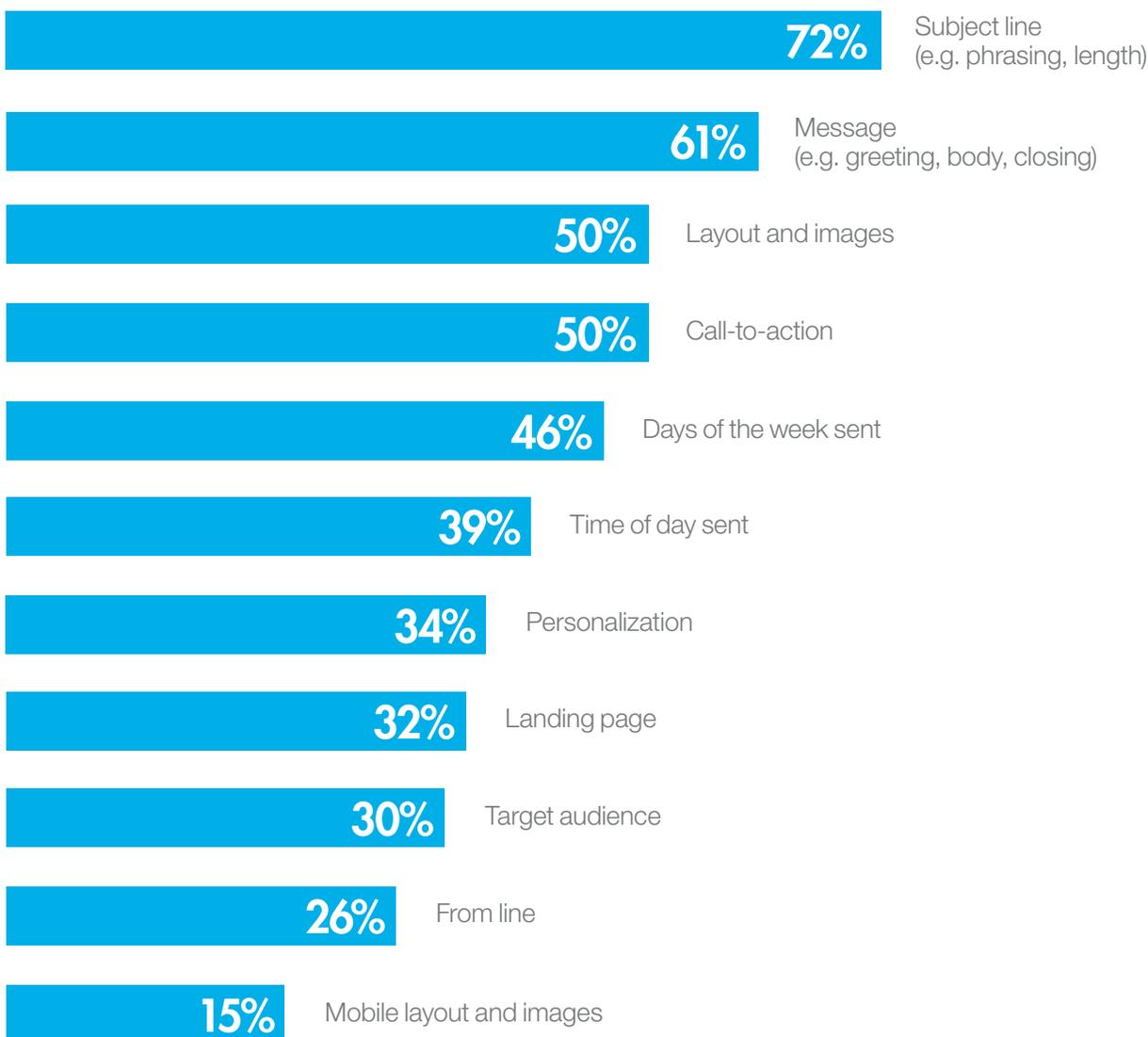


# WHAT TO TEST IN YOUR EMAILS

One of the most powerful aspects of email marketing is that it can, indeed, be tested, which is crucial to the success of your campaigns. There are no golden rules for how to run your campaigns, and that can be frustrating; but rules don't exist because what works for one audience won't necessarily work for another. Testing is your biggest ally.

## What to test

Historically, the subject line has been the most popular marketing email element to test, followed closely by the content of the message itself. But as MarketingSherpa highlights in this chart, there are many other elements of your emails that are just as testable:



Source: MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey

# Best practices are those that are best for YOUR audience.

## You must test to see what resonates most with your subscribers.

### Eight Tips for Pro Testing

1. Start simple. Test subject lines and headers first. It doesn't take a lot of time or creative work to come up with a few simple variants, and the return can be significant.
2. Test one element at a time. If you test more than one element, you won't be able to tell which variant drove the success.
3. Control for time of day and day of the week. If you're testing other variants, then send on the same day and at the same time to eliminate the timing variant.
4. Keep a log of all your tests. Record your findings so you can refer back to the specific variables tested and, more importantly, learn from them.
5. Make sure testing is part of your day-to-day processes. Testing doesn't have to be daunting, and it shouldn't be something you put off due to a lack of resources — it should be part of your daily routine.
6. Run tests on groups that are small, but large enough to determine a clear winner. The winning variables should then be incorporated into your larger mailing.
7. Don't forget that small differences can be significant. This is especially true if your sample sizes are large.
8. Listen to what your tests tell you! All the testing in the world won't matter if you're not making decisions and modifications to your campaigns based on what you've learned. Unused data is sad data, indeed.

### Here are 25 elements we suggest you consider testing:

1. Subject line
2. From name
3. Day of the week
4. Time of day
5. Frequency
6. Mostly-images vs. mostly-text
7. Short copy vs. long copy
8. Links vs. buttons
9. Number of links
10. Unsubscribe at the top
11. First name personalization — in the subject line
12. First name personalization — in the email body
13. Animated gifs
14. Font colors
15. Font styles
16. Opt-down
17. Social sharing icons
18. Social connecting icons
19. Delivery by time zone
20. Call to action — number
21. Call to action — placement
22. Post-click landing page
23. Social proof
24. Tone — human vs. corporate
25. Copy length

Want to learn more about testing? Visit:

[Marketo's The Ultimate Guide To Test Statistics](#)

([bit.ly/11ZkASJ](http://bit.ly/11ZkASJ))

Are you among those who self-proclaim, "I'm not good at math"? If so, we've got a [handy calculator](#) you can use.

This calculator was originally designed for landing-page conversions, but it works great for email numbers. Just replace "page views" with "emails sent," and "conversion rate" with "click-through rate."

