it is increasingly important to personalize engagements.

STO COMPARED TO STANDARD EMAIL

From January to November 2021, STO emails had **2x the open rate** versus standard emails.

YTD OPEN RATE AVERAGE

STO: 22.82%

Standard Email: 11.26%

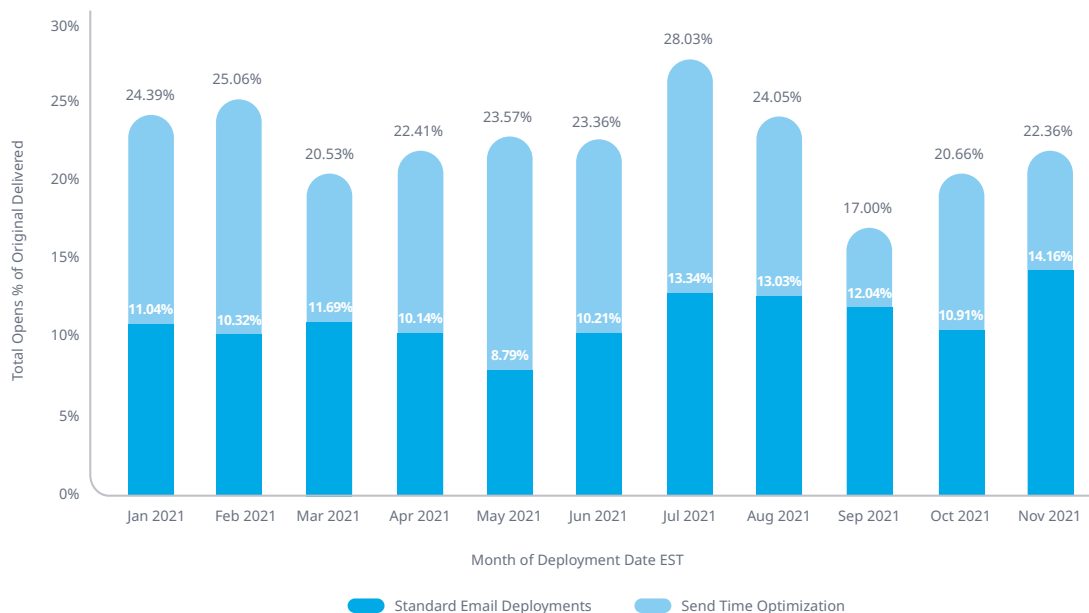
HOW STO WORKS

STO is an algorithm and add-on feature that allows marketers to send emails at the most optimal day and time. The same email is sent to different recipients at different times based on when they are most likely to read the message. STO determines the best day and time to send an email based on a person's engagement data.

Because each person's schedule is different, STO uses the individual's unique engagement history to predict when they are most likely to interact with an email on a specific day of the week. If there is not enough data on an individual to enact STO, then emails can be sent at a pre-set time and day, as is typical with standard email deployments.

At IQVIA, we use data to make intelligent decisions about when to send emails and ensure open rate optimization. STO is so powerful that it can even tell which day an individual is most likely to open an email, and that information allows marketers to target not only the hour, but the day of the week when engagement is most likely to occur.

Open Rates: STO versus Standard Email



Incorporating STO allows marketers to forget about time zones and work schedules, and even the day of the week in some circumstances. If a customer's STO time is at 10:00 a.m., it is because that is when they most frequently open emails. Marketers no longer have to think about where a target customer lives or works, and no longer have to map out specific days and times of week. They can just focus on the opportunity to reach HCPs with messages they will read.

ENHANCING EMAIL CAMPAIGNS

STO can be used to enhance the overall effectiveness of email marketing campaigns by identifying the day and time to reach an HCP with a message that will actually be read and actioned.

Setting up a unique send for each day of the week would be a lot of work, but STO makes it easy by allowing emails to go out on the best day of the week and at the best time for each individual HCP after building just one program.

ONE STEP FURTHER: STRATEGIC SEND TIME OPTIMIZATION

Emails can still be setup based on a person's predictive behavior even if there is no specific data to rely on. Using

a process called strategic send time optimization (SSTO), marketers are able to forecast the best day and time to send an email to a particular person.

SSTO enables marketers to fill in the blanks for people who have not engaged with a particular HCP email in the past. If someone typically opens all their email at 7 a.m. on Monday and Tuesday, SSTO can predict that the individual is also likely to open their email at 7 a.m. on Wednesday, for example, making it the ideal time to send an initial email to an HCP target.

Metrics indicate that SSTO improves open rates, click rates, and read rates for targeted email campaigns. This predictive modelling also feeds into STO. Once a person engages with a particular HCP email, it becomes their new STO day and time.

GET STARTED WITH STO

With more than 15 million emails sent each month, IQVIA has a lot of data to drive its STO and SSTO metrics for the benefit of customers, enabling them to take advantage of years of learned behavior. To learn more or get started with STO and SSTO, [reach out to us today](#).