



An Introduction to Email Design Systems

Let's learn about Email Design Systems

? We're here to answer your questions. Email hello@taxiforemail.com if we can help answer any questions you might have about Email Design Systems

 You can watch a full recording of this webinar on the [Taxi Blog](#)

 **After this webinar you'll know what an Email Design System is** (and how to decide if your team needs one)

Meet your experts



Lexi Clarke
Action Rocket



Paris Fisher
Taxi for Email



Elliot Ross
Taxi for Email

What is an Email Design System?

“ A design system
will make my emails
look block-y!

“ Having a design system means there's no room for creativity and one-off campaigns that are *different*.

“ With a design system, every email will look the same.

Master Template

Design System

Code Snippets

Email Style Guide

Modules

Template

What is an Email Design System?

*“An Email Design System helps
everyone on the team
make the best email”*

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People who aren't
designers or HTML
geeks

People who are HTML
geeks but might be in
other teams or
countries

The same people who
would otherwise be
making HTML from
scratch

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Best quality HTML code:
mobile, accessible, good
rendering

On brand and consistent


Quicker!

The same people who
would otherwise be
making HTML from
scratch

What's an Email Design System?

Modularity is key.

*“An Email Design System helps everyone on the team make the best email — It is a **collection of reusable HTML components**—along with clear guidance on when, how, and why you should use them—that empower marketers to easily create high-quality, on-brand emails. “*



What's an Email Design System?

*“An Email Design System helps everyone on the team make the best email — It is a collection of reusable HTML components—**along with clear guidance on when, how, and why you should use them**—that empower marketers to easily create high-quality, on-brand emails. “*



Actionable instructions are key. If all you have is modules of HTML, that's not a Design System.

What's an Email Design System?

*“An Email Design System helps everyone on the team make the best email — It is a collection of reusable HTML components—along with clear guidance on when, how, and why you should use them—**that empower marketers to easily create high-quality, on-brand emails.**”*



A great email design system improves the subscriber experience—and helps your team be more productive.

Why would you
need one?

An Email Design System helps you **deliver a more consistent brand experience**



#1

Email leads the way your brand communicates

- Through the sheer quantity of messages you send
- The size of your audience
- Email teams have to work out how to create 'actionable' marketing messages
- Get trust from your customers

#2

Email has to work harder than web

- On web it's about the experience and journey
- For email it's about inspiring the start of the journey
- Your email design system can inherit style from the web
- But your marketing message are unique need a well thought out design.

#3

Email Design Systems - Help the brand evolve in the inbox

To do list:

- Have you ever collated and reviewed every email your customer may gets?
- Do they look like they come from 1 team, from the same brand?

An Email Design System will help your **brand evolve** across every email that is made by every:

Team, agency, designer, or new person

An Email Design System helps you **implement (and stick to) email best practices**

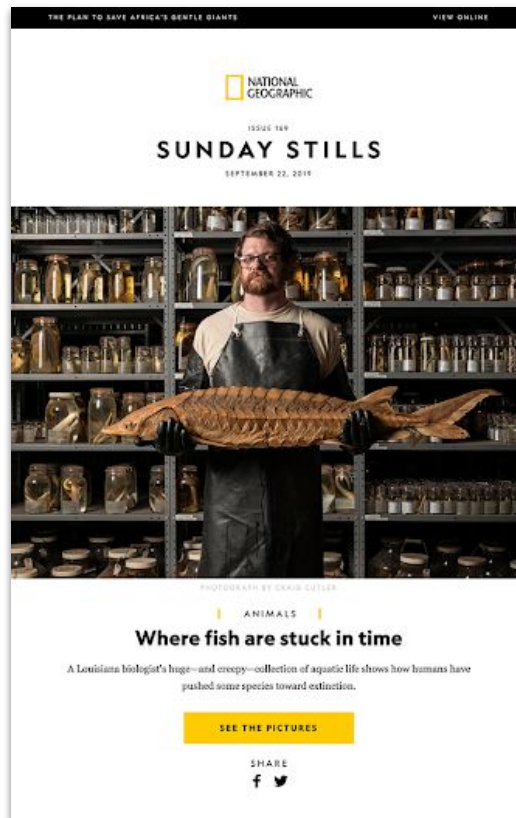
The best Email Design Systems go *beyond* design advice. For example, when it comes to using images in your campaigns your Design System might cover...

Design Guidance

Look and feel
Photos vs. illustration

Best Practices

File size
ALT text



An Email Design System helps you **make fewer mistakes**

A good QA process helps you spot mistakes when they happen — but **a good Email Design System prevents you from making them in the first place.**

Link

Make sure any URLs begin with 'https://'.

MODULE SETTINGS

Background image that can't be blank

☐ Browse ☒ URL

640 x 400

This field must be changed.

An Email Design System helps you **speed up your email production process**

Process without an Email Design System

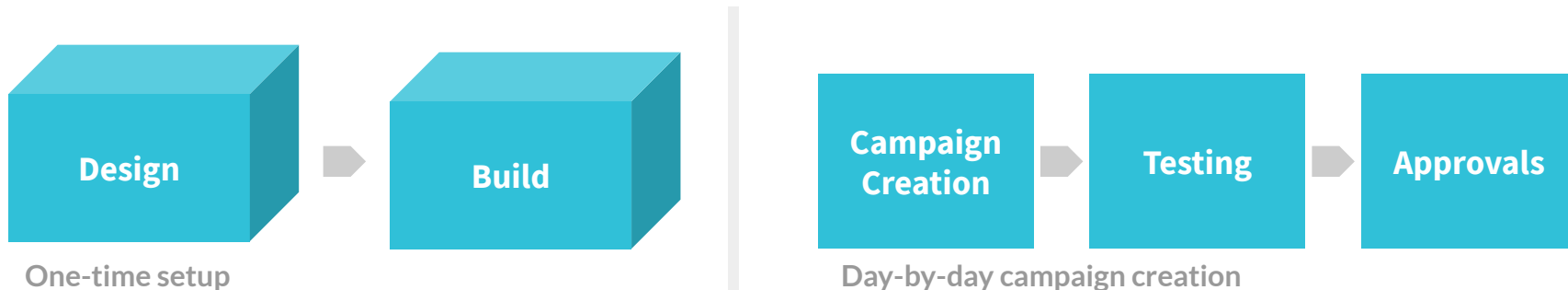


An Email Design System helps you **speed up your email production process**

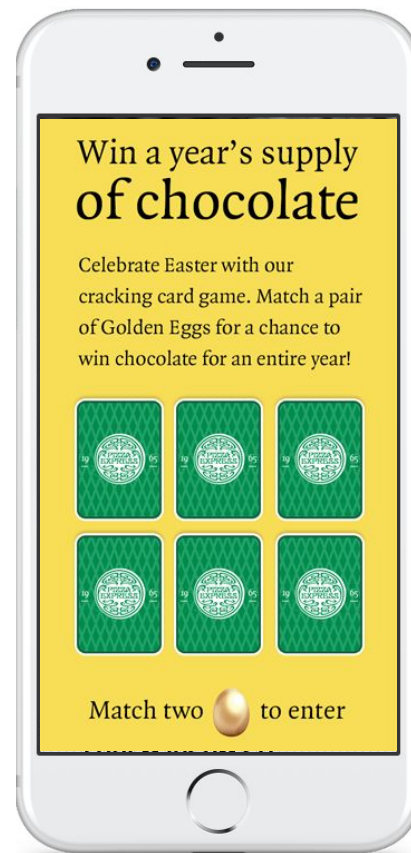
Process without an Email Design System



Process with an Email Design System



More time for
creativity.



Let's look at
some examples!

Example #1

Stack Overflow

- Publicly available on Stack Overflows [design guidance website](#)
- Alongside product, content, and brand guidelines
- **Tool used:** website



GUIDELINES

Getting started

Design best practices

FAQ

TEMPLATES

Short transactional

Long transactional

Promotional

Major announcements

BASE

Border radius

Outlook conditional CSS

Responsiveness

Typography

COMPONENTS

Buttons

Footers

Images

Spacers

Tags

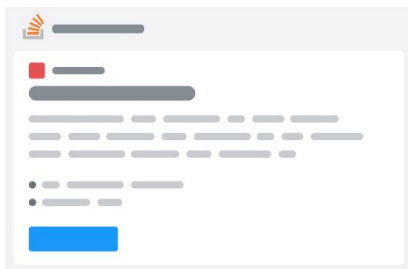
Team identification

Email design at Stack Overflow

An email design system that helps us work together to create consistently-designed, properly-rendered email for all Stack Overflow users. Intended for anyone who works with email at Stack Overflow.

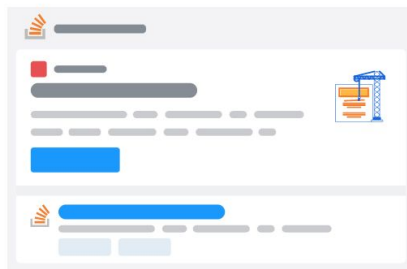
Templates

Starting points for creating new emails.



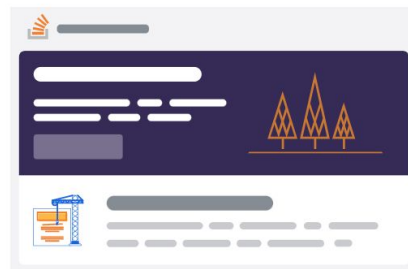
Short Transactional

Great for emails with a single message like "Forgot password", "You've been removed from a Team", or "Cart abandonment".



Long Transactional

For complex emails that could contain multiple messages like "Your answer was accepted", "New Interests", or "Tag digest".



Promotional

Major announcements worthy of grabbing attention or celebrating like "Announcing Teams", "Welcome to Talent", or "You've asked your first question".

[Product](#)[Email](#)[Content](#)[Brand](#)

GUIDELINES

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TEMPLATES

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BASE

[Border radius](#)[Outlook conditional CSS](#)[Responsiveness](#)[Typography](#)

COMPONENTS

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PATTERNS

Sizes

Default

The default size for email buttons is appropriate for most emails. Useful for emails with one or two main calls-to-action.

```
<td class="s-btn s-btn__primary" style="border-radius: 4px; background: #0095ff; text-align: c
  <a class="s-btn s-btn__primary" href="#" style="background: #0095FF; border: 1px solid #00
    -
  </a>
</td>

<td class="s-btn s-btn__white" style="border-radius: 4px; background: #ffffff; text-align: cen
  <a class="s-btn s-btn__white" href="#" style="background: #ffffff; border: 1px solid #fff
    -
  </a>
</td>

<td class="s-btn s-btn__outlined" style="border-radius: 4px; background: #ffffff; text-align:
  <a class="s-btn s-btn__outlined" href="#" style="background: #ffffff; border: 1px solid #0
```

[Ask question](#)[Ask question](#)[Ask question](#)

Small

A slightly smaller button size is appropriate for emails with multiple calls-to-action, like a newsletter

SECTIONS

[Styles](#)[Primary](#)[White](#)[Outlined](#)[Sizes](#)[Default](#)[Small](#)

[Product](#)[Email](#)[Content](#)[Brand](#)

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COMPONENTS

[Buttons](#)[Footers](#)[Images](#)[Spacers](#)[Tags](#)[Team identification](#)

PATTERNS

[Columns](#)[We've updated our privacy policy](#)[New application](#)

--> and <!-- EMAIL BODY : END -->
code comments).

[Small](#)[Large](#)[Grab the Code](#)

SO for Teams Name

Something happened

A starting point for more **simple transactional emails** with a single message. It can contain [links](#) or **rich text**. [Read this](#) if text is written in markdown.

Good for emails like:

- Forgot password
- You've been removed from a Team
- Cart abandonment
- We've updated our privacy policy

[Medium primary button](#)

You're receiving this message because \$reason\$.

[Edit email settings](#) [Contact us](#) [Privacy](#)



Stack Overflow, 110 William Street, 28th Floor, New York, NY 10038

<3

Short transactional template

A starter template for simple transactional emails with a single message. This template is meant to be adapted and built upon.

✓ GOOD FOR:

Simple transactions that include a short message, such as:

Forgot password

You've been removed from a Team

Cart abandonment

We've updated our privacy policy

✗ NOT SO GOOD FOR:

Lengthy transactions that include multiple messages, lists or one time announcements, such as:

Your answer has been accepted!

New featured jobs

Weekly recommendations

New application

Note: These templates are in Iterable and Hubspot. The code here can also be copied and pasted.

Emails in our codebase use a main template (eg. `Layout.html.cshtml`) that includes the `<head>`, logo, and footer. Only the middle part of these templates are needed (between `<!-- EMAIL BODY : BEGIN -->` and `<!-- EMAIL BODY : END -->` code comments).



GUIDELINES

[Getting started](#)[Design best practices](#)

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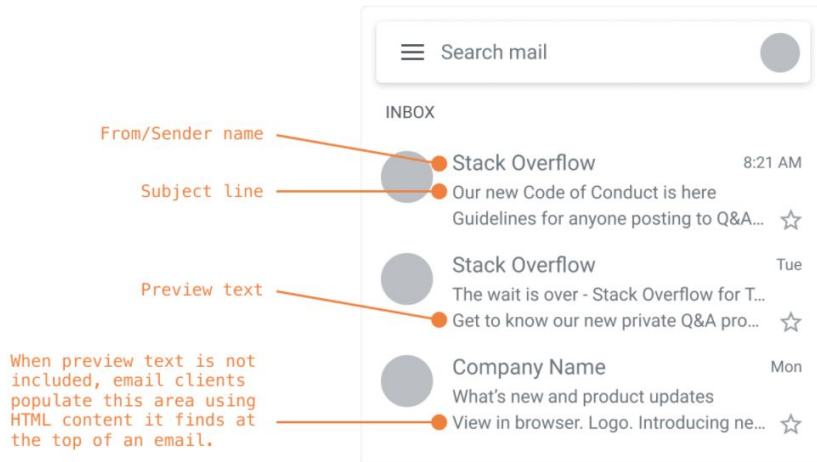
PATTERNS

[Columns](#)

What is preview text?



Preview text is a snippet of copy pulled in from the body of your email and typically displayed underneath the sender name and subject line in a subscriber's inbox. It's used to increase open rates, as users see an email in their inbox before opening it.



Preview text is optional. If preview text is short or omitted, email clients will fill the space with text from the email body (including alt attributes). You can avoid unwanted text coming in from your email's body by [using this hack](#).



Note: Iterable inserts its own preview text, so this part of the Stacks template can be removed for templates prepared for Iterable.

SECTIONS

[Why do we have to write CSS inline?](#)[If CSS is inline, why do we need a style tag?](#)[Can we use a CSS inliner?](#)[How does CSS inheritance work in email?](#)[How do margin and padding work in email?](#)[What is the best for email?](#)[What is preview text?](#)[How wide should an email be?](#)[What is conversation threading?](#)[When should I deviate from these guidelines?](#)

How wide should an email be?



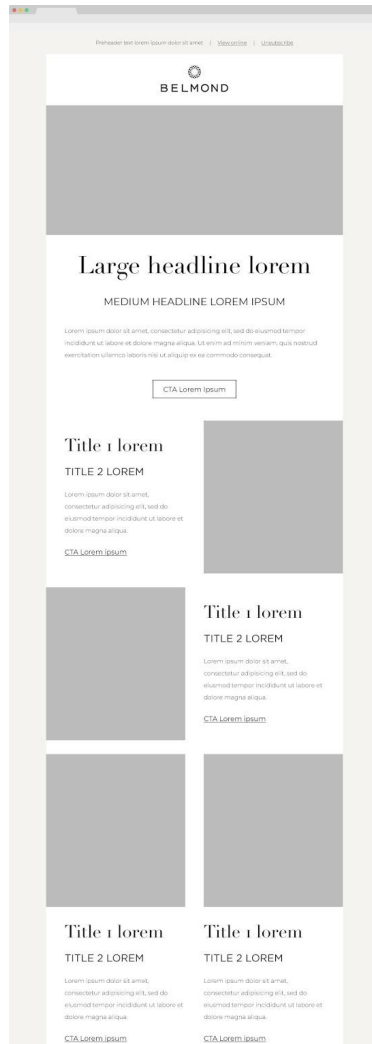
Example #2

Belmond

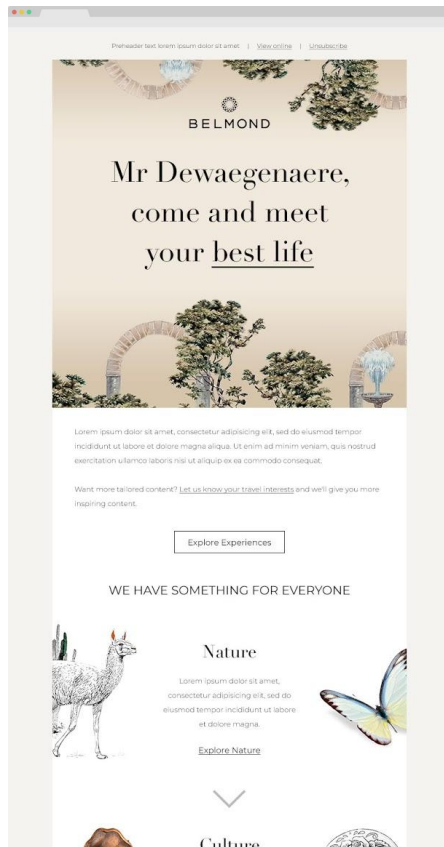
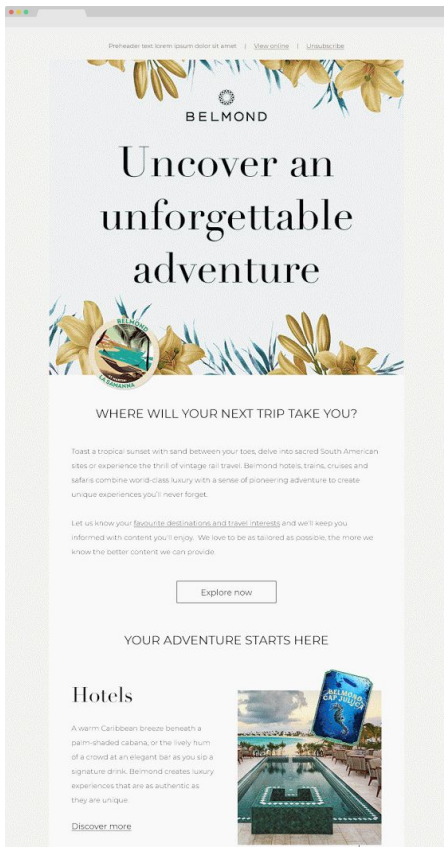
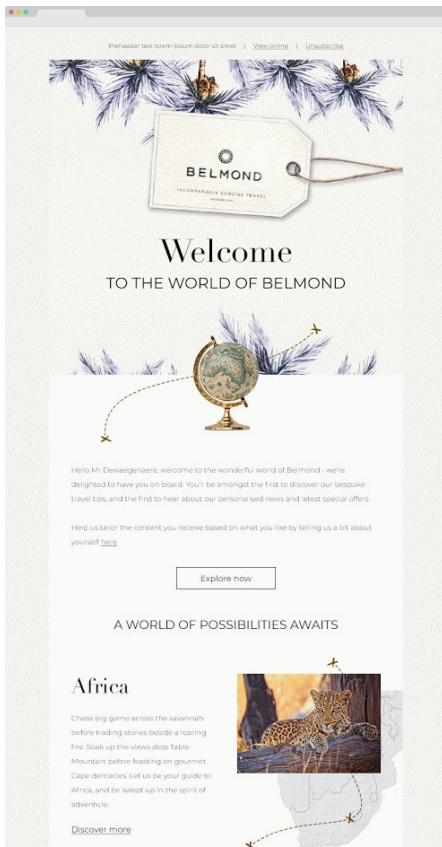
Luxury Travel Brand

- 1 design system to produce all CRM emails
- Created from a new onboarding series
- Plan to evolve with the CRM program
- **Tool used:** ESP and Email guidelines to manage the design and code.

The Design System



Adding creative, brings it to life



Example #3

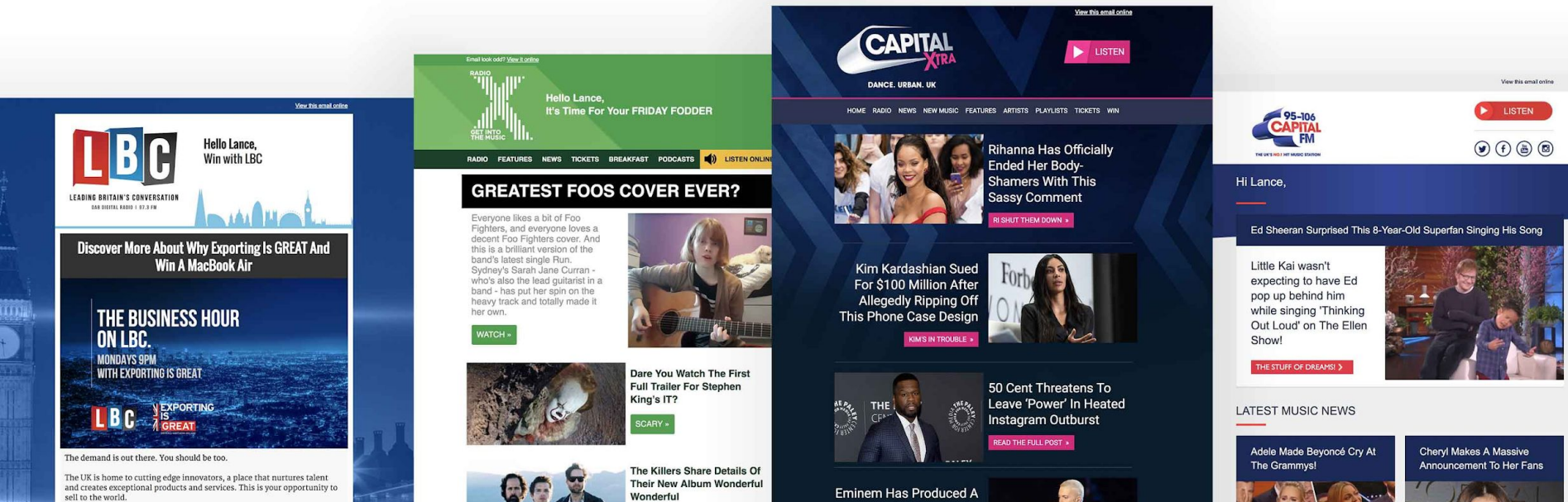
Global Radio

Commercial radio company

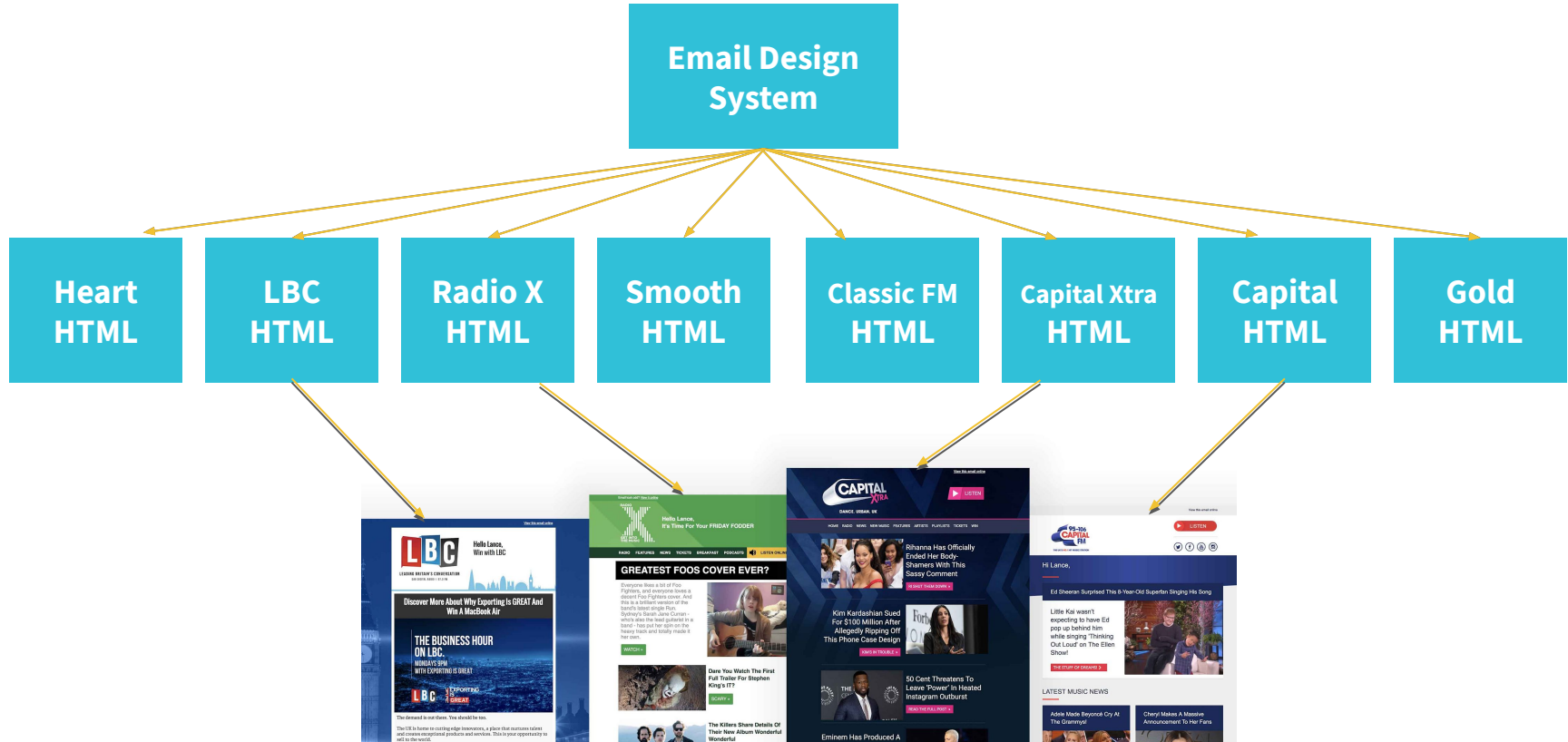
- 1 Design System
- 8 - reskinned subtemplates
- All brands have the same modules - cut production
- Editors create segmented emails at scale across all brands
- **Tool used:** Taxi for Email

Global Radio - 1 Design System for 8 Brands

Read the full case study →



Global Radio - 1 Design System for 8 Brands

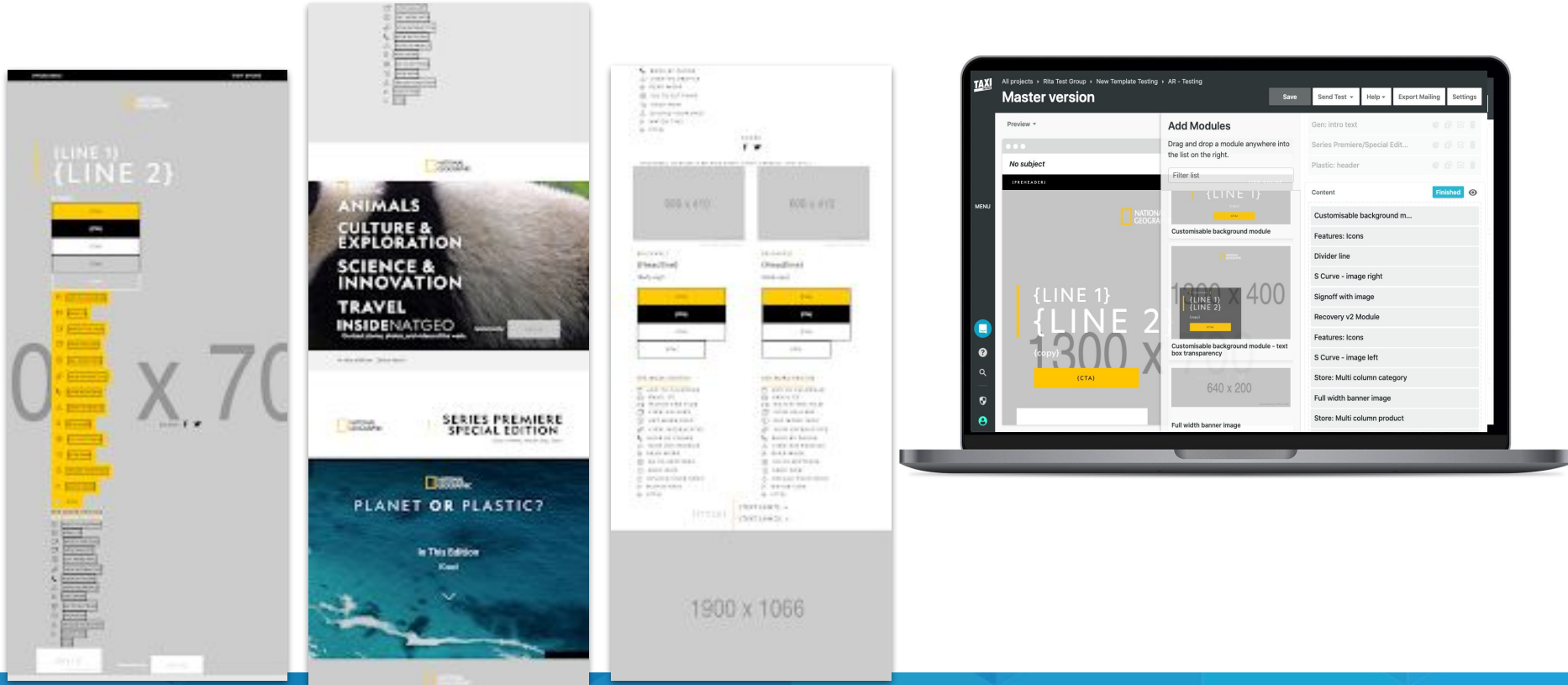


Example #4

National Geographic

- One Email Design System
- Contains 36 Modules
- From this they create all Editorial and Circulation campaigns.
- **Tool used:** Taxi for Email

What does their Email Design System look like?



Let's get geeky for 1 minute 🧐

Taxi Syntax — the secret to making Email Design Systems *actionable*

Create the perfect HTML, then use the power of the Taxi syntax to control how it's used, what can be changed, and what can't.

```
<module name="CTA" label="CTA Button">
  <editable name="link" label="Link"
  hint="Make sure any URLs begin with
  'https://'">
    <a
  href="https://taxiforemail.com">Find
  out more</a>
  </editable>
</module>
```

Taxi Syntax within your template

Link

Make sure any URLs begin with 'https://'.

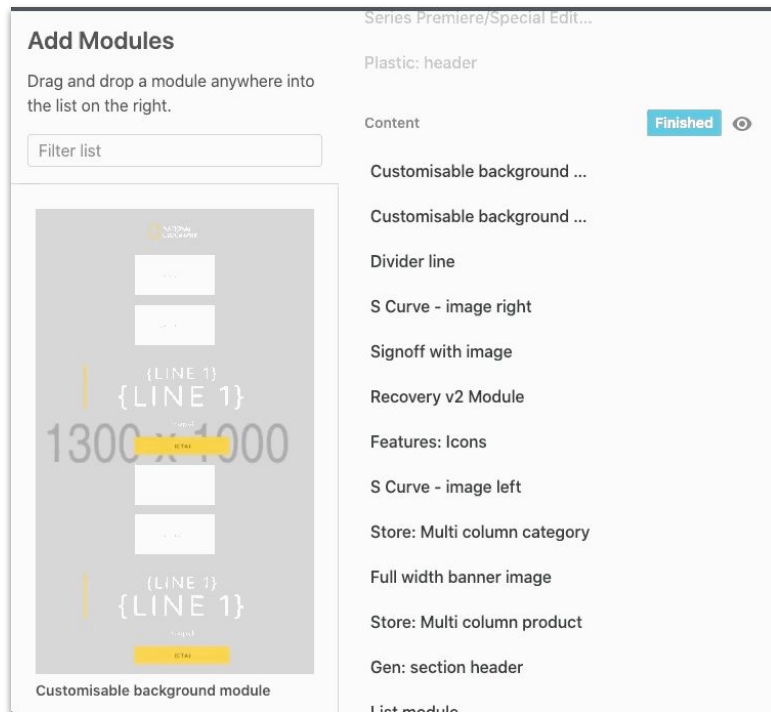


And how it translates into an editing experience

National Geographic - Taxi Syntax

Taxi Syntax turns the beautiful design into a **simple and easy editing experience**.

Email Design System in Taxi

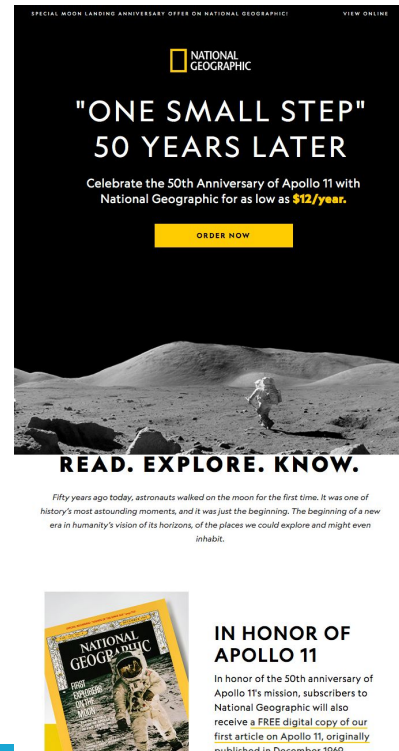
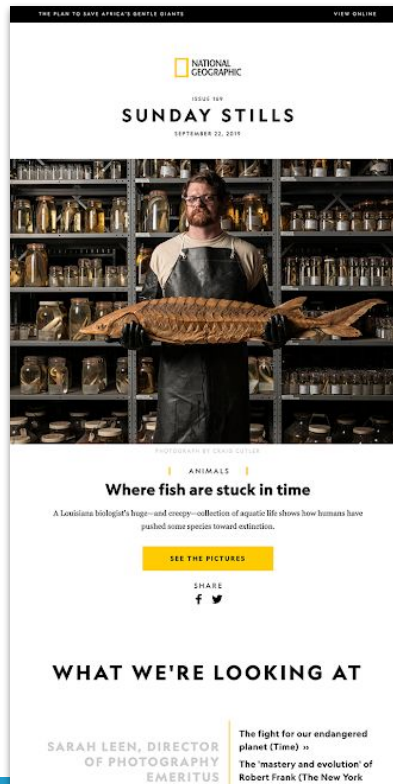


National Geographic - The final products

The result?
Stunning emails.



Screenshots from
Really Good Emails

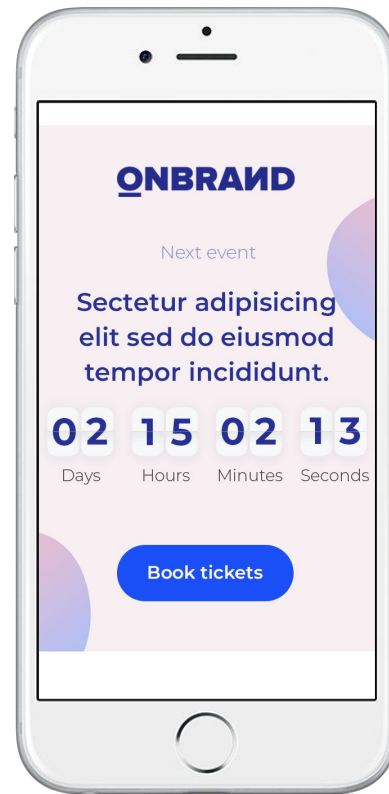
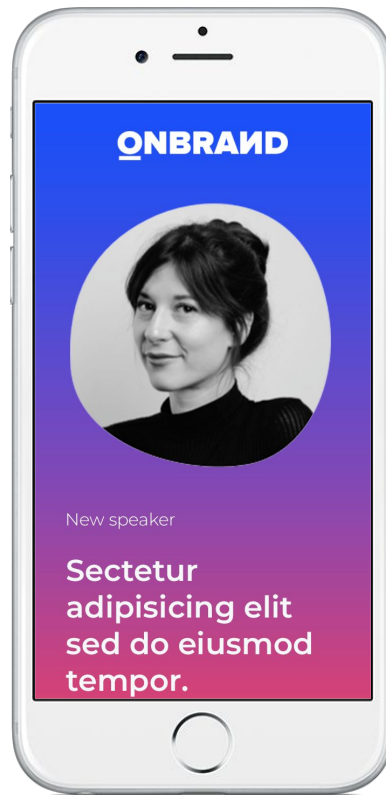
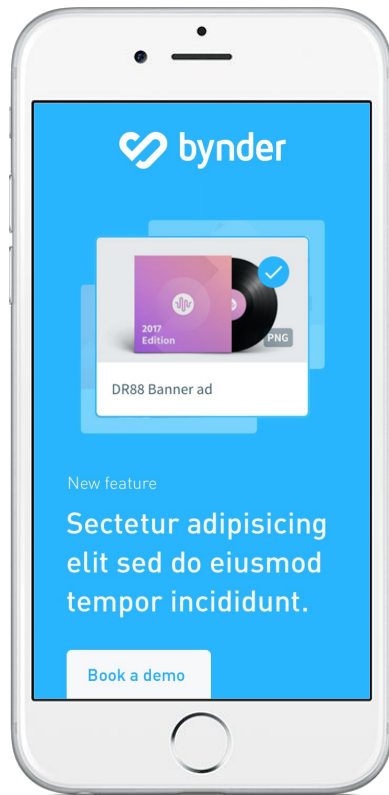


Example #4

Bynder

Digital Asset Management Platform

- A B2B brand with a high design value
- 1 design system: That supports different business units
- Creates a variety of different email campaigns
- **Tool used:** Taxi for Email



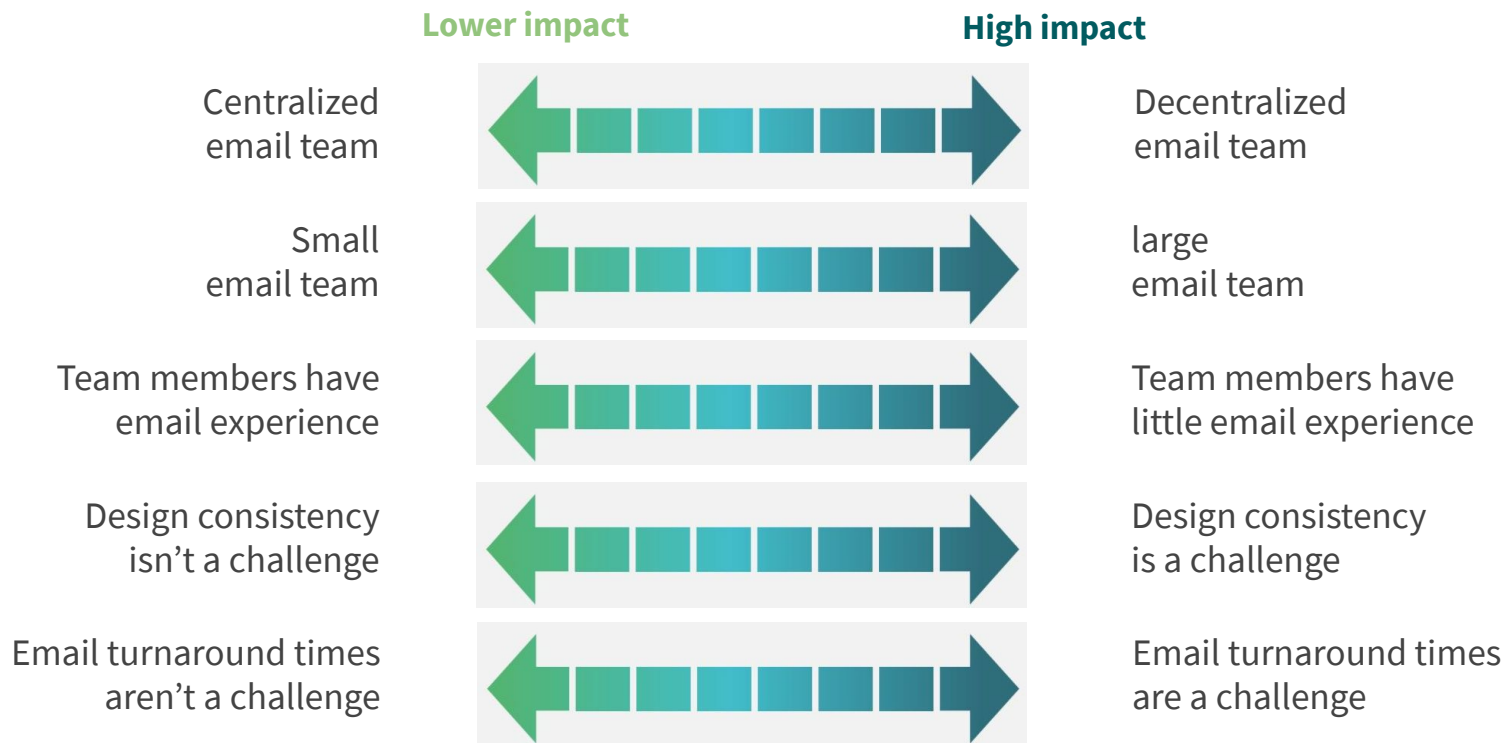
Does my team
need one?

Effort \longleftrightarrow Results

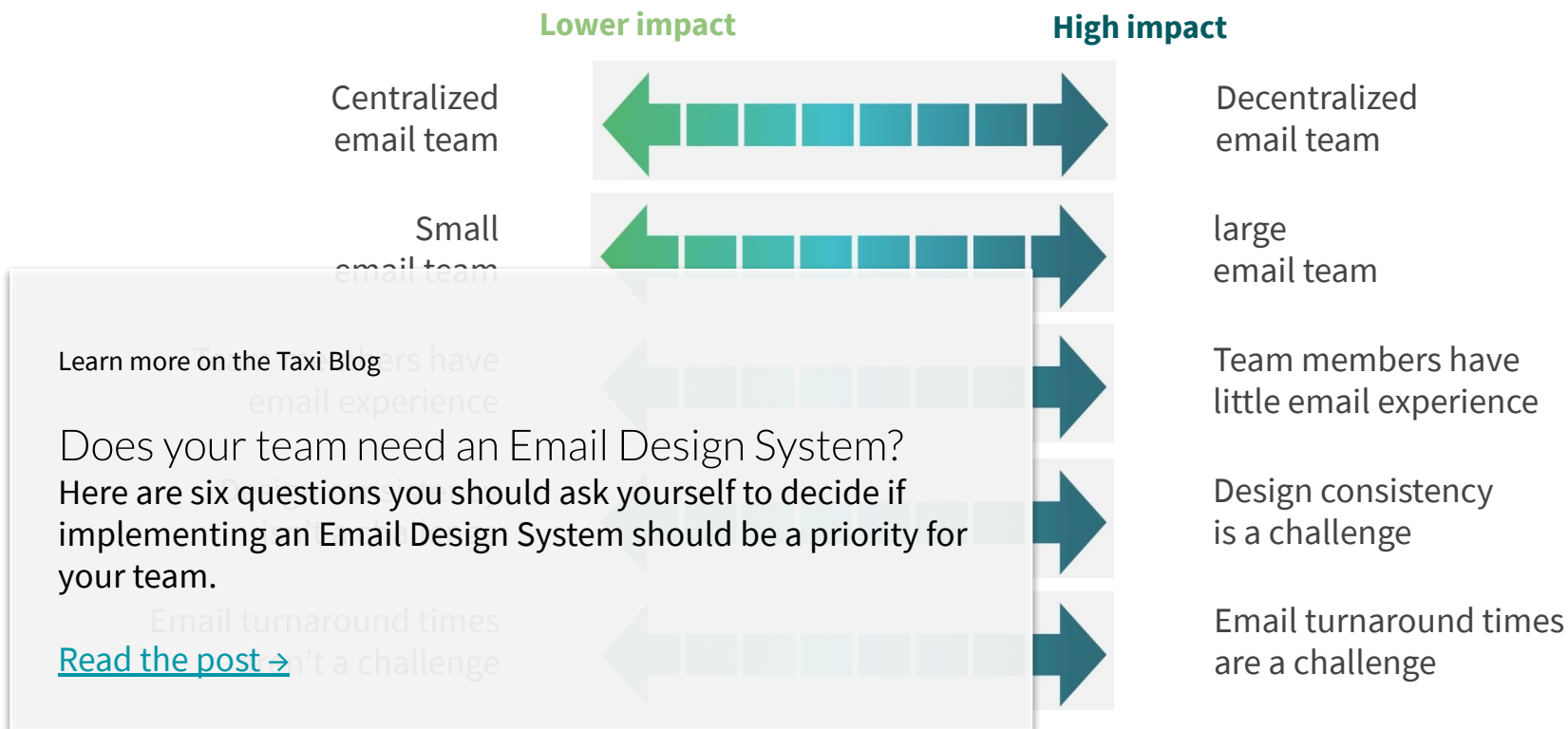


When do Email Design Systems make a big impact?

When Email Design Systems make a big impact



When Email Design Systems make a big impact



Questions

An Email Design System
allows you to send better
email at scale.

(while keeping your sanity)

Need help with your Email Design System?



We help you manage Email
Design Systems that people will
actually use.

taxiforemail.com



ACTION ROCKET

We're here to help you create your
Design System, from planning to
design, build and training.

actionrocket.co

Additional Resources

- Blog: [Webinar recap and Q&A](#)
- Blog: [Does your team need an Email Design System?](#)
- Documentation: [How to build Email Design Systems in Taxi](#)