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The All-New GSD



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Hey, Insiders!	5
The Mindset: Shock to Your System	6
The Topline: Who Owns Your Customer Data?	11
The Scout: Email Critique of Kettle & Fire	14
Email #1	15
Email #2	18
Email #3	22
Email #4	26
Email #5	29
Email #6	32
Email Schedule	35
Key Takeaways + Action Steps from Kettle & Fire	37
The Wrap-Up	38

Hey, Insiders!

As you know, we want to expose you to as many sources of knowledge and inspiration as possible with every GSD. So starting this February, we'll be dividing the report into three new sections:

1. **The Mindset (by yours truly):** As CEO, I have helped numerous companies reach the 6- or 7-figure mark. I've met hundreds of business owners in the process and quickly realized that their mindset shaped their success. My GSD goal? To challenge how you think and help you unlock your full potential. Every month, I want your productivity to skyrocket.
2. **The Topline (by GSD Contributors):** This is a special section. It won't be a regular part of our monthly GSDs, but it will be updated whenever we see industry developments that will be relevant and beneficial to you. The objective of this is to give you a rundown of pertinent areas of growth (e.g., this month, maximizing first-party data) and explain your next steps.
3. **The Scout (by Team GSD):** Do you ever wonder about other companies' email strategies? Are you curious about their writing techniques? Or about their incentives? We subscribed to various companies' emails, and we're going to dissect and distill them into crucial learnings and clear action steps *every month*. This way, you can pick up tips and tricks for your email marketing.

Let us know your thoughts about the all-new GSD by hopping onto our members-only Facebook group. We hope you're as excited as we are!

Happy reading!

Matthew Stafford

The Mindset

Shock to Your System

By Matthew Stafford

What to expect in this section:

- Your mindset is the foundation of success. Whether you're stuck in a rut or gaining momentum, this section will help you reframe and refine your thinking.
- You get to pick the brain of Build Grow Scale's CEO, Matt Stafford—with his years of experience as a leader, strategist, businessman, and revenue partner to hundreds of ecom owners.
- Get ready to get real.

My singular goal for this section of the monthly GSD is to teach you that the most critical skill you need to succeed in business is right in front of you. Yet most people never actually teach it to you, get you to work on it, or even consider it.

There's a good chance neglecting this skill prevents you from realizing your business dreams, financial goals, and the lifestyle you hope to provide for yourself and your family.

I'll be covering many lessons in this section this year. I will also make a bold promise that this will be the biggest lever you have ever pulled to create "success" ... no matter how you define it.

As you may have learned, when I go quiet, it isn't because I'm lazy or don't feel like doing anything. I have had a fantastic ride over the last couple years. And when I say amazing, it isn't typically what someone calls amazing.

If you are in business for yourself and have been there for any length of time, you get hit right between the eyes with things you never saw coming. We all have—that's life. And you better get used to it.

Over the past 12 months, I've taken several members on as private clients to work on what I've been discovering. To find out if they would see or feel the same way I did with what I learned. I found the same thing with each of them, which showed up as different challenges for each business owner.

I know I have said many times inside the group that the owner is the bottleneck in their business. If that wasn't true, why did each client have crazy good results when I only talked with the owner? The entire business started improving from top to bottom. Things got easier to diagnose, handle, and solve.

So what skill can you own, and not need to be any more talented than the next guy ... yet continue to improve and yield better results month after month?

Each one of these clients possessed the same thing I had when we started—a flawed thinking process. It ended up being the root cause of all the other problems. As we developed and improved our thinking processes, this turned out to be the one lever that affected everything.

I don't know about you, but I, for one, am grateful for the challenges I've encountered over the past couple years. Each one has forced me to figure this out now, because it will serve me—and you—for the rest of our lives. That's *if* you pay attention and do the work of upgrading your skill in this area.

All the other things we provide for you center around your business. But not this one. For this one, it's time to address a more personal issue: what's going on inside that mind of yours, and whether it's helping or hindering you.

Our eyes only see, and ears only hear, what our brain is looking for.

Unfortunately, you will need to work on cracking this open for yourself.

Most entrepreneurs pretend these issues don't exist. They always look to the marketplace for answers or solutions.

You've been sold business success like you've been sold everything else: "Following these ten steps, you can do everything wrong and still get everything you want. And you'll achieve it in days or weeks, not months or years."

Well, hopefully, this will be a little shock to your system.

How has that been working for you?

Stop reading and really answer that question.

Put some thought into it. How many of these courses and programs have you bought that you still aren't doing anything with?

Your success isn't based on the latest tricks or tactics. They may help make things a little easier, but they won't give you consistent long-term results year after year.

You need to see that the cause and cure for your problem are inside your mind ... not the marketplace.

My friend Rich Schefren puts it this way:

"There is a set of beliefs, knowledge, and perspective necessary to think and act as a strategic entrepreneur does. It is critical to your business's success. As a result, it's not an overstatement to say that if you are trying to grow an online business, and you're

missing any of these necessary beliefs, knowledge, or perspectives ... it's the equivalent of being functionally illiterate."

You need to consider that you are the biggest obstacle to your success.

As an entrepreneur, you need to think accurately, clearly, and better than your competitors.

Answer this ...

Are you going full speed ahead toward your desired success? Or are you wandering around?

Are you doing what you want today, or are you going through the motions of yesterday's habits or routines?

Is what you have what you want? Or have you been settling for it because it was easier or less scary than what you needed to do to get what you wanted?

You already know the answers to these difficult questions.

Your thinking determines your success or failure in every area of your life. This includes your business.

So it isn't a stretch to see ... You can't have a thriving business unless your thinking is clear and accurate.

You are what you think; your business reflects that back to you.

Next month I'll start sharing some exercises you can do to work through this stinkin' thinkin'. It's time to make some true breakthroughs. Live the life you intended when you took the risk to be the master of your journey.

The last thing I will do is bombard you with a bunch more things to do. If this is going to work, it needs to be sustainable and consistent.

As my favorite book, *The Slight Edge*, puts it, “Consistent daily habits over a long period of time. The type of habit that is easy *not* to do because you don't see the immediate effect. But that will give you long-term leverage and momentum when put into practice” ... as Deven Davis says, “*every damn day!*”

The Topline

Who Owns Your Customer Data?

By Mark Shilensky

What to expect in this section:

- This section will not be a regular section in our monthly GSD. It will be a special section where we will include timely pieces from our team of experts, focusing on various areas of growth.
- You'll quickly discover where to focus your time and effort for maximum impact.
- Use this section to stay ahead of the game.

First-party vs. third-party data is one topic you'll hear about in 2023.

So we can all start on equal footing, let's go over the basics.

Third-party data is where a third party service like Meta, Google, TikTok, etc., owns the communication channel with your customers. You have to keep using them to have ongoing access to your customers.

Let's go beyond just advertising platforms and look specifically at ecommerce. This same principle applies to Amazon, Etsy, eBay, or any other platform where they control how and when you can communicate with your customers.

First-party data is what you want. This is where you own your customers' information and have a direct path to put your message in front of them. As a tool to achieve this, the conversation will revolve primarily around email and SMS. Still, it could quickly

expand to any other medium where you directly control the customer communication process.

A beneficial side effect of having more first-party ownership of your customer data is that you don't have to spend as much time and money to re-acquire customers for their second, third, fourth purchase, and beyond.

You can see that this directly ties to your customer retention rate (CRR) and will also improve your customer lifetime value (CLV), both of which are topics many of us don't talk about or focus on nearly as much as we should.

If you take a minute to think about it, what can you do to help increase the quality of your communication with your customers?

Simply stated, the more detailed information you capture and use to segment your lists, the deeper your connection with your customers can become.

So over the next few weeks in the Facebook group, I'm going to be sharing a number of the tools and techniques I use to capture that data, and how I use it to segment my audience in Klaviyo to communicate more effectively.

Now, for those of you wondering ... yes, you will still need to advertise on social media and other platforms. But how much more precise and effective will that advertising be if it's targeted based on your first-party data and expanded segmentation?

When this GSD is released, I'm going to add a thread on this exact topic in the EI Facebook group so we can engage directly and discuss how to implement it in more detail.

This isn't a time to sit on the sidelines and watch. If you want to get the most out of this discussion, you need to be active and engaged.

Don't wait for someone else to ask the question you're thinking about.

Don't tell yourself, "I'm a newbie, so I can't add value."

Don't let your negative self-talk hinder you from grabbing the success you deserve.

Be a part of the conversation. That's the only way you'll continue to grow. I'll see you in the Facebook group!

The Scout

Email Critique of Kettle & Fire

By GSD Contributors

What to expect in this section:

- What are your competitors doing right? What techniques are they using that you can use to your advantage? What pitfalls should you avoid?
- In this section, we will scout various ecom stores and subscribe to their emails/newsletters ... so you won't have to.
- Every month, we'll analyze and break down each email, point out what worked and what didn't, and provide best practices and recommendations.

Some disclaimers:

- While we are channeling our years of expertise to study their emails, we have no visibility over the brands' basic strategies and results/data.
- We intend to inspire you and point out best practices you can apply to your brand. You are empowered to cherry-pick which recommendations will work best for you.
- And if you do decide to experiment, we encourage you to test, test, test.

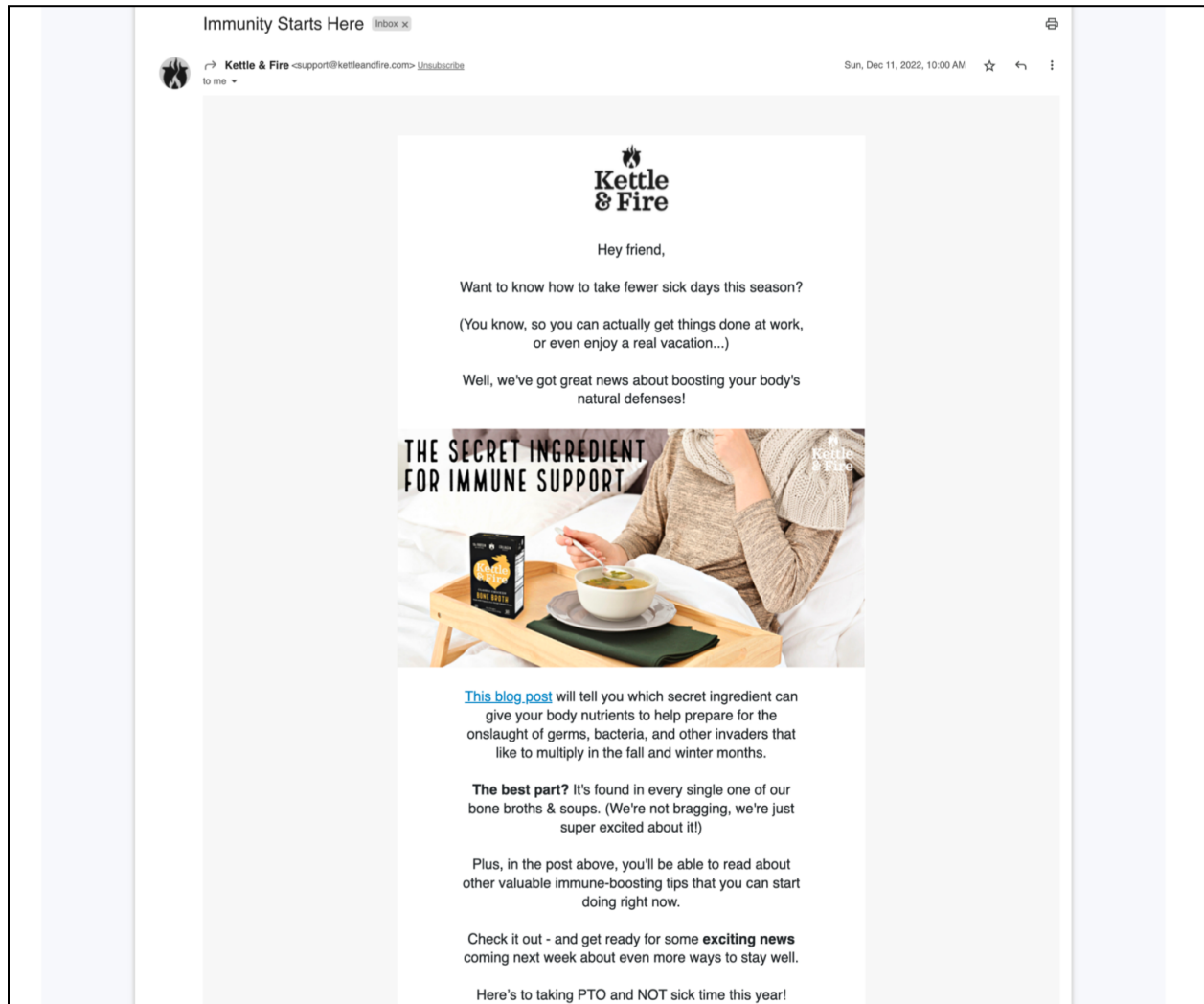
The GSD team subscribed to **Kettle & Fire** for this month's critique.

Kettle & Fire is an online store that sells bone broths and soups. Their company's mission is "to deliver the amazing benefits of bone broth to the world." They offer easy-to-prepare broths and soups made from high-quality chicken and cattle (no additives, preservatives, antibiotics, or hormones). #NotSponsored

Below you'll see their email campaign for December. I dissected each email and added important notes! Feel free to jump in on our private Facebook group if you have thoughts to share.

EMAIL #1

(Sent on December 11)



Subject line: As a general rule, email subject lines should be short and sweet. Marketo recommends using no more than seven words or 41 characters; Mailchimp, on the other hand, says nine words or 60 characters. Ideally, they are descriptive enough to indicate

what's in the email, and interesting enough that you want to open the email. So for me, their three-word subject line is short. But can it be more intriguing? Yes.

Body copy: Right off the bat, I'm loving the language they used in the email. Sentences were short, punchy, and conversational. However, I wish they would have used my first name instead of "friend" so it's more personal. This customization should be pretty easy to set up.

But notice how they started with a question (*"Want to know how to take fewer sick days this season?"*), followed by the emotional benefit (*"You know, so you can actually get things done at work, or even enjoy a real vacation ..."*), and then the functional benefit (*"Well, we've got great news about boosting your body's natural defense!"*).

Smart copywriting! Here's why:

Questions are fantastic hooks you can use to start an email because they immediately pique interest. Here, Kettle & Fire is also asking about something very concrete and relatable (how to take fewer sick days), which is the emotional benefit that appeals to the reader's heart or passion points. "To get things done, or to enjoy a real vacation" is an emotional appeal to the people who like to be in control, or those who know the value of personal time off. Finding the emotional benefit is an excellent way to connect with your audience.

Let's be honest ... Sometimes, when we're too close to our products (or too in love with our brand), we tend to focus on the functional benefits of our offer. I've seen many emails starting with the product descriptions (stats, specs, the whole shebang). When really, the first thing you should address is, "What's in it for me? Why should I care about this email, and why should I care about your product?"

So when you write your emails, remember BENEFITS FIRST. Reasons to believe come after. And you don't have to list everything (nobody likes a text-heavy email). Check out

how this email had a link to a blog post on their website. This is brilliant because the copy can be longer on the website, and you can add elements like photos, video links, and more.

Visuals: After the intro, we see a picture of a woman in bed, sipping broth. It looks like she is mid-cough and sick in bed. I get that this photo intends to subtly remind the reader that this ill woman can be you if you don't support your immunity.

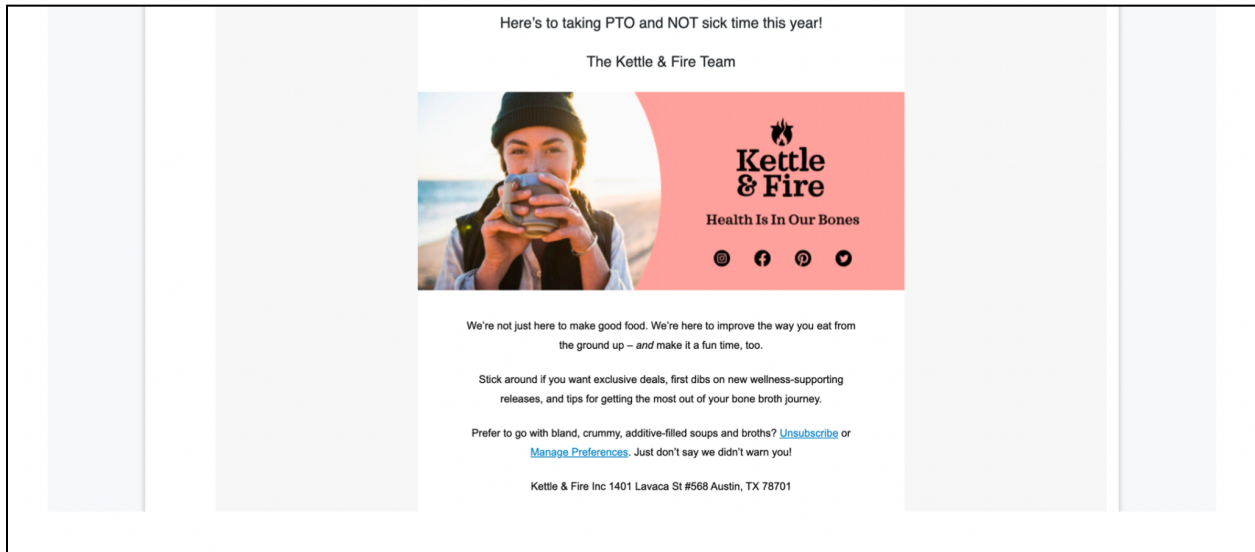


Now, the picture itself isn't terrible. Technically, it's clear (not low resolution or pixelated) and well-lit. But I have two concerns ...

First, the cropping is horrible. I wish they hadn't cropped the model's head or fist. As a rule of thumb, photos with faces tend to get more engagement (on Instagram, pictures with faces get 38% more likes than those without).

Second, and this is more important ... The broth doesn't look appetizing. Don't you agree? It doesn't look very comforting or delicious. A good food stylist can help, or perhaps a closer focus on the product.

Lastly, I wanted to point out their cute way of getting you to stay tuned (and stop you from unsubscribing).

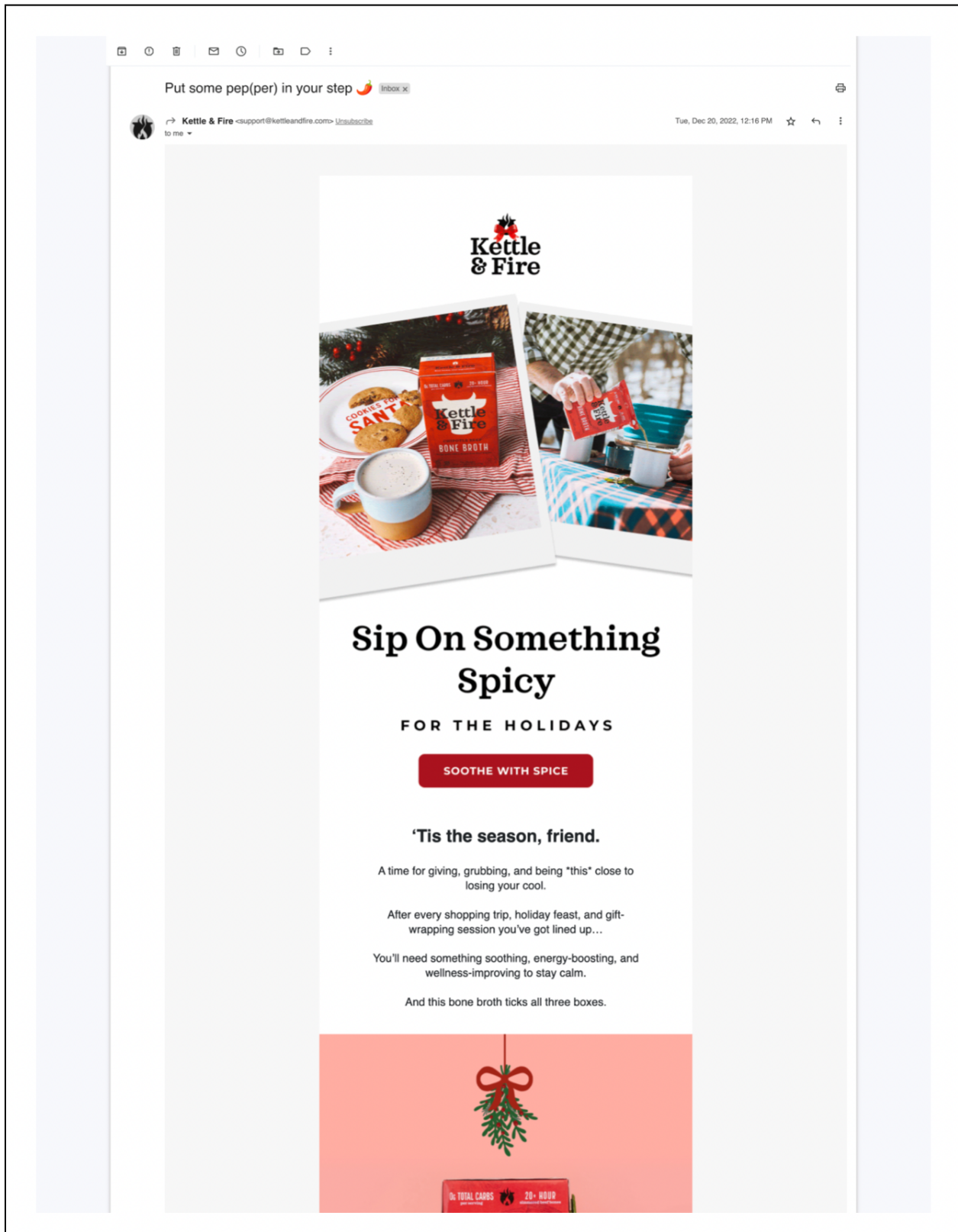


“Prefer to go with bland, crummy, additive-filled soups and broths? Unsubscribe or Manage Preferences. Just don’t say we didn’t warn you!”

This part is friendly but has a teasing edge. Of course, you wouldn’t choose bland, crummy, additive-filled soups and broths! So again, it appeals to your pride in selecting quality products like Kettle & Fire.

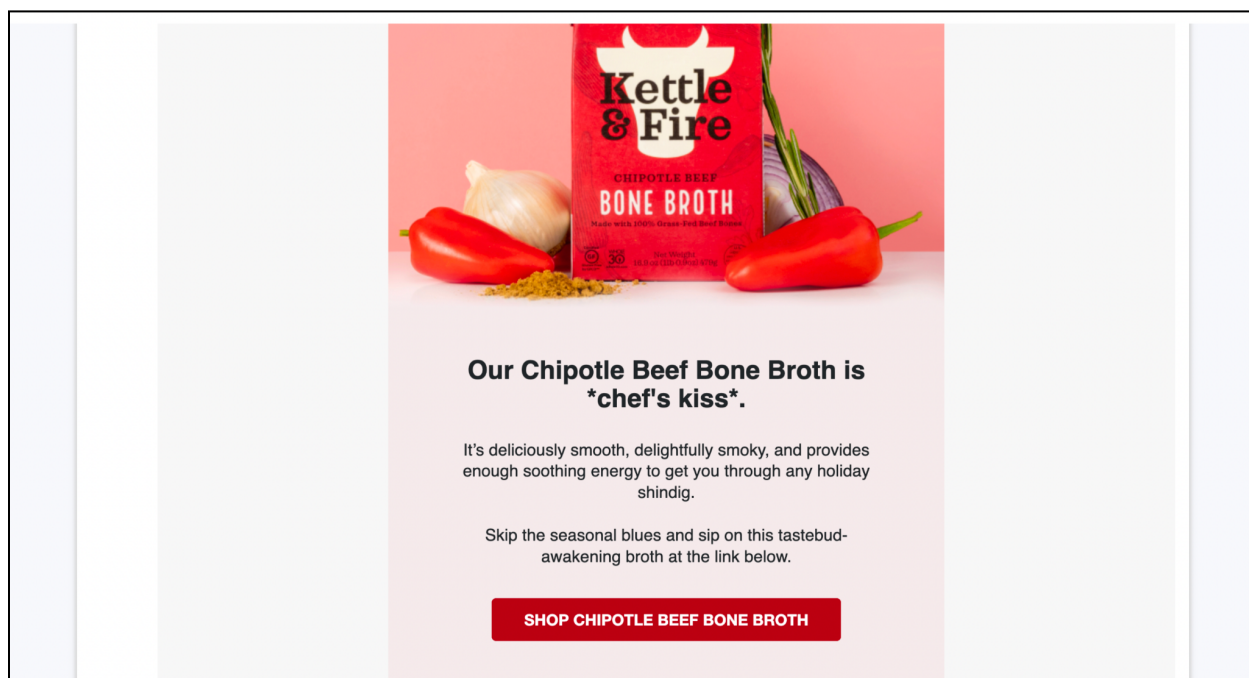
EMAIL #2

(Sent on December 20)



Subject line: *“Put some pep(per) in your step.”* That emoji was cute, not going to lie! And I like that it showed a little personality, a little oomph, even though it was still short. I also immediately knew the email would be about pepper or something hot or spicy.

Body copy: Sure enough, the header goes, *“Sip on something spicy for the holidays.”* Very aligned to the subject line, wouldn't you say? However, I don't like the copy on the button that says, *“Soothe with spice.”* At this point in the email, it's unclear what it means.



“Tis the season, friend.” Again I wish it was addressed to me personally. But a nice Christmas touch, for sure.

It also hints at the frantic and stressful holiday season, which is why the reader will need a bone broth that ticks all boxes. It was a good setup (emotional need) for the solution (product).

“Our Chipotle Bone Broth is **chef’s kiss**.” I love that! The headline sounds very young, very Gen Z.

The button below “Shop Chipotle Beef Bone Broth” is much more straightforward than “Soothe with spice.” But having two to three call-to-action (CTA) buttons is a good practice. Any more than that, and your email will likely generate fewer clicks.

Visuals: Did you notice that cute logo up top? They dressed up their logo with a festive red bow. Immediately, you know that this is a Christmas-related campaign. I also noticed the name “Santa” peeking out from the plate of cookies. I love that the holiday elements are subtle and not in-your-face.




Below, you will see that the main product visual is well done. Again, just a slight hint of Christmas with the main focus being the product, surrounded with fresh veggies and spices. It helped that the email was visually broken up by the salmon pink background. It moves the reader and makes the email interesting (and not too long).




EMAIL #3

(Sent on December 22)

Your fave holiday sips with a TWIST 🍷👉 [Inbox](#)

 **Kettle & Fire** <support@kettleandfire.com> [Unsubscribe](#)
to me

Thu, Dec 22, 2022, 9:03 AM ☆ ↶ ⋮



Kettle & Fire
14g PROTEIN COLLAGEN
Kettle & Fire
CLASSIC CHICKEN BONE BROTH
16oz (473ml) | 100% Natural | No Added Sugar

A Sip of Nostalgia With a Splash of Nutrition

FILL YOUR MUG

Your Fave Holiday Sips Just Got An Upgrade


Festive drinks are arguably the *best* part of the season.


But the guilt that comes with every not-so-great-for-your-health sip? Probably the *worst* part of the season.

So put a nutritious spin on your fave holiday drinks and savor away, guilt-free:

Low-Carb, Keto Eggnog

Stay on track while satisfying that holiday craving.



 **Kettle & Fire**
HOW TO MAKE KETO EGGNOG

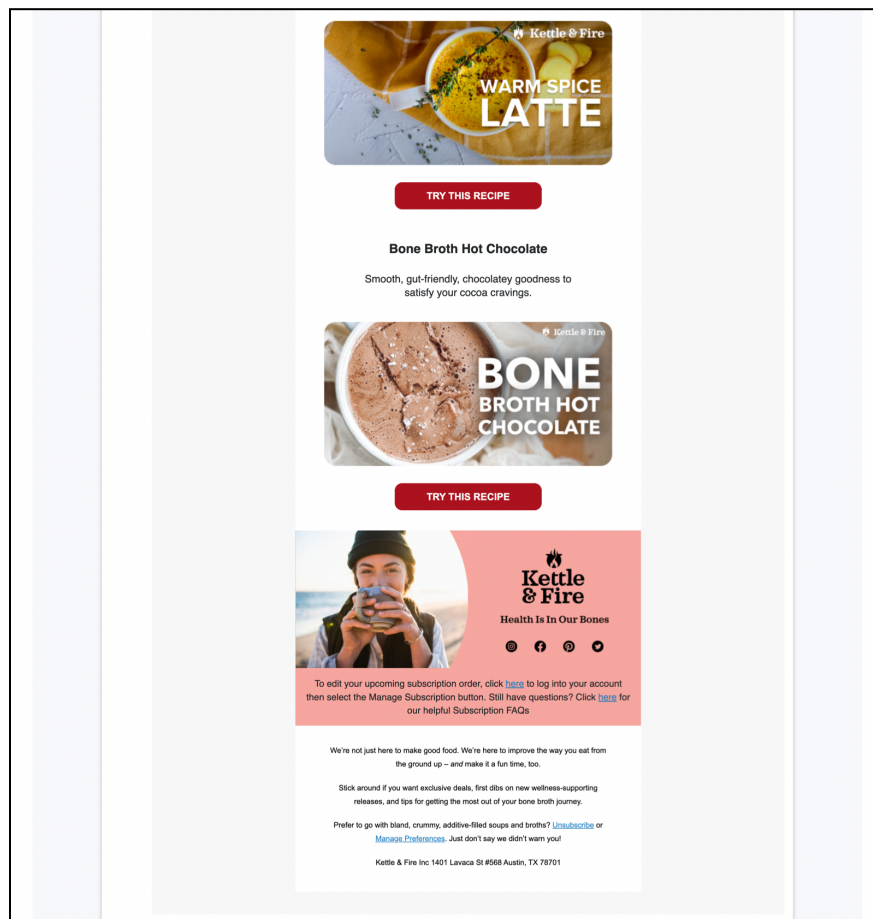
TRY THIS RECIPE

Subject line: Personally, I think the eyes emoji gave life to the subject line. Without it, it had no flavor or flair. But, it is very clear.

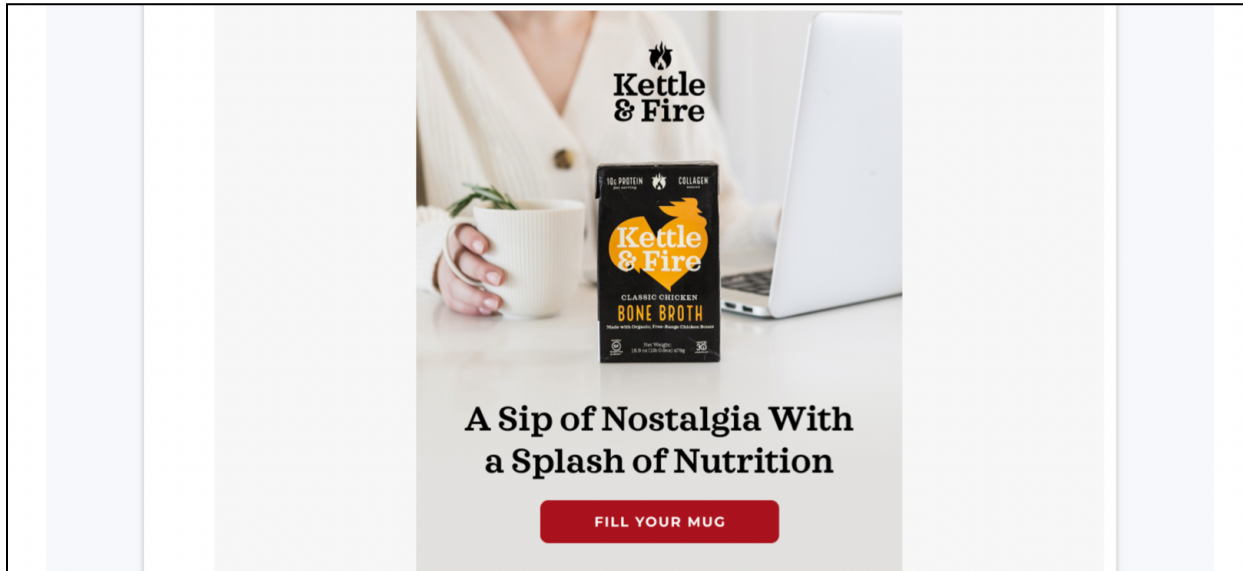
Body copy: “A sip of nostalgia with a splash of nutrition,” doesn’t do anything for me. At this point, I don’t know what the drink is yet. I am not compelled to read on. As a CTA, “Fill your mug” is creative, but I don’t know why I should click on it.

“Your favorite holiday sips just got an upgrade.” Clear and interesting. I’m thinking, “Ooh, did my favorite Christmas drinks get better?”

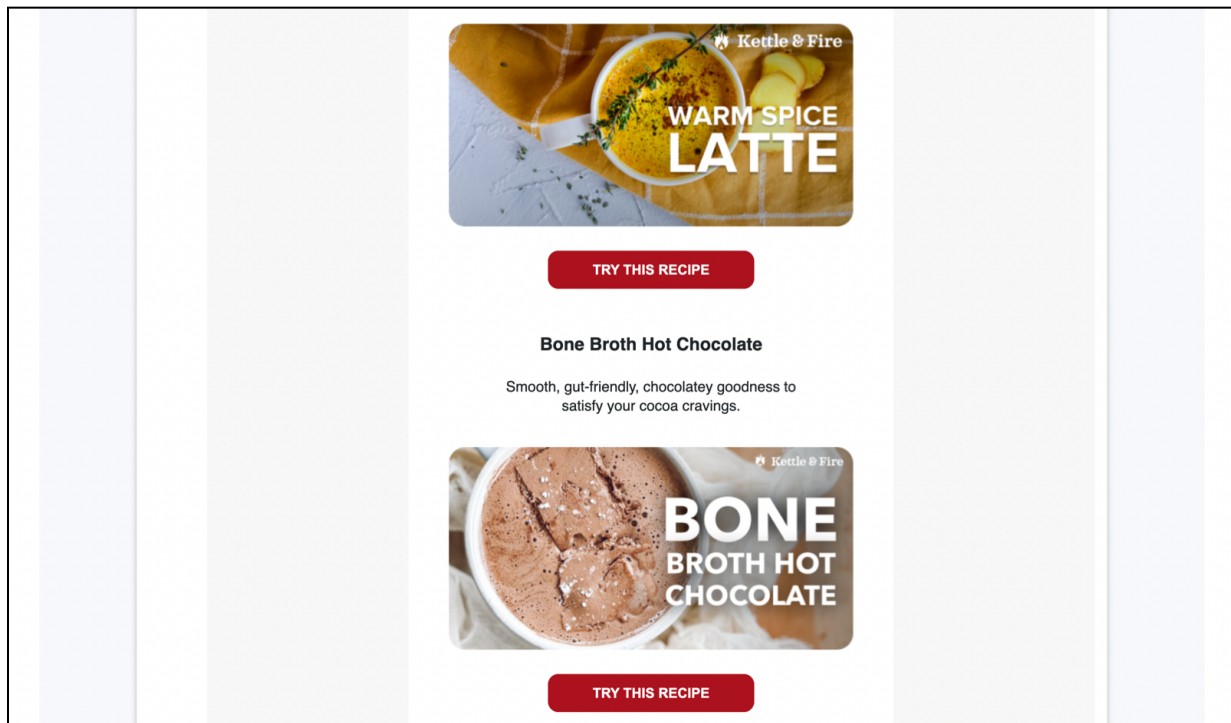
The relatability angle follows this: “Festive drinks are fun, but the guilt after is not.” Here we can see that Kettle & Fire is sticking to their formula of emphasizing the emotional need (to indulge without the guilt) and context (holiday drinking) before delivering the product’s promise (nutritional recipes for Christmas drinks, using their broths and soups). Effective!



Visuals: The main visual they used here is underwhelming. Very generic and forgettable.



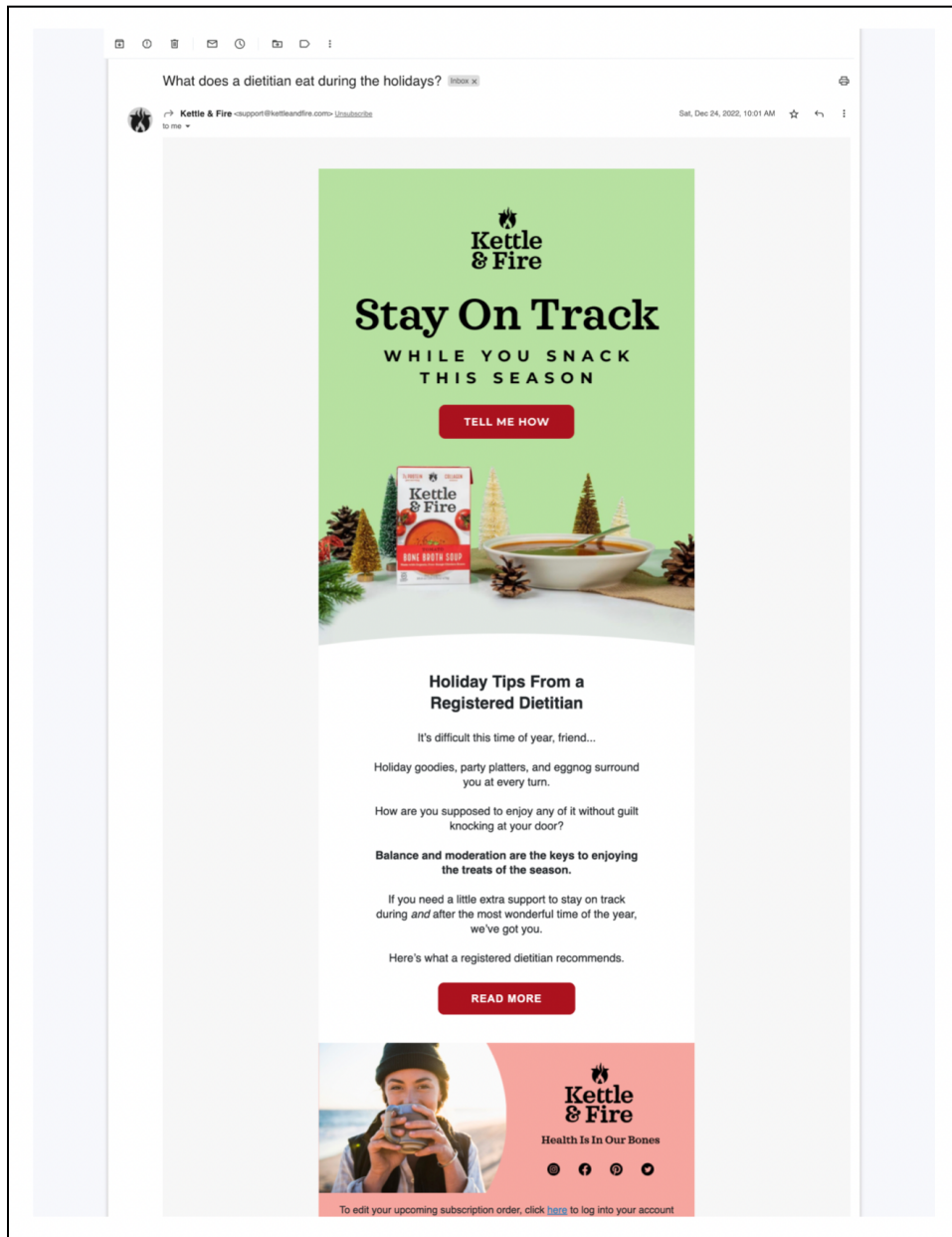
But regarding the recipe thumbnails, these food shots look professionally done! They look delectable. The titles of the recipes are clear and readable.



If you're wondering, having as few images as possible in your email (3-10) is recommended. Again, these photos should be clear, well-lit, and ideally evoke an emotion or convey a message. Using too many images can also impact your loading time or make the visual cluttered, so consider that.

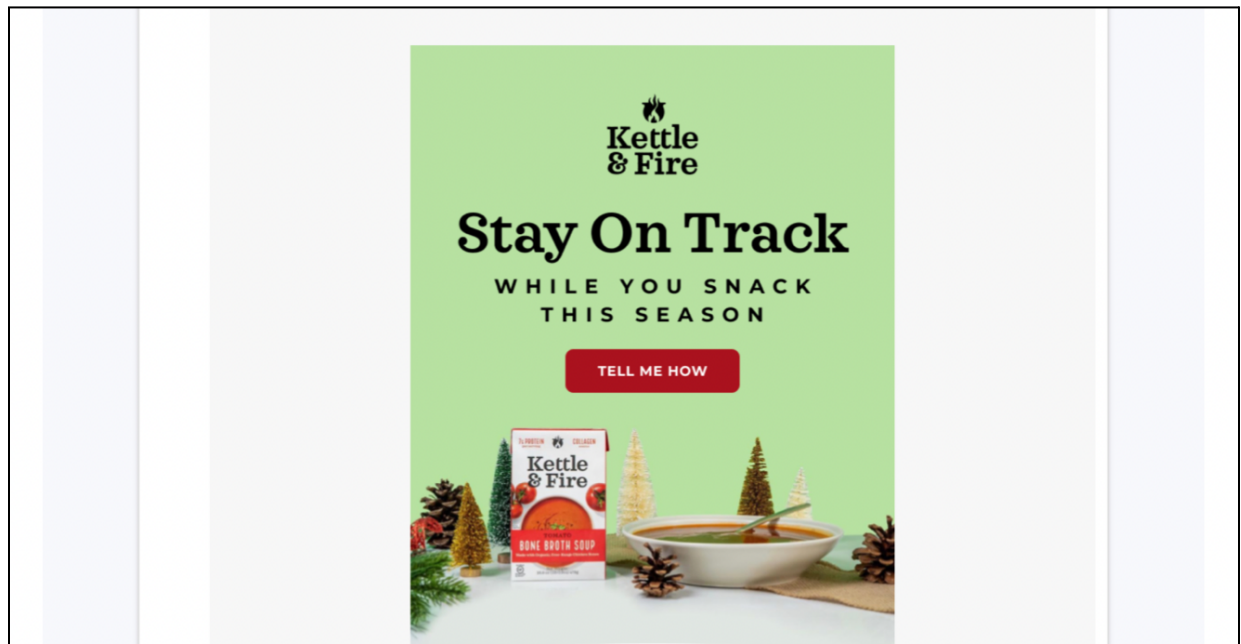
EMAIL #4

(Sent on December 24)



Subject line: "What does a dietician eat during the holidays?" This line feels a little too niche for me. Why would I be curious about what dieticians eat? Unless, of course, the target audience of Kettle & Fire is diet-conscious health buffs. Otherwise, this is not my angle.

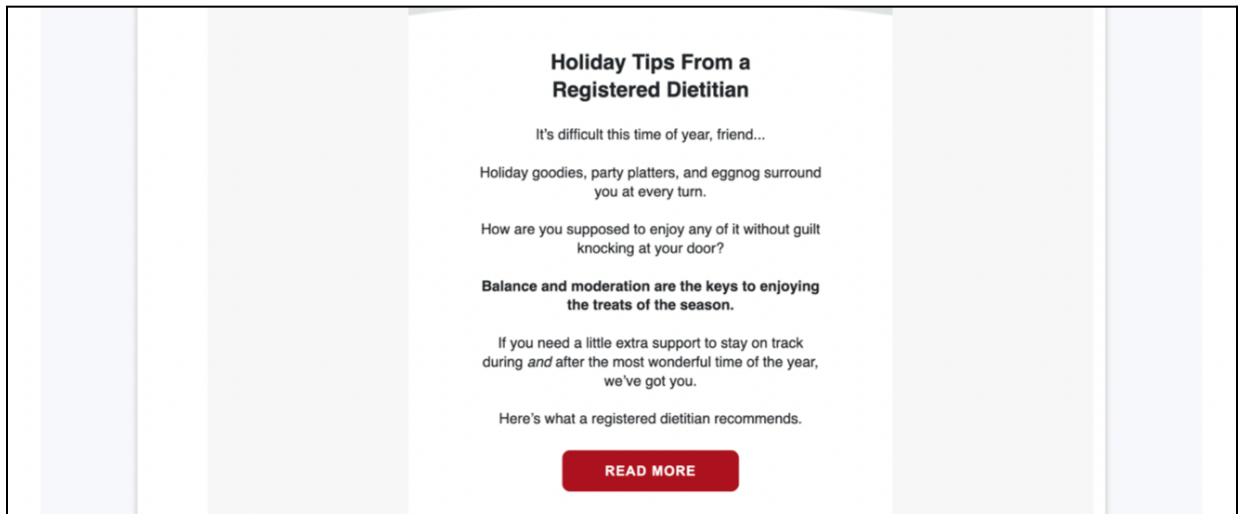
Body copy: *“Stay on track while you snack this season.”* Now there’s a good insight into the audience’s specific behavior. It’s talking to people who are improving their health without sacrificing a good snack.



I love the call to action, too: *“Tell me how”* ... because as a reader, even if I haven’t seen the rest of the email, I am informed enough and intrigued enough to click. I immediately know that I want to stay healthy and protect my progress while still being able to indulge myself during the holidays.

I would swap this headline with the subject line if it were me. What do you think?

For the rest of the body copy, the writer could paint a picture for the user: *“All the festivities, and all the holiday goodies, with all that guilt. What would a registered dietitian do? You’re encouraged to click to read more.”* And I would have included the dietitian’s name and company in the email to make it more legit.



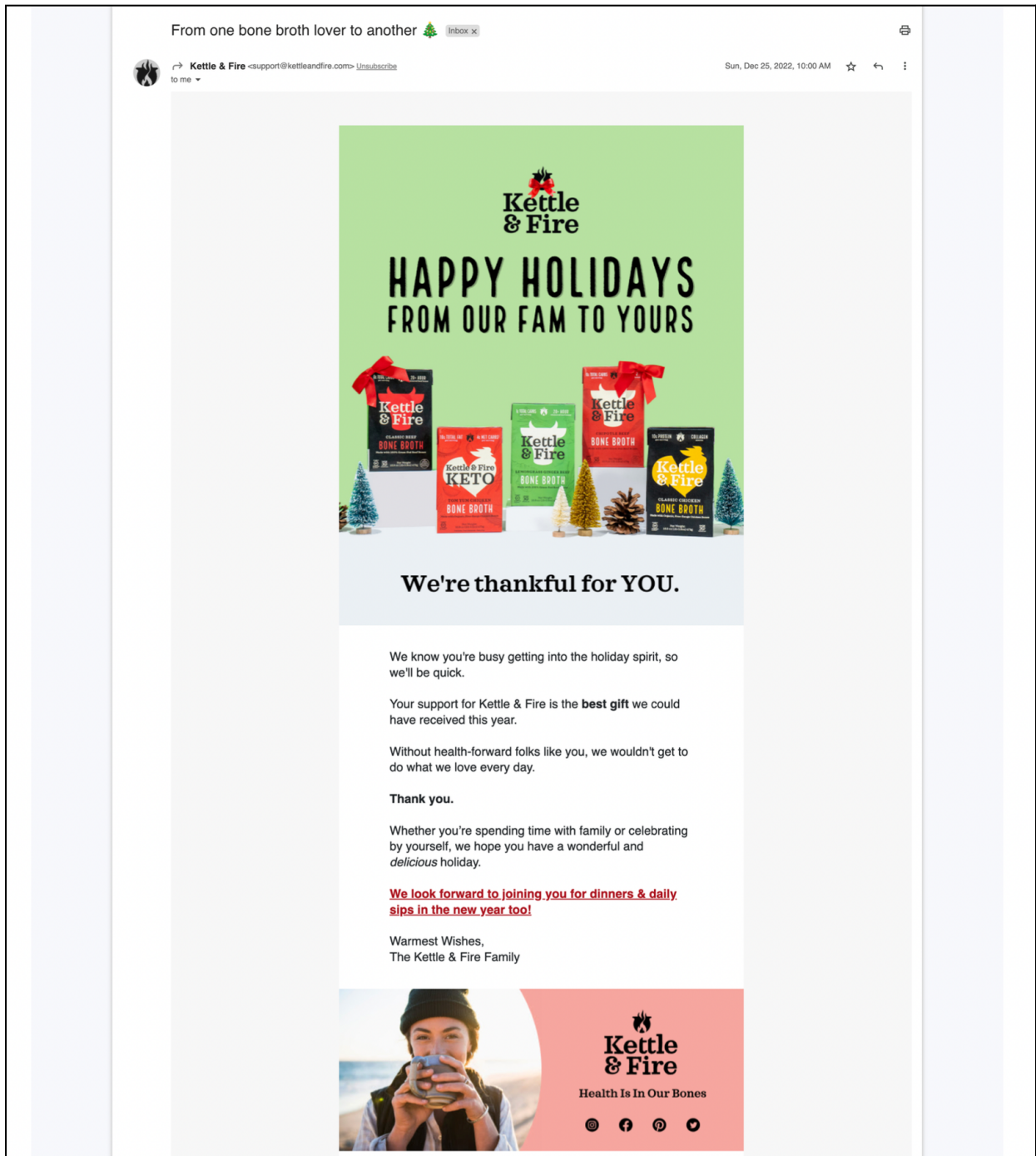
But overall, getting an expert is a good idea for your brand to appear like a trustworthy authority in your field.

Visuals: This visual needs to illustrate the point (of staying on track while you snack, with the expert advice of a dietitian). It's just a cute holiday-themed product shot. I am also slightly disappointed that we don't see the delicious soup in the bowl much. The colors do pop, though.



EMAIL #5

(Sent on December 25)



Subject line: Cute subject line. I love the pine tree emoji. Also, I love that it touches on the connection between the brand and the reader.

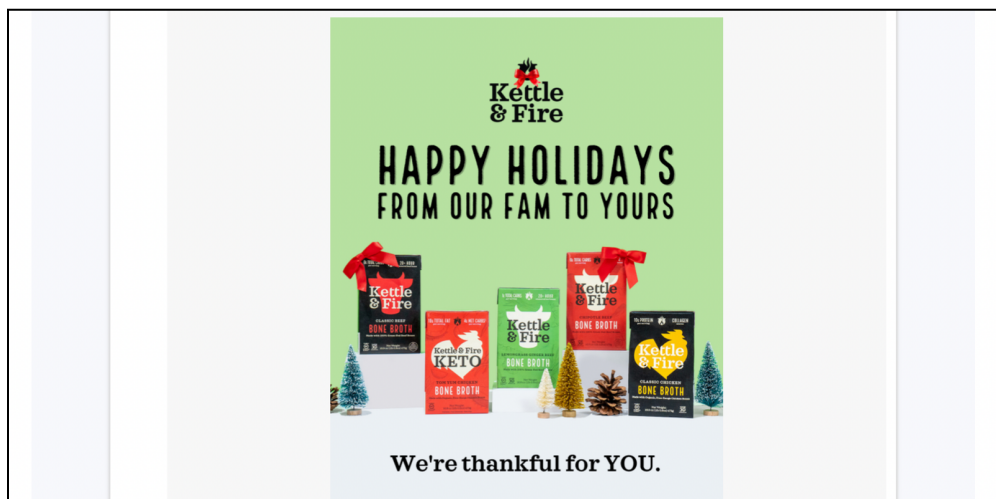
Body copy: The copy was written like a personal letter from the brand to me. Unlike the other emails, this one has a signatory, “*The Kettle & Fire Family*” ... and I love that. It neatly ties in with the headline, “*Happy holidays from our fam to yours.*”

I think the tiny but touching gestures from the brand create and strengthen its community of loyal buyers. However, I would have loved it more if they’d given me a unique Christmas gift (like a freebie or free shipping). But I understand that sometimes brands don’t want to “sell” during meaningful moments like Christmas.

And of course, I still wish they had personalized it with my name!

You’ll also notice that there are no CTAs in the email, but there is a link. “*We look forward to joining you for dinners and daily sips in the new year too,*” is clickable. Upon clicking, you will be led to their homepage. Ideally, this would lead to a special page featuring New Year promos or recipes to make the experience more seamless.

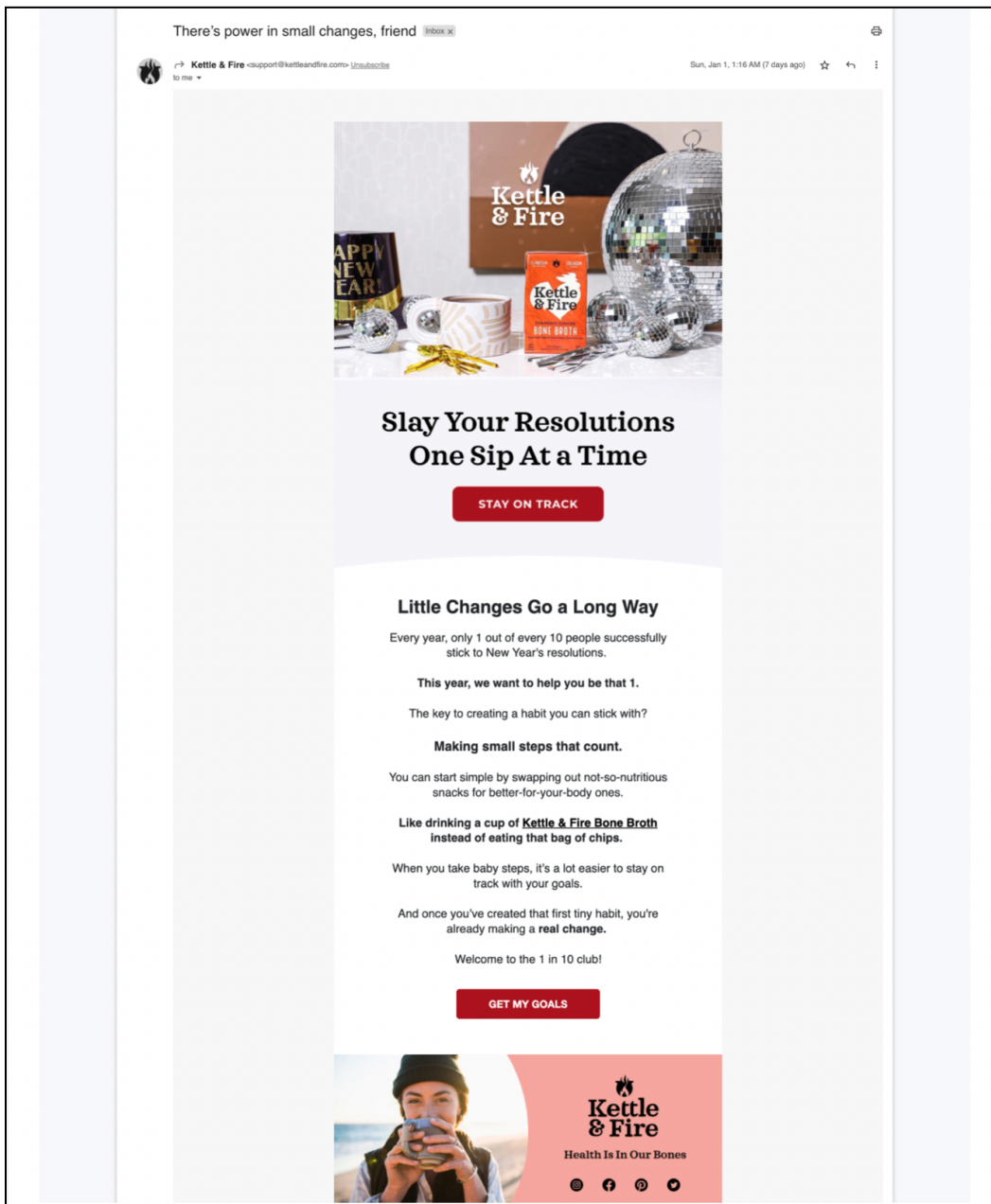
Visuals: I like the product shot. Very simple, but you feel the holidays with the consistent red ribbon and the pine trees. However, because this was intended to feel like a letter, I’d like to have seen a picture of the owner. Or perhaps a family enjoying their products. Something to add a little more warmth.



EMAIL #6

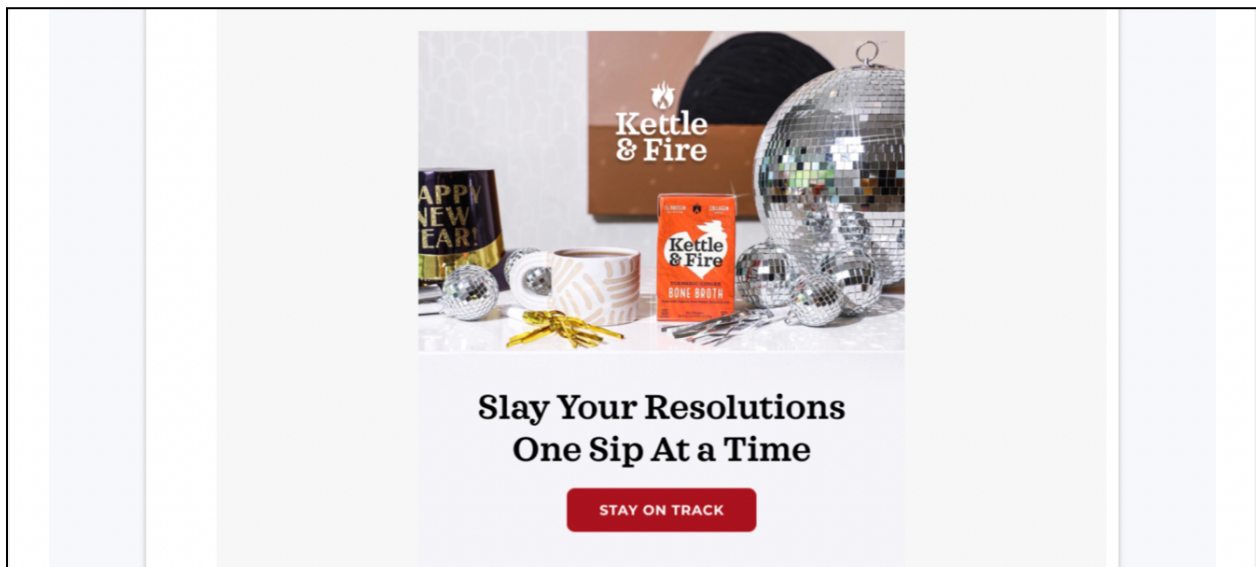
(Sent on January 1)

Note: I'm including their January 1 email here to round out their holiday emails.

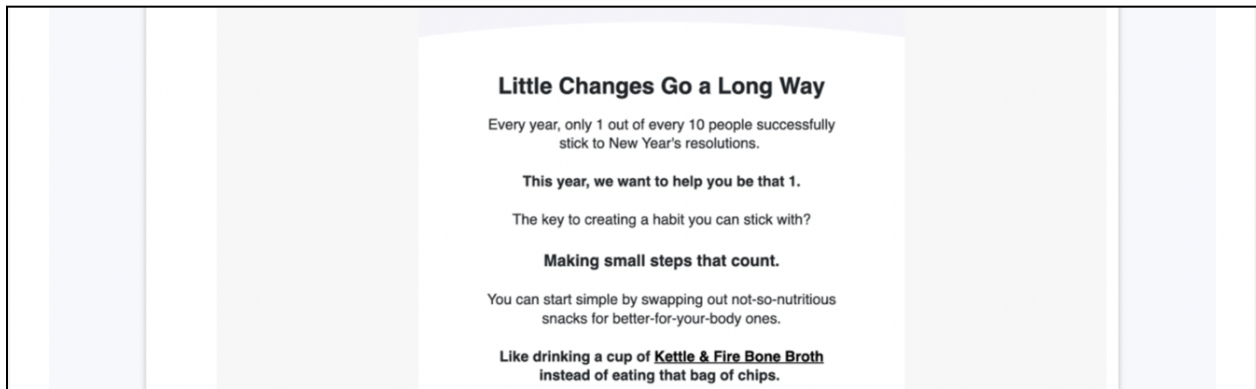


Subject line: *“There’s power in small changes, friend,”* is good. It’s very encouraging and to the point.

Body copy: *“Slay your resolutions one sip at a time,”* is very promising. It also complements the subject line, highlighting the small things you can do to make a significant impact. But up until this point, the health factor is not as apparent. As a CTA, *“Stay on track”* is unclear.

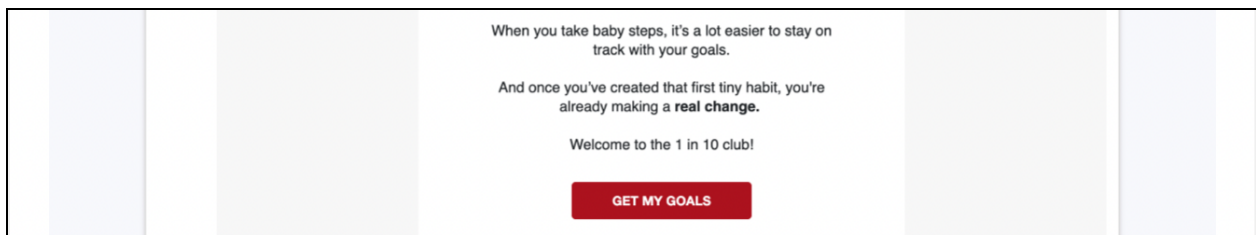


The rest of the email is broken down into short, impactful lines. First, it appeals to the readers’ desire to achieve their resolutions, emphasizing how challenging doing so can be. And then it segued beautifully into making small steps that count, like swapping unhealthy snacks for Kettle & Fire Broth.



It finishes strong with the encouraging note, *“Welcome to the 1 in 10 club!”*, which is a nice touch.

“Get my goals” as a CTA is clear and creative.



So that does it for the emails the team received from Kettle & Fire! Now let's talk a little bit more about their scheduling.

EMAIL #	DATE RECEIVED	TIME	SUBJECT LINE
1	Sunday, December 11, 2022	10:00 AM	Immunity starts here
2	Tuesday, December 20, 2022	12:16 PM	Put some pep(per) in your step
3	Thursday, December 22, 2022	9:03 AM	Your fave holiday sips with a TWIST
4	Saturday, December 24, 2022	10:01 AM	What does a dietician eat during holidays?
5	Sunday, December 25, 2022	10:00 AM	From one broth lover to another
6	Sunday, January 1, 2023	1:16 AM	There's power in small changes, friend

Check out the frequency of their emails.

I'm surprised at the significant gaps in their blasting, but I think I understand the reasoning behind it.

I signed up on December 1, and got my first email on December 11.

The company sent the follow-up email after nine days.

Nine days is a bit too long for me, but given that soup is not necessarily a fast-moving product during the holidays, they may have been more conservative in their spacing of emails. Likely, they did not want their emails to get lost in the holiday clutter.

Several emails were sent in the morning (between 9:00 and 10:00 a.m.). I wonder if they could have been more dynamic, though. Maybe, they could have sent out emails in the late afternoon—perfect for afternoon snacking or dinner prep?

Omnisend data shows that sending 10-19 emails per month, or around 3-5 emails per week, tends to work best. But the decision will still be up to you as the business owner.

Create many emails and experiment with subject lines, CTAs, and scheduling. Doing so will provide valuable insights to help hone your email campaigns.

KEY TAKEAWAYS + ACTION STEPS FROM KETTLE & FIRE

1. Personalize your emails: Personalization is critical to successful email marketing. Make sure to include the recipient's name in the subject line and body of the email. It's also a good idea to use customer data, such as purchase history, to recommend products or offer personalized discounts. Personalization can increase open rates by as much as 26%.

2. Optimize the subject line: The subject line is the first thing customers see when they receive an email. It should be clear, concise, and compelling. A good subject line will entice the customer to open the email, while a bad one will cause it to be deleted or marked as spam. Test different subject lines to see which ones perform the best.

3. Use a clear and compelling call to action: Every email should have a clear, persuasive CTA. This could be a link to purchase a product, a discount code, or an invitation to attend an event. Make sure your call to action stands out and is easy to understand.

4. Test and optimize: Testing and optimizing your email campaigns is crucial to improving results. Test different subject lines, email designs, and CTAs to see what works best. Use A/B testing to compare the performance of different versions of your emails.

5. Use automation: Automation can help you save time and improve the effectiveness of your email campaigns. For example, you can set up automated welcome emails for new subscribers, abandoned cart emails for customers who leave items in their cart, and post-purchase follow-up emails.

6. Make it mobile-friendly: More and more people are checking their emails from their mobile devices, so it's essential to ensure that your emails are mobile-friendly. This means using a responsive design that adapts to the size of the screen, and keeping the content concise and easy to read on a small screen.

7. Track and analyze your results: To improve your email campaigns, you need to know how they perform. Use email marketing software to track key metrics, like open rates, click-through rates, and conversion rates. Analyze this data to see what's working and make adjustments accordingly.

8. Use clear and consistent branding: Consistency is critical in branding. Make sure your emails reflect your overall branding and aesthetic. Use the same color scheme, logo, and tone of voice as your website and other marketing materials.

9. Be consistent: Finally, consistency is vital when it comes to sending emails. Make sure to send emails at regular intervals, whether daily, weekly, or monthly. This will help keep your brand top of mind with your customers and increase their chances of purchasing.

Did you find this new format of GSD helpful? Any insights to share? You know where to find us ... Let's talk it over in our members-only Facebook group!

Here's to getting more sh*t done!

Matthew Stafford