

The background of the page is a grayscale photograph of a business meeting. Several people are seated around a table, looking at documents and a laptop. One document is titled 'MARKET ANALYSIS'. The image is partially obscured by blue geometric shapes at the top and bottom.

Email Signature Marketing



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How Email Signature Marketing Can Get You 12,500 More Leads

Imagine you send, on average, 50 emails a day. Excluding vacations and weekends, that's around 12,500 emails a year. That's 12,500 brand impressions. That's 12,500 instances when you can cultivate brand ambassadors, gain social media followers, drive traffic to your website, and drive your clients and prospects with high-value calls to action. Now multiply all this by the number of employees in your company.



It's clear that email signature marketing is a strong yet inexpensive content marketing opportunity that is too often overlooked. In this thought leadership paper, we hope to compel you not to continue to waste this powerful marketing opportunity by taking advantage of the marketing campaign capability that waits for you at the tail of each email.

Throughout this paper, you will learn the psychological and advertising influence of the email signature, the branding possibilities, the marketing campaign opportunities, and how to automate and track it all affordably with an email signature marketing tool. By the end, we hope that you will see how email signatures should be a revered marketing channel.

Why Email Signature Marketing is More Powerful than Social Media Marketing and Google Ads

There's no doubt, social media is a whole lot sexier than email, but the past, present and future of successful marketing is in your inbox. Rarely will social media or Google Ads ever create and nurture qualified leads to even a fraction of the success of email signature marketing.

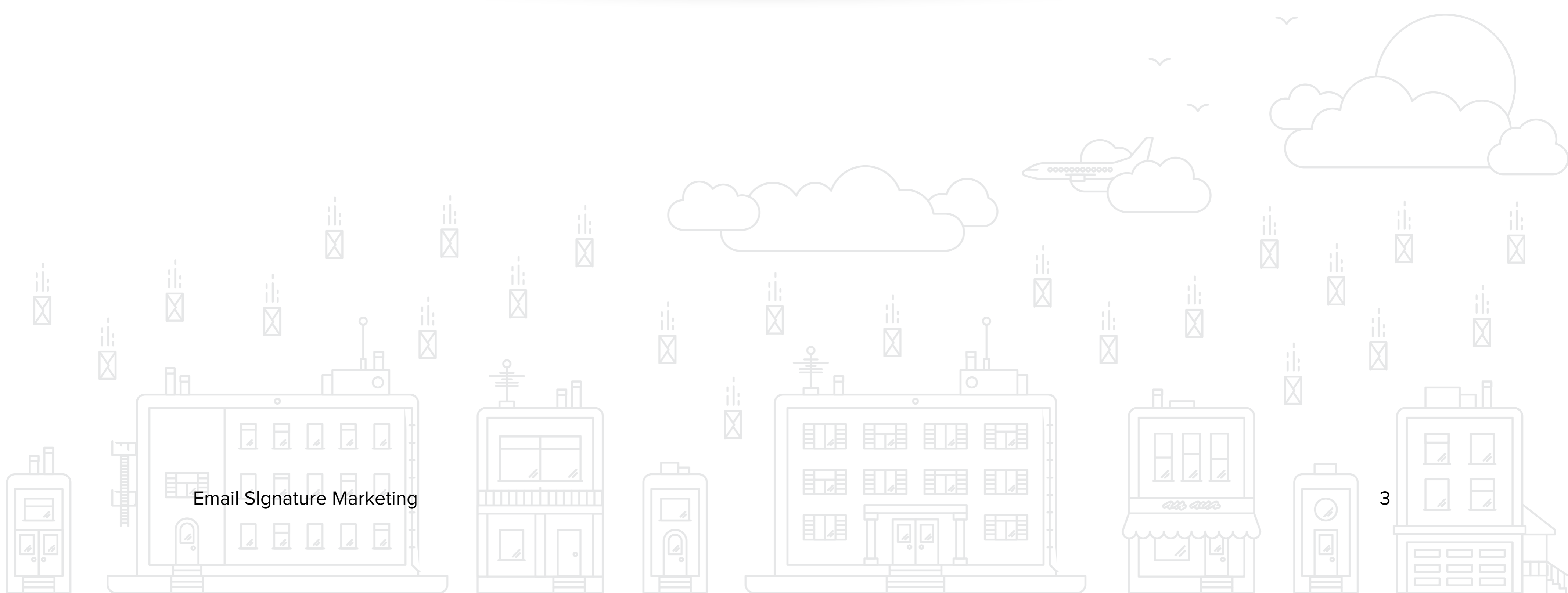
“If u have to choose between adding a subscriber to your email list or a new Facebook fan, go for email every time,” Nate Elliott, analyst at Forrester market research, told Fast Company. “Plus your emails get delivered more than 90 percent of the time, while your Facebook posts get delivered two percent of the time—and no one's looking over your shoulder telling you what you can and can't say in your emails.”

It makes sense. Social media, like banner ads, search engine marketing and search engine optimization, to name a few, are all about struggling to be heard in the cacophony, trying to catch rapidly waning attention spans. When someone is reading an email you or any of your employees have sent, he or she is already engaged, ready for the next step or call to action down the sales funnel. Social media offer impressions to an often unknown and unqualified audience or people who have chosen to follow or like you for any number of reasons. Google Ads and paid social media campaigns can target a little better, but are usually based on geographical parameters. It's safe to assume that your employees are already in one-on-one conversations with a much more targeted audience than you'll find with fans on a social network or the often costly and imprecise Google Ads.

In September 2014, Business Insider echoed Forrester with its findings that 44 percent of consumers preferred receiving “personalized offers/coupons” via email than any other means. Offline advertising strategies of print mail and in-store offers fell next at 28 percent and 13 percent, respectively. A mere three percent of all polled said that they prefer to receive offers and deals via social media.

It’s clear that people are flocking to social media for a lot of things, but still rely on email to aid their shopping.

Plus, your email marketing signature can aid your social media by building a following with links and icons for professional networks like Twitter and LinkedIn for B2B and Facebook and even Pinterest or Instagram for B2C. Socials won’t return the favor by collecting emails and other contact info for you.



Email Signature Marketing Makes for a Great Content Marketing Asset

Your company spends a lot of time and money creating compelling content, which certainly helps your SEO and attracts qualified traffic, but it can be used for a lot more. You, of course, want to take advantage of this by reuse-repurpose-recycling this content in many ways including newsletters that offer added value to your clients and prospective clients. But all this content is a waste without a call to action. If you don't pair a CTA with your content, you're simply working for free. This is especially true when sharing this content via email.

BUT you don't want to seem too "marketing-y." People are less likely to listen to what you have to say and they are less likely to move down the sales funnel--or even receive the email past spambots--if you go all salesy with bright colors flashing BUY NOW! and other 1950s used car salesman jargon. The email signature is a perfect place to make a persuasive sale passively. It's the always-approved location to promote and sell your company.

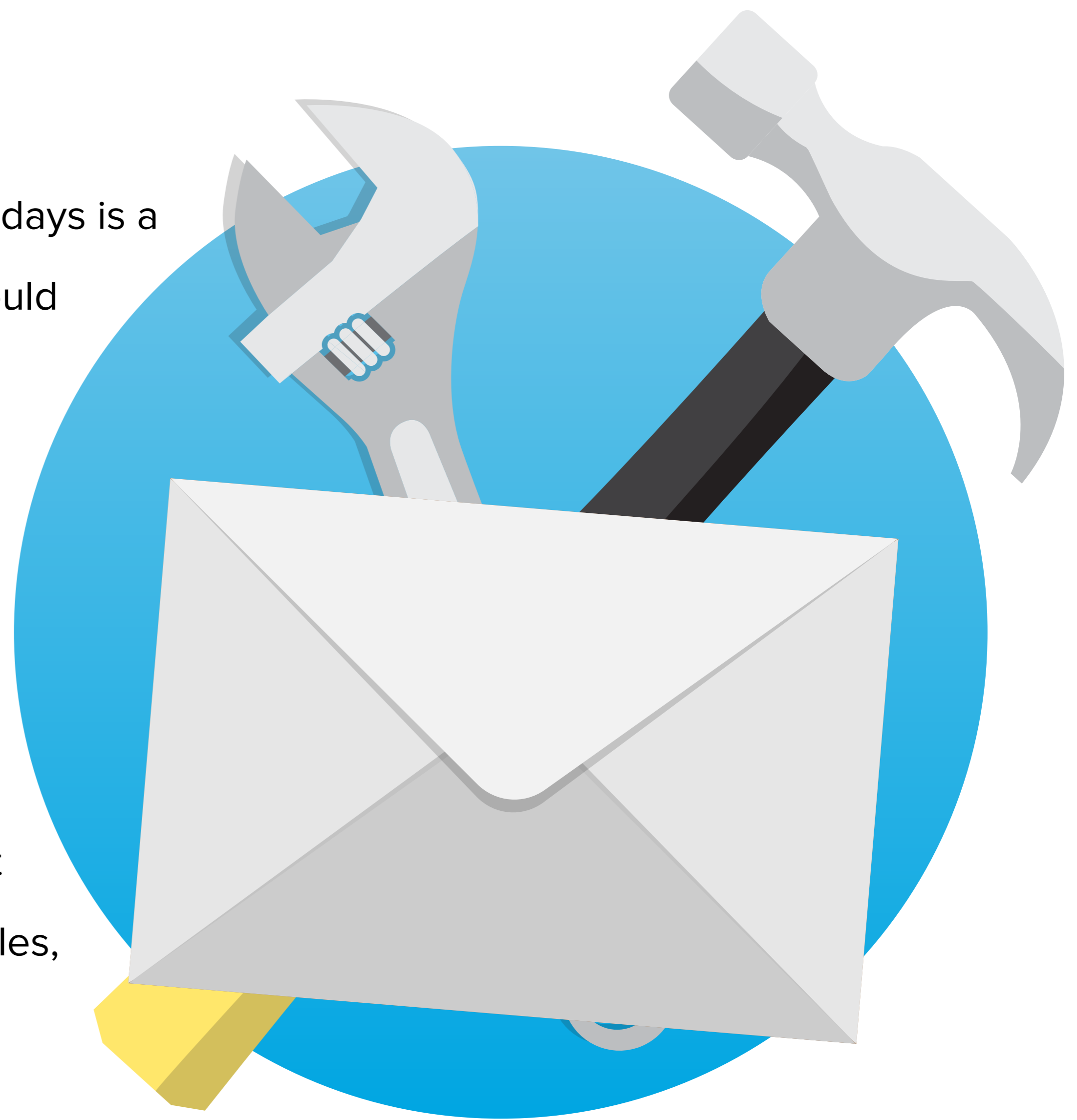
Email signatures can promote, among limitless other things, eBooks, webinars, podcasts and other high-level content that you shouldn't just be giving away for free. Compel that recipient to give you more inside information by leading them to opt-in landing pages. This drives qualified traffic to your website, offers your sales, customer success and market research teams more customer insight, and builds to your credibility in the mind of your prospect.

Plus, your content is something you should be proud of. Why wouldn't you want to make sure your company's brand, logo and message are associated with it?

And It Makes for a Fantastic Sales Tool

Getting people to open your email nowadays is a feat in itself. When that happens, you would be remiss not to try to guide that captive audience further down the sales funnel or get them to at least take a further action, driving them to your website or event.

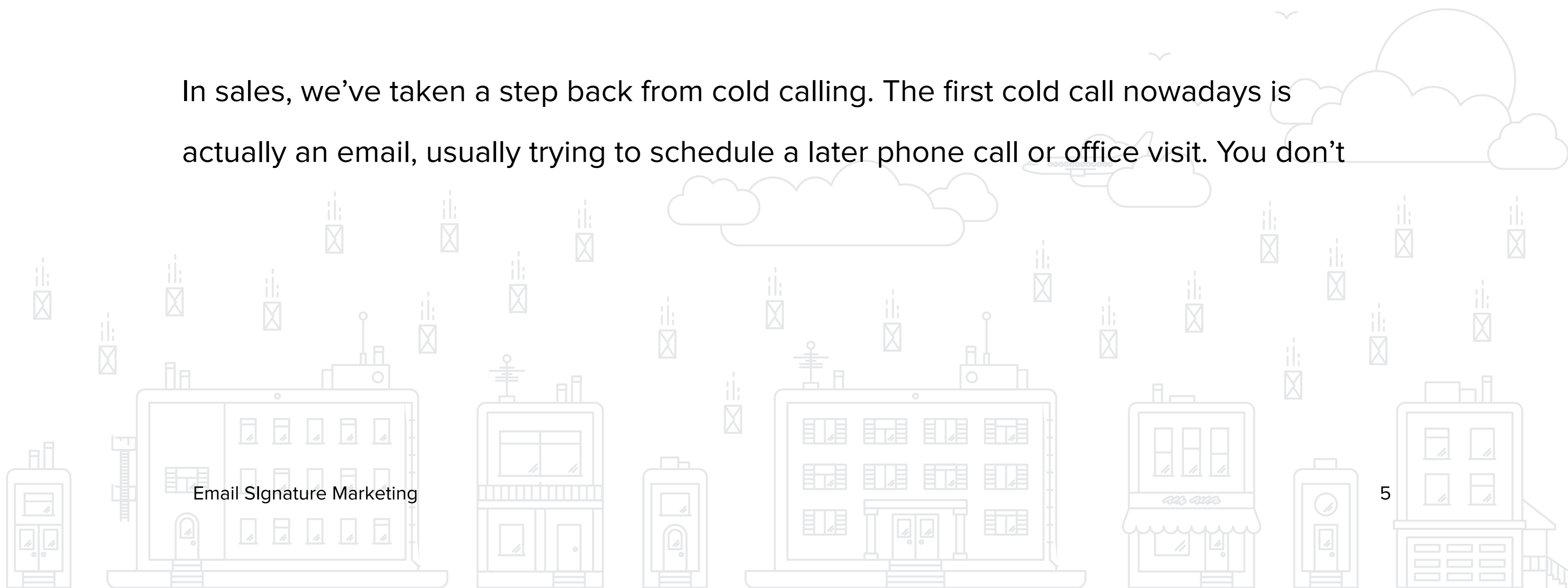
There is no doubt that email comes in high volume at a low price. This makes it an impressive opportunity for growth, sales, and upsell.



First and foremost, make sure you sell your product or service in your email signature with a link to make a purchase or to content that helps guide the prospect down the sales funnel.

You can also promote deals, special trial offers and seasonal sales across your staff's email signatures or in targeted departments. The sales department should work with marketing to communicate if there's a difficult month and reps that are behind in their goals, to strategize ways to push marketing campaigns via email signature that help meet company-wide goals.

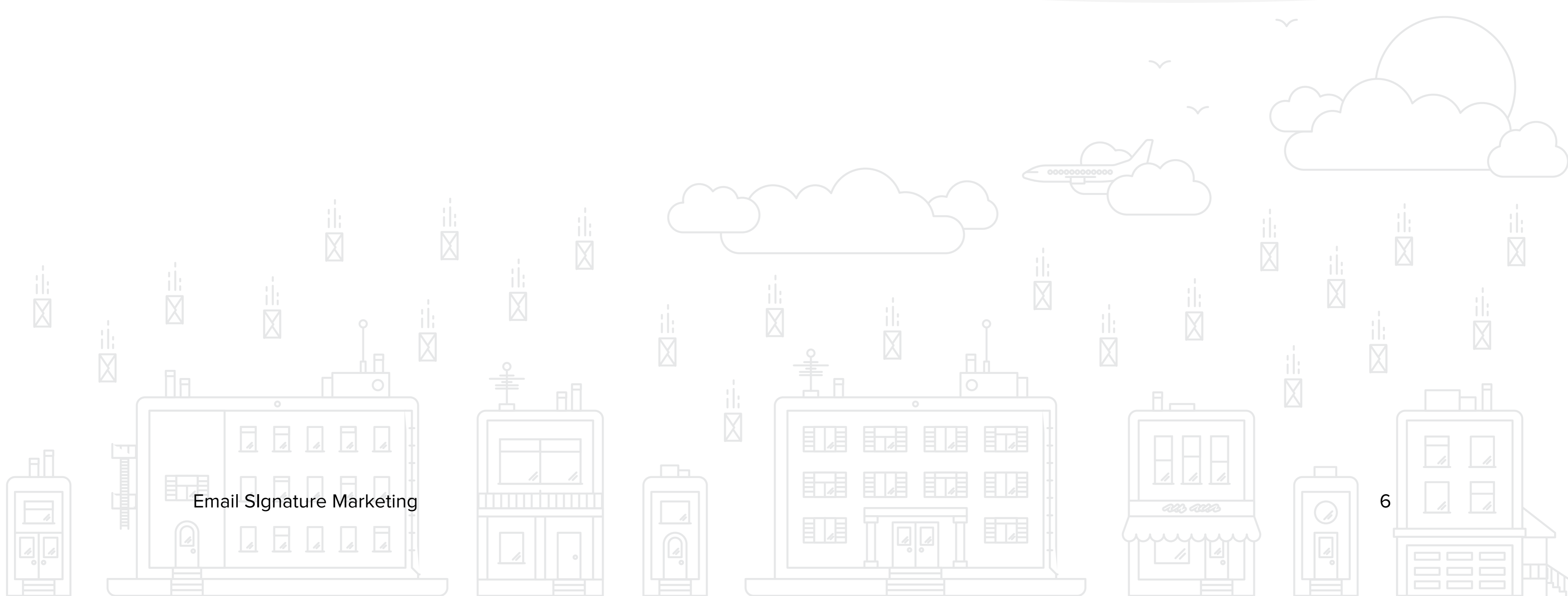
In sales, we've taken a step back from cold calling. The first cold call nowadays is actually an email, usually trying to schedule a later phone call or office visit. You don't



want that first contact to bombard that prospect with marketing bells and whistles. You want to make your case in as few lines as possible. The email signature gives you an extra spot to give a passive bump or even to hide an Easter Egg, like, “Use this coupon for an extra 10% off!”

Email is the most common way we communicate, meaning it’s the number-one way we nurture client relationships. You want all positive contact between an employee and a client or potential client to be associated with your brand and a way to move the sale forward.

In fact, with Xink email signature app, you can even customize and automate different emails for Replies and Forwards, so, as you move deeper into a conversation with a client, you can use different content or deals to move them further along the sales pipeline. Blend this with scheduling regular email signature updates and the marketing department has helped to automate the control of the sales



This is Your Brain on Email Signatures

Our brains love images. When reading a magazine, we're searching for the photos first. Before even registering the words on the screen, we get an imprint of any images throughout the email. Since most emails still contain simply text, that means that your logo and any email signature marketing campaign you are running become the first impression your company leaves on any reader.

And our brains process images 60,000 times faster than text, making that email signature imagery most likely to be each email's last impression. Include a written message in your picture—like a coupon with a run image and deal—and you've left a stamp on the brain.

Whether dealing with four, forty or four hundred emails a day, we tend to skim a bit. From the Mona Lisa to chain letters, we still follow the same comprehension and retention pattern: following Di Vinci's Reverse S, which has us scanning the screen, curling down the page Left > Right > Diagonal Down to Left Bottom Corner, ending at the Right Bottom Corner. Open a recent professional email you've received. Where do your eyes land? The email signature is the tail of that Reverse S.

Consciously or subconsciously, there's no doubt that a well-branded email signature is the first and last thing our memory registers in any email.

Add a face to that email signature and you not only literally put a face with the name, but you begin to build trust. Also, the part of the brain that processes images is right next to the one that processes emotions, meaning that adding that smiling colleague's headshot creates a human bond with your brand. This is particularly successful with insurance, real estate and other sales folks who rely on the trust of a personal brand to close a deal.

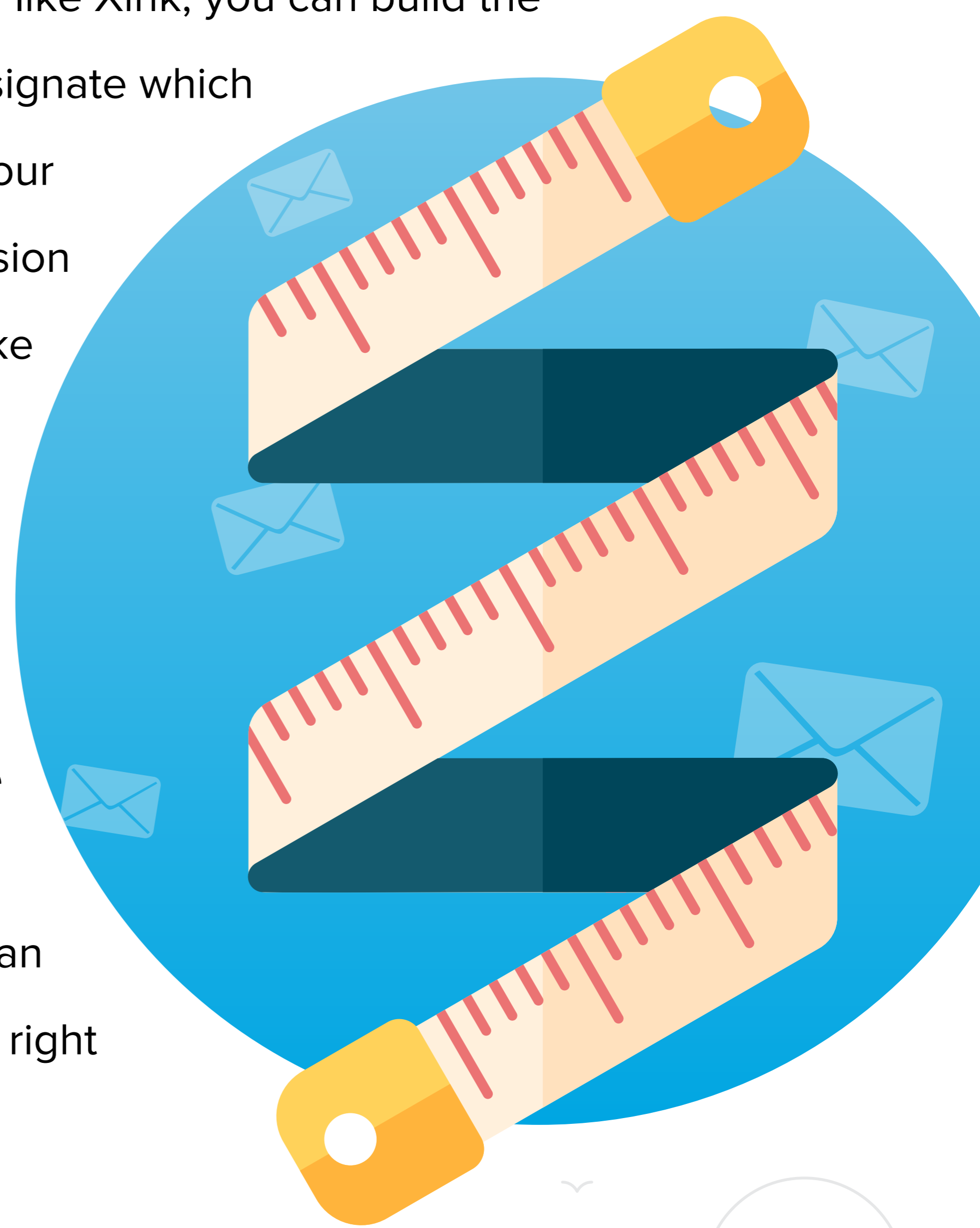
Like All Good Things in Marketing, You Can Measure It

You work hard to work and rework every marketing channel available to you, but you may be forgetting the massive possibilities of the email signature channel.

Email signature marketing, as with all proper marketing, is only valuable if you can track its success or failure, comparing it with different marketing campaigns, comparing one email signature against another. With your company sending thousands of emails daily, you have another avenue for advertising campaigns.

In a matter of minutes using an email signature tool like Xink, you can build the content of your targeted marketing campaigns, designate which employees' emails end with what, and then track your campaigns by click-through rates and even conversion rates, paired up with your website analytics tools like Google Analytics or Omniture. You can also use Xink's native analytics to help identify potential new sources of traffic and conversions.

You can even A/B test two different email signature versions of the same campaign, in order to determine which converts the best. Anything you can test and track on a webpage, can be done with the right



Email Signature Management Creates Consistent Brand Impressions

Marketing blogger Jay Hathaway calls email signatures the bumper stickers of the Internet. “From the overused quotations to the sanctimonious ‘consider the environment before you print this email’ messages, email signatures are the bane of modern communication,” he said. While here at Xink, we consider email signatures an entry into a new avenue of marketing, we also realize the risk of management or marketing not having control over employees’ famous last words.

Email marketing is about balancing professionalism without being too in-their-face with intense marketing and branding. Email signature marketing is a great opportunity to reach your clients on a less invasive, almost surreptitious level.

Some of us may think what you say matters—and of course it does. But your potential client is judging your book by its cover before buying. Not having an email signature at all looks downright rude and thoughtless. If your branding is all over the place, with different team members using different fonts, variations of the logo, typos/slang, broken links and the like, you come off as sloppy and undesirable and makes your company look like it was slapped together rather than the tight-knit team it really is. Using email signature management to build brand consistency guarantees that each member of your growing team puts the best foot--and footer!--forward.



Email Signature Marketing is Perfect for the Multi-Office and Remote Team

As your business expands to multiple offices and multiple countries, with teams working on different projects with different schedules, corporate branding consistency and messaging can fall through the cracks.

Add to this the BYOD—Bring Your Own Device—culture, and you have a lot of people sending literally millions of emails that don't represent a unified, professional company, that tell more about which device your employees are using—ie; “Set from my super cool iPad” or “Please excuse typos on mobile”—instead of what they do and what your business represents. No one cares where you're replying to their email from--they just want to get replied to in a fast and efficient manner.

By using an email signature marketing tool, you can control the branding, no matter what device it is created or appears on. Xink supports your email signature control on both Office 365 and Google Business Apps, on your web browsers and with the official Gmail and Outlook Web Apps.

Using an email signature app like Xink is also important for many businesses that are branching out or merging. Imagine a company like Kraft, which owns about a hundred brands from Boca Burger to Oscar Mayer. Kraft probably doesn't have a cross-promotion opportunity in sending the same message to vegetarians and ardent carnivores, but it does want to maintain a unified brand image. Kraft's marketing execs could create lists from each product line, maintaining control over the unilateral brand image, font, messaging and style, while tweaking it depending on each sub-business's audience and logo.

Channel the Team or Department that is Doing the Talking...

The messages the CEO and board members are sending shouldn't be the same as the accounting and administrative departments. Both certainly communicate with outside customers and vendors, but their email signature messages should reflect each group's jobs and goals. The CEO may be well served to include links to the company's latest news and accomplishments, while finance might save time by including links to Accounts Receivable or Accounts Payable forms.



Similarly, Human Resources should end emails with links to job openings and perhaps a sentence that drives home the company's culture and purpose.

One of Xink's clients, Autodesk help desk software has seen a huge return on investment by adding their tech support knowledge base to the bottom of sales reps' and the customer success team's emails. Each month, Xink pays for itself when just one email drives just one customer to their self-help Knowledge Network before a rep directly addresses the issue.

Since Xink allows you to hyper-target audiences, you and your marketing team should be considering how the email signature can be customized and automated to support the goals of each department.

...And Who They Are Talking To!

When you are talking about your business to a potential investor, a prospective client or a family member, you use different vocabulary and highlight different benefits, right? It should be the same with your email signature. We just spoke about how you can tailor email marketing to team member and department, but it's just as important to tailor it to different audiences' needs.

All of us Mac users have had to call AppleCare at some point. Apple would be genius to use a marketing automation tool like Xink so they can upsell accessories to customers in the service follow-up survey, with email signature ads or coupons changing depending on an iPad, iPhone or iMac user audience. They are providing a service and then guaranteeing good service in the future; the resolution of a tech problem is a perfect time for an upsell via email signature automation.

You can also localize your email signature to reflect different languages in different countries served. In reverse, if you are serving only local markets, make sure that your email signature includes an address, driving home that the sender is local too. If you are a European company or are serving EU companies, make sure to include the mandatory VAT and registered company details.

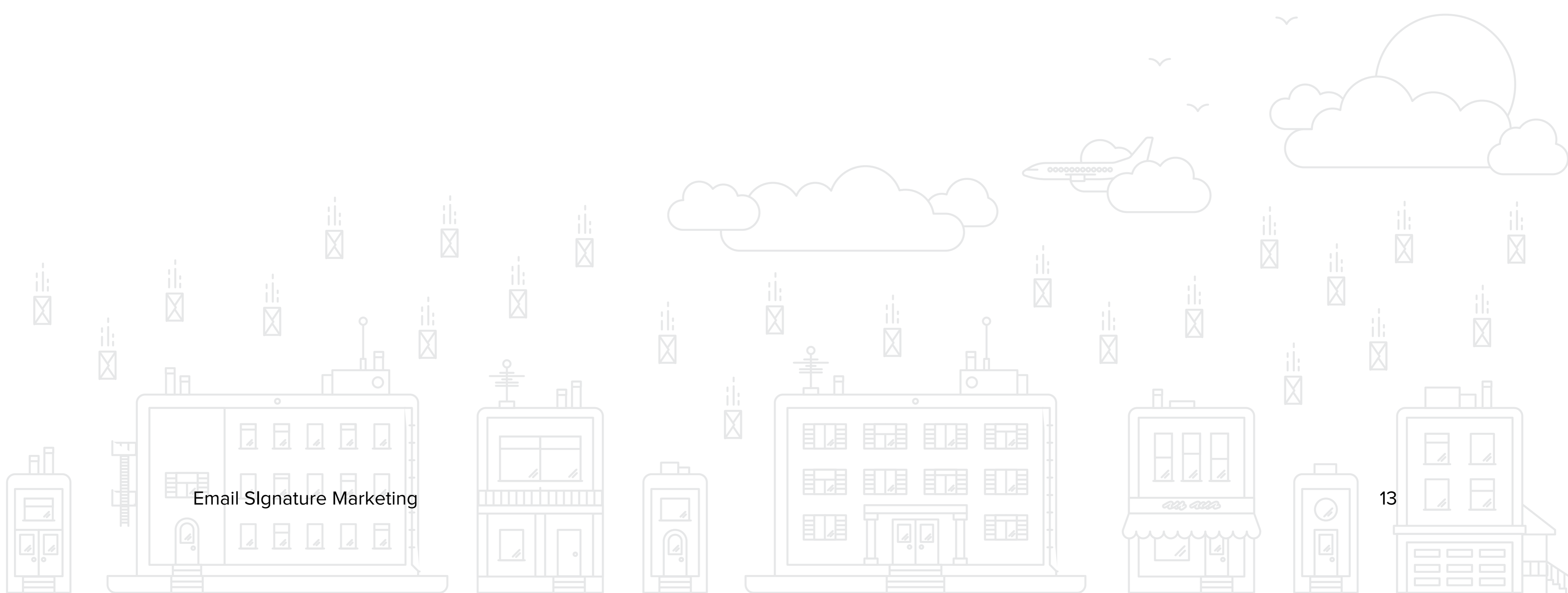
You can also plan to have internal and external signatures. An internal email signature may have less logos, brandings and disclaimers, while it may instead include other useful info. One of Xink's law firm customers have internal signatures which give extensions to bypass the receptionist, as well as billing codes. Just make sure that you don't include any internal info that would be devastating if an employee accidentally forwards to an outsider. Never include things like identification numbers.

The Sky's the Limit via Email Signature Marketing

You're creative. We're going to offer you a bunch of ideas of how you can open more opportunities and close more deals via email signature marketing, but you are really only limited by your imagination as to what you can market there and how.

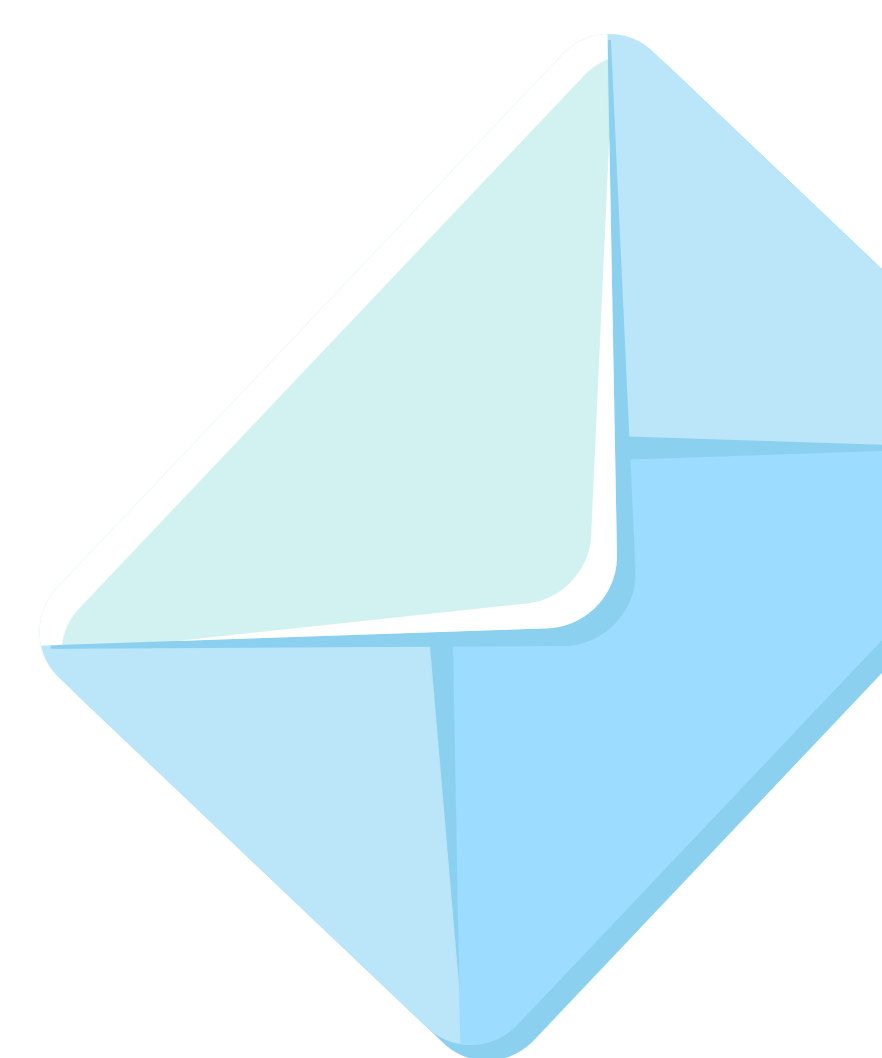
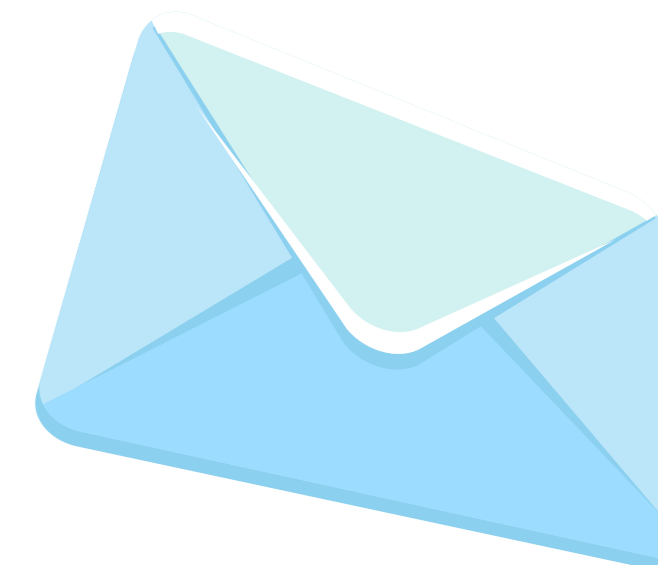
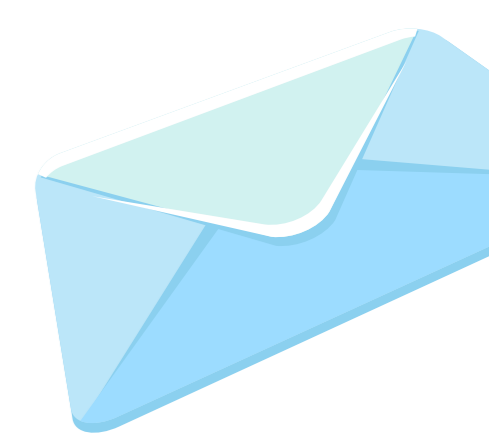
Your email signature can be just as versatile as an electronic billboard. Just remember to use email signature scheduling to make sure that it stays fresh. Plan ahead by scheduling the start and end date for multiple email signature campaigns or add your email signature into your monthly marketing plans. Your email signature is a great thing to automate so you aren't wishing Happy 2015 when the groundhog sees his shadow.

If your primary revenue comes from event attendance, then you should keep company-wide email signatures up-to-date with upcoming events. If your company has just received an honor, feel free to brag about it, but give this banner ad a deadline so you don't seem braggy. Schedule secular holiday celebrations, like Happy New Year!, or that annual Cyber Monday sale. And announce any updates, launches or big moves, online or off.

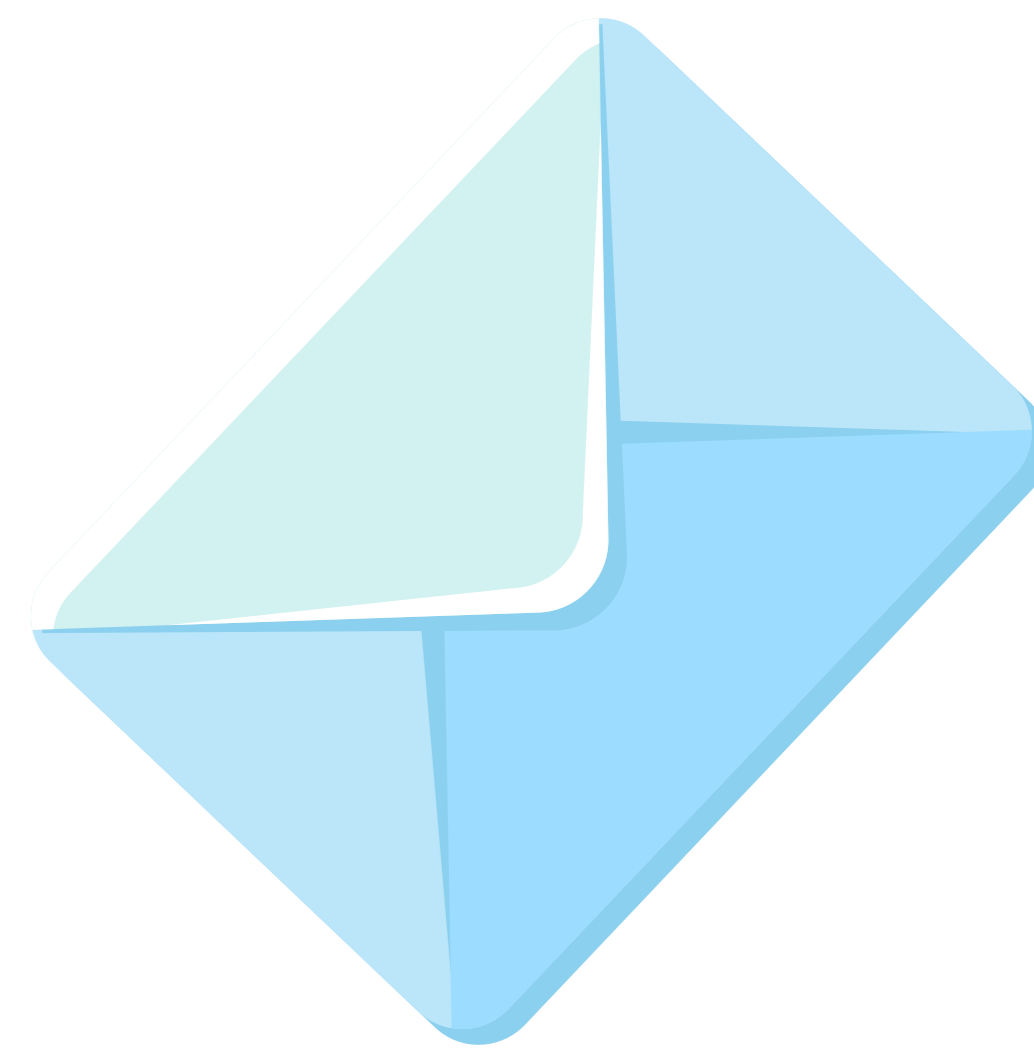
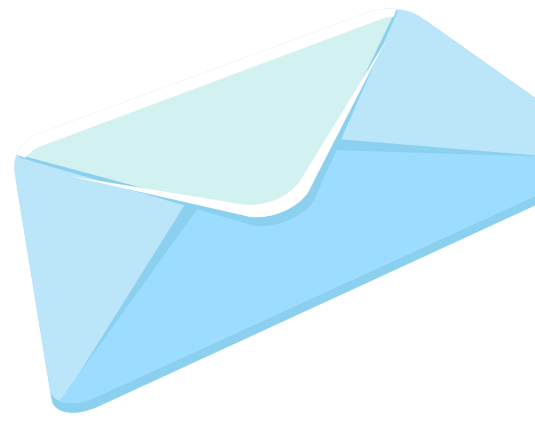


Here are 50 ways to get the most out of email signature marketing automation:

1. If you work in any business that wants website traffic, it would be absurd to not include a link to your homepage in your email signature.*
2. Link to pages other than homepage with more tailored message
3. Assure legal, security and accounting compliance
4. Link straight to a sales page
5. Repurpose and repromote content
6. Highlight specialized content like eBooks and How-to Videos
7. Your company tagline or value proposition
8. Contact information (including email address for easy access)
9. Drive the best methods to contact employee in future...
10. But make sure you give the recipient more contact ideas
11. Identifies sender in business context, like job title
12. Logo consistency
13. Font and colors consistency
14. Message consistency
15. Legitimize your company with brand consistency
16. Boost end-of-month and end-of-year sales
17. Attract candidates for job openings
18. Adds an extra call to action, like for a Demo, a Sales Quote or to Make a Purchase
19. Newsletter sign-ups
20. "Join My List" Visitor Box
21. Advertise new features
22. Cross-promote with a strategic partner (who also plugs your business via his employees' emails)
23. Share news and awards
24. Wish Happy 2015!
25. Or, if you are an accountant, wish Happy April 15, 2015!
26. Give exclusive offers or coupon codes
27. Gain more customer insight via a survey

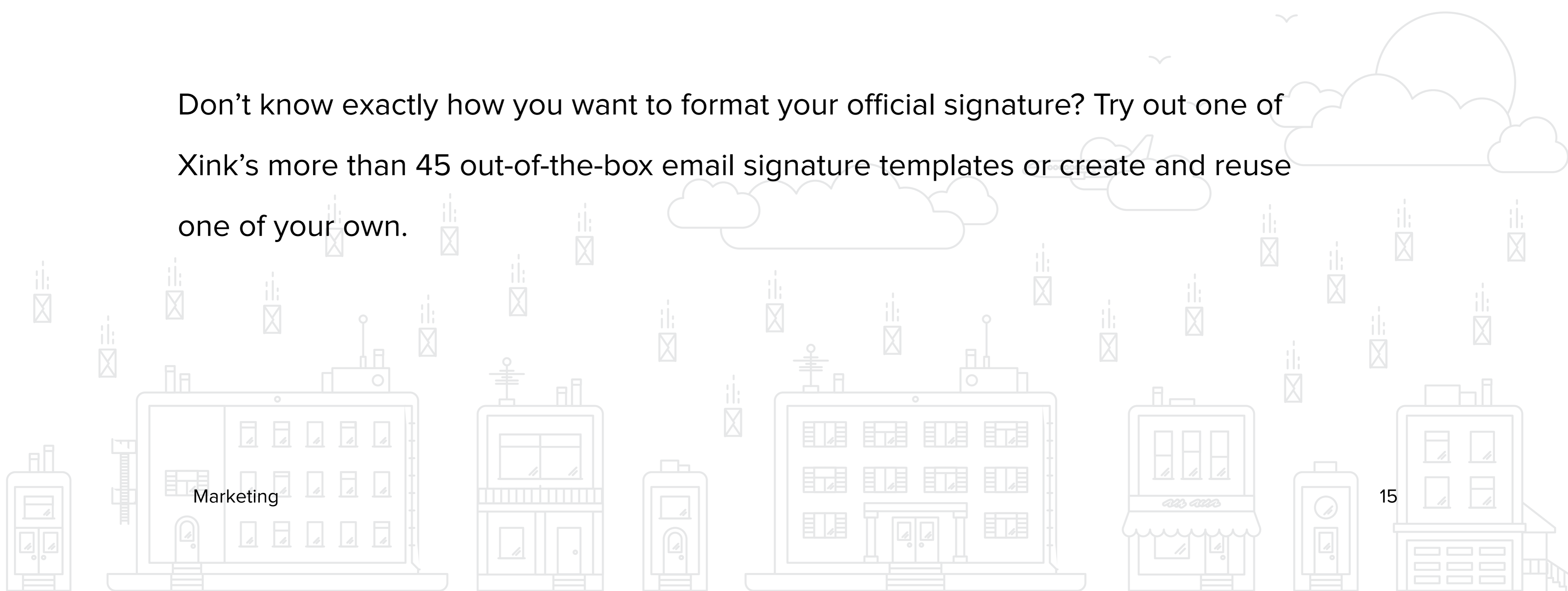


28. Video to show off your visual product or service
29. Video client testimonials
30. Advertise your next event
31. Advertise your next webinar or e-demo
32. Let people know you're attending an industry event
33. Customize event advertising by region and target audience
34. Hold contests and giveaways
35. Drive traffic to opt-in webpages
36. Upsell to current customers
37. Close new ones
38. Increase company Twitter followers
39. Increase individual's LinkedIn network
40. Ask for your restaurant's recommendations on Yelp!
41. Ask for your hotel chain's recommendations on TripAdvisor
42. Ask for employee recommendations on LinkedIn
43. Ask for company recommendations on GlassDoor
44. Promote a specific ad campaign
45. Show off an honor or award
46. Schedule it all ahead of time!
47. Track is all with Xink...
48. Or Google Analytics or the web analytics tool of your choice!



*You'd be surprised by how many people click on your email signature. You may work on creating an email of rich content filled with calls to action, but then the recipient may want to simply click on your webpage to check your business out for themselves.

Don't know exactly how you want to format your official signature? Try out one of Xink's more than 45 out-of-the-box email signature templates or create and reuse one of your own.



Are Employee Email Signatures a Part of Your Overall Marketing Strategy?



It's clear that marketing power still lies in the inbox. If you aren't factoring email into your sales funnel and inbound marketing strategy, you are really missing out. You and your competition--and the world, really--are competing for limited web real estate, fighting for your target audience's attention. With more than 12,000 opportunities per employee per year to make a strong branding and content impression, you'd be crazy not to take advantage of an easy email signature automation tool like Xink to get it all done.

xink

DASHBOARD

PEOPLE

SIGNATURES

CAMPAIGNS

4

Active Campaigns

3,608

Click Through

106,280

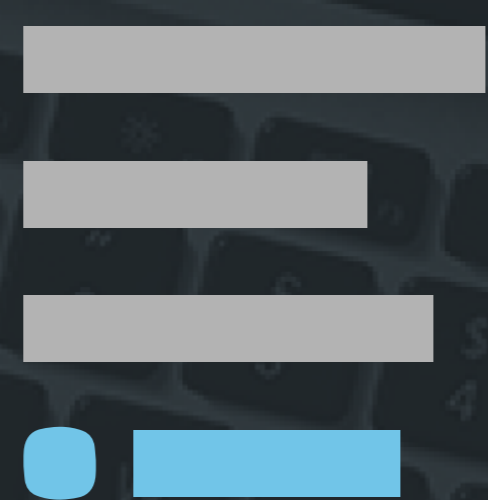
Opens

12%

Click Through Rate

Campaign Click Throughs

Campaign Name



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