

## HTML Coding Requirements for Email Broadcasts

**All client-submitted HTML files for email projects must conform to these rules.**

1. Do not submit HTML files created with FrontPage, Microsoft Word, Publisher, etc. These programs bloat the code with useless tags. Use a true HTML editor.
2. Do not use CSS for formatting the email. CSS works great on web sites – not so much in email. For a full guide on the use of CSS in email, download our [CSS Guide](#). However, MTD recommends you avoid CSS altogether and use the older table and font tags instead.  
  
If you simply MUST include CSS, use it inline; do not link to an outside file nor place a style sheet in the <head> section.
3. Use UTF-8 encoding for all special characters.
4. Do not place background color codes in the <body> tag. Instead, place background color codes in the <td> tag.
5. Do not use the <tbody> tag. For some reason this triggers a flag in SpamAssassin.
6. Do not use XHTML. Do not close single tags with “ />” as you would for an XHTML document.
7. It is recommended to avoid the use of background images. If you must use a dark background image behind a light-colored font, you must also use a dark background color in case the image does not display properly.
8. Place “alt” text in all image tags, *especially* if the image is a link. Use text relevant to the image being used.
9. Do not use scripts or codes such as Java or PHP. Emails containing scripts usually get flagged as spam.
10. Do not include attachments (PDF's and others). Place these on your website instead and include a link in the email.
11. Do not include an unsubscribe link. MTD will set the unsubscribe information and forward the opt-outs/opt-ins (if any) to you at the end of the campaign.
12. **MOST IMPORTANTLY** – before submitting your finished file, validate the code using W3.org's free online validator found here: <http://validator.w3.org>. (You might want to validate the code a few times during the coding process as well.)  
  
Alternatively, your HTML editor may include a tool for checking the code.
13. Finally, upload your file to the Files tab on your Teamwork page. Do not send it in an email.

If you have any questions, please write to Kitty at [kitty@mtdmarketing.com](mailto:kitty@mtdmarketing.com).