Your **Cold email** checklist for 2025

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Warm-up and recovery

- ☐ Domain warm-up takes 1-3 months (the longer the better).
- ☐ Email warm-up (on a warmed domain) takes 14-30 days.
- ☐ Use a cold email tool that has warm-up included (like <u>Woodpecker</u>).
- ☐ Burned domain? Replace with backup.
- ☐ Re-warm burned domain, 30 days.

2025 sending guidelines

- ☐ General rule of thumb: ~50 emails per day per mailbox.
- ☐ <5% reply rate, open rates dropping? Warm-up + send.
- ☐ Keep the ratio of 30 cold emails + 20 warm-up emails.
- ☐ Constantly <30% open rate? Re-warm your domain.
- ☐ Check bounce messages if the bounce rate ~5%.

Email copy guidelines

- ☐ Keep copy between 30-100 words.
- ☐ 1 value proposition with a soft CTA per email.
- ☐ Avoid links, images, and bolding in the first email.
- ☐ Prospect-centric language. Avoid many I/We sentences.
- ☐ Keep around a 5th-grade reading level. Use: <u>Hemingwayapp</u>.
- ☐ If you are new to copywriting try frameworks like AIDA, PAS, etc.
- ☐ Keep your subject lines lowercase and 1-5 words (shorter = better).

A/B testing

- ☐ Determine the metric you want to test (e.g. open rate).
- ☐ On average, what % of said metric do your emails generate?
- ☐ Determine what % difference you want to detect at the minimum.
- ☐ Use <u>this calculator</u> to determine the sample size per version.
- ☐ "Baseline": your average. "Detectable Effect": difference to measure.
- ☐ Run a test for at least 7 days. Stop once sample size is reached.
- ☐ Check statistical significance <u>here</u>. #successes: e.g. unique opens.

Cold email infrastructure

- ☐ Use a tool optimized for Gmail changes (like <u>Woodpecker</u>).
- ☐ Use main providers: GoDaddy/Outlook, Google. Mix of both.
- ☐ Consider trying out outbound email providers/resellers: <u>1</u>, <u>2</u>, <u>3</u>.
- ☐ Dedicated outbound domains. Don't use your business domain.
- ☐ 2 emails/1 domain. Good engagement? Up to 5 emails/domain.
- ☐ Have 30-50% back up domains and emails ready to go.
- ☐ Set up <u>SPF</u>, <u>DKIM</u> & forwarding to your business domain.
- ☐ Track your reputation with <u>Google Postmaster Tools</u>.

Benchmarks   (Heavily influenced by target, country, and language)

- ☐ Good open rates are at 50-80%.
- ☐ Great reply rates: 3-5% per email, 10% campaign.
- ☐ Bounce rate: <2% (Use free list validation in <u>Woodpecker</u>).

Ideal customer profile (ICP)

- ☐ Define your ICP: "I help X solve Y by doing Z"
- ☐ Create sub-ICPs for tighter targeting and engagement.
- ☐ Take your best fit, top clients. What do they have in common?
- ☐ Gather keywords, phrases and search terms about top clients.
- ☐ Use these to search for lookalike clients.

AI/automation & personalization

- ☐ Overused, avoid: "I love the work you do at {{Company}}", etc.
- ☐ Instead, think: "What would I point out doing manual research?"
- ☐ Manually research X accounts. Write down what you learned.
- ☐ Brainstorm: "What types of data would show I did research?".
- ☐ Find that data. <u>Clay</u>, <u>Apify</u>, and <u>Zenrows</u> are your friends.
- ☐ Experiment embedding researched data into your copy.
- ☐ Once you know what works, use <u>Make</u>, <u>n8n</u> (lower cost).