



HTML Email Development Guidelines

1.1 Introduction

HTML e-mail is the use of a subset of HTML to provide formatting and semantic markup capabilities in e-mail that are not available with plain text.

Most graphical e-mail clients support HTML e-mail, and many default to it. Many of these clients include both a GUI editor for composing HTML e-mails and a rendering engine for displaying received HTML e-mails.

HTML mail allows the sender to properly express quotations (as in inline replying), headings, bulleted lists, emphasized text, subscripts and superscripts, and other visual and typographic cues to improve the readability and aesthetics of the message, as well as semantic information encoded within the message, such as the original author and Message-ID of a quote.

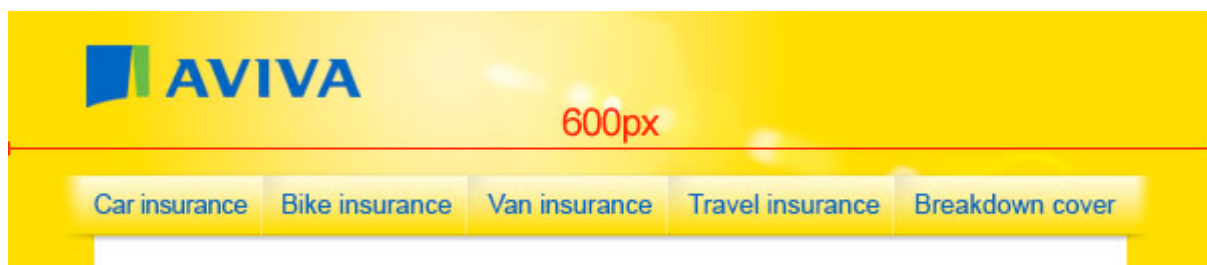
1.2 Overview

Although HTML email development follows some conventions of regular Web page development, we have to consider the display criteria within email clients and Web mail clients from all popular Web mail providers, as well as supporting requirements for those across all of our supported browsers. Some of the examples below are specific to one distribution system and should be substituted with code from your chosen provider.

1.3 Design

1.3.1 Email width

Designs need to be created to a maximum width of 600px. 600px is on average the maximum recommended size for Web mail client preview panes.



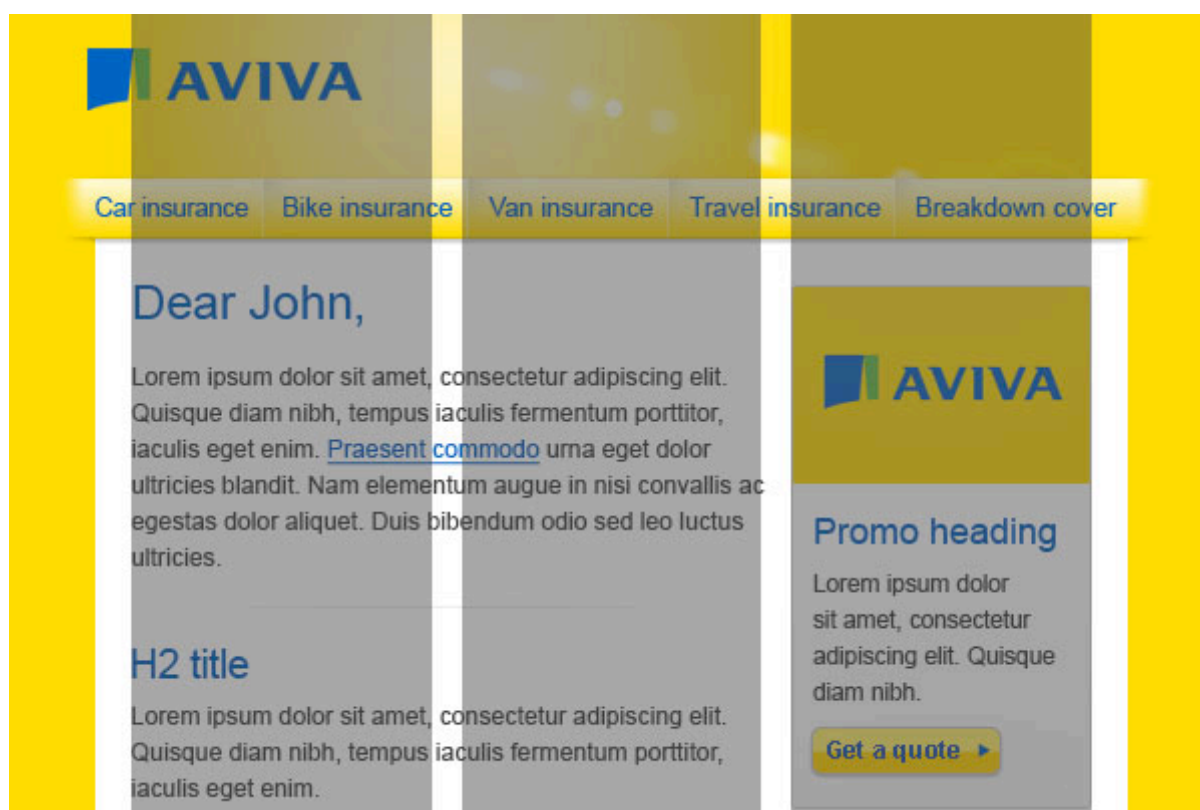
The average preview pane is between 300 to 500 pixels high so, again, all important content should sit within this area.

1.3.2 Technologies

Designs need to be created with HTML emails in mind. They need to be static and cannot feature interactive or dynamic elements like JavaScript, Flash, jQuery, or Server side interaction. Video components are also not supported in many modern clients and should not be used.

1.3.3 Structure

Email templates should utilise a 3 column grid based layout with each column measuring 150 pixels and a 15 pixel padding area. Outer padding should be 18 pixels on all sides.



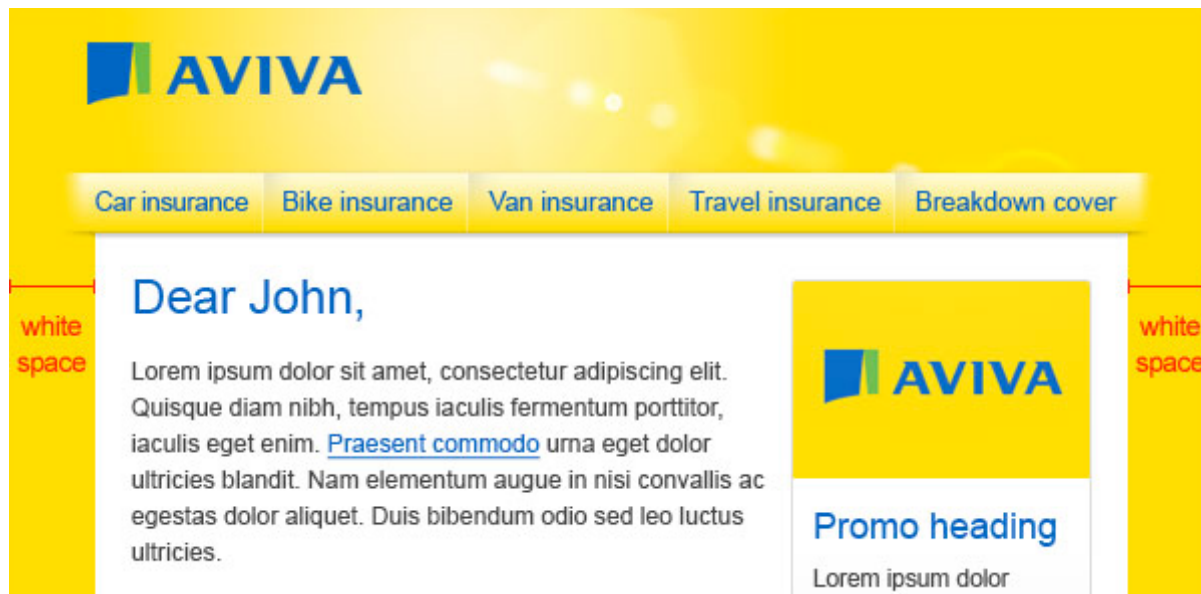
1.3.4 Background colour

All emails must be created using Aviva Yellow (#ffd900) as the predominant background colour for white space areas. This colour should be used to fill side columns of the email giving the impression the template fills the user's preview pane.

All content areas, however, such as the main content column should use white (#ffffff) as a background colour to ensure legibility of copy.

1.3.5 Email masthead

The masthead for each email must include the Aviva logo, left-aligned and the Aviva sunbeam as a background.

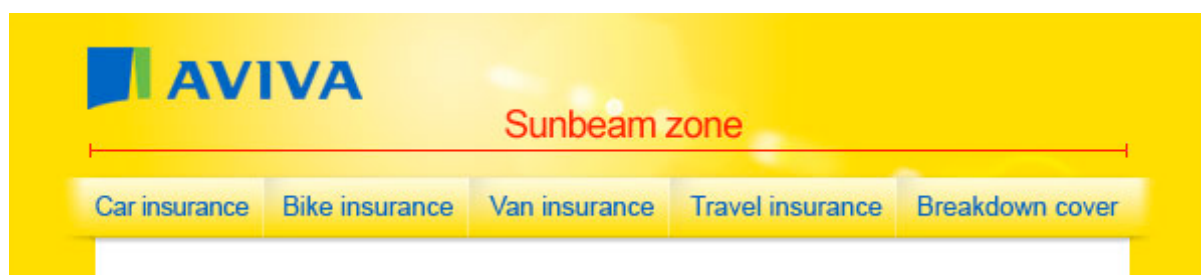


The Aviva logo has a fixed size, position and exclusion zone in the masthead. The exclusion zone should incorporate a minimum of 18 pixels white space to the left and right of the logo and 23 pixels top and bottom.

The Aviva Sunbeam has a fixed size and position in the masthead.

The Sunbeam must only be used once within each email template.

The sunbeam must be positioned so that no edges are seen at either side of the masthead, allowing the yellow background colour to merge with the background colour of the body.



1.3.6 Buttons

All buttons will need to be supplied as images due to restrictions using background images mentioned previously. Primary call to action buttons must be yellow (such as 'Get a quote'). There are three sizes available. However, in some instances, buttons may be required to be placed on Aviva yellow backgrounds or gradients. In this case, an alternative solution should be used. Either the Aviva green button or the Aviva silver button should be used in these instances.

1.3.7 Promo pods

Promo pods, if required, should be placed in the right-hand column of the template, and utilise H3 tags for titles. Copy within a pod should be 12pt Arial with an 18pt line height in Aviva Grey(#333333). Imagery can be used within the pods to supplement the sales message.

Pods may use one of two colour schemes dependant on the prominence required for the content. Standard pods utilise a white background with a 1 pixel border (colour #d1d1d1) and any buttons within these pods should utilise the standard Aviva yellow button. Pods that require more prominence can utilise a yellow gradient (#fae466 to #ffd900) and should then utilise the Aviva white/grey button. If required the yellow pod may also use the Aviva green button to enhance the call to action.

1.4 General

HTML and plain text emails should be created and both should be offered to users. When delivering the email, your chosen distribution system will decide depending on the recipients' preferences which version they receive so you will not have to worry about how to target different clients.

HTML emails should offer users a hyperlink so they can view the email as a Web page. The code for this will vary depending on what level of personalisation is used.

An unsubscribe hyperlink should be offered to users so they can be removed from mailing lists.

Within the definition of the HTML guidelines we will refer to "spacer gif". The spacer gif is a 1x1 pixel transparent gif. It is to be reused throughout the HTML email and sized as required to fill and hold open a table cell.

1.5 Plain text email

Plain text emails are to be written in Notepad or similar, should contain no formatting at all and be 70 characters per line to ensure they display correctly in the preview pane.

1.6 HTML email

HTML email should be built in HTML with no Doctype. The HTML should be well formed, and feature closing tags on all HTML elements. The document head should be empty aside from a <title> and <meta> definition for character set, which must be UTF-8.

The basic layout of an HTML email is as follows;

```
<html>
  <head>
    <meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=UTF-8" />
    <title>Title</title>
  </head>
  <body>
    <!-- content here -->
  </body>
</html>
```

1.6.1 Layout

All layouts should be of an HTML tabular structure. Nested table usage is promoted where necessary to achieve layouts where design criteria are more diverse.

Styles such as padding and margin should not be used to define or help to define layout.

Table dimensions: width, borders, cellspacing and cellpadding should be defined in each opening <table> tag such as;

```
<table width="800" cellspacing="0" cellpadding="0" border="0">
```

There is no requirement for <th>, <caption>, <colgroup>, <col>, <thead>, <tbody> or <tfoot> tags to be used.

1.6.2 Table Cells

Cell backgrounds should be created by colouring the cell directly, setting cell instance.

Cell dimensions should be defined on the cell and filled by spacer gifs;

```
<td bgcolor="#123456" height="50" width="50">
  <img href="http://www.example.com/spacer.gif" height="50" width="50" />
</td>
```

If a border is required, an element should be built with a container cell spacing an inner cell.

They should be spaced with a spacer gif and coloured background. CSS Styles should not be used.

Vertical alignment of cell content should use the **valign** attribute;

<td valign="top">

Horizontal alignment of cell content should use **align** attribute;

<td align="right">

1.6.3 Styles

HTML emails should not contain a style block within the head or body. HTML emails should not link to an external style sheet.

No inline-styles should be found within the document unless:

It relates to the underline definition and colour definition of an anchor tag. This is an issue we have found in some versions of Firefox where the tag will not colour the underline of an anchor tag.

We have found an issue with images in Hotmail, where Hotmail sometimes collapses images even when a height and width are defined. To correct this we apply the style of display: block; to each image.

At the time of writing, it appears that this issue is now fixed in Hotmail and we do not need to include this rule but still retains enough value to be included within the documentation.

1.6.4 Scripting

HTML email should not contain any functional or interactive content such as JavaScript. This includes JavaScript blocks in the head and body or through the loading of external scripts.

1.6.5 Images

All images must have height and widths defined in the tag and require an alt attribute. Spacer gif images do not require an alt attribute.

Standard images should be no larger than 30kb each. Larger images should be sliced into smaller sections where necessary.

The .jpg format should be used for photographic or stock based imagery. The .gif format should be used for any graphical element that uses text; including Aviva headers, navigation, icons and signoff signatures.

Animated GIF images are not supported in many modern email clients and should not be used.

Many email clients automatically block images so in all instances ALT tags should be used to define the content of the image.

Background images should not be used as these are not supported in many clients, use background colours instead, referenced using inline styles.

Links to images should use a full, absolute path. They must not be relative to the email.

```
<img href="http://www.example.com/spacer.gif" />
```

All imagery used within email templates should conform to the main online guidelines. As the Aviva sunbeam is always used in the email masthead, it should not be present in any imagery used within the email body itself.

Any images may be used from www.avivabrand.com but it is also acceptable to source alternative imagery for use within emails from third party sources. These images should adhere to the following:

- The photo should look as though it is literally taken from the point of view of a customer.
- The image should not have the Aviva Sunbeam applied as this is present in the masthead of the email.

Any imagery showing people should feel unposed and genuine, do not use portraits shot in a studio or using an artificial light source.

1.6.6 Fonts and copy

All fonts should be styled using the tag and following attributes.

- Size is defined:
 - Size="3"
 - Possible values: a number from 1 to 7.
 - Browser default is 3.
- Font-weight is defined:
 - Font-weight="bold"
- Colour is defined:
 - color="red" or using hex code color="#123456". Shorthand hex code usage is not advised.
- Font-face is defined:
 - face="verdana"
- Copy cannot be defined with <p> tags (*Hotmail does not recognise this tag correctly*), so just space it using
 tags

Body copy should be Arial and utilise Aviva Grey (#333333).

Body copy should have a line height of 18 pixels.

H1 tags should utilise Arial and utilise Aviva Blue (#004fb6).

H2 tags should utilise Arial and utilise Aviva Blue (#004fb6).

H3 tags should utilise Arial and utilise Aviva Blue (#004fb6).

1.6.7 Carriage return

```
<font face="verdana" size="3" color="#FFF000">
```


text

carriage return

To create a new paragraph

Paragraph 1

Paragraph 2
