

The background of the page is a dark, semi-transparent image of a group of people, likely students or professionals, gathered around a table and looking at documents. The image is overlaid with a large blue chevron shape pointing downwards from the top right corner.

The Ultimate Guide to Email Signature Design



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The Ultimate Guide to Email Signature Design

Your company spent hours and thousands of dollars on designing your logo and your business card, but how many people do you give that out to? Think of your email signature as your much more active and effective business card.

With that in mind, we go forth to answer all your questions about how to design an email signature that puts your best business face forward and gives you the highest return on investment.

And here's a preview: It's easy. Even though so many companies are messing it up and missing out, we can help you design and email signature that converts to new business, without putting you out too much.



What is the Biggest Mistake in Email Signature Design?

If you aren't concerned about mobile-first design in your email signature, then you should only send emails during the office hours of each individual client and hope that they won't put off til later to read.

With all things that that represent your company and will be viewed online, on many devices, t's essential to test it out, again and again on multiple devices on multiple operating systems. Chances are, your email signature won't show up well on many people's phones or tablets or, depending on what they block, may not show up at all.

Don't worry, this isn't unusual—we have many clients whose designers have created gorgeous email signatures, when viewed on a Mac or PC. But the challenge is that today more than half of all emails are received on mobile devices.

And while webpages are mobile responsive, so far, emails aren't. Email clients are interpreting and rendering emails as they see fit, rendering and converting email HTML the way browsers haven't made the mistake of doing since around 2002.

Therefore, you absolutely need to have one email signature HTML that simply must work on all sorts of screens and browsers.

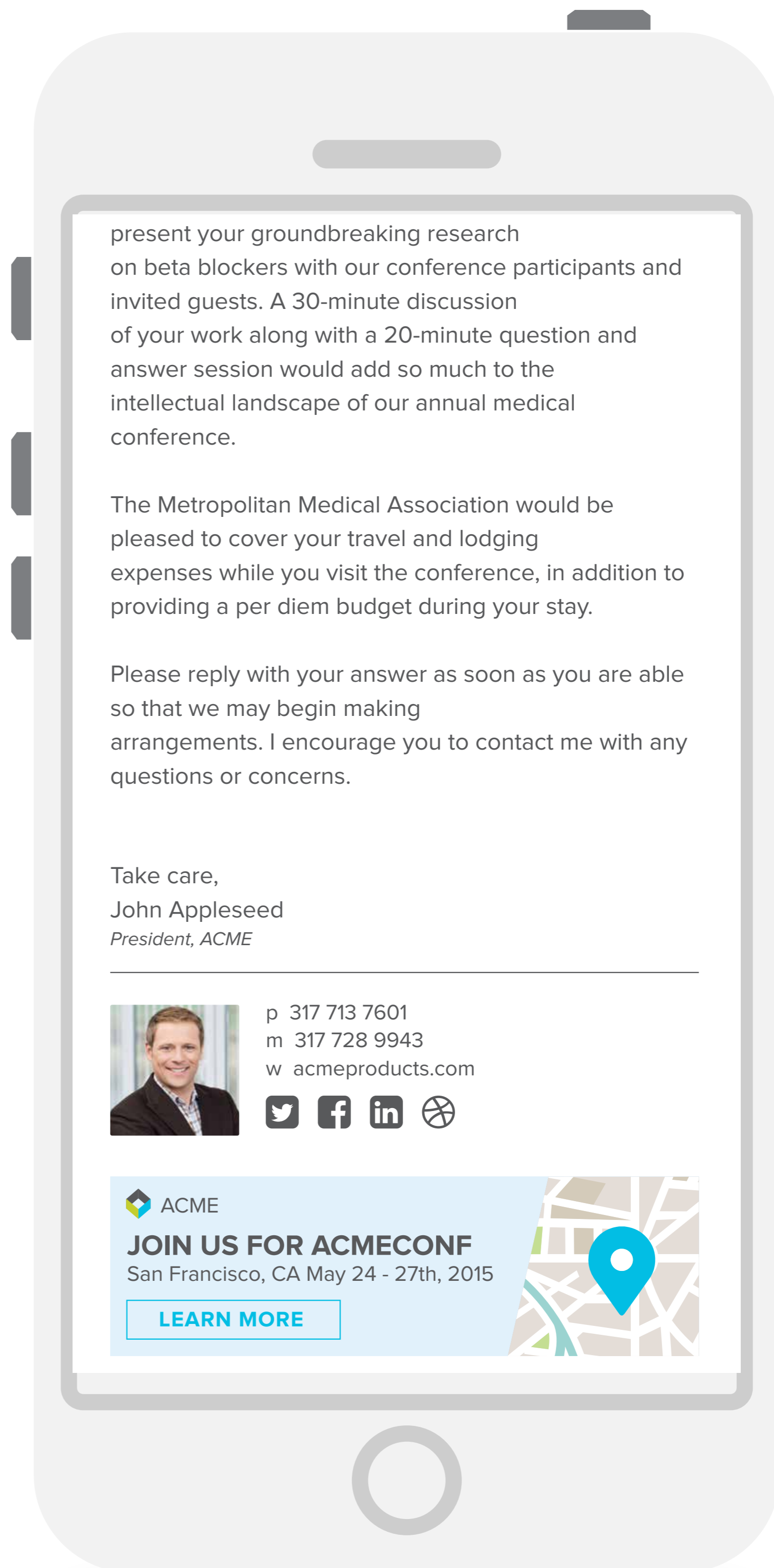


How do I Create Mobile-First Email Signature Design

The rules for a lot of email signature design follows the rules of mobile-first design in general. With fonts and images, which we talk about below, as with everything, assume your email can be read on all sizes so keep it as simple as possible to reach the most people.

Plus, if you spend all this money on a gorgeous logo and design, you don't want mobile devices to mess them up now, do ya?

Also Read: TutPlus piece on How to Create a Simple, Responsive Email



What's the best way to start designing an email signature?

We recommend writing your email signature in HTML in order to give you the flexibility to create exactly what you want in a highly portable format that you can be read on different devices. Just don't write it in HTML5 because (as a recurring theme) email readers are too old school to deal with it.

How do I make my email signature well-shaped in a neat little box?

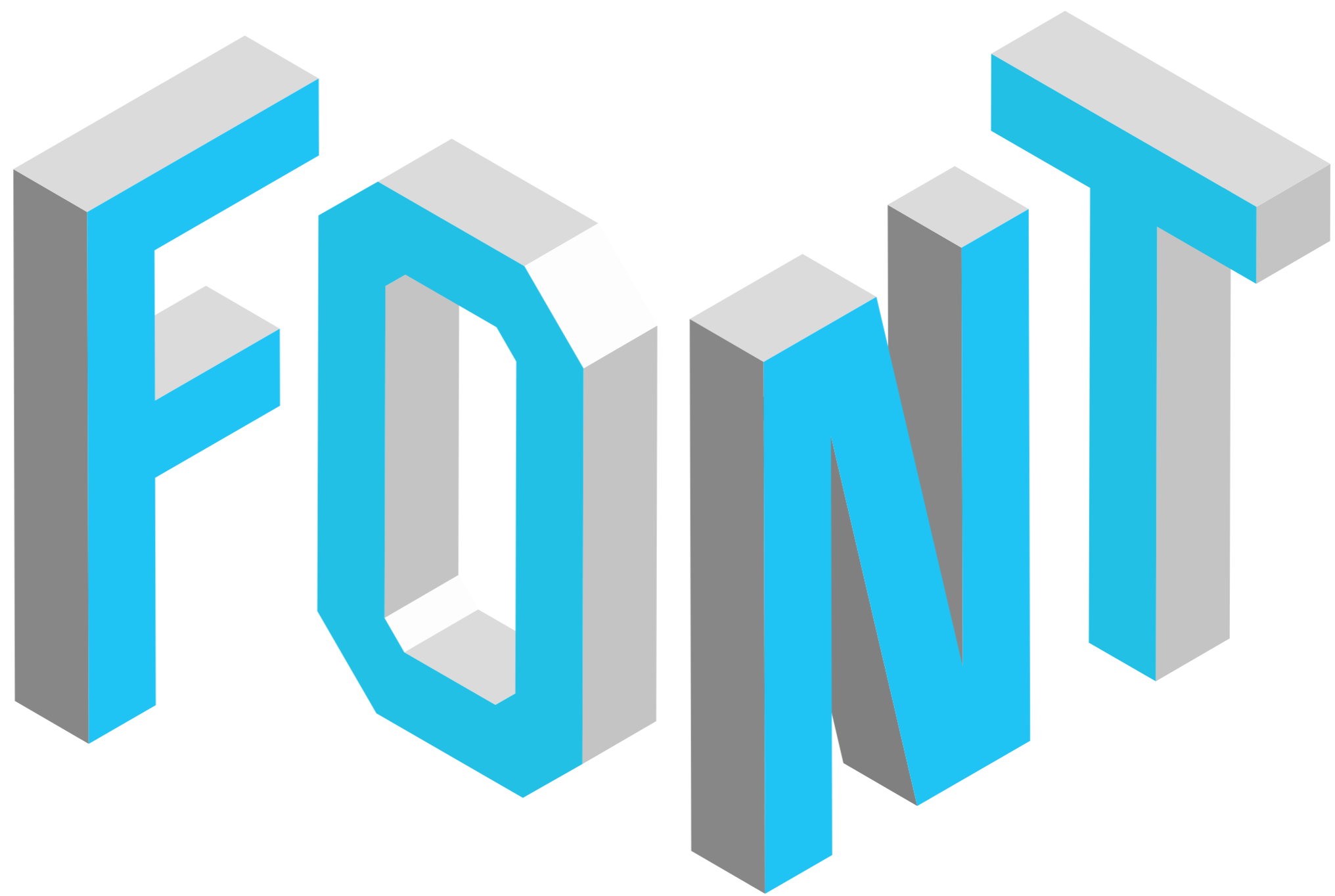
We recommend using HTML tables when you generate your email signature content, ensuring that you maintain control over the visual layout. Tables are scalable and easy to add additional content.

It also allows you to better optimize the signature towards mobile readers.



Which font should you use?

Most mobile devices can't show small font sizes, which means they all show 10-point font sizes. Choose a font size bigger than you would assume and then, as always, test it on the smallest mobile devices you can find.



Like with all things font related, don't get fancy. Sure, you may have had a beautiful font designed just for your company—which is totally cool to use in your logo—but remember, is the objective for your email to be read or for your font to look pretty? It's very unlikely a customer or potential customer is going to download a font on all of his or her devices in order to read your email.

Stick to the basics of font: Arial, Helvetica, Sans-Serif and the like. We recommend as a best practices:

- Use Arial for Windows
- Use Helvetica for Apple
- Use Sans-serif for the rest



The best practice is to use a 10-point standard Windows font with fallback font for Mac. Know that non-standard typefaces and HTML will not translate well across email clients.

If you are using an email signature management tool like Xink, you don't need to predict, but rather can design it to open differently depending on the operating system or device.

[Learn all about email signature fonts here.](#)



What size should your email signature be?

Your email signature has to be an equivalent of 320 wide pixels by less than 600 high, so that when it is reduced for mobile, it doesn't cut anything off but is still legible. iPhone will automatically reduce it to that size and Android will simply crop it down and cut it off, so you should make sure you can view it at that size.

One of the biggest mistakes is to work hard to create a good email signature with great actionable content and then Android or another device simply cuts it off so it's useless in half of all emails.

How big should your email signature file be?

An average email signature file, including logo and images, should be 50 kilobytes for an email signature. Of course, if you use an email signature management tool like Xink, with everything up in the cloud, size doesn't matter.



What size logos, headshots and images should you use?

At all costs, avoid scaling images down. If you have your logo in 600 x 300 because it looks nice when it's big, and then you scale it down, the email signature will be a giant file. We recommend that you maintain images at 100 percent size and then size it to the exact size you want it to be. Create that size logo or whatever, and then make sure that it meets the desired quality and readability.



And remember that many mobile phones block images. Code it in the backend, never attach. And make sure that your email signature can be complete if your email doesn't load.

Also, remember to add height and width to all images in your email signature because they may get resized by the email program used by the recipient. And your recipient's phone or computer may block the loading of images so always add an ALT tag for that case.



How should we stylize links in email signatures?

Well, it depends on your objective. If your link is the most important thing you want them to do in your email, then leave it au natural.

And be careful of too many automatic links. For example, on computers and phones with Skype installed will automatically convert phone numbers into clickable links to Skype. If your preferred form of contact is phone, then maybe this works, but otherwise it's a distraction from your call to action and you should code that option out. (Note: If you want to seem international, make sure to add your area code.)

Read More: [“How do i remove the Skype logo around phone numbers”](#)

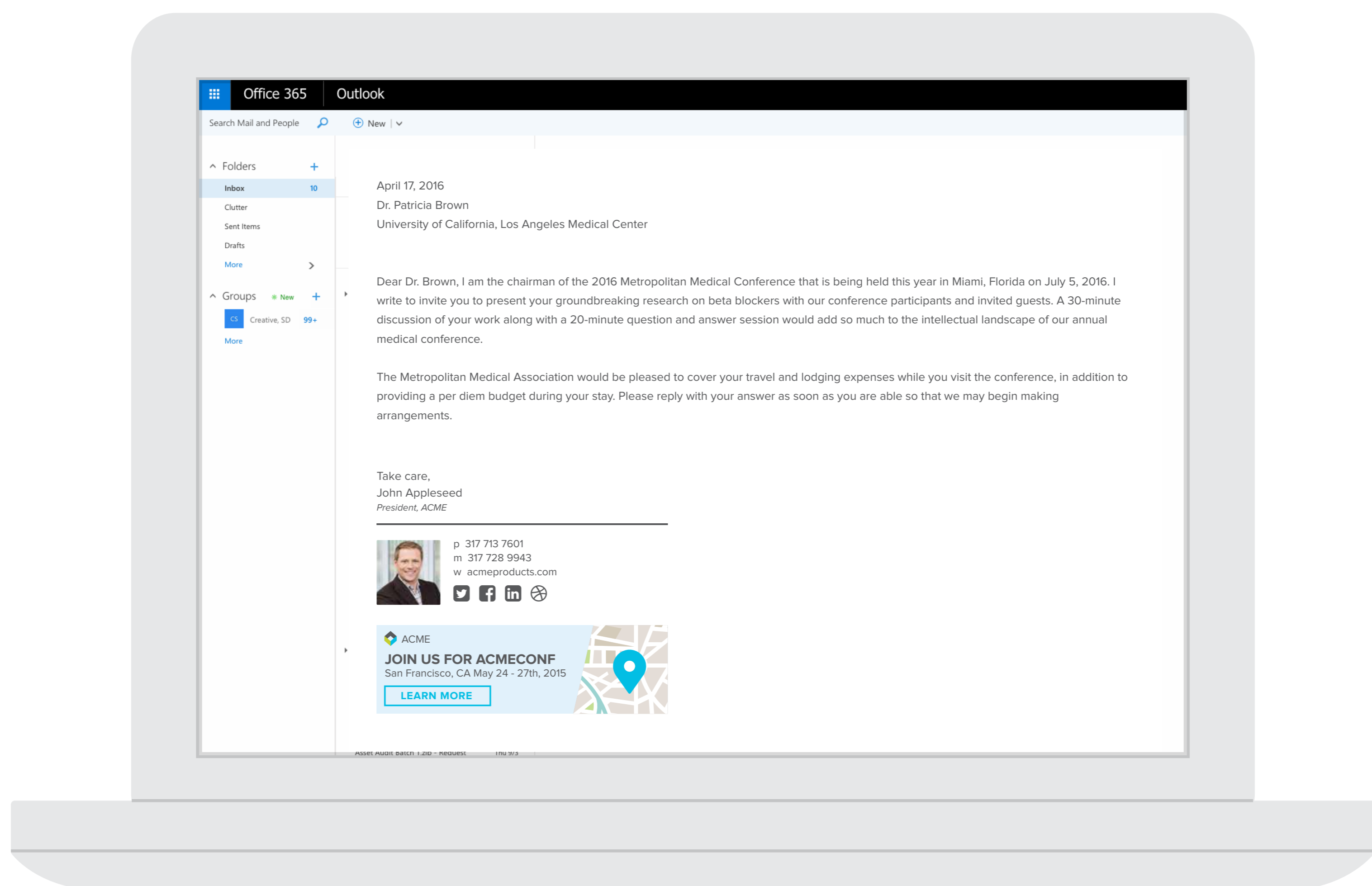
The same goes for links. If you use an email management system, you can run campaigns at the bottom of the email, with specific text and leading to specific campaign pages, but by leaving your website link in default bright blue hyperlink, you entice them to click on your homepage not your campaign.

Read More: [“How do I stylize email links?”](#)

Your phone and website should absolutely be in your email signature along with other contact info, but that doesn't mean you want your reader to act upon them. When in doubt, if you want someone to click on it, make it clear.

How can I design my email signature with all these disclaimers?

Good question! You probably can't. Disclaimers are this ugly, distracting thing that take up a huge chunk of space, but aren't in any way enforceable by law nor required by law. The disclaimer usually just asks you to forget what you just read. If you want a beautiful, actionable email, give it a delete, so you can leave room for more important things.



How long should my email signature design be?

This is another situation which varies per sender. When it comes down to it, it's all about making sure you have the most important information, and then cutting everything else down so you don't distract from the call to action or the email itself.

Furthermore, when thinking about design, you should generally consider that less is more so the info doesn't get squished and you make sure it can be read on various mobile devices.

Also, if your purpose is to make an email signature that drives revenue through a campaign (read down further), then keep the rest of your email signature short so you have more room for the moneymaker.

TutsPlus also recommends that you keep your email signature (and email) wider than long. So feel free to group things in an easy to read way that allows your signature to be rectangular.



What do I need in my email signature?

As per our previous note, you want only what you need plus one thing that helps move forward what you want. Think about it from the perspective of your average recipient.

But, while each email signature is designed with a different purpose in mind, here are what you probably should always have in an email signature:

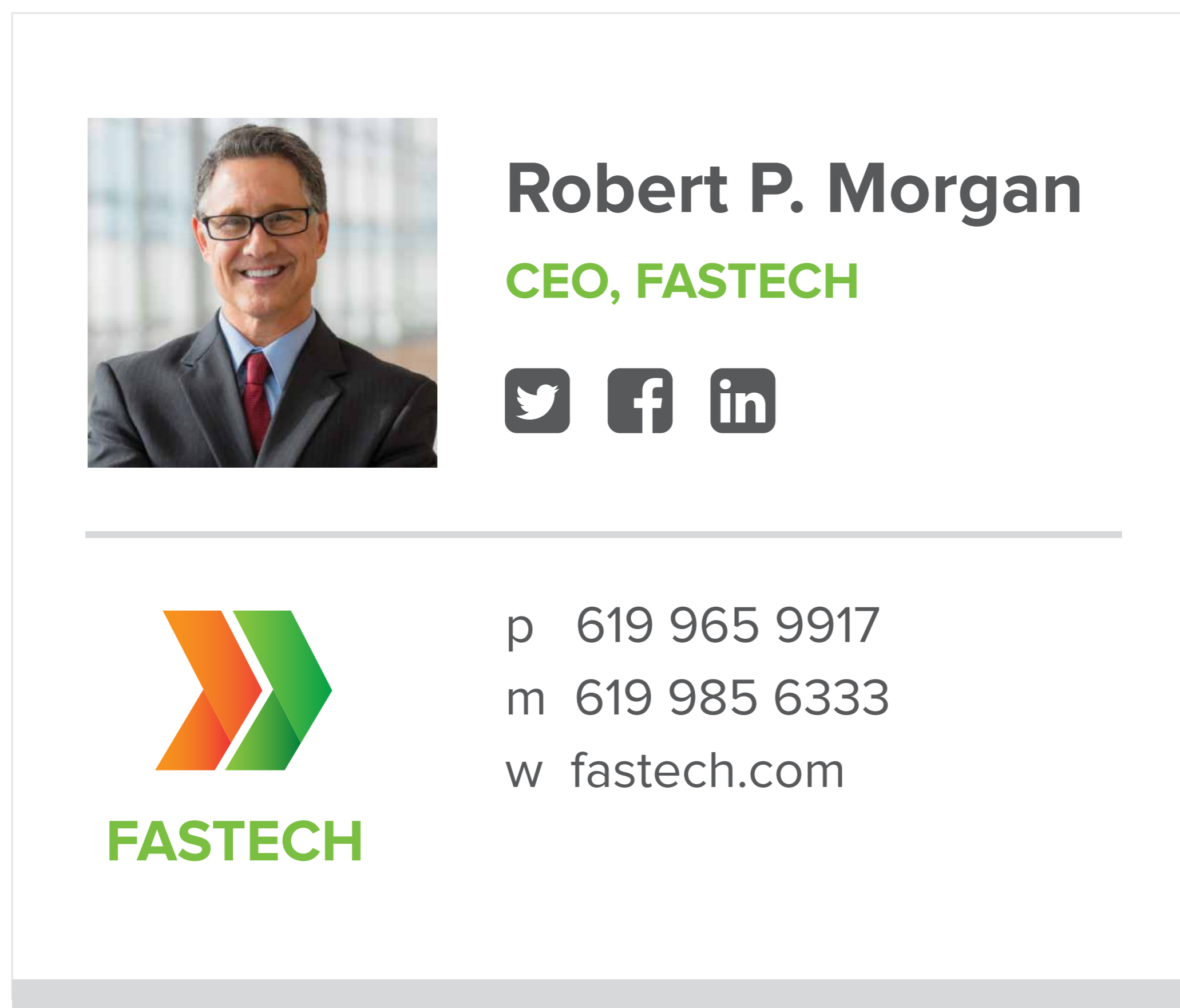



- Your name
- Your title or whatever can put you into context
- Your logo
- Your photo (if you're in a customer-facing role, like sales.)
- Your phone number (and any hours that you will only answer it in.)
- Your website, not written WWW but rather written neatly and hyperlinked (but without the blue line whenever possible.
- A call to action—holiday customer support schedule? special discount code? new feature or product? won an award? tuck it in there.
- A specific blogpost or landing that is exactly what you hope to drive traffic to.




All in all, you want to make sure clients can reach you as quickly as they prefer, so keep that in mind when deciding what to fill your email signature with. And don't forget to make sure they are up to date!


Should I put my email address in the email signature?

Probably not, unless you are writing something that you want to go viral and be forwarded on, so they can still get back to you.



**Robert P. Morgan**
CEO, FASTECH

**FASTECH**

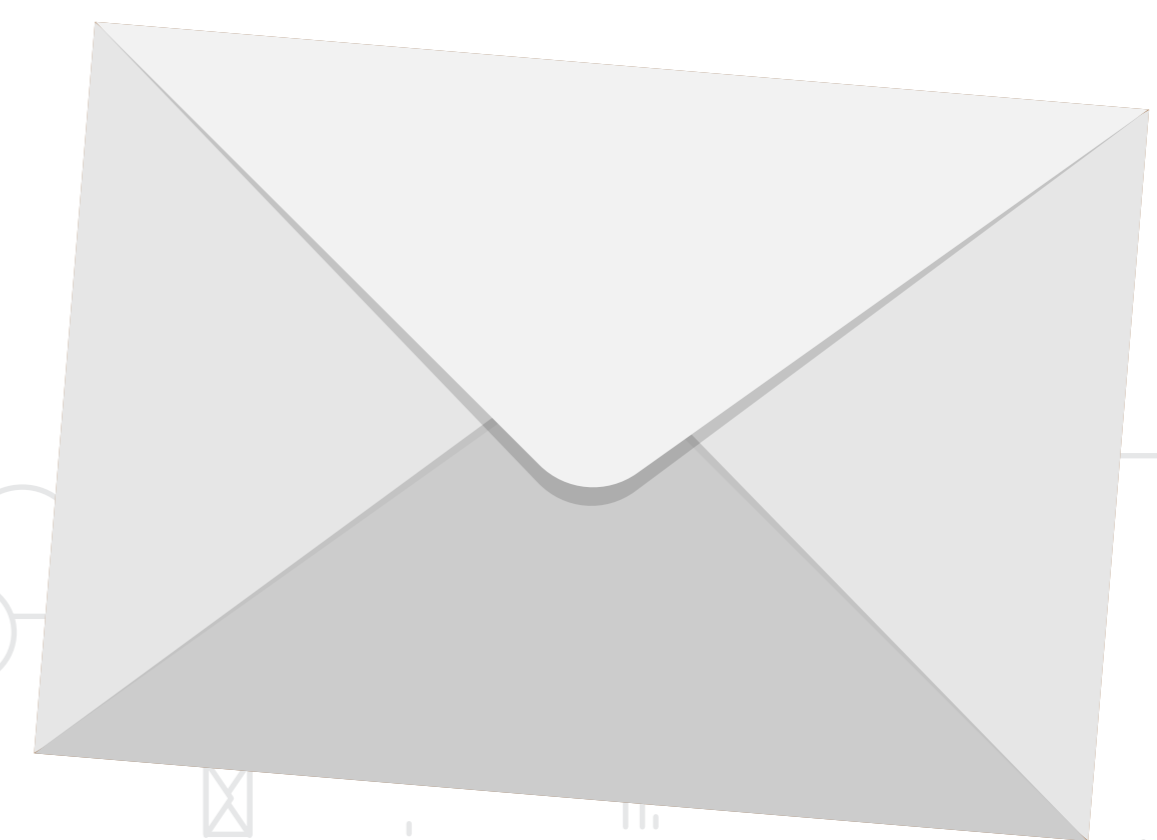
p 619 965 9917
m 619 985 6333
w fastech.com

How should I arrange social media buttons?

Again, first and foremost, think of your objective. Are your social channels simply the most important thing in your email signature? Then, absolutely, you should put them big and proud.

There's no doubt that increasing your social media following is essential to your business's success. Every business that's present on social media networks want to have more followers there, and a company that doesn't have a social media presence will not exist in a couple of years. It helps you appear in-touch and well-connected, as well as helps the search engine optimization of your website. The email signature is one of the easiest ways to have gain followers.

To reiterate, if your greatest objective is to have them visit your social media, then definitely keep the default iconic-colored blue icons, which result in a much higher click-through rate. However, to include them on your mobile emails will require email signature software.



Note, please, please, only add social media not only where you are active to post on but also where you are active at checking. More and more, the first line of customer support and tech support complaints is social media. You want to seem responsive. If you're not gonna be, then don't put these channels in every email you send.

And, remember, only add the social media buttons for the kind of clients you want to have. Usually LinkedIn and Twitter are more impressive for B2B businesses, and Facebook, as well as YouTube, Pinterest and Instagram, rule the B2C world, particularly as you get into the pop cultural space.

Don't overload your signature with all ten different social media you use. Focus on the top two or three that are most important to you and the people you email.

[Read More: "Looking to Increase Your Company Following on Social Media?"](#)



How do I design for Outlook?

Outlook Web App enforces a character limit in its email signature settings. The maximum signature size in OWA with Exchange Online (Office 365) is 8KB for HTML and text signatures. If your OWA email signature is incomplete, you will have to shorten it.

Use the OWA app for your iOS or Android device if you have Office 365 to ensure you get your company signature, consistently, every time



What about Plain Text?

Always create a plain text signature for anyone who may have blocked HTML.

But how can I keep design consistent across different departments?

If your image and how professional you are perceived is important to your business (which is true for the vast majority of businesses), then you want to make sure that your marketing and PR departments keep it consistent across all communication. And what communication is more common than email? Probably none, considering that people send at least 50 emails a week. It's essential that you design and implement continuity across all employees' email signatures.

Don't worry, there's an app for that. With an email signature management software like Xink, you can control this branding and even run campaigns that convert. You make sure every email is designed just the way you want it, and you create a world where your company leaves a memory of being detail-oriented and professional.

What's even better, we've an app to help you keep branding consistent but messaging different across different teams and departments.



Can I make money off of a well-designed email signature?

Your email signature creates brand consistency and contributes to that air of professionalism, but with just these tricks, you aren't generating revenue. The next step of email signature design is to use it for marketing and sales campaigns

How can you measure design?

It is an art but one that you can certainly measure. Like with all ad campaigns, you can A/B test ad campaigns running at the bottom of your email to find ones that work best, measuring which one has the highest click-through rate and even setting it up with Google Analytics to know not only which has the best CTR but which ads convert to a sale best.

Focusing on email signature design with a measuring management tool is a great way to test our different campaigns, constantly changing and updating, just like you should your website. With Xink, you can even schedule a whole marketing campaign half a year in advance and generate and track the clicks.



How should I handle the CTA?

The biggest mistake is when companies make beautiful email signature campaigns but forget a call to action to get people to click on it. Make sure it's clear where you are taking them and why they should go there. Make sure they know exactly what to expect when they click.

According to MailChimp email software, the larger the text in the call to action, the more important it'll feel to the reader. Just keep it as short as possible. MailChimp also recommends experimenting with different fonts and colors just for the CTA to stand out.



How often should I change email signature campaigns?

The other common mistake is running the same campaign all the time. And don't leave the same one up for too long because you are losing out on your return on investment. Make sure to update your campaigns regularly for the best impact.



What other sorts of experiments can you perform?



Well similarly, you can A/B test rebranding by seeing what your current clients already like. You can also add coupons and sales, or anything else you want to test. Are you sponsoring or running a fundraiser for a good cause? Brag in a banner! And don't forget to use it for your holiday hours and simply wishing a happy new year.

Have a great YouTube tutorial or quick (90 seconds or less) value proposition video? Embed that right in! Since everything is managed in the cloud, there's very little risk. If something doesn't work, you can quickly and easily change it.

Another popular campaign to run is with a call to action for more newsletter signups. This is particularly good for the sales department to have as it can help move prospects along the sales pipeline, as tech support hours or a knowledge base is useful in the email signatures of customer service.

How many campaigns should I run at once?

Two calls to action is good, three's a crowd. Since you will always want more social media followers, put that banner on Always Active, and then place your short-term campaign banners running on top of the social media banner to get more attention.

But what if I suck at design?

We aren't asking you to get your IT department to code an in-depth email signature Picasso. If you use Xink email signature management app, your marketing or design team can do it themselves, simply uploading it, guaranteeing consistency, and even tracking results like you would any other campaign.



But are you an email signature design rockstar?

We'd love to show it off! Learn more about how to become an email signature resource and the envy of all your friends!



xink

DASHBOARD

PEOPLE

SIGNATURES

CAMPAIGNS

4

Active Campaigns

3,608

Click Through

106,280

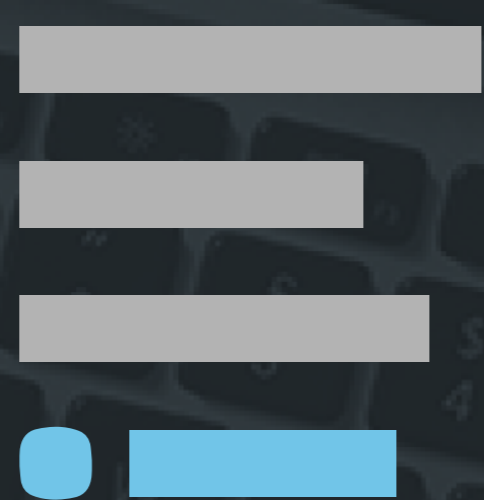
Opens

12%

Click Through Rate

Campaign Click Throughs

Campaign Name



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www.xink.io

