



The UK Email Marketing Benchmark Report 2012



This report is the result of an analysis of over 900 million email marketing messages sent through the Sign-Up.to online marketing platform in the 12 months from 1st January - 31st December 2011.

These email campaigns are from small-medium sized UK organisations and have been sent to UK recipients. All of these messages were permission-based and sent to opted-in lists (never to 3rd party or purchased lists).

The 23 industry sectors listed here have been self-selected by the sending organisations. For details of the calculation methods and additional graphs and tables, please see the appendix at the end of this document.

These averages are a good place to start when benchmarking your performance, but there are many factors which will influence your own results. When judging the success of your own campaigns it's important to ensure you select relevant criteria and look for incremental improvements in your emails by benchmarking against your own average results.

Please feel free to pass this document around, post excerpts and links, we'd love you to - all we ask it that you include a link and attribution to www.sign-up.to when you do.

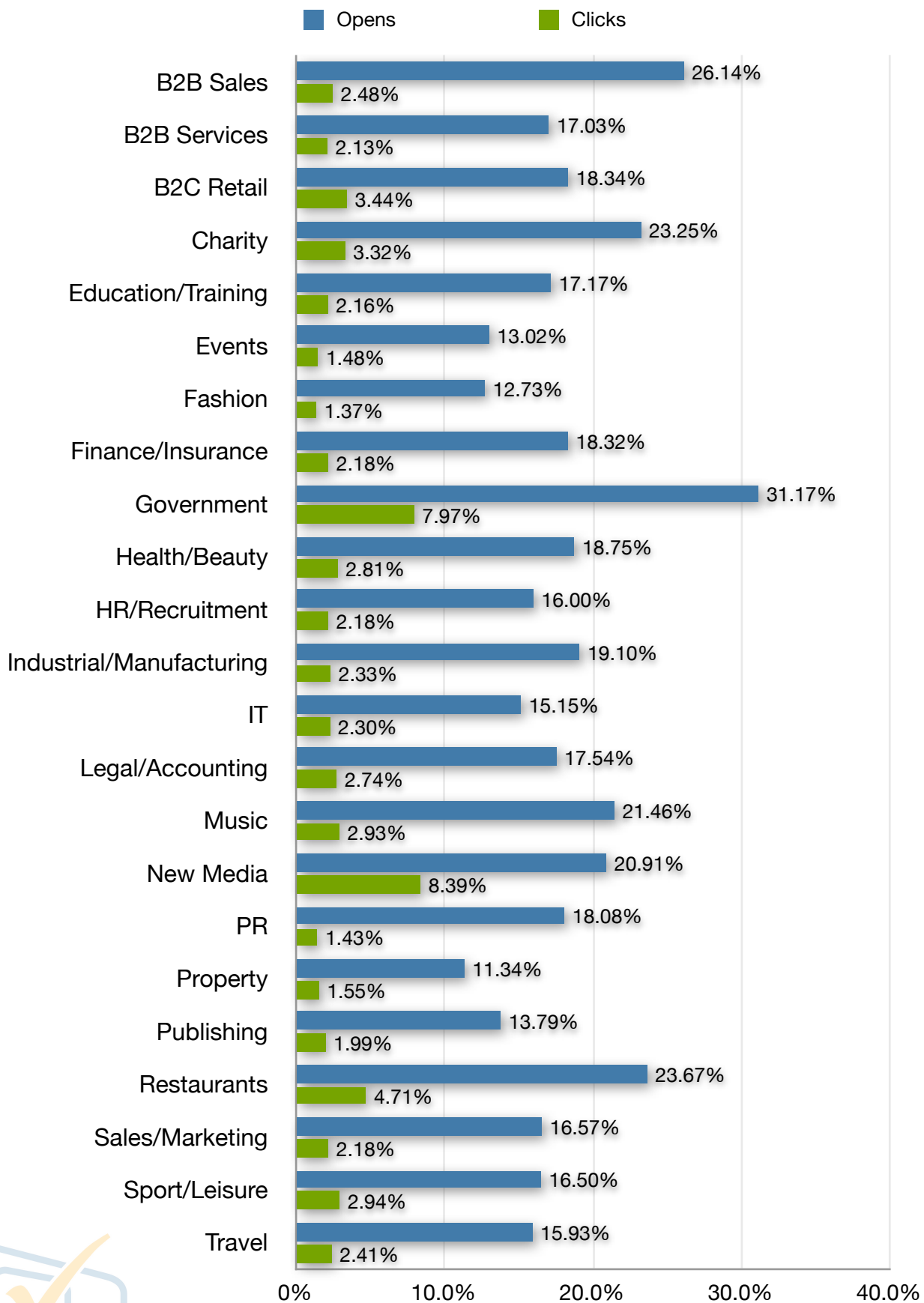
You can find the latest online version of this report, and interactive versions of the charts at www.sign-up.to/email-benchmark-2012/

Overall averages

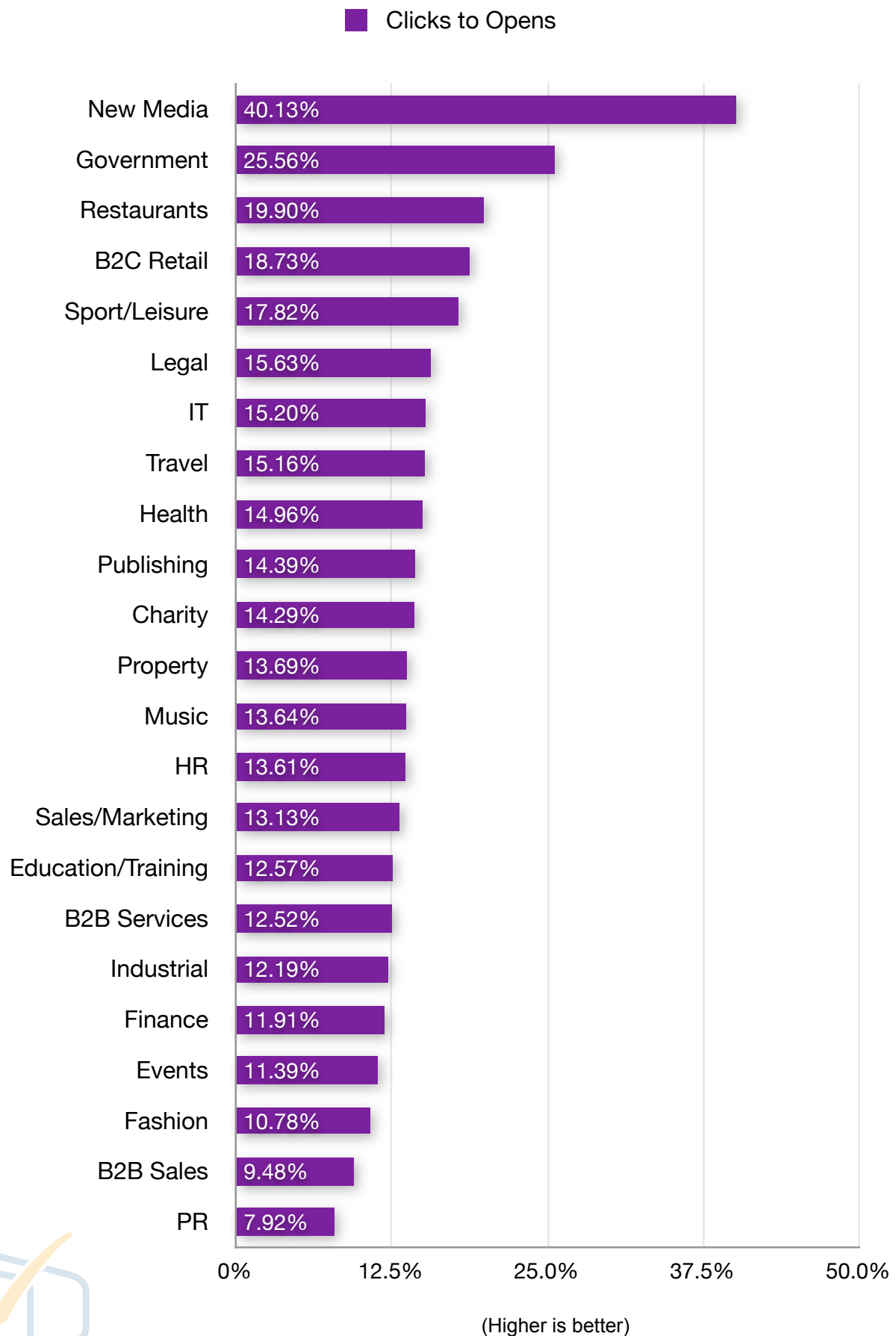
Across all industries the average results for UK SME email marketing campaigns were:

- Open rate: 18.35%
- Click-through rate: 2.95%
- Unsubscription rate: 0.15%
- Click-to-open rate: 15.42%
- Unsubscribe-to-open rate: 0.97%

How do open and click-through rates compare across sectors?



Which sectors have the best campaign engagement?



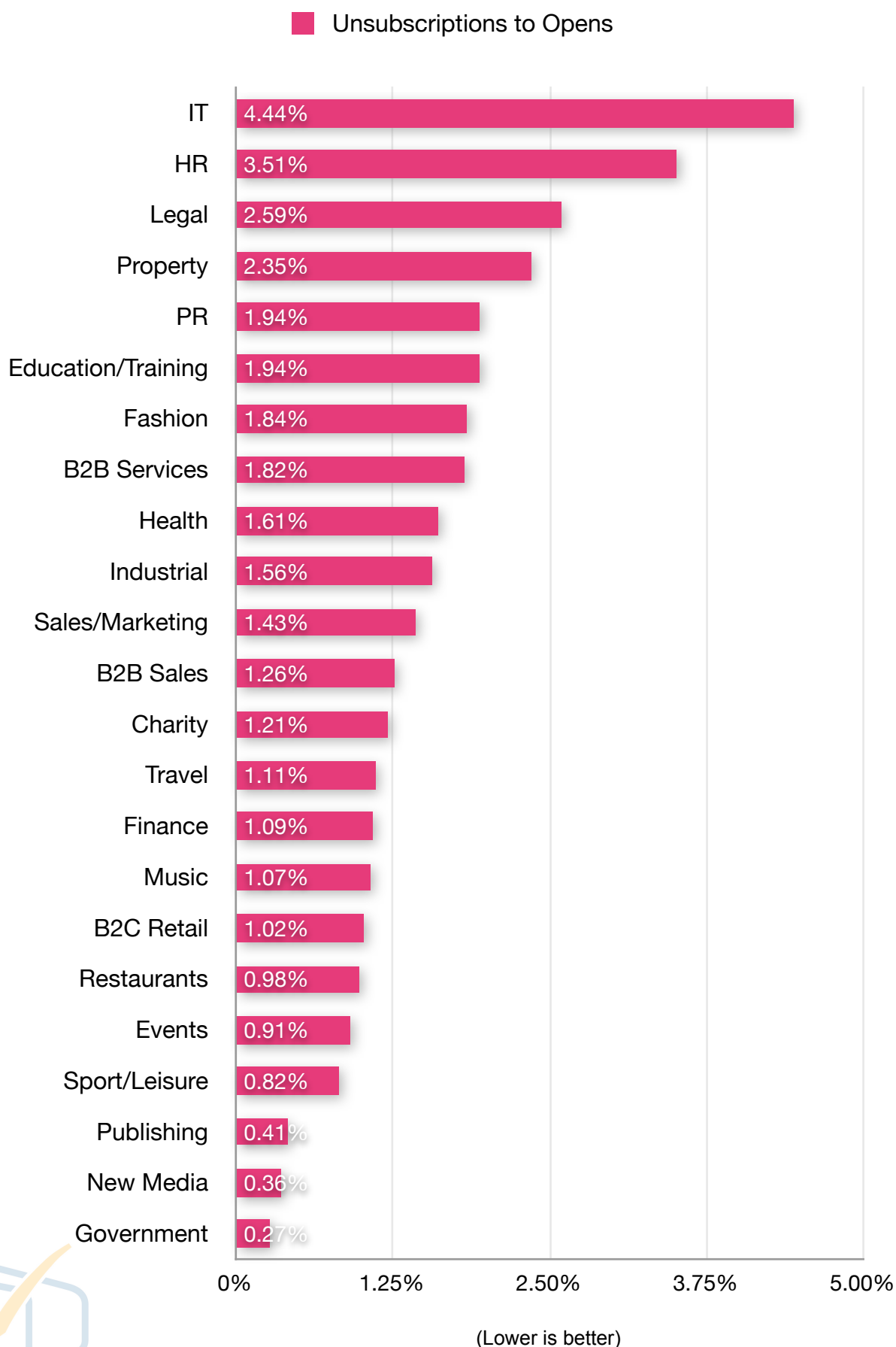
Click-to-open rates give a deeper insight into campaign performance by looking at actions performed after a campaign has been opened. This puts the focus on the actual email content - its design and relevancy to the recipients - and removes factors which influence open rate, like subject line and sender details.

When comparing click-to-open rates it's important to remember that different types of email campaigns will have different objectives - driving a click-through may not always be the goal of a campaign.

For example, this year sees the New Media category take the lead with a huge click-to-open rate of 40.13% - campaigns in this category include many regular newsletters where the purpose is to direct readers back to online articles to read the full content, resulting in a very high click rate. By comparison, in the PR category many of the emails are press releases which contain all of the relevant content within the email itself rather than linking away, and so they don't drive as many clickthroughs.



Which sectors have the highest reader loyalty?



To measure reader loyalty, we look at the ratio of unsubscriptions to opens - a good indicator of the relevance of a campaign to the audience. Unsubscription rate alone is a useful measure but doesn't take into account people who simply discard messages without ever opening them - the worst possible result for an email marketer.

This year actually sees a small increase in unsubscriptions across a number of industries, accompanied by an increase in open rate. The likely cause of this is the wider implementation of feedback loops and unsubscription links by ISP's directly into their email interfaces - making it easier for readers to unsubscribe rather than simply ignoring emails they no longer find engaging. Ultimately [this is a good thing for marketers](#).





Appendix - more charts and tables

In this appendix we've included charts breaking down some of these statistics further as well as details of how we calculate these numbers and tables of the raw percentages, in case you're curious!

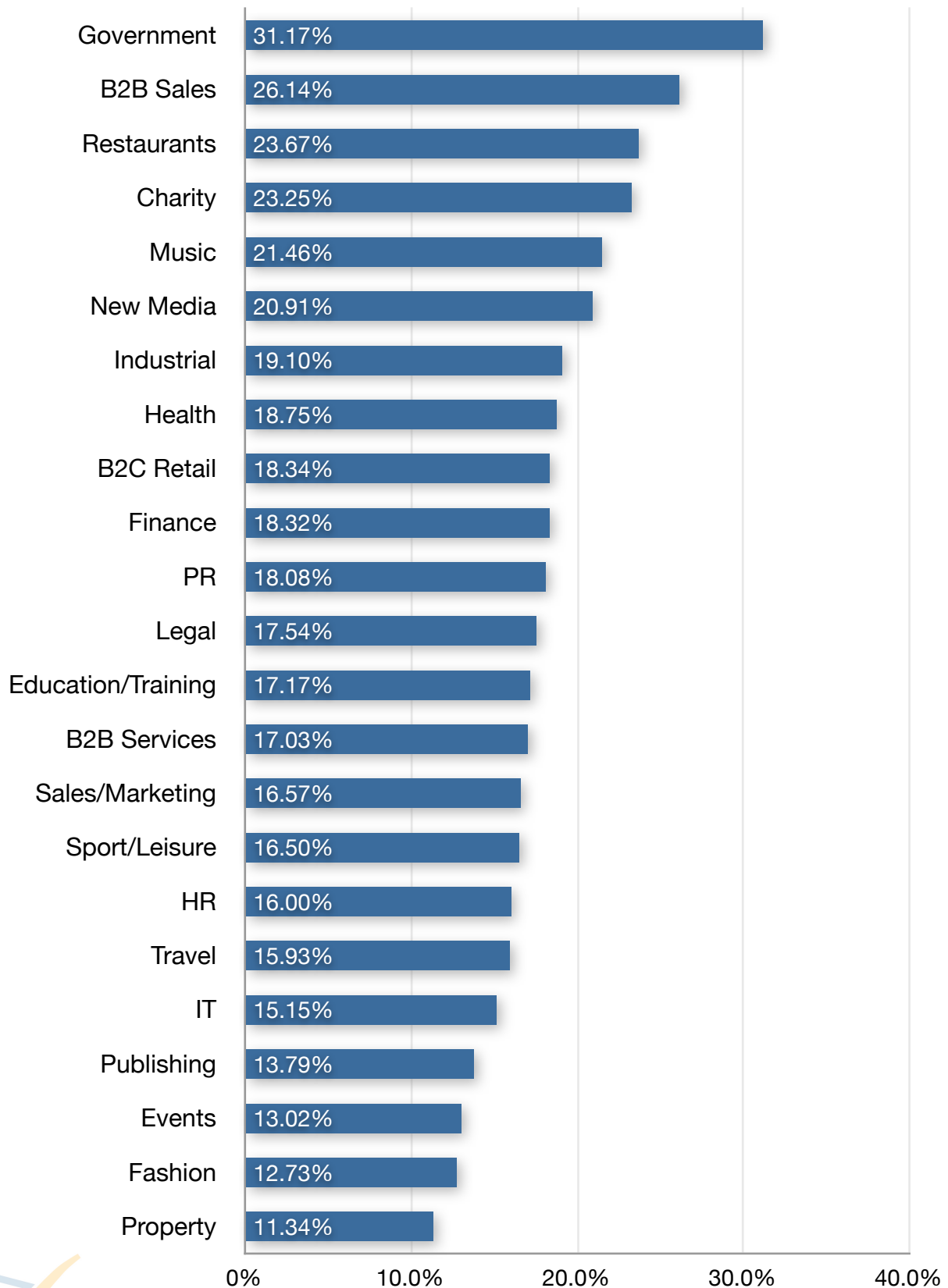
A little bit about Sign-Up.to

We're a 9 years old, UK based company providing software, services and support to thousands of businesses to help them communicate better with their customers using email marketing, mobile marketing and social media.

To find out more about what we do visit us at www.sign-up.to drop us an email at solutions@sign-up.to or give us a call on 0845 644 4184 - we'd love to hear from you.



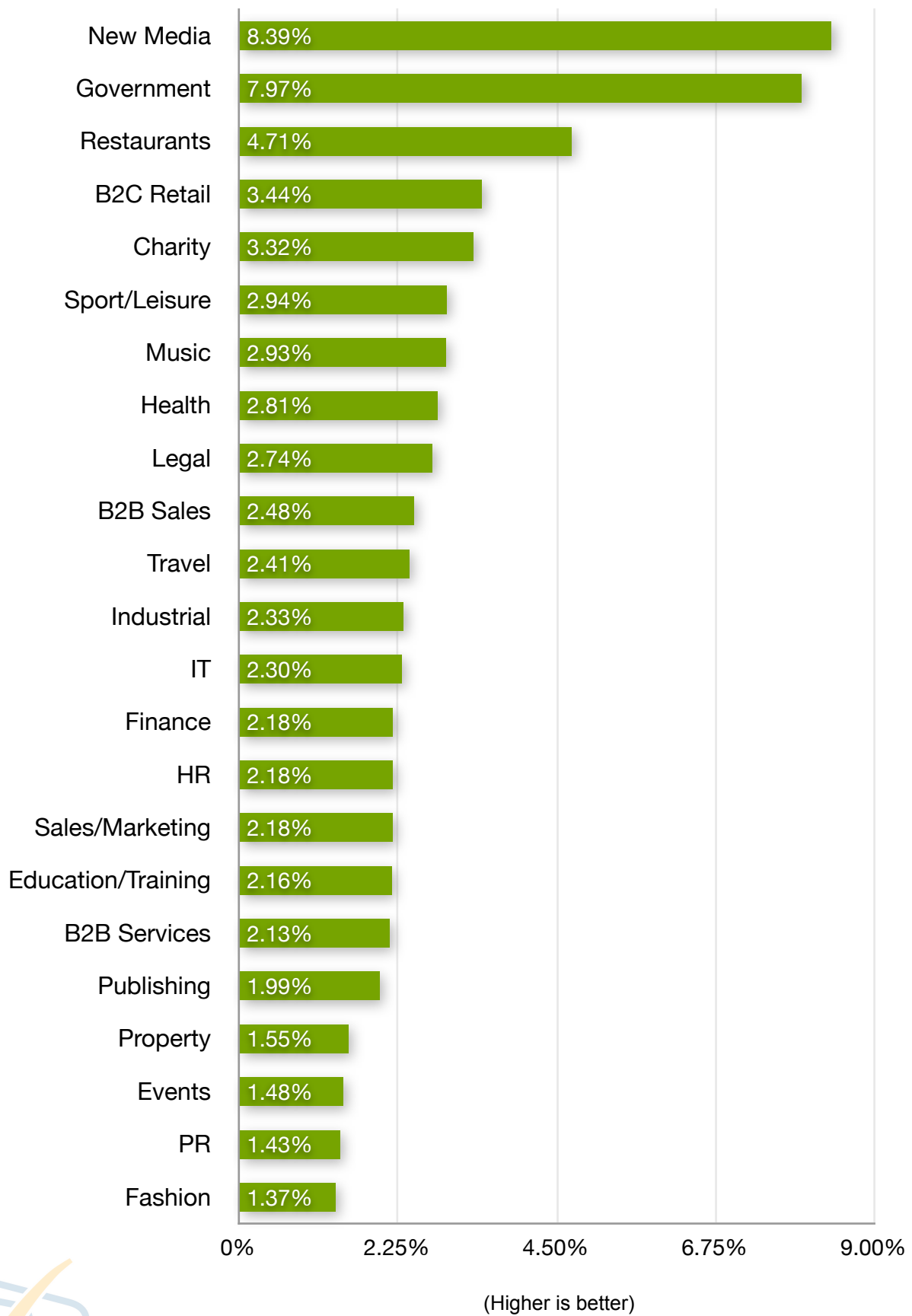
Which sector has the best open rate?



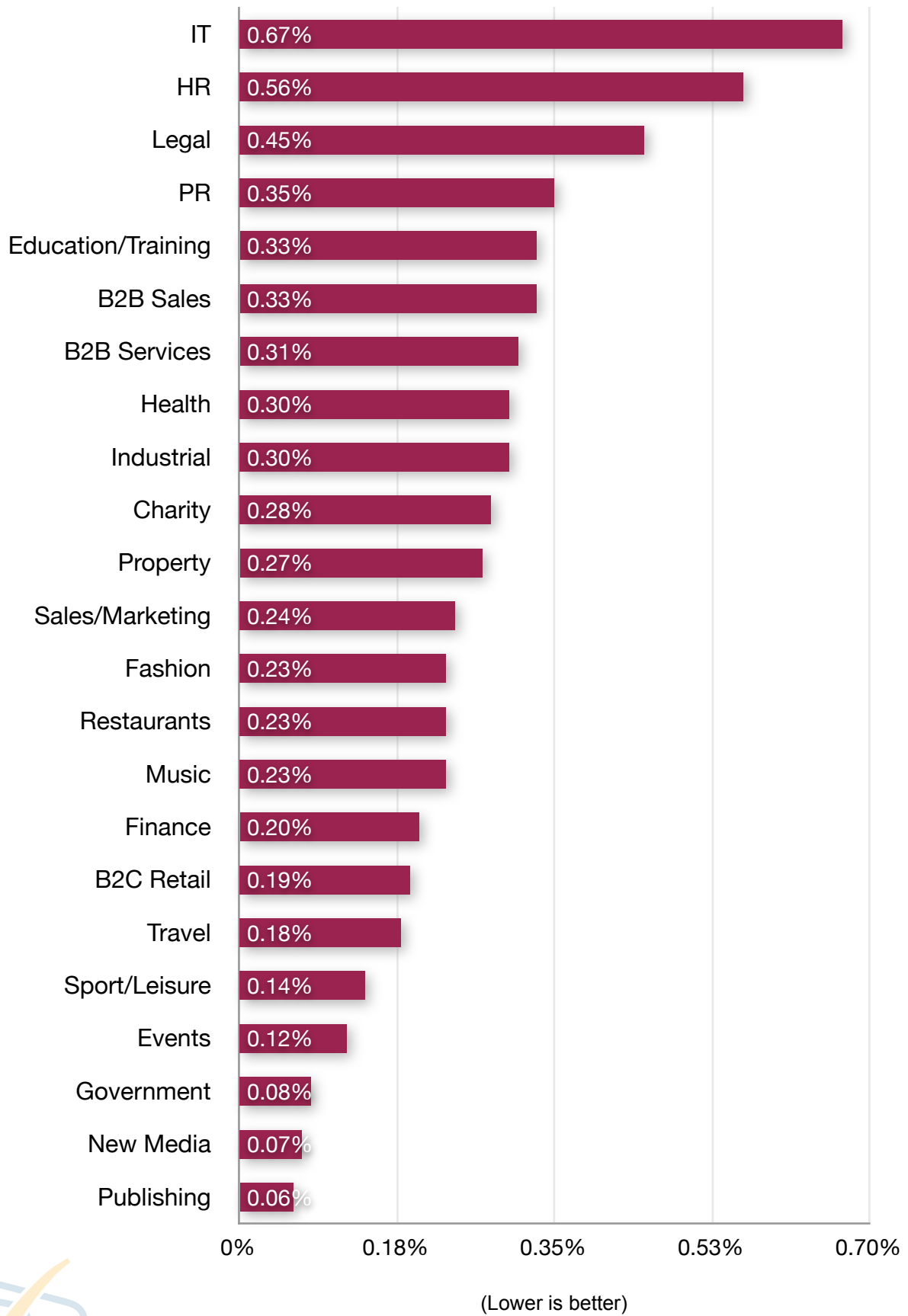
(Higher is better)



Which sector has the best click-through rate?



Which sectors get the most unsubscriptions?



Raw data

For the numerically inclined, here are the raw percentages in table format.

	Opens	Clicks	Unsubs	Click to Open	Open to Unsub
B2B Sales	26.14%	2.48%	0.33%	9.48%	1.26%
B2B Services	17.03%	2.13%	0.31%	12.52%	1.82%
B2C Retail	18.34%	3.44%	0.19%	18.73%	1.02%
Charity	23.25%	3.32%	0.28%	14.29%	1.21%
Education/Training	17.17%	2.16%	0.33%	12.57%	1.94%
Events	13.02%	1.48%	0.12%	11.39%	0.91%
Fashion	12.73%	1.37%	0.23%	10.78%	1.84%
Finance/Insurance	18.32%	2.18%	0.20%	11.91%	1.09%
Government	31.17%	7.97%	0.08%	25.56%	0.27%
Health/Beauty	18.75%	2.81%	0.30%	14.96%	1.61%
HR/Recruitment	16.00%	2.18%	0.56%	13.61%	3.51%
Industrial/Manufacturing	19.10%	2.33%	0.30%	12.19%	1.56%
IT	15.15%	2.30%	0.67%	15.20%	4.44%
Legal/Accounting	17.54%	2.74%	0.45%	15.63%	2.59%
Music	21.46%	2.93%	0.23%	13.64%	1.07%
New Media	20.91%	8.39%	0.07%	40.13%	0.36%
PR	18.08%	1.43%	0.35%	7.92%	1.94%
Property	11.34%	1.55%	0.27%	13.69%	2.35%
Publishing	13.79%	1.99%	0.06%	14.39%	0.41%
Restaurants	23.67%	4.71%	0.23%	19.90%	0.98%
Sales/Marketing	16.57%	2.18%	0.24%	13.13%	1.43%
Sport/Leisure	16.50%	2.94%	0.14%	17.82%	0.82%
Travel	15.93%	2.41%	0.18%	15.16%	1.11%



Defining terms

Let's define some of the terms we're using as several of these figures can be (and often are!) calculated in different ways.

All figures we use are based on unique user actions - for example we only count the same recipient opening a campaign once, if they open that campaign again we don't count that as another open.

- **Bounced:** messages returned by the receiving mail server as undeliverable
- **Delivered:** messages accepted for delivery by the receiving mail server (*total sent - bounced*)
- **Open Rate:** the percentage of delivered emails that were opened (measured by an image load or link click); i.e. *number opened / delivered*
- **Clicks:** the percentage of delivered emails that had a link clicked; i.e. *unique clicks / delivered*
- **Unsubscribes:** the percentage of delivered emails that result in an unsubscription; i.e. *unsubscribes / delivered*

For some of the reports we use different ratios, as these are a better way to compare some aspects of campaign performance - these are:

- **Click to Open:** the percentage of opened emails that had a link clicked; i.e. *unique clicks / opens*
- **Unsubscribe to Open:** the percentage of opened emails that result in an unsubscription; i.e. *unsubscribes / opens*

We use these 'x to Open' figures as ways to compare the performance of the actual campaign content because these look at what happens after the first objective of someone actually opening the campaign has been achieved.

