



# The UK email marketing benchmark report 2013

When you're running a small business in Britain, it can be difficult to find meaningful comparisons to measure your marketing against. We know, we tried. Reports on big businesses and US firms just aren't that useful for a UK SME. That's why we created our UK email marketing benchmark.

This report is the result of an analysis of over 1.1 billion email messages sent through the Sign-Up.to online marketing platform in the 12 months from 1st January - 31st December 2012. These email campaigns are all from small-medium sized UK organisations. All of these messages were permission-based and sent to opted-in lists (never to 3rd party or purchased lists).

The 22 sectors listed here have been self-selected by the senders. 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 remember that there are many factors which will influence your own results. When judging the success of your campaigns make sure you select relevant criteria for you and then look for incremental improvements by benchmarking against your own average results. For more on this, check out <http://www.sign-up.to/resources/>

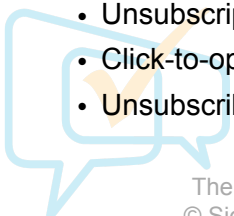
Please feel free to pass this document around and post excerpts and links - all we ask is that you include a link and attribution to [www.sign-up.to](http://www.sign-up.to) when you do.

You can find the latest online version of this report, and interactive versions of the charts at [www.sign-up.to/email-marketing-benchmarks/email-benchmark-2013/](http://www.sign-up.to/email-marketing-benchmarks/email-benchmark-2013/)

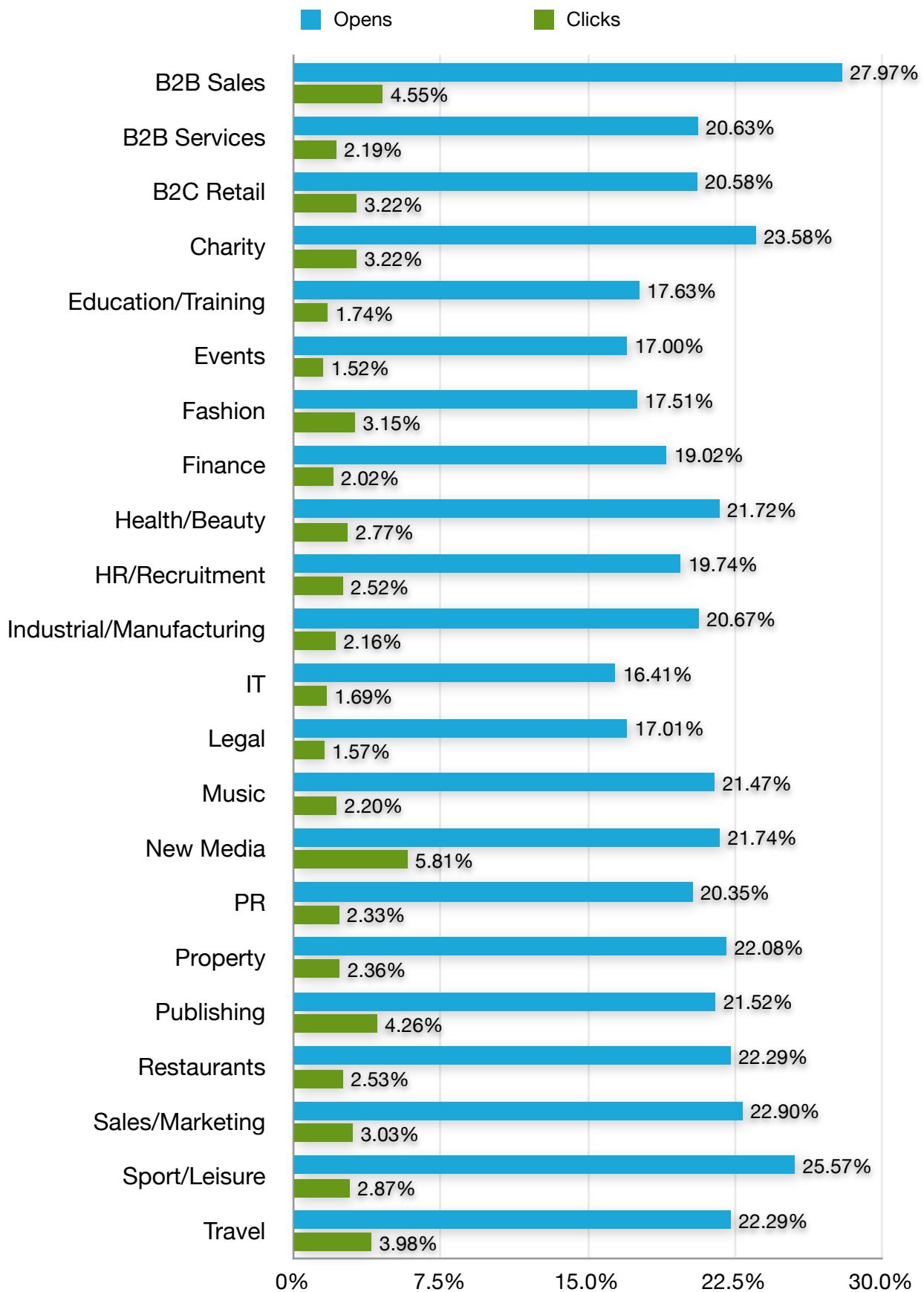
## Overall averages

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

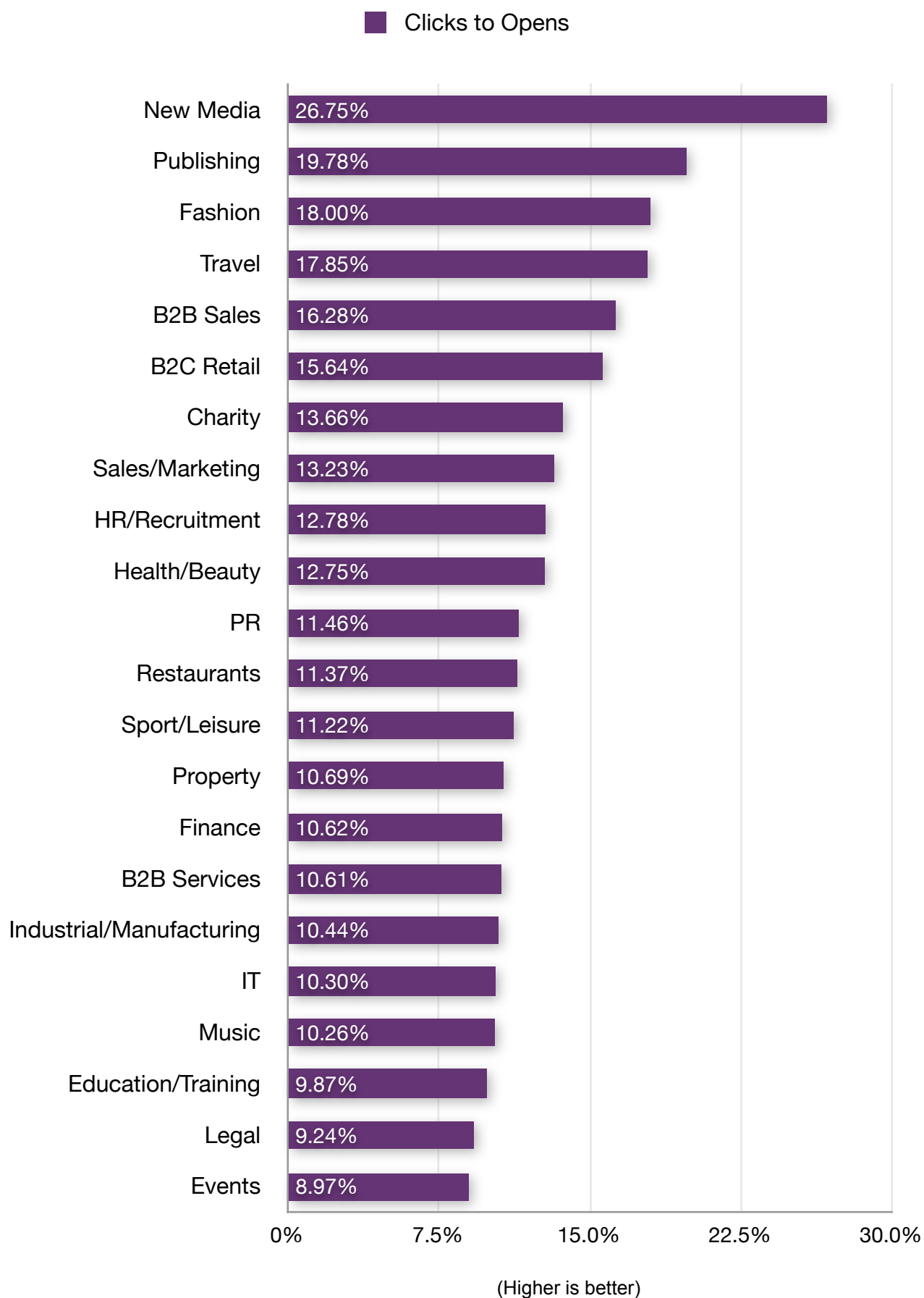
- Open rate: 21.47%
- Click-through rate: 3.16%
- Unsubscription rate: 0.47%
- Click-to-open rate: 14.72%
- Unsubscribe-to-open rate: 2.29%



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



## Which sectors have the best campaign engagement?

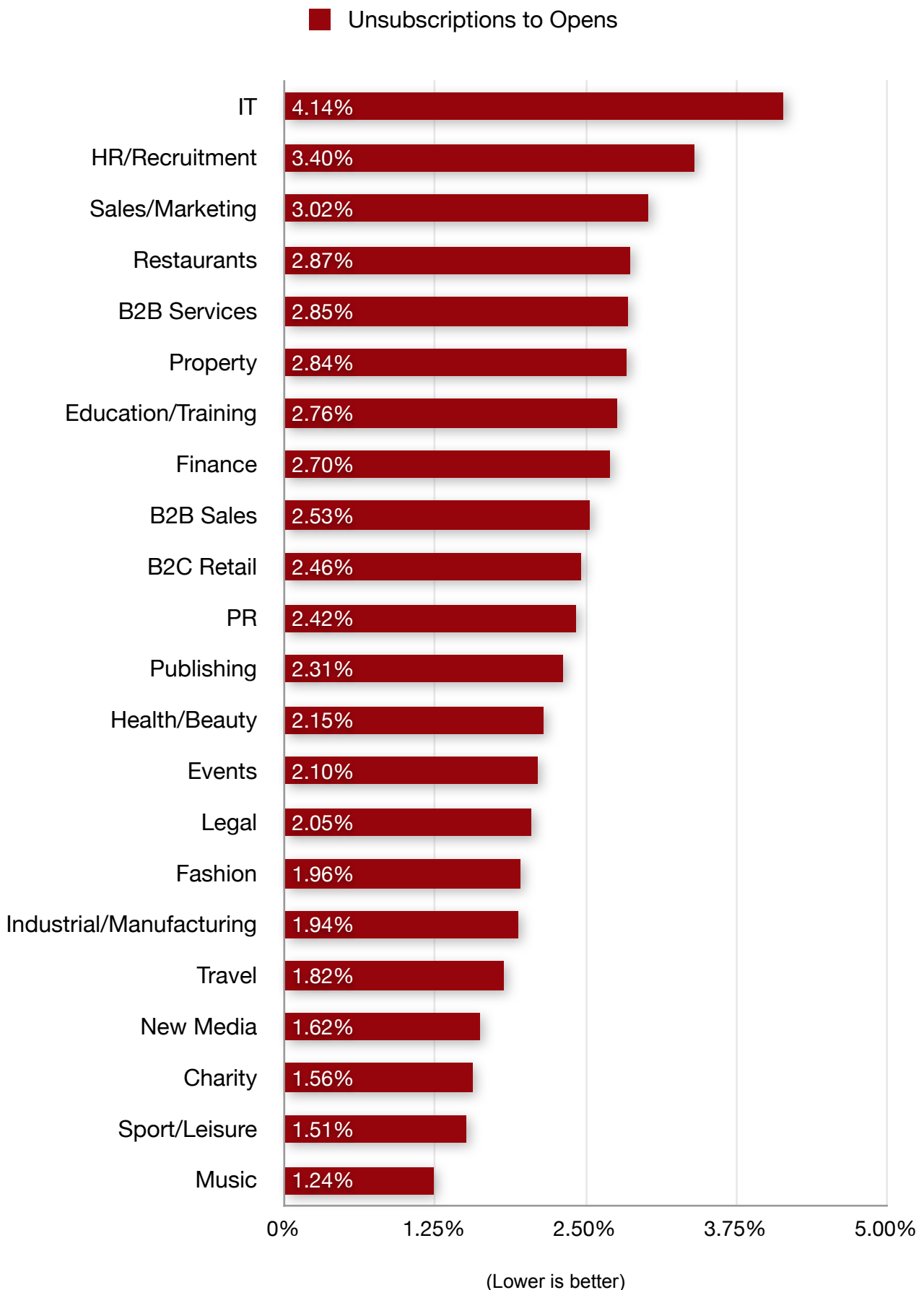


Click-to-open rates give a deeper insight into campaign performance by looking at actions performed after a campaign has been opened. This puts the focus on the actual email content - its design and relevance to the recipients - and removes factors which influence open rate, like subject line and sender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

This year sees Business to Business Sales take the lead with a click-to-open rate of 27.97%. By comparison, in the Events category (the worst performer) many of the emails are flyers which contain all of the relevant content within the email itself rather than linking away, and so they result in a fraction of the number of clicks.

## 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. The unsubscription rate alone is a useful measure but doesn't take into account people who simply discard messages without ever opening them - which is the worst possible result for an email marketer.



## Appendix - more charts and tables

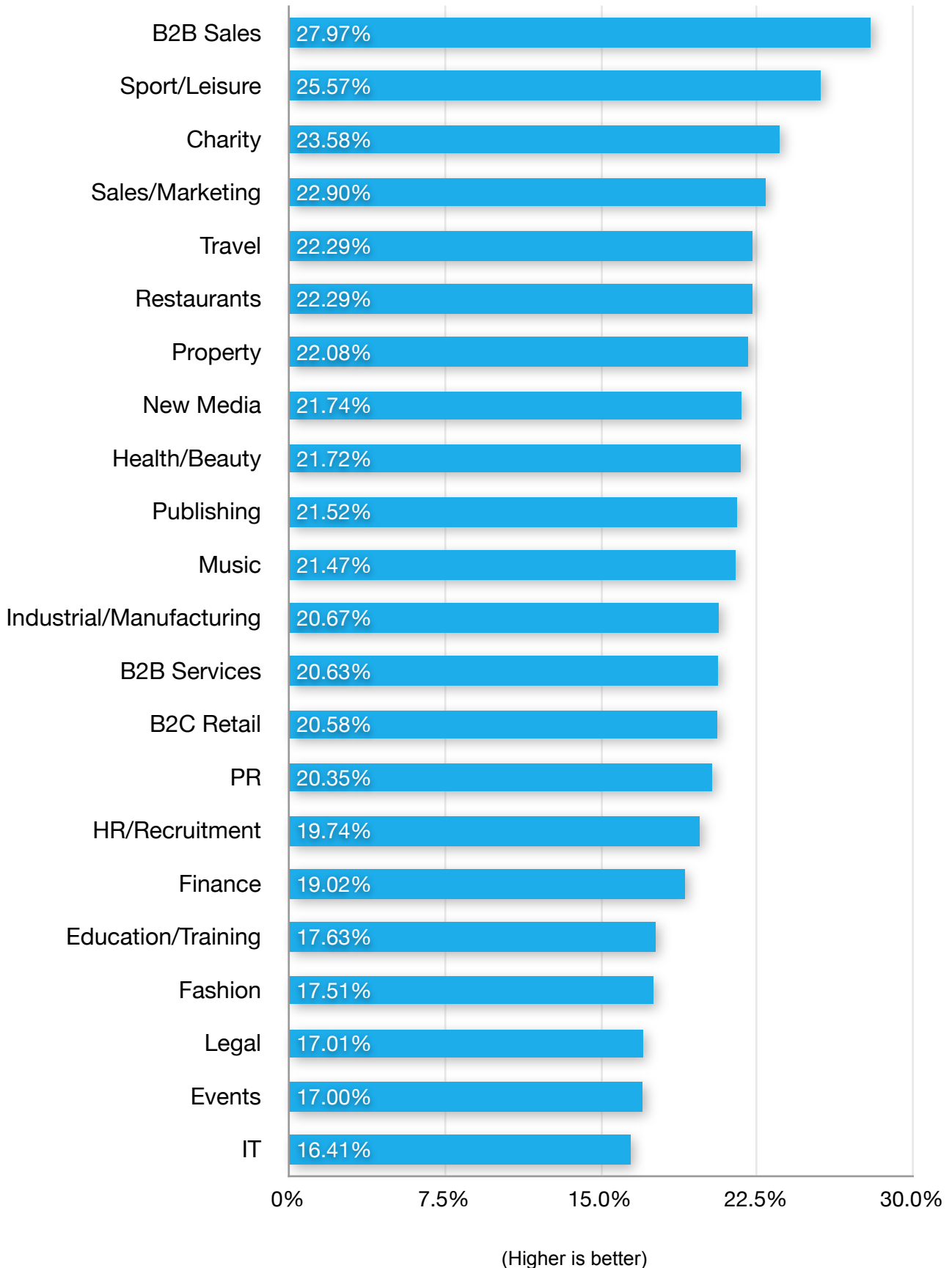
In this appendix we've included charts breaking down these statistics further, as well as details of how we calculate the numbers and tables of the raw percentages, in case you're curious!

### **A little bit about Sign-Up.to**

We develop software and provide services and support to thousands of businesses to help them communicate better with their customers using email marketing, SMS and social media. We've been in business for 10 years, are still owned by the original founders, and have offices in the UK and Australia.

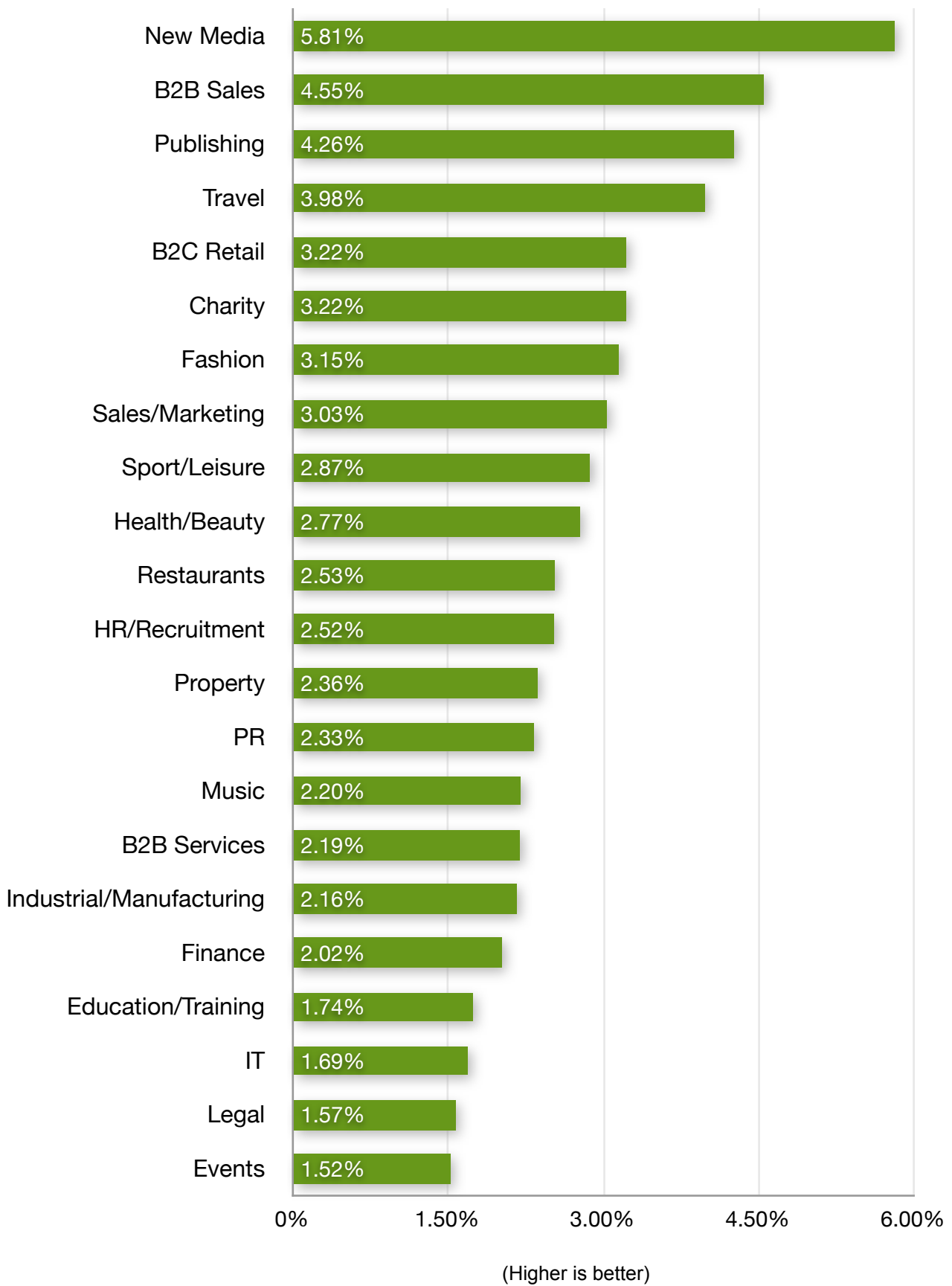
To find out more about what we do visit us at [www.sign-up.to](http://www.sign-up.to) drop us an email at [solutions@sign-up.to](mailto:solutions@sign-up.to) or give us a call on 020 3355 2631 - we'd love to hear from you.

## Which sector has the best open rate?

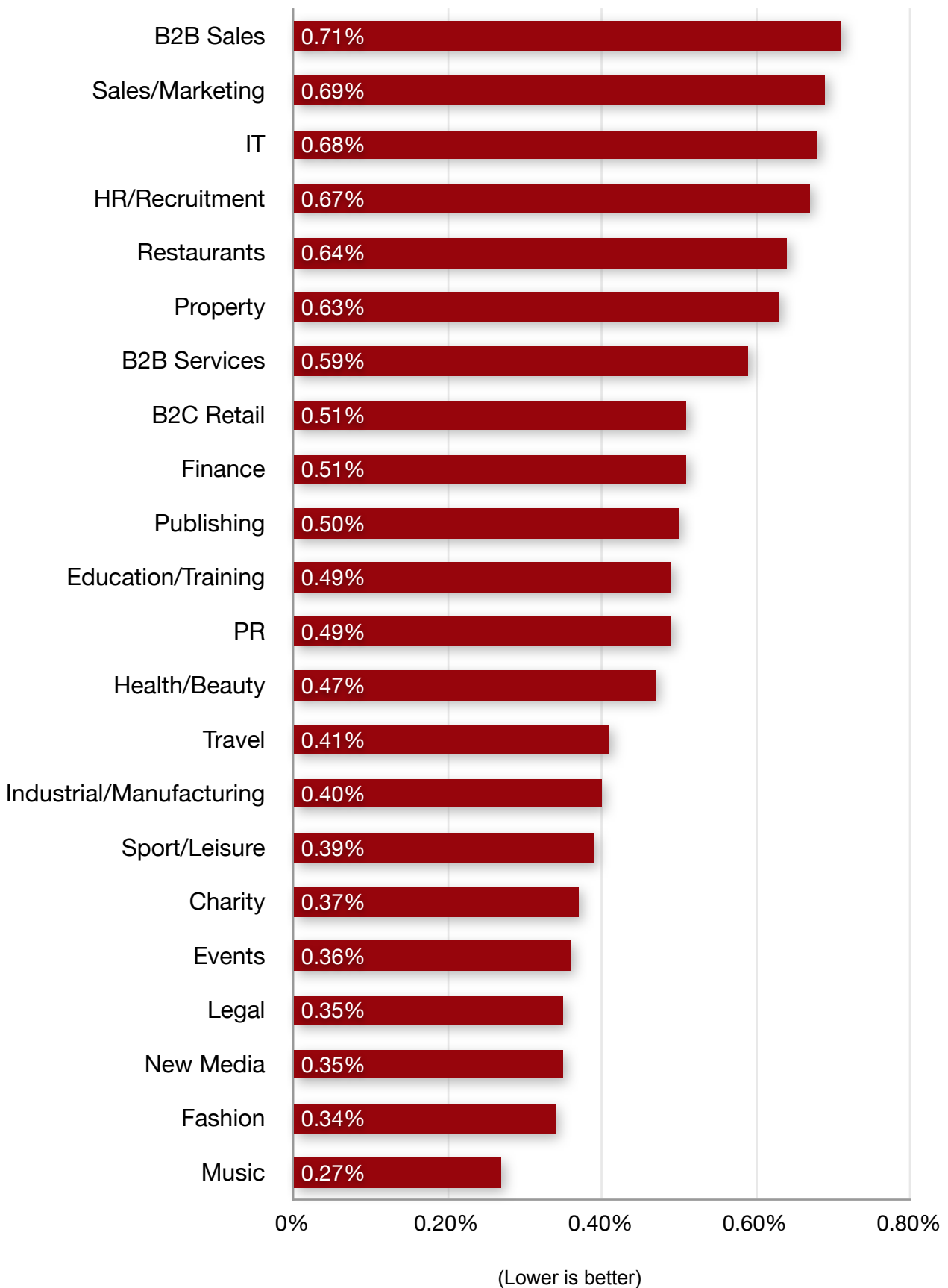




## Which sector has the best click-through rate?



## 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	27.97%	4.55%	0.71%	16.28%	2.53%
B2B Services	20.63%	2.19%	0.59%	10.61%	2.85%
B2C Retail	20.58%	3.22%	0.51%	15.64%	2.46%
Charity	23.58%	3.22%	0.37%	13.66%	1.56%
Education/Training	17.63%	1.74%	0.49%	9.87%	2.76%
Events	17.00%	1.52%	0.36%	8.97%	2.10%
Fashion	17.51%	3.15%	0.34%	18.00%	1.96%
Finance	19.02%	2.02%	0.51%	10.62%	2.70%
Health/Beauty	21.72%	2.77%	0.47%	12.75%	2.15%
HR/Recruitment	19.74%	2.52%	0.67%	12.78%	3.40%
Industrial/Manufacturing	20.67%	2.16%	0.40%	10.44%	1.94%
IT	16.41%	1.69%	0.68%	10.30%	4.14%
Legal	17.01%	1.57%	0.35%	9.24%	2.05%
Music	21.47%	2.20%	0.27%	10.26%	1.24%
New Media	21.74%	5.81%	0.35%	26.75%	1.62%
PR	20.35%	2.33%	0.49%	11.46%	2.42%
Property	22.08%	2.36%	0.63%	10.69%	2.84%
Publishing	21.52%	4.26%	0.50%	19.78%	2.31%
Restaurants	22.29%	2.53%	0.64%	11.37%	2.87%
Sales/Marketing	22.90%	3.03%	0.69%	13.23%	3.02%
Sport/Leisure	25.57%	2.87%	0.39%	11.22%	1.51%
Travel	22.29%	3.98%	0.41%	17.85%	1.82%

## 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 proportion of delivered emails that were opened (measured by an image load or link click); i.e. *number opened / delivered*
- **Clicks:** the proportion of delivered emails that had a link clicked; i.e. *unique clicks / delivered*
- **Unsubscribes:** the proportion 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:

- **Clicks to Opens:** the proportion of opened emails that had a link clicked; i.e. *unique clicks / opens*
- **Unsubscribes to Opens:** the proportion 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.