

2026 Growth Email Strategy V3.1

Driving Practice Revenue Through Segmentation, Seasonality Alignment, and Authority-Led Messaging

Email remains one of Donaldson's highest-performing owned channels and a controllable lever for revenue. The 2026 strategy is built on one core principle from 2024–2025 performance: **growth comes from higher conversion efficiency (relevance + clarity), not just increased send volume. Aligning the right patient segment with historical seasonality data by procedure is our golden ticket.**

2026 is also a transition year: LeadSquared enables segmentation by pillar and lifecycle stage, allowing email to become more relevant, more persuasive, and more measurable.

1) What We Know (Data Inputs)

This strategy is grounded in Donaldson-specific performance patterns and year-over-year demand trends.

1A) Macro demand (monthly lead seasonality)

2025 lead data shows:

- **Peak demand window:** March–May
- **Strong plateau:** June–August
- **Major trough:** September
- **Suppressed period:** Q4 and February

Strategic implication:

We do not create demand equally all year. We harvest demand when it's highest and protect efficiency when it's lowest.

1B) Micro demand (procedure-level seasonality: YOY 2024–2025)

Year-over-year trends show consistent peak months by pillar:

- **Plastic Surgery peaks:** January (1.20x) + April (1.24x)
- **Aesthetics peaks:** May (1.18x) + June (1.16x)
- **Functional peaks:** April (1.17x) + May (1.16x)

1C) Top procedures and best months (Donaldson-specific)

Top procedure best months:

- Tummy Tuck: July (1.93x)
- Breast Augmentation: April (1.36x)
- Mommy Makeover: April (1.53x), March (1.31x)
- Liposuction: June (1.63x), March (1.59x)
- Botox: November (1.41x), May (1.18x)
- Filler: April (1.52x), January (1.29x)
- Lasers: September, December
- Weight Management: March (1.39x), April (1.37x)

Strategic implication:

2026 email planning should prioritize procedures by month, not just pillars.

1D) High-intent weeks (timing advantage)

YOY analysis identified repeat “oddly strong weeks” including:

- Surgery: Jan 10–23 and Jan 29–Feb 11
- Surgery: Apr 25–May 5
- Botox spike: mid-May
- Laser surge: late Nov / early Dec
- Hormones spike: late Oct
- Sexual wellness spike: mid-March
- Weight loss: huge YOY increase in 2025

Strategic implication:

Even within monthly cadence, send timing should align to predictable high-intent windows.

2) 2026 Growth Strategy: The Revenue Formula

Revenue = Right Audience × Right Procedure Moment × Right Message × Right CTA

2A) Segmentation goals for 2026

1. Increase relevance → increase click intent → increase consult actions
2. Reduce unsubscribes caused by irrelevant pillar content
3. Enable more precise revenue attribution by pillar

Right Procedure Moment (Procedure-Led Calendar)

Instead of “what should we talk about in April?”

We answer: **‘What are patients already booking in April?’**

- April = Breast Aug + Mommy Makeover + Filler (peak)
- July = Tummy Tuck peak
- September = Laser exception month

Right Message (What Wins)

What performs best in Donaldson email:

- authority-led education
- outcomes + safety framing
- decision clarity
- cognitive-load reduction
- One primary CTA (book consult, schedule treatment, request treatment plan)

What does NOT perform (and what to do instead)

- **Avoid singular product skincare promotions** until ecommerce becomes a possibility (ex: ‘20% off SkinBetter ____’). Performance indicates these do not drive meaningful response.
- **Staff storytelling that stays internal** (no patient outcome tie)
- Patients do not want staff as the hero *in routine campaigns*
- **Patients want themselves as the hero, and Donaldson as the guide**
- **Exception:** Staff/provider-led hero content performs well when:
 - introducing a new provider
 - reintroducing an existing provider with a new service
 - Dr. Donaldson is the hero (especially in December)
- **Staff content works best when it proves expertise, reduces fear, and clarifies decision-making**

Curiosity hook (optional) → Authority payload → Single action

2025 Lead Seasonality (What It Means for 2026)

2025 Monthly Leads by Category (this dataset)

Month 2025	Surgery	Aesthetic	Spa	Functional	Unsure	Total
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Jan	250	132	21	63	15	481
Feb	156	63	25	44	10	298
Mar	279	142	33	80	17	551
Apr	221	109	33	81	12	456
May	264	137	41	104	33	579
Jun	234	124	26	80	28	492
Jul	288	93	28	70	14	493
Aug	258	109	27	72	19	485
Sep	133	64	9	56	28	290
Oct	201	101	20	72	20	414
Nov	152	94	23	53	17	339
Dec	129	80	26	62	21	318

Summary: Strategic Implications for 2026

These learnings reinforce that email performs best when it **reduces cognitive load for patients** and increases confidence in Donaldson's expertise and care model. Based on these learnings, the 2026 email strategy will prioritize:

- Authority-first education over lifestyle storytelling
- Clear, singular calls to action in C1 campaigns
- Evergreen editorial campaigns that support long-term growth
- Foundational systems that will later support retention strategy
- Messaging that positions Donaldson as a guide and decision-maker, not simply an information source
- Relevant promotions using tasteful, on-brand verbiage

3) 2026 Email Ecosystem & Campaign Framework

This framework defines the role, cadence, and expectations for each email type in 2026.

Email Ecosystem Overview

Email Type	Cadence	Primary Objective	Role in Growth
C1	Monthly and segmented by pillar, Whenever possible, send C1 to align with historically strong weeks.	Lead/consult conversion around timely demand	Primary revenue driver
C2	Monthly - either single pillar or segmented by pillar	Authority + consideration, support future conversions	Trust & consideration, shaping demand
Editorial Campaigns (EC)	~3x per year	Muilti-channel Conversion + evergreen growth	Scalable long-term revenue asset

C1 Campaign Framework

Conversion-Focused, Timely Messaging

C1 campaigns are designed to capture attention around relevant, seasonal, or timely topics and convert engaged readers into inquiries or appointments.

C1 Structure Guidelines

- Hero Topic - One clear, patient-relevant focus
- Supporting Topics - Up to two, reinforcing the main theme
- CTA - One Primary conversion CTA (book/consult/request)
- Tone - Educational, authoritative, patient-first
- **Optional hook block (above the fold):** curiosity driver (can include staff/lifestyle)

C1 Strategic Guardrails

- Prioritize *why this matters now*
- Emphasize outcomes, safety, and expertise
- Avoid topic overload or multiple competing CTAs
- Use urgency intentionally (events, booking windows, seasonal relevance)

What changes with segmentation (C1)

Each month, define:

- which pillar(s) get a C1
 - At minimum, we will send one core C1 monthly. In peak months, we will split C1 into pillar-specific versions.
 - what version changes per pillar
 - which CTA is primary per pillar
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C2 Campaign Framework

Authority, Education, and Long-Term Trust

C2 campaigns support patient education and reinforce Donaldson's expertise across aesthetics, plastic surgery, and functional medicine. C2 emails can generate leads, though their primary role is long-term influence and authority.

C2 modes (choose one each month)

Mode A: Single-Pillar C2 (default)

- Anchor theme + 3–5 blogs that support one pillar
- Sent to that pillar segment
- Stronger narrative, higher relevance
- CTA - learn more, explore options, etc

Mode B: Cross-Pillar C2 (intentional)

- Anchor theme that naturally bridges pillars (e.g., inflammation, hormones + skin)
- Still one narrative; pillars are supporting angles, not separate "sections"
- CTA - learn more, explore options, etc

C2 Strategic Guardrails

- Tie all blogs back to a single narrative
 - Position Donaldson as guide and authority
 - Avoid overly promotional framing, which supports future campaign performance
 - Monitor which C2 content drives conversion actions & consider leveraging that content as a supportive topic in future C1 emails or cornerstone themes for future C2 sends.
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Editorial Campaign (EC) Framework

Evergreen, Multi-Channel Growth Assets

- 3-4 campaigns/year
- Multi-channel reinforcement: email, landing page, paid, social, print, photo & video production
- Long-form decision-making clarity (reduces fear + confusion)
- Performance measured beyond launch window
- Focus on decision-making clarity and trust

Additional Editorial Campaign topics are determined by leadership and cascaded to marketing. This framework ensures consistency in execution and measurement regardless of topic.

4) KPIs & Performance Measurement

C1 Campaign KPIs (Conversion-Focused)

KPI	2025 Baseline	2026 Target
Open Rate	~22%	25–30%
Click Rate (CTR)	~4.1%	5–6.5%
Click-to-Open Rate (CTOR) % of openers who clicked (Clicks ÷ Opens)	~19%	22–28%
Conversion Rate (inquiry / consult action)	Not consistently tracked	0.8–1.5%
Revenue per Send (where attributable)	Variable	+25–40% YoY

C1 underperformance is largely structural (too many topics, weak CTA clarity). Improvements come from **focus**, not volume

C2 Campaign KPIs (Authority & Engagement)

KPI	2025 Baseline	2026 Target
Open Rate	~22%	24–28%
CTR to Blog Content	~5.0%	5.5–7%
Click-to-Open Rate (CTOR)	~23%	25–30%
Avg. Time on Page (email traffic)	Baseline established	+10–20% YoY
Revenue per Send	Baseline established	+10–20% YoY

Editorial Campaign KPIs

2025 performance vs 2026 targets

KPI	2025 Actual Performance	2026 Target
Number of EC Campaigns	2 campaigns	~3 campaigns
Open Rate	22–27%	24–30%
Click-Through Rate (CTR)	5.5% – 9.8%	6–8% (avg)
Click-to-Open Rate (CTOR)	~25–45%*	25–35%
Estimated Revenue per Campaign	~\$6k – ~\$20k	\$25k+ over lifecycle
Primary Conversion Action	Click to long-form content	Consult / inquiry action
Performance Window	Measured near send date	Measured at 30 / 90 / 180 / 365 days
Campaign Lifespan	Short-term performance	12–24 month evergreen asset

2025 data shows that Editorial Campaigns drive significantly higher click intent than standard C1 and C2 emails, validating their role as deep-education, high-conversion growth assets rather than short-term promotional sends.

Reporting Cadence

- **Monthly:** C1/C2 KPI review + brief insights log (what worked / what didn't / what to test next)
 - **Quarterly:** KPI trend review + strategic adjustments (content, CTA strategy, segmentation opportunities)
 - **EC campaigns:** performance review at **30/60/90 days**, then **6 and 12 months**
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5) 2026 Procedure-Led Calendar

Data-Informed Patterns & Recommendations

The following guidance outlines recommended content approaches for each month based on historical performance trends. These are not locked themes, but strategic guardrails to inform topic selection, framing, and calls to action.

- **Peak months (Mar–May):** Success = higher conversion actions per send
- **Plateau months (Jun–Aug):** Success = consult intent capture + EC engagement
- **Trough months (Sep, Q4):** Success = engagement quality + unsub stability

Month	What Performs	Do	Avoid
Feb	Confidence-led, subtle framing	Carrie's facelift journey campaign, clarity-based consult CTA	Gimmicky Valentine's themes

Mar (peak conversion season)	Weight Management peak; Mommy Makeover + Lipo also strong	C1 (Functional): weight management recommitment (authority-first) C1 (Surgical): lipo planning / “how we decide what you actually need” C2: Functional: metabolic + inflammation conversion push	DIY timelines
Apr (SURGICAL PEAK)	Breast Aug + Mommy Makeover + Filler peak	C1 (Surgical): Breast Aug or Mommy Makeover hero C1 (Aesthetic): Filler safety/decision guidance Send window: Apr 25–May 5 C2: surgical authority (trust + outcomes)	Abstract planning
May (Aesthetics strong; Functional peak)	Most functional leads, strong aesthetic leads	C1 (Aesthetic): “Spring reset: results that look like you” C1 (Functional): energy/weight optimization Micro spike: mid-May Botox bump	“Beach body” messaging
Jun	Liposuction peak + Aesthetic peak	C1 (Surgical): lipo hero C1 (Aesthetic): skin health + maintenance	Heavy promotion
Jul (surgical lead peak, tummy)	Tummy tuck explodes in July	EC1 (Tummy Tuck): “Now is planning season: consult now, schedule smart”	Transformation narratives
Aug (back-to-school	Reset	C1 (Laser ramp / Aesthetic segment): “Fall skin reset starts now” → CTA: laser	Hard selling

+ laser ramp begins)		consult / event waitlist C1 (Functional): routine reset theme C2: Cross-pillar (Anchor: “reset season: routines, skin, energy”)	
Sep (laser conversion month)	Correction, Lasers burn hot in September	C1 (Laser event): event-focused clarity + limited capacity C2: Single-pillar (shorter, stronger narrative)	Passive awareness
Oct (pre-holiday and hormones)	Botox day prep + holiday prep, hormones spike late Oct	C1: aesthetic planning (“start now for holiday-ready skin”) + surgical consult capture for winter windows C1 (Functional): hormones optimization	Late messaging
Nov	Botox Day	C1 (Aesthetic): Botox hero CTA: schedule	Topic overload
Dec	Trust	C1 (Laser): winter laser/repair positioning CTA: consult / schedule Message from Dr. Donaldson	Sales-heavy pushes

Strategic Note

Monthly performance consistently improves when messaging:

- Reduces cognitive load for patients
- Reinforces Donaldson as the guide and decision-maker
- Aligns seasonal relevance with expert direction

6) 2026 Execution Rules (How to run it without chaos)

Monthly workflow (repeatable)

1. Confirm monthly procedure hero priorities (from V3 calendar)
2. Confirm segments receiving each send
3. Build one master template with modular blocks
4. QA CTAs + landing page alignment
5. Track results by segment + lifecycle

Testing priorities (what to test in 2026)

- Subject lines: curiosity vs authority framing
- CTA language: “book consult” vs “request plan”
- Above-the-fold hook usage (staff hook vs myth-busting hook)
- Pillar segmentation impact on unsub rate