

# THE MARKETERS' GUIDE TO HIGH-PERFORMING EMAIL DESIGNS

 in 2024

## Introduction

The business impact of good design has been proven repeatedly. Well-designed UI could raise conversion rates by over 200%<sup>1</sup>. Even email leaders often reference how specific design trends enhance customer experience.

However, email teams have faced difficulty prioritizing design as they navigate through the third year of Apple's MPP, disruption from Yahoo! email requirements, and continued AI development.

But in 2024, teams finally realize the impact it can have on their email performance. With more than 35% of teams investing in an email design expert to deliver the best experiences to their customers<sup>2</sup>.

### Why did we write this report?

To effectively utilize the most recent design trends, it is crucial to stay informed. This report is an attempt to bridge that gap by serving as a playbook for email marketers looking to include the latest design trends of 2024 in their upcoming email campaigns.

For this, Kombai researched emails from global marketing teams to identify and categorize the latest design trends. If the end of 2023 is anything to go by, we should see more of these design trends making their way to the foreground in 2024.

**“Standing out in the inbox today can be challenging. Brands must focus on complementing their copy with the latest design trends to captivate their audience.**

**Kombai's users often share with us how implementing modern design trends has improved their email conversion rates.”**

**Dipanjan Dey**  
Co-Founder & CEO, [Kombai](#)



# Research Methodology

For this study, Kombai surveyed **1350 emails from 9 different industries**. These emails were sourced from public email libraries like Email Love, Really Good Emails & Milled.

Our sampling approach was comprehensive and mitigated any sampling bias. To avoid over-representation, each company’s emails were limited to only two samples. To diversify our sample, emails were randomly selected from these three libraries. All the emails in the dataset fell under promotional and product emails that were sent out in 2023.

To augment our findings, we also drew correlations from **Klaviyo’s 2024 Email benchmark report<sup>3</sup>** - specifically the click rates for the various industries covered in our survey.

Read on to see what we found.



ECOMMERCE



FOOD



FASHION



HOME DECOR



EXERCISE & FITNESS



SAAS



CONSUMER APPS



TECHNOLOGY



TRAVEL

## CHAPTER ONE

# Leading Design Trends In Email

For brands today, it's crucial to stay on top of the latest email design trends to capture their customers' attention.

While many email teams rely on tested design styles, customers are regularly exposed now, more than ever, to unique eye-catching emails. Failing to keep up with them can affect your channel performance.

In this chapter, we cover 16 such eye-catching email design trends that are most popular today. Additionally, we dive deeper into 5 of them that are seen most often across industries.





# Top 16 Leading Design Trends

Most widely used design trend by marketers across the world.

- Overlapping Text**

Texts overlapping with other texts, images, patterns or design elements, either partially or completely.
- Rounded Corners**

Rounded edges in images, sections, and buttons instead of sharp corners.
- Custom Visuals and Illustrations**

Crafting custom illustrations particular to the brand identity and the content of the email.
- Creative Typography**

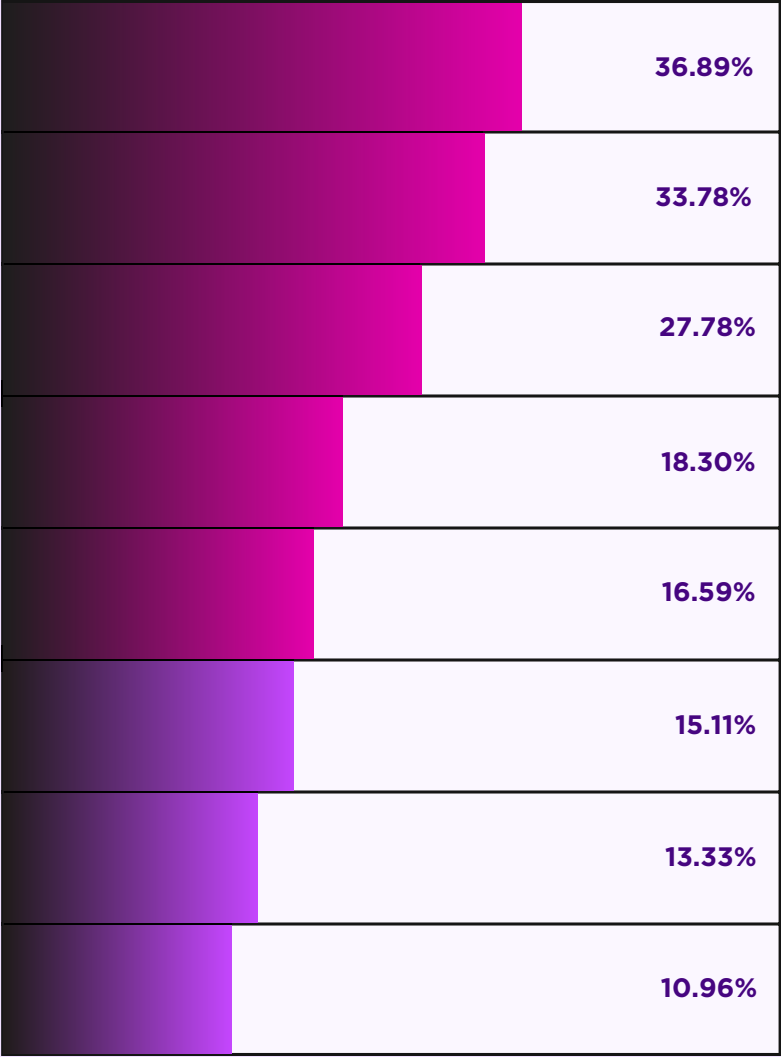
Visually rich fonts that focus more on aesthetics than readability to draw users' attention.
- Minimalist Designs**

Simple, typically monochromatic design style - often visible with clear lines and formatting.
- Animated GIFs**

GIFs inserted in the email for product showcase, ticker tape banner, cinemagraphs, etc.
- Collage**

A group of multiple images placed together in an email. It is helpful for adding numerous images while saving space.
- Duotone**

Usage of a color theme that involves only two color shades in the email.



% of design trends present across 1350 emails

# Top 16 Leading Design Trends



## Gradients

Transition of multiple colors added to the background of sections, images or buttons in an email.

## Irregular Frames

Frames that don't have any regular shape. Their sides and angles can be of any size and length.

## Ecstatic Color Themes

Color theme with vibrant colors to bring joy and energy to the email. It often incorporates multiple other design trends.

## Shadow Effect

Visual effect to add shadow behind objects. It is most commonly used on images, sections, and buttons in an email.

## Hand-drawn & Doodle Illustrations

Illustrations that are hand-drawn or doodled and inserted into emails. Often used to add a personal touch.

## Floating Elements

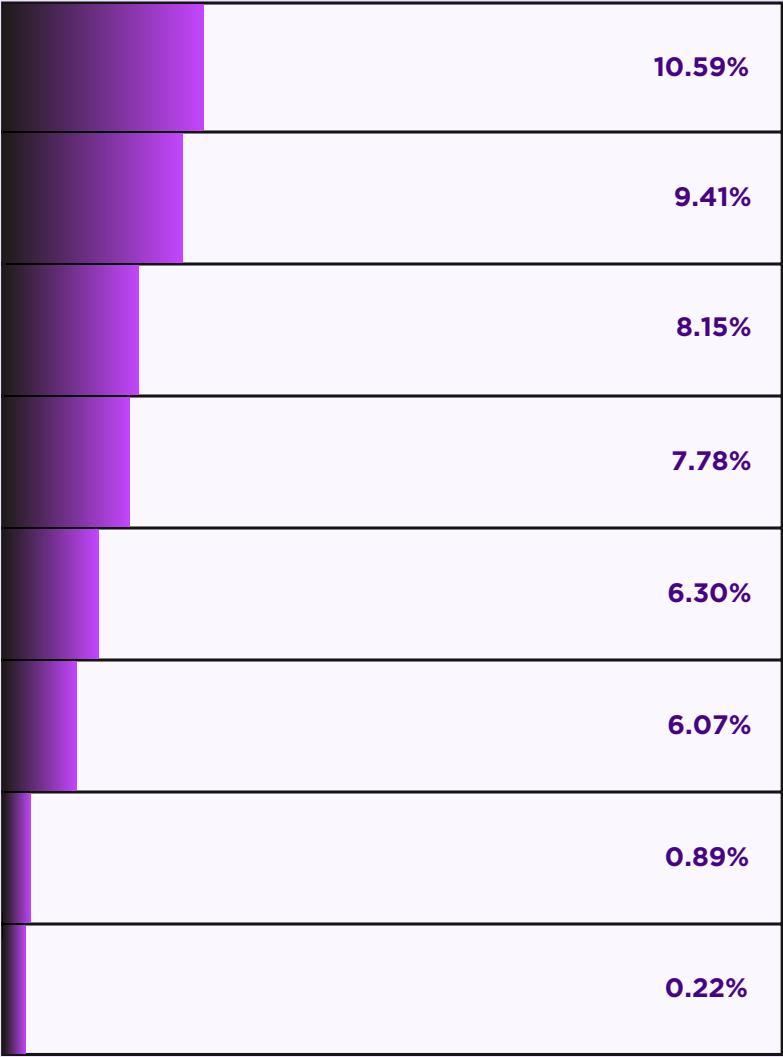
Product images and illustrations of objects that appear to be floating in mid-air.

## Gamified Experience

Incorporating gamified elements like quizzes, progress bars, puzzles, etc.

## Scroll Campaigns

Long images that merit scroll actions. E.g. A long hot dog that you have to scroll to see completely.



% of design trends present across 1350 emails

# 5 Most Popular Email Design Trends

The top five most popular design trends in 2023 were Overlapping text, Rounded corners, Custom visuals & illustrations, Creative typography, and Minimalist designs.

These design trends were seen across all industries and are highly effective in creating visually stunning emails that engage the readers.



**“At Email Love, we believe email marketing is all about fostering connections.**

**Focusing on user experience – clear calls to action, intuitive navigation, and a clean aesthetic – is the key to unlocking the true power of email marketing”**

**Andrew King**

Founder, [Email Love](#)

# O1.

## Overlapping Text

Overlapping text involves layering text on top of other texts, images, and sections to create a visually compelling layout. This technique can be used to add depth, texture, and contrast to an email design, making it more engaging for the reader.

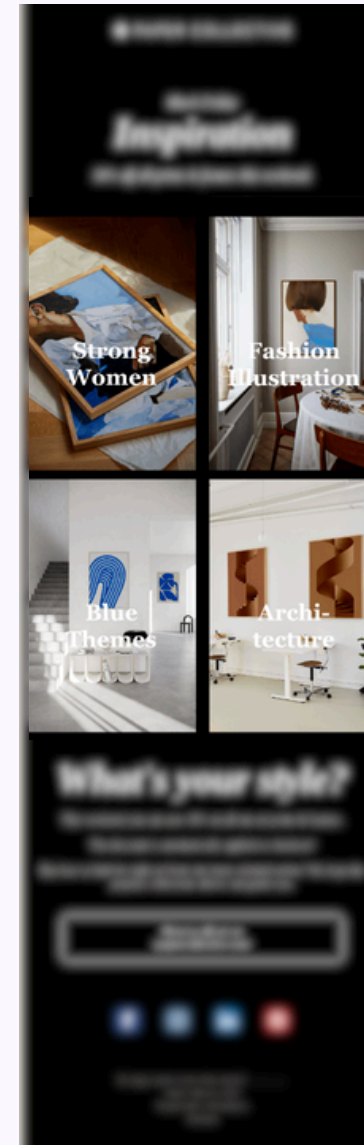
By layering text elements on top of other elements, marketers can draw attention to important information and guide the eye of the reader through the content.

In addition, overlapping text can be used to create interesting and unique typography designs that are both visually striking and easy to read. By playing with different fonts, colors, and sizes, designers can create a variety of effects - subtle, bold, dramatic, etc.

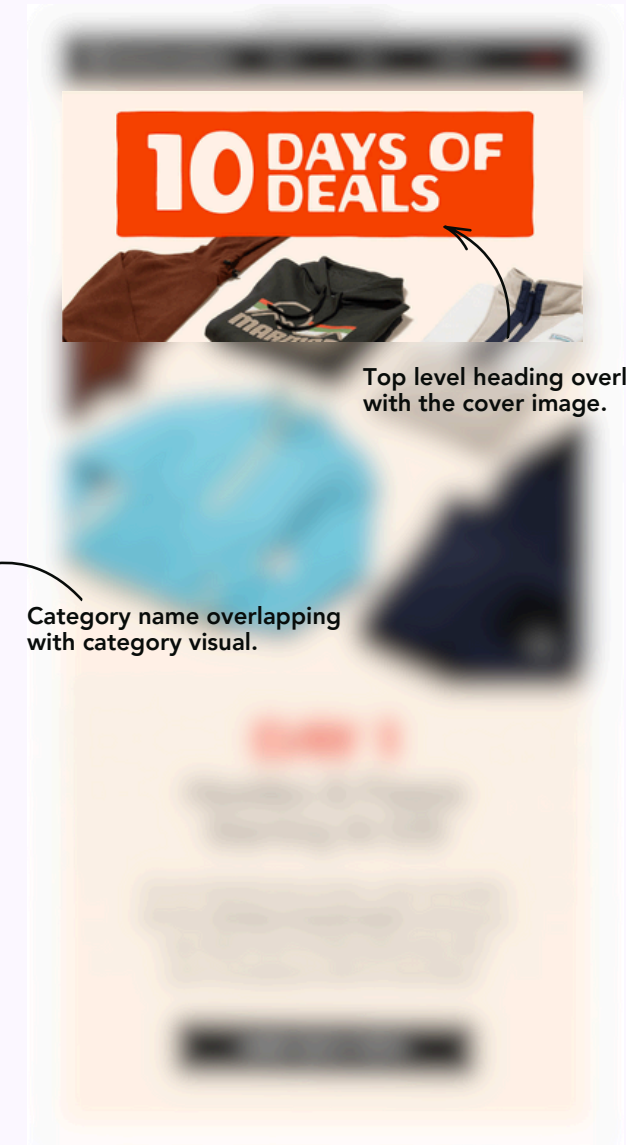
### Use cases:

- Category name on top of a product visual.
- Heading on top of the hero cover image.

[Overlapping text inspirations for your next email – click here.](#)



[Paper Collective](#)



[Backcountry](#)



## 02. Rounded Corners

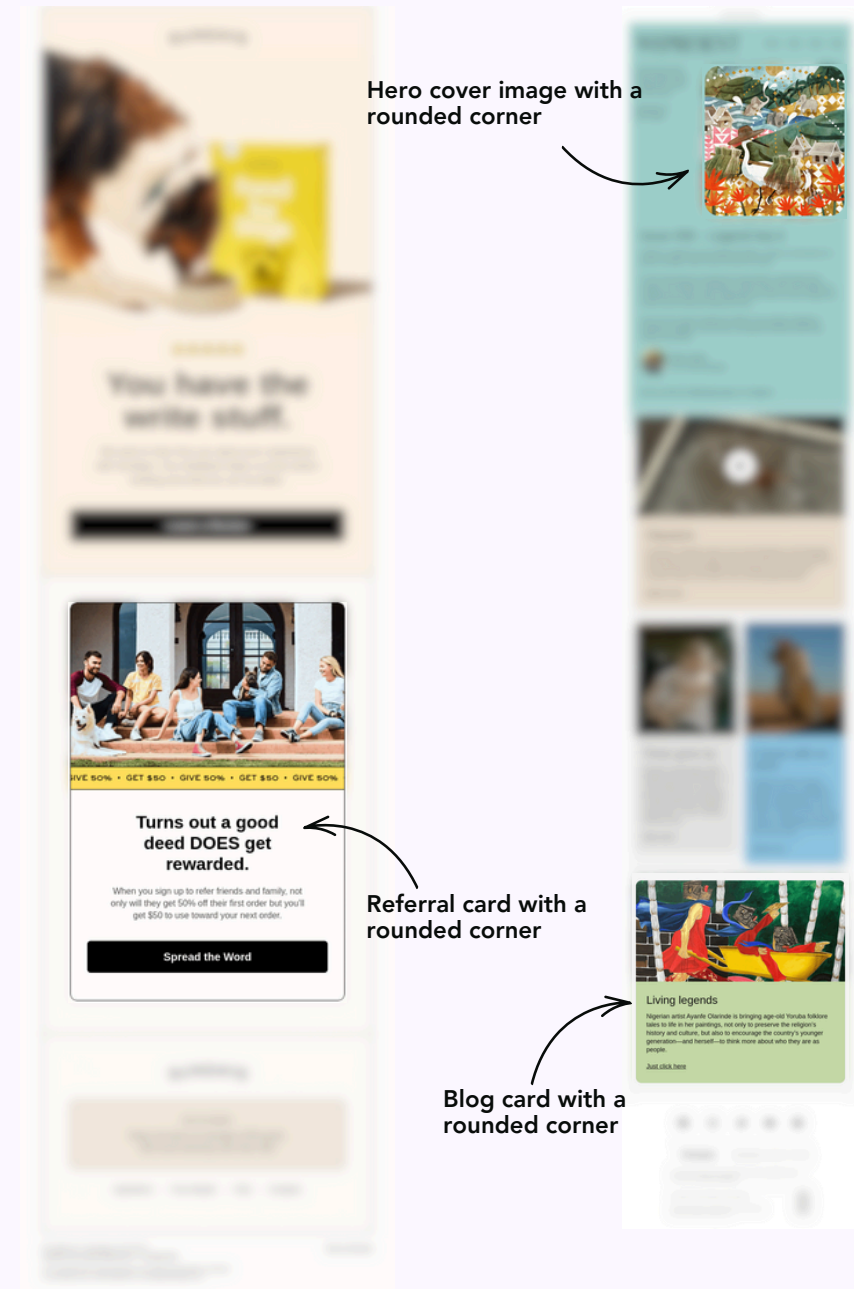
Rounded corners involves adding round edges to the corners of elements in an email. These elements could be images, buttons, cards, etc.

By using rounded corners in email design, marketers soften the overall look and feel of an email. Additionally, it helps to create a more cohesive and consistent design throughout the email, which improves the overall user experience.

### Use cases:

- Rounded cover image of a blog card.
- Rounded sections to create separation in email.
- Rounded product visuals of an ecommerce brand.

[Rounded corners inspirations for your next email – click here.](#)



# 03.

## Custom Visuals and Illustrations

Custom visuals & illustrations involves using brand-specific illustrations to enhance the design and deliver a more on-brand experience to the reader.

This design trend adds a touch of personality and uniqueness to emails, which helps brands stand out.

In addition, custom visuals and illustrations creates an emotional connection with the reader by using images that evoke positive emotions.

For example, illustrations of happy people or animals creates a positive association with the brand and improves the overall user experience.

### Use cases:

- Brands using their mascot in emails.
- Using relevant illustrations based on the email content.

[Custom visuals & illustrations inspirations for your next email – click here.](#)

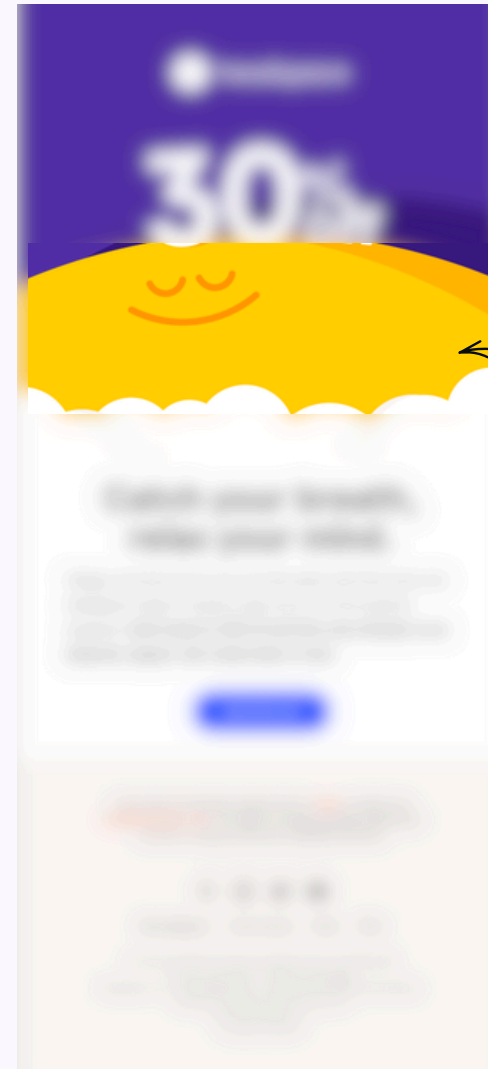
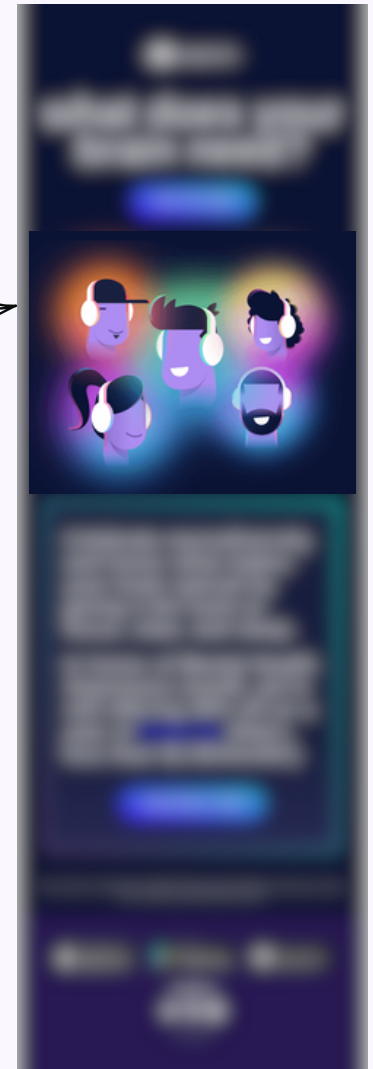


Illustration of different persons wearing headphone, each depicting a different mood like focus, relax, sleep, etc.

Headspace's smile illustration that often appears in their emails.



**Headspace**

**Brain.fm**

# O4.

## Creative Typography

Unlike traditional typography, which focuses on readability, creative typography involves using unique and engaging fonts that enhance the overall aesthetics of the email.

Using creative typography in emails helps capture the readers' attention and create a lasting impression. It can also be used to convey the brand's personality and tone of voice.

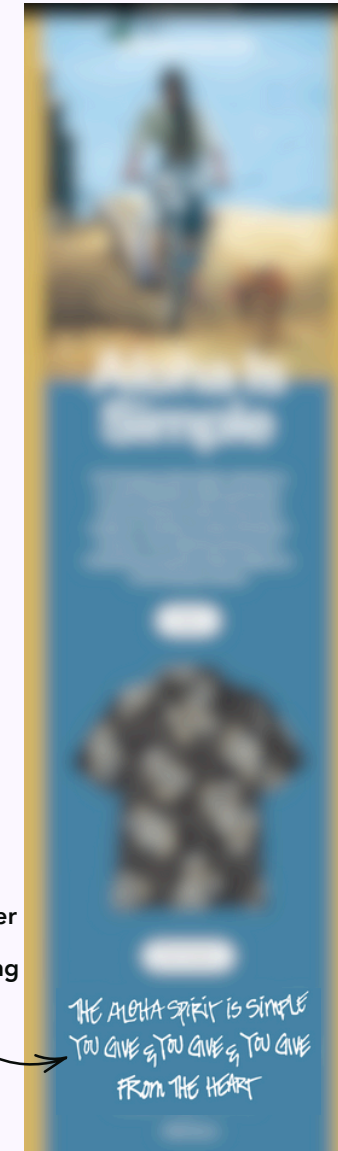
Creative typography can also be used to highlight key messages and calls to action within the email. By using bold, contrasting, or larger fonts, brands can draw the readers' attention to important information and encourage them to take action.

### Use cases:

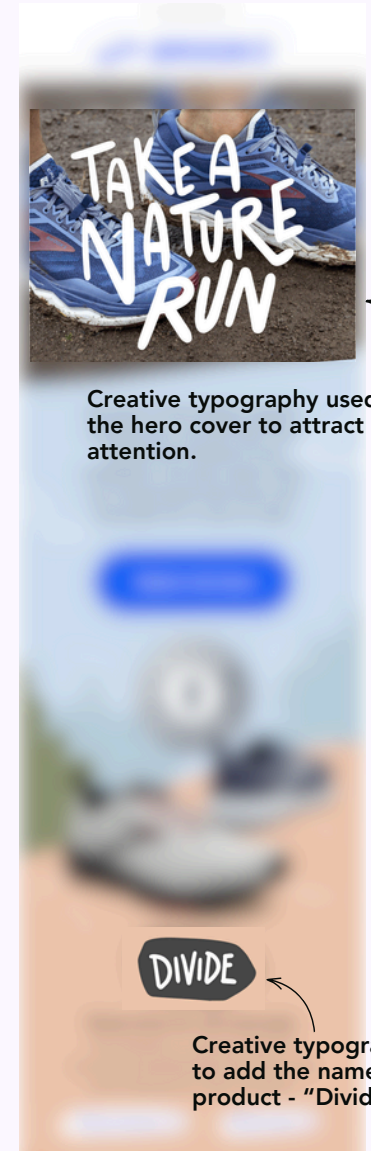
- Used for top-level email headings.
- Used for naming product visuals.
- Callouts for a particular image or section.

[Creative typography inspirations for your next email – click here.](#)

Patagonia quoting former American world surfing champion Rell Sunn, using a creative font family.



**Patagonia**



Creative typography used on top of the hero cover to attract the readers' attention.

Creative typography used to add the name of the product - "Divide".

**Brooks**

# 05.

## Minimalist Designs

With its clean and simple aesthetic, this design style emphasizes the use of white space, limited color palettes, and simple typography to create a streamlined and modern look.

One of the main benefits of minimalist design in emails is that it enhances the readability of the content. By removing clutter and unnecessary elements, the focus is on the key message, making it easier for the reader to understand and engage with the content.

Minimalist design is also a brand-agnostic design trend. From fashion to finance, it can fit into any business or brands identity.

### Use cases:

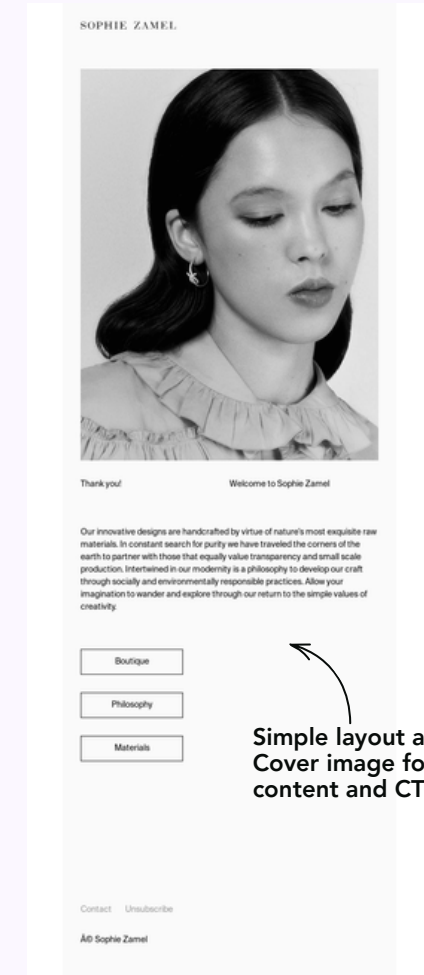
- Used to convey information clearly without visual clutter.
- Used to enhance readers' experience by providing a straightforward navigation.
- Used to enhance aesthetics without sensory overload.

[Minimalist designs inspirations for your next email – click here.](#)

Single column layout with a minimal color palette and font styling.



[A24](#)



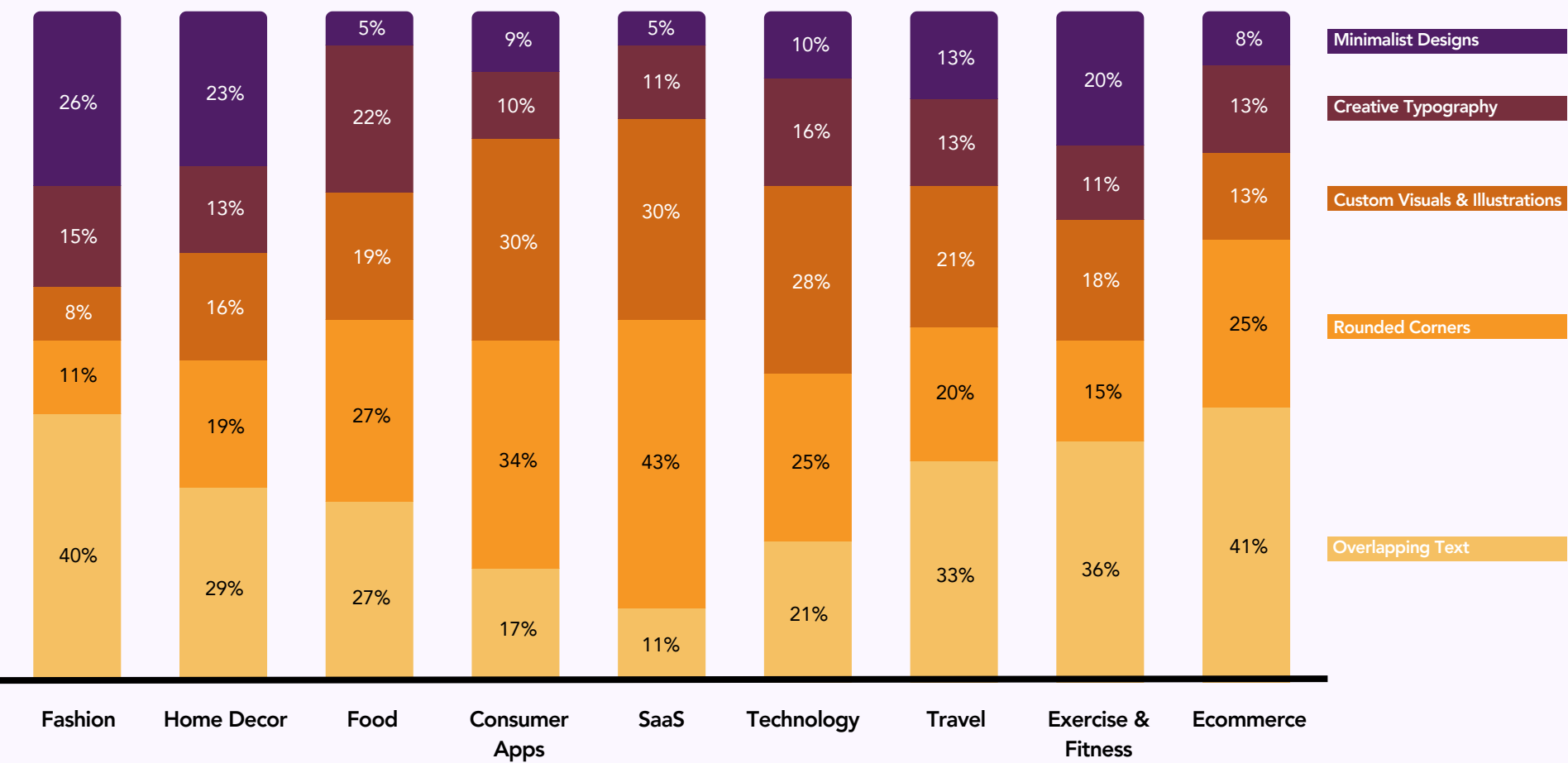
Simple layout and format - Cover image followed by content and CTA buttons.

[Sophie Zamel](#)



# Industry-Wide Distribution of Top 5 Email Design Trends

Distribution of top 5 design trends across various industries.



# Industry-Wide Most Popular Email Design Trends

Top 3 design trends in descending order of their appearance in our study across various industries.

## Ecommerce

1. Overlapping Text
2. Rounded Corners
3. Animated GIFs



## Food

1. Overlapping Text
2. Rounded Corners
3. Creative Typography



## Fashion

1. Overlapping Text
2. Minimalist Designs
3. Collage



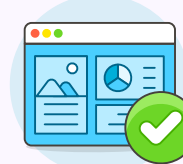
## Home Decor

1. Overlapping Text
2. Minimalist Designs
3. Rounded Corners



## SaaS

1. Rounded Corners
2. Custom Visuals & Illustrations
3. Gradients



## Exercise & Fitness

1. Overlapping Text
2. Duotone
3. Minimalist Designs



## Consumer Apps

1. Rounded Corners
2. Custom Visuals & Illustrations
3. Overlapping Text



## Technology

1. Custom Visuals & Illustrations
2. Rounded Corners
3. Overlapping Text



## Travel

1. Overlapping Text
2. Custom Visuals & Illustrations
3. Rounded Corners



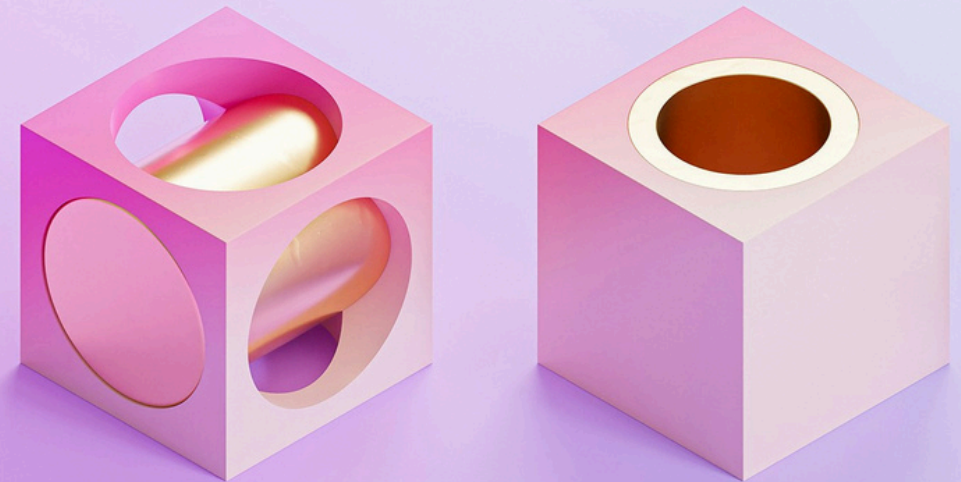
## CHAPTER TWO

# Design Trends' Impact on Performance

Email remains the highest ROI marketing channel. As a result, marketing teams are continually searching for ways to improve their email performance metrics.

While much focus is placed on optimizing headlines, copy, and conducting A/B tests, the impact of design on email performance is often overlooked.

In this chapter, we explore how industries with higher click rates use email design trends to enhance their email marketing performance.



# Less Is More In Email Design

How often are we slowed down by superfluously designed websites that we decide not to take the action that we set out to do?

The same holds true for emails, with the cognitive threshold perhaps being even lesser. You only get a fraction of a minute to grab the readers' attention. So, incorporating too many design trends can create sensory overload and hinder your chances of converting them.

Decluttering your emails is a best practice often referenced & through this study, we finally have the data to back it up.

## Industries see varying percentages of unique design elements in their emails.

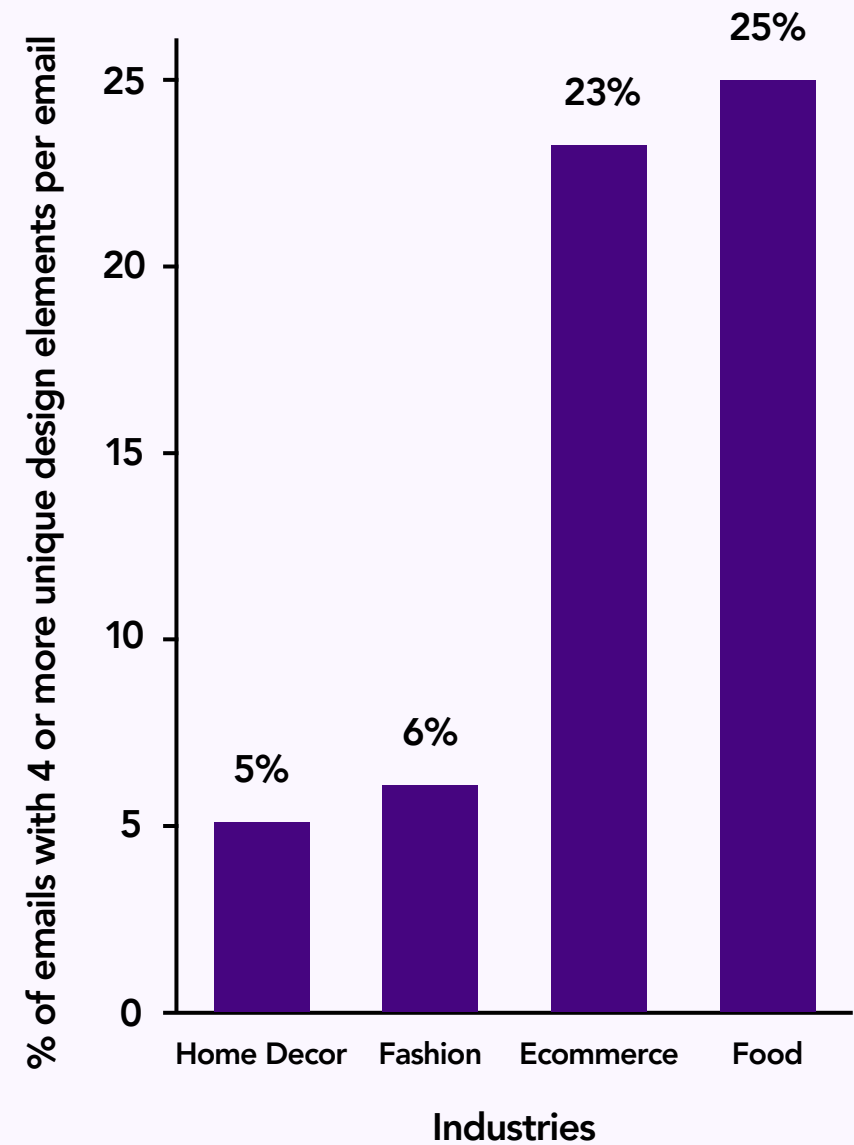
As seen in the graph, certain industries produce far more emails with four or more unique design elements in them than the rest.

The Food and Ecommerce industries account for 25% and 23% of emails with four or more unique design trends respectively. On the other hand, the Home Decor and Fashion industries have only 5% and 6% of emails with four or more unique email design trends.



**“Newsletters with just a handful of design elements often perform better than those with lots of design elements. So keep design elements to a minimum, don’t create sensory overload, and make it easy for people to skim and scan.”**

**Dan Oshinsky**  
Consultant, [Inbox Collective](#)





# Less Is More In Email Design

Fashion and Home Decor industries have significantly higher click rates than the Food and Ecommerce industries.

On average, emails in the Food and Ecommerce industries receive 1.49% and 1.47% click rates, respectively<sup>3</sup>. On the other hand, emails in the Fashion and Home Decor industries receive 1.64% and 1.67% click rates on average<sup>3</sup>.

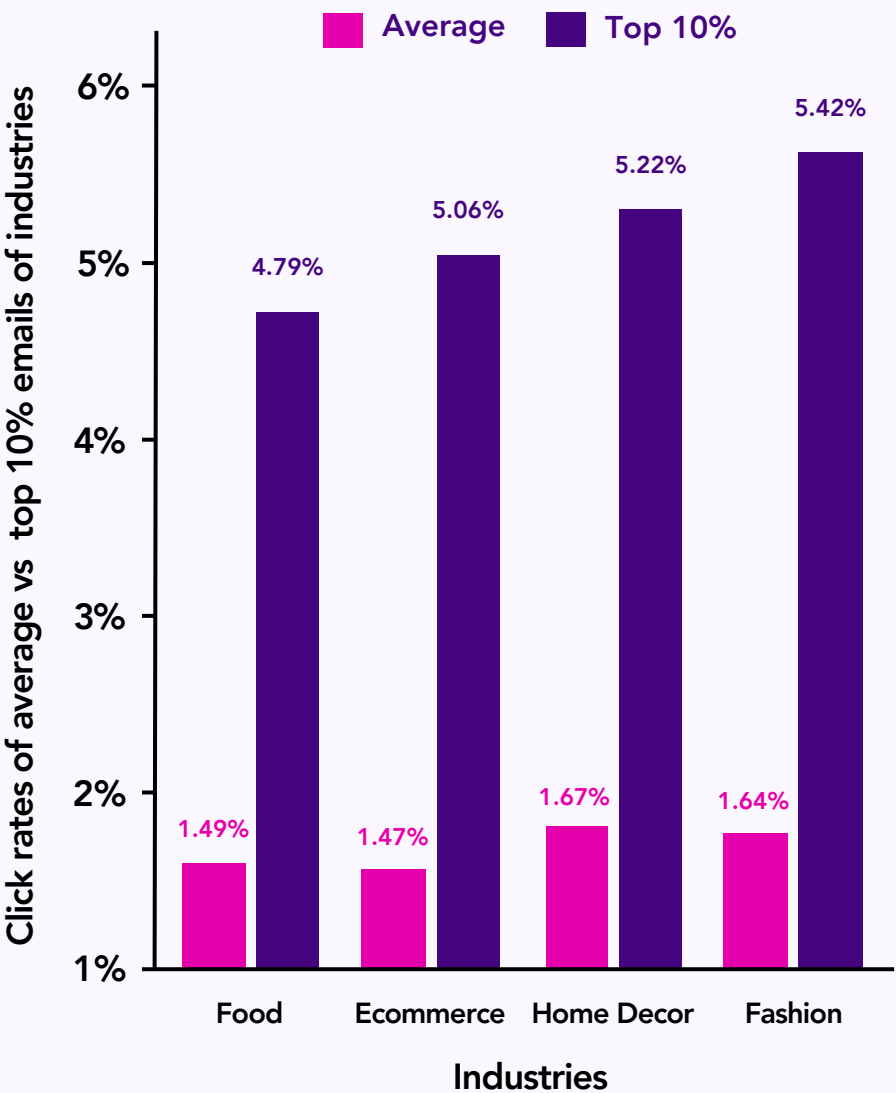
This trend holds true even for the top 10% of emails from these industries. The top 10% of emails in the Food and Ecommerce industries account for 4.79% and 5.06% click rates.<sup>3</sup> Whereas, the top 10% of emails for Home Decor, and Fashion industries account for 5.22% and 5.42% click rates.<sup>3</sup>

We can clearly see that the Fashion and Home Decor industries constantly perform better than the Food and Ecommerce industries for both average and top 10% emails.

Therefore, it's essential to design your emails with a focus on user experience. Build email aesthetics and flows keeping in mind user actions and journeys. Because, at the end of the day, your campaign goals are tied back to conversion.



The difference between the click rates for emails in industries with the highest(Home Decor) and lowest(Ecommerce) click rates is **a substantial 13%, which could unlock significant revenue upside for your brand.**



# TL;DR

We understand that all these numbers and text could've been a lot to go through and process. To make things convenient for you, we leave you with a **tl;dr version** below for a quick skim:

## Level up with modern design trends

Great customer experiences rest on staying with the times.

Marketers need to be updated with modern design trends, such as overlapping text, rounded corners, custom visuals & illustrations, amongst others, to deliver exceptional emails that enhance customer experience and capture viewers' attention.

## Less is more in email design

Focusing on the most impactful customer interactions is crucial to driving vital actions that lead to success. Email marketers commonly use modern design trends to achieve this goal. Yet, it's best to limit the number of unique design elements in your emails to facilitate user actions.

Emails filled with excessive visual elements can lead to sensory overload, in turn negatively impacting click rate. Therefore, it's essential to spend time testing and analyzing the number of unique elements that work best for your email campaigns.



## Endnotes

- 1 "The Six Steps For Justifying Better UX", Forrester, December 2016. <https://www.forrester.com/report/The-Six-Steps-For-Justifying-Better-UX/RES117708>
- 2 "The 2023 State of Email Design", Litmus, 2023. <https://page.litmus.com/state-of-email-design.html>
- 3 "The 2024 Benchmark Report", Klaviyo, 2024. <https://resources.klaviyo.com/2024-benchmark-report/p/3>

# About Publisher

## ----- Kombai

Voted as one of the Top-10 Products of 2023 on Product Hunt, Kombai's purpose-built AI converts unique email designs into production-ready emails in just a few clicks.

Kombai helps email marketers turn their unique designs into fully functional code without any coding skills. It auto-implements coding best practices for reduced spam risk, high deliverability, and accessibility.

With Kombai, you can build unique, high-performance email campaigns from your designs in minutes, not weeks. This frees up time for email teams to focus on email strategy and testing to ensure better overall email performance.

Kombai is used today by email teams at Fortune 5000 companies to run high-performance campaigns 20x faster and cheaper.

## ----- Email Love

Email Love is an inspiration gallery, blog, newsletter, and agency focused on one thing - Helping marketers elevate their email marketing.

Email Love's website looks to inspire marketers, designers, and coders, encouraging them to elevate their email creative, content, and strategy. Every email featured is carefully handpicked, ensuring only the best campaigns make the cut. Each post includes a detailed description highlighting what sets it apart and why it deserves your attention.

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[linkedin.com/company/email-love/](https://linkedin.com/company/email-love/)  
[twitter.com/emaillove](https://twitter.com/emaillove)

# Design Trends References

## Animated GIFs



GIF used as a ticker tape banner to notify users about active deals.

Visuals of the event are presented using multiple images clubbed together.

Adidas

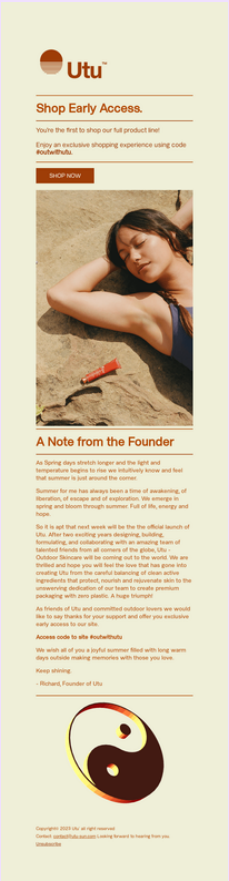
## Collage



Only two colors used across the entire email to create a duotone theme.

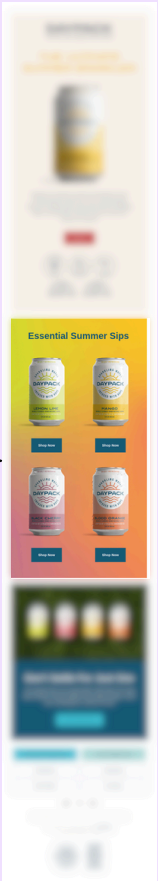
Le Col

## Duotone



Utu

## Gradients



Transitions of multiple colors used in the background.

Athletic Brewing



# Design Trends References

## Irregular Frames



Winnie Lou

Irregular shapes used as backgrounds behind product images.

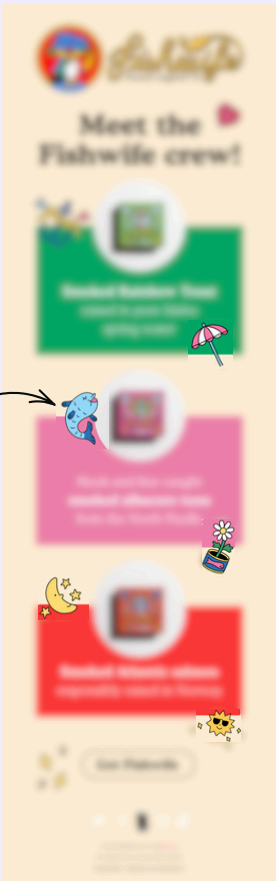
## Hand-drawn & Doodle Illustrations



Yohana

Doodle Illustration used as the hero cover in the email to give a personal touch.

## Floating Elements



FishWife

Objects floating throughout the email to grab the readers' attention.

# Design Trends References

## Gamified Experience



Progress bars used throughout the email to provide a gamified experience.

Grammarly

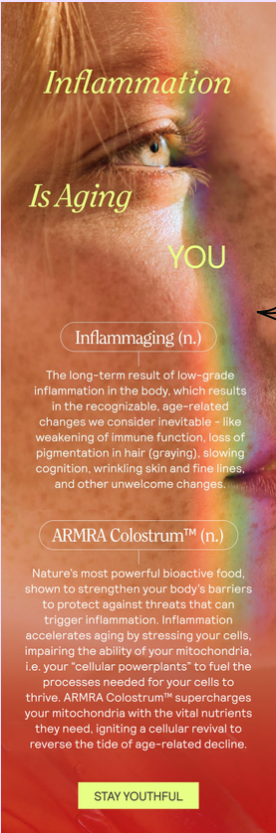
## Shadow Effect



A patterned drop shadow effect used behind the CTA button.

Graza

## Scroll Campaigns

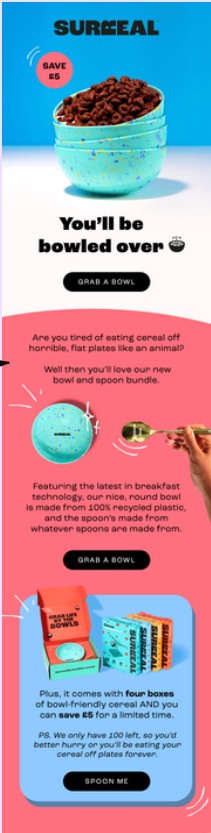


Long image of a girl's face used to merit scroll action.

Shades of pink and blue color used to give the email a joyful and ecstatic vibe.

Armra

## Ecstatic Color Themes



Surreal