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From approved design to working email

By Gyata Tabiri · Revised November 2, 2026

An approved design deserves to be understood before it is altered. In an email build, the difficult moment often arrives when something looks convincing in the design file but needs a different treatment in the inbox.

Find what the detail is protecting

A background image may establish the mood, or it may carry information the reader needs. A button's position may connect it to a particular offer. Before proposing a fallback, I want to understand that purpose. A technically workable replacement can still weaken the message if it preserves the shape and loses the intention.

Show the problem in a form we can discuss

I have raised issues with layouts, mobile arrangements, backgrounds, and buttons through screenshots, written feedback, and conversations. Designers then revised the work. That gives the revision a shared reason and keeps an implementation decision from quietly becoming a redesign nobody approved.

Distinguish essential detail from acceptable variation

Some differences can be accepted without changing the message. Others affect the reading order or obscure an action. I would discuss that distinction using a representative build rather than describe the whole design as impossible. A specific example leaves room for another person to suggest a better approach.

Keep the decision with the file

Depending on the company, I have used Litmus or Email on Acid, alongside Apple Mail/iPhone Mail. The useful record connects the tested version with the environments checked and the differences accepted. It should be possible to understand why a fallback exists before removing it in the next campaign.

The point of that exchange is to carry the visual intention further, with the designer still part of the decision. Good implementation gives the idea a workable form.

Read alongside: Leaving room for the build in a design · Investigating a rendering difference.

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