buildout

EMAIL CHECKLIST

Top 10 habits
every CRE broker
should know

CRE EMAIL CHECKLIST

Stand out in your prospects' inboxes with emails that work

Speed to market matters to everyone in commercial real estate but so does the presentation. Whether you're promoting a just-listed property, announcing a price reduction, or reviving interest in a stale asset, email remains one of the most powerful tools at your disposal.

The problem? We discovered last month talking to our top Showcase super users, that 1 in 3 can't seem to find the time to create emails. And when they do, most listing emails fall flat. What we're seeing is that emails that are too long. Possibly, too busy. And worse, too generic. Or they look like they came out of a platform built for ecommerce instead of CRE. If you know that finding time is hard to produce emails, we want to ensure that when you do have the time, it's the best darn email you put out there. That is why we created this succinct list of 10 listing email best practices to help you tight up your outreach. We know that this list is fueled already by top-performing brokers to cut through the noise and drive real engagement.

HABIT 01

Start with a **strong subject line**

Your email is only effective if it gets opened. No matter how strong your listing is, it won't generate interest if no one opens the email. The subject line is your first and most critical touchpoint—it determines whether your email is opened, ignored, or deleted. According to Campaign Monitor, 64% of people decide to open or delete an email based on the subject line alone. In CRE, where brokers and investors are flooded with messages, the stakes are even higher. To stand out in crowded inboxes, your subject line should be:

✓ **CLEAR (NOT CLEVER)**
Good: "Sublease Available | 12,000 SF Office in Denver Tech Center"
Avoid: "You won't want to miss this one!"

✓ **PROPERTY-SPECIFIC**
Good: "Just Listed: ±18,500 SF Industrial in North San Antonio"
Why it works: You're signaling that the email is about a real opportunity not a newsletter or general update.

✓ **TIME-SENSITIVE**
Good: "Back on Market: 10,000 SF Warehouse | Immediate Occupancy"
Avoid: "Listing Update"

SIDE NOTE

Avoid all caps, excessive punctuation, or vague phrases like "Check this out."

HABIT 02

Don't forget the **preview text**

While subject lines get the spotlight, preview text (also known as the preheader) is just as important—and often overlooked. It's the line of text that appears in most inboxes directly after the subject line. On mobile devices, especially, it often determines whether your email gets opened or ignored. Think of it as your second hook, a chance to add context, highlight value, and differentiate your message from the dozens of others your recipients are scanning.
Use it to add clarity, not repetition. Think:

▶ **SUBJECT**
"Just Listed: Boutique Retail on Main St"

▶ **PREVIEW**
"High foot traffic, ±1,500 SF, surrounded by national tenants"

▶ **WHY IT MATTERS**
According to Litmus, mobile devices account for 42% of email opens, and most email clients display the preview text right below the subject line. That gives you an additional 30–90 characters (depending on the platform) to sell the click.

HABIT 03

Keep your header image **clean and relevant**

In commercial real estate, your audience isn't looking for abstract concepts or flashy marketing graphics—they want instant visual context. The header image is the first thing most recipients see when they open your email. It should immediately tell them:

▶ **What the asset is**

▶ **Where it is**

▶ **Why it matters**

One high-quality property photo beats a flashy graphic every time.

HABIT 04

Write like a broker, not a marketer

Your audience isn't a consumer, it's another professional. Maybe it's a buyer, a tenant rep, an investor, or a broker just like you. That means your email copy needs to communicate value fast, in a tone that's direct, data-driven, and confident. Leave the fluff and overhyped language to consumer brands. CRE prospects don't need a story—they need clarity. Consider:

▶ **Lead with facts, not flair**

▶ **Use market language, not marketing language**

▶ **Highlight what matters: property type, size, timing, opportunity**

▶ **Speak to the deal—not your company**

HABIT 05

Use bullet points, not paragraphs

Your prospects are busy. They scan. Use bullet points for:

▶ **Square footage and layout**

▶ **Location highlights**

▶ **Zoning and availability**

▶ **Ideal use (office, industrial, retail, etc.)**

Think, how do I make the key info visible without scrolling.

HABIT 06

Always include a **clear call to action**

Don't leave people wondering what to do next. Strong CTAs include:

▶ **"View the OM"**

▶ **"Schedule a Tour"**

▶ **"Contact the Listing Team"**

▶ **"See Full Listing"**

Link to a property website or PDF that gives more detail.

Prioritize mobile optimization

We touched on it above but according to industry benchmarks, up to 50% of CRE email opens happen on mobile. And in some submarkets, it's even higher. If your email isn't optimized for mobile, you're risking immediate deletion or a broken first impression.

Use a single-column layout. Keep text legible. Make sure your call-to-action (CTA) buttons are easy to tap.

Best practices for mobile-optimized emails:

► **Use a single-column layout**

► **Keep text legible and short**

► **Make your call-to-action (CTA) links/buttons easy to tap**

► **Optimize images for fast load**

► **Test every email on your phone before sending**

Use your brokerage's branding —**but don't overdo it**

Buildout was built to ensure brokerages brand's stay on point. So we, of course, need to include this. Your brand matters. In fact, consistent branding can increase trust and recognition, especially when you're marketing multiple properties across a region or vertical. But here's the key: branding should support the message—not compete with it.

In listing emails, the deal is the star. Your brand is the stage. Why branding matters in CRE emails:

✓ **TRUST**
A familiar, professional look signals credibility

✓ **CONSISTENCY**
Helps recipients visually connect the email to your team or firm

✓ **RECOGNITION**
Makes your emails easier to identify in a crowded inbox

HABIT 09

Send at the **right time**

Midweek mornings typically perform best for CRE outreach. Aim for Tuesday–Thursday, 9am–11am local time, based on your target market. But this is only a recommendation. Do some testing to see what may be a better fit for your clientele and market. We recommend avoiding:

► **Late Friday sends**

► **Monday mornings (email overload)**

► **Weekends (lower, less focused engagement)**

HABIT 10

Track engagement—but **focus on what matters**

Email metrics can be helpful—but don't get caught up in vanity stats. Prioritize:

► **Open rates (to test subject lines)**

► **Click-throughs (to gauge interest in the listing)**

► **Replies or follow-ups (the ultimate signal of intent)**

And most importantly, make sure you're actually **following up** on that engagement.

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Final thought

Your email is often the first impression a prospect gets of a listing. It's worth getting it right.

A well-written, well-designed email won't just look better it will help you win attention, generate activity, and move deals forward faster. If you're relying on clunky tools or outdated templates, this is a good time to re-evaluate. Streamlined, listing-specific email workflows are quickly becoming the standard.

The best brokers don't just list—they promote. And they do it with precision.

Interested in more CRE marketing best practices?
We have some exciting things in the works this quarter. It might just be time for us to chat.

SCHEDULE A DEMO