

The consumer's perspective. It's a piece of the marketing puzzle that can get lost in the shuffle of crafting the perfect lifecycle journey for your brand. In our Customer Experience Analysis series we take a look at marketing from the consumer's point of view to identify customer experience growth opportunities and strengths from some of today's leading brands.

Over the course of three weeks, we commit to a variety of actions—such as creating a profile, browsing items, and abandoning our cart—that trigger behavior-based marketing communications. From there, we identify every message—across mobile and desktop channels—to capture a comprehensive view of the customer experience. The following consists of our observations and recommendations for the **HBO Max** user experience.

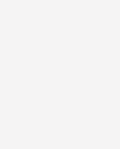
A Bit About the Brand

HBO Max is the stand-alone streaming platform hosting all of HBO's series, documentaries, movies and more. Launched in May of 2020, HBO Max has over 44 million users and offers two subscription plans: \$9.99 a month with ads and \$14.99 a month without ads.

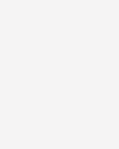
The Timeline

LEGEND

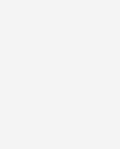
EMAIL



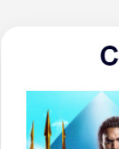
Welcome



Promotion

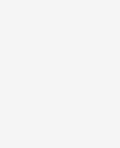


Transaction

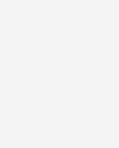


Cart Abandonment

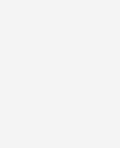
MOBILE



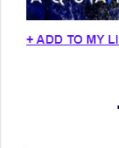
Push



In-App



SMS



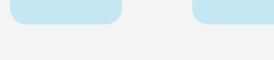
Cart Abandonment

USER ACTION

Day

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21

Sign Up



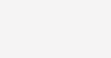
HBO Max starts off with a variety of recommendations to get you started in browsing and consuming their content. Additionally, the email contains a link that helps you personalize your profiles within the service.

Download App/ Opt in



The welcome campaign continues the next day with an educational email promoting the HBO Max app and the different ways users can utilize it.

Add shows or movies to Favorites



Despite favoriting a few series, we did not receive any messaging reflecting this action.

Adjust in-app preferences, Browse items on mobile



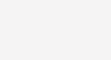
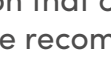
For emails promoting a new premiere, HBO Max includes a countdown timer at the top of the email under a gif, a visual leading most of their emails. This is a great way to build excitement and engagement for new content. Related content—in this case other horror titles—also keeps the reader interested. Engagement from an email like this can be incredibly useful in gauging interest from users as behavioral data from this email can help inform later recommendations.

Engage with email CTA



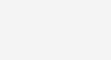
HBO Max sent a survey a little over a week after we signed up. A delay like this allows users to test out products to develop their own judgments about what's working and what could be improved. The survey itself, which came from a different sender address, collected demographic and account information that could be used later to personalize recommendations.

Unsubscribe/ Opt Out



The start of Pride Month came with an email and push notification promoting the same content. Vibrant imagery in the email and push notification ensured attention would be paid to the content. HBO Max does well to give a voice to LGBTQ+ content by creating collections of content, but be sure to do it year-round, not just during **certain times of the year**.

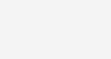
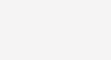
End Research



When "The Conjuring" premiered, HBO Max sent similar emails and push notifications again. But the content should be varied enough to provide value for each channel. Set an expectation of what sort of messaging users can anticipate from each channel.

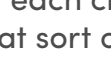
Also, HBO Max in this email is promoting an ad-free plan, which we had signed up for at the start of our research. Content should reflect the user's stage in your customer journey.

Unsubscribe/ Opt Out

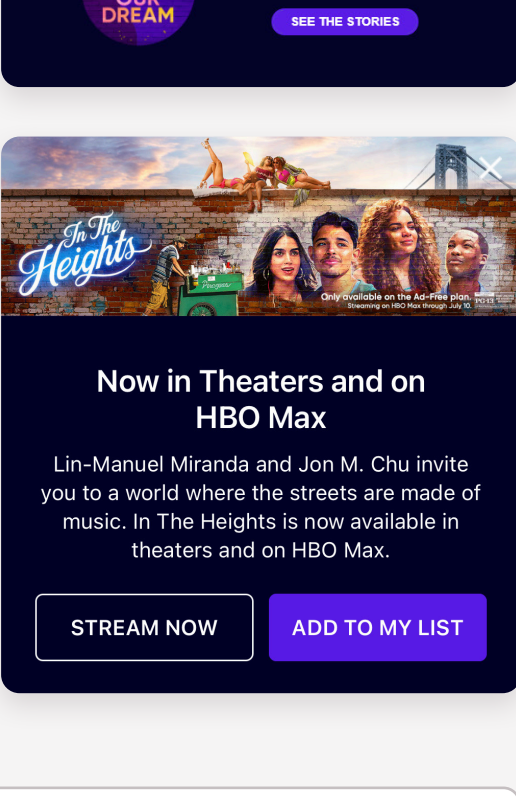
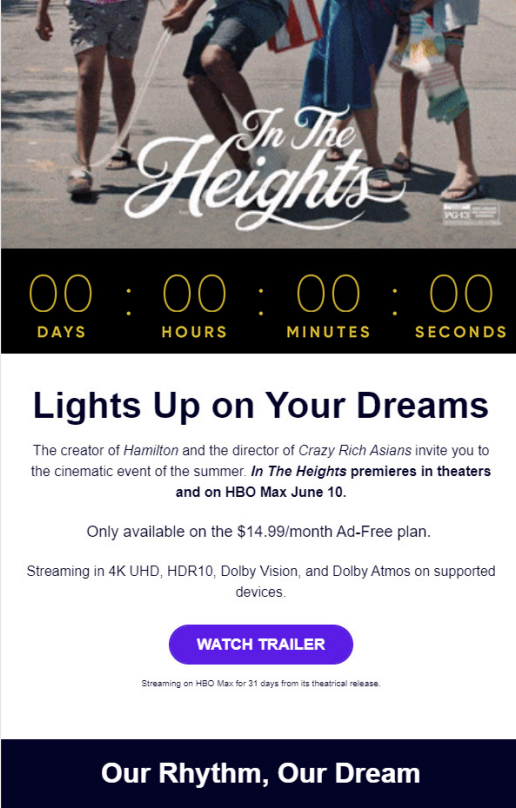
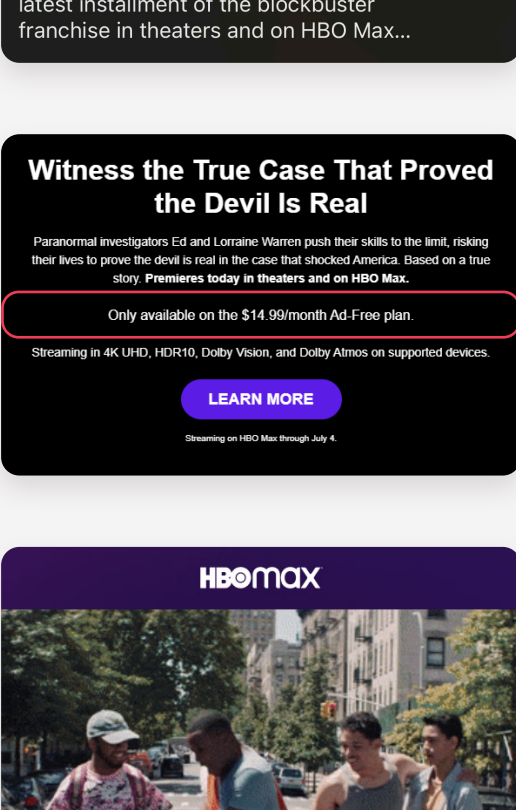
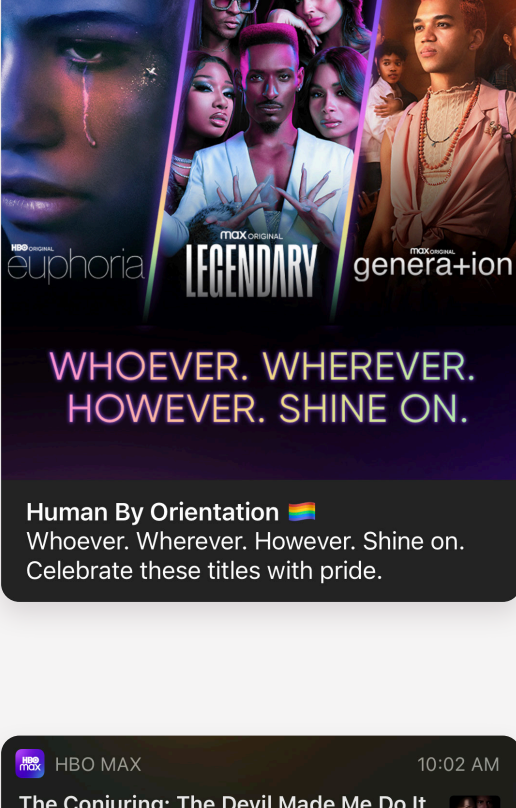
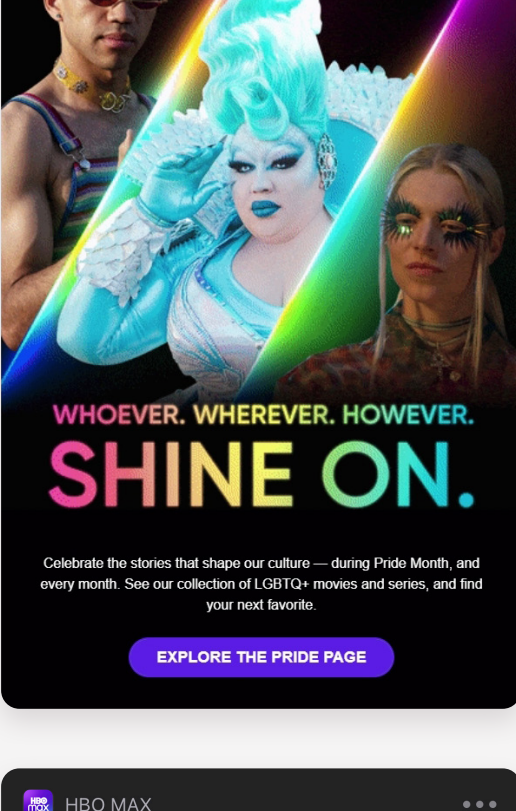
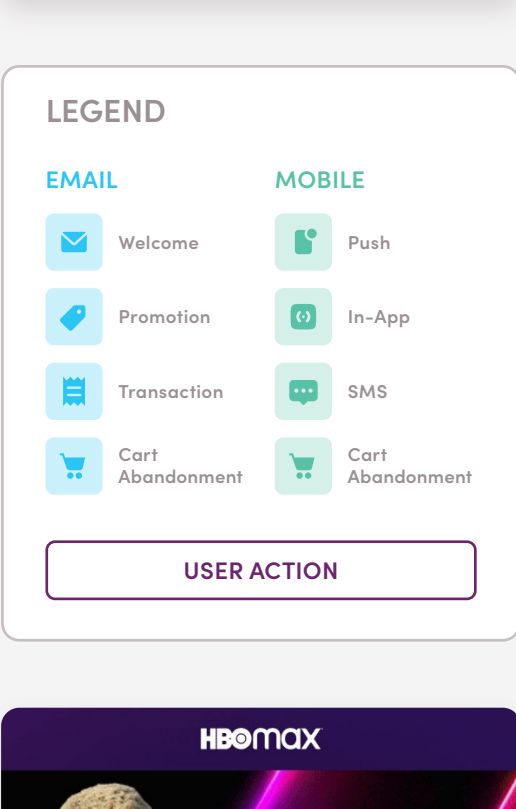
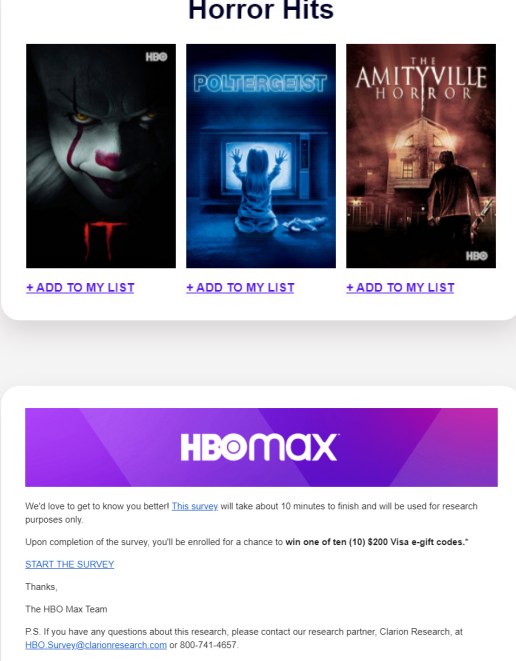
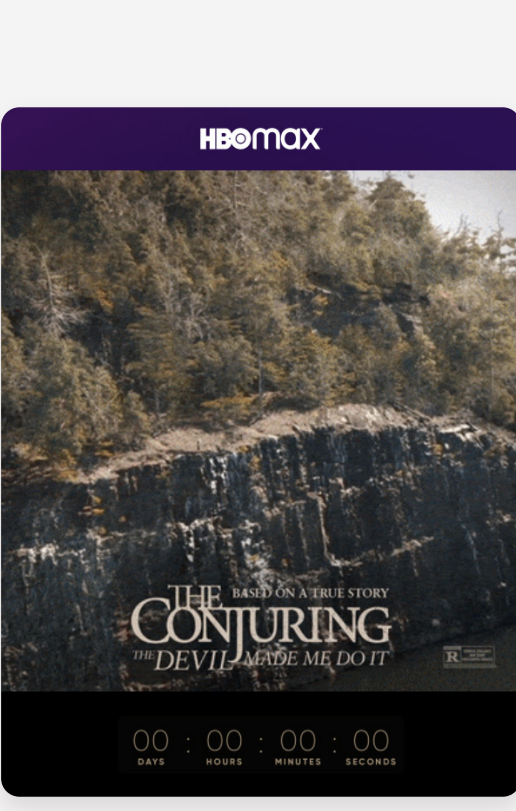
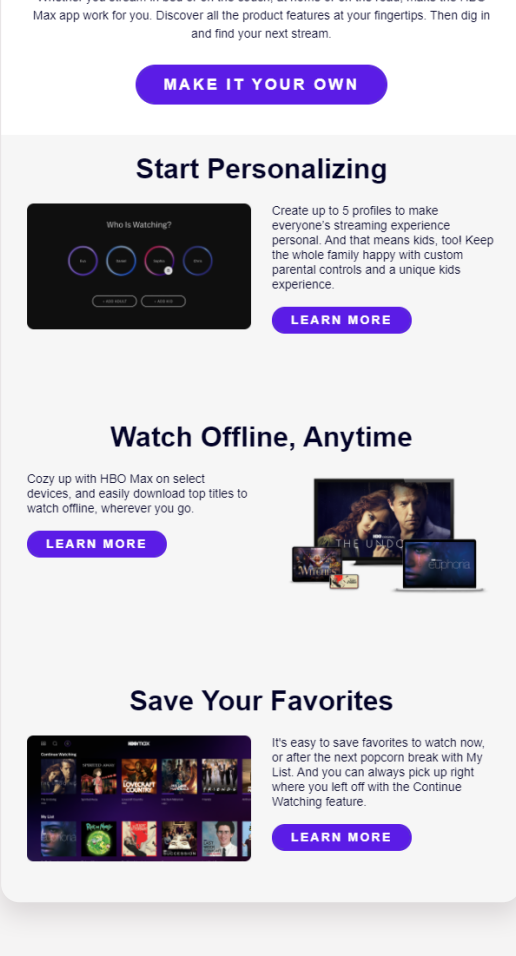
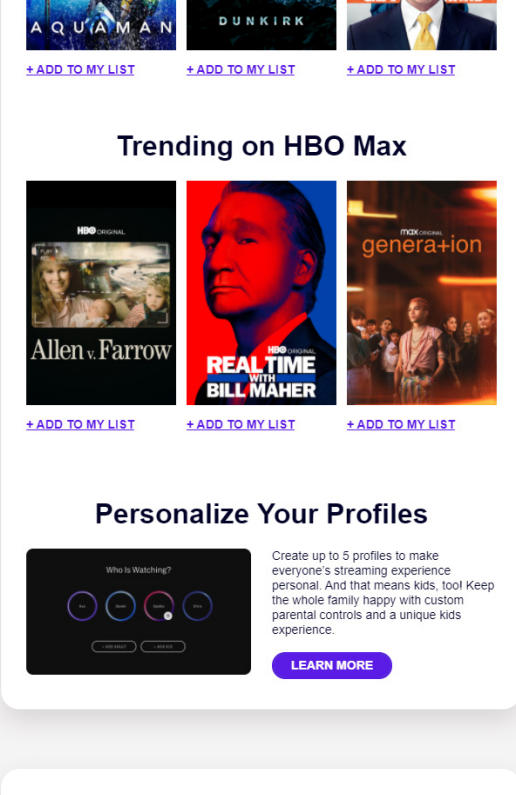


A few days in advance of the premiere of "In the Heights," HBO Max sent an email similar to the "Conjuring" email on Day 7. Of note, this email also highlights Latinx content throughout the rest of the email.

Unsubscribe/ Opt Out



A few days later, once "In the Heights" had premiered, we received an in-app message with a button to watch it immediately or save it for later. An in-app message that comes a few days after the initial promotion is a great way to sustain engagement and remind users of content or products that might warrant their attention. For a service with a wide breadth of products or content like HBO Max, this is a great multi-touch strategy to highlight a recommendation.



TOTAL: 22

EMAIL: 17

MOBILE: 5

Key Takeaways

The HBO Max customer experience starts off strong with a good welcome campaign introducing the features that come with a subscription. Dynamic content, high quality imagery and varied designs keep email and mobile content engaging. HBO Max has room for personalization opportunities, however, to incorporate browsing and viewing behavior.

1. Welcome, There's More to Discover

The welcome campaign is educational and introduces the breadth of content available to new subscribers, but the options for users to provide meaningful **zero-party data**, such as explicitly stating which genres they prefer, are lacking. In doing so, HBO Max then must find new ways later in the customer journey to learn user preferences. Letting the user dictate their experience from the start goes a long way in building trust, especially when looking at streaming services.

2. Change the Channels Up

HBO Max does well to incorporate mobile messaging into the customer experience through push notifications and in app. However, the majority of push notifications we received were identical in content to the emails we received on the same day. Since a growing number of **emails are opened on mobile**, there's a good chance users are seeing the same content twice on the same device on the same day. Diversify the content to let users understand the unique value each channel offers.

3. Up Next...

During the research period we favorited multiple shows and watched two series, including "Rick and Morty." With that said, we did not receive any messaging that reflected these actions, such as recommendations for other animated series. User behavior is crucial to personalizing the experience. Incorporate these actions into promotions and recommendations to help customize the experience at the individual level.

With these small adjustments, the user experience is enhanced and personalized at a level that creates a lasting impression and relationship with the consumer. For more information about how to implement these tactics with Iterable, schedule a demo today.

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About Iterable

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