



How To Grow Your Email Marketing List

Introduction

Email marketing can be profitable for any business, no matter what kind of product or service you are offering. However, the foundation for email marketing success depends on the quality and size of your permission-based email list. If you build a list of subscribers that trust you and consider you to be an expert in your field, your response rates will constantly climb.

Developing and maintaining a responsive, opt-in email list is challenging, even for the most experienced marketers. It doesn't matter if you're at the beginning of your list-building journey or you already have millions of contacts, list management is hard work. Addresses change, subscribers become inactive, and some unsubscribe, chipping away about 20-30% of your total list every year! However, consider the alternative: studies show that low-quality lists waste tens of millions of dollars annually, and *no* business can afford that. Quite simply, small investments in list management can reap huge returns in marketing efficiency and campaign ROI.

The following list provides techniques and tips to help you grow your list, including, but not limited to:

- Boost sign up form activity.
- Find new places to add forms!
- Use more content distribution channels.
- Partner with other publishers and vendors!
- Contribute to social media sites and blogs.

List building tips to help you make the most out of your email marketing.

1. Add a sign-up form everywhere prospects go

Sign-up opportunities should be easily accessible on every page of your website. Make sure they “pop” visually and clearly indicate what visitors are signing up to receive. Don’t forget your website blogs and any other blogs you control. Blogging is a great way to communicate with potential customers, so include sign-up forms so they can continue the conversation with you!

2. Boost your sign-up activity

- Make it quick and easy for your visitors to sign up. A first name and email address is all you need initially. If you ask about frequency or other preferences, keep it brief.
- Be clear, persuasive and honest as to what subscribers will receive and how they will benefit from subscribing. Include one or two short customer quotes.
- Tell them how often they can expect to receive your newsletter or other emails. Do not inundate them, even if they indicate no preference.
- Link sample newsletter issues to your sign up forms, so prospects can make an informed opinion. You’ll get more responsive subscribers!

3. Address visitors' privacy concerns

Don't overlook this important issue coming out of the gate, as the fear most people have is that they will receive an avalanche of spam – or scams – after giving out their email address. Tell potential subscribers that you respect their privacy and their personal information, then link this statement to your privacy policy page. Include a link to Customer Service if they have questions.

4. Add incentives to sign up

Decide early on whether or not to use incentives, then be consistent whenever you can. The most popular incentives are free articles or reports and, of course, special offers, VIP programs and discounts. The latter can eat into your profits if your sign-up forms are working, so we recommend “thought leadership” papers, or ebooks and reports that you know your prospects can use. These will attract quality subscribers *and* increase your reputation as a subject matter expert!

5. Create a great squeeze page

First things first! A squeeze page is typically designed only to build your list, so make sure it's compelling and convincing. It should feature a powerful headline and a few of the “juiciest” benefits to get visitors salivating to sign up to your list! Entertain your visitors with an audio or video message telling visitors why they should subscribe, or perhaps letting a customer do it! Not only will it create that “human” connection, but you could direct them to the subscription form on your webpage while you're winning them over!

6. Include testimonials in your squeeze page

This is crucial. Customers giving their opinions about your product or service can be the most powerful conversion tool of all! Put one or two strong testimonials from satisfied subscribers on your squeeze page. Use any format, but you may find that multimedia (audio and/or video) is more “believable”. People like to see and hear who is giving their opinions, so they can make more informed judgments.

7. Include a “Sign Up” button in your e-newsletter

...or a text link to your subscription page, if you’re not using HTML. This may sound like a waste of time, but what if a subscriber forwards it to friends and co-workers? Or they might share it on social media sites or reprint it online. You could explode your sign ups, if you added a form!

8. Create a web-based newsletter repository

By offering an online archive or gallery of all of your newsletters, you make it much easier for subscribers to decide if they’d like to sign up. The more informed they are about what you have to offer, the more likely they are to open your email messages. Online newsletter and article archives are also an excellent way to generate additional traffic from search engines!

9. Include “forward to a friend” and “share” links in your newsletters and promotions

This is the best way to encourage subscribers to share your newsletter content, offers, articles, etc., with friends and on social media sites. “Word of mouth” is a powerful viral technique that works great with email marketing! If subscribers find your content useful and informative, they will pass it on, multiplying your readers, and hopefully your sign ups! It’s a powerful source of new subscribers – achieved with minimum effort.

10. Add sign-up forms to blog updates

Place a sign-up box on your blog to keep your readers notified of new posts. This has a three-pronged benefit: you’ll build your email list, strengthen relationships with your readers, and get more traffic to your blog!

11. Add opt-in check boxes to other forms and business messages

Create opportunities to sign up for your newsletter while prospects are filling in other forms. Why not! It’s a value-added service to let them know a free e-newsletter is available. Think about all the types of forms you use, from software downloads, demos, and white papers, to event registration and contact forms. And, with the highest open rates of any emails, confirmation and transactional emails could also increase sign-ups, so add a form!

12. Let others reprint your newsletter

As long as your newsletter content is not modified or used inappropriately, you should encourage distribution and republishing. Many webmasters and newsletter publishers are actively looking for high-quality content, and if they reprint your newsletter, you'll get new subscribers, traffic and links pointing to your site. If there are limits and conditions, for example, on commercial use, just state your policy clearly and concisely.

13. Use a co-registration service to build your list

Co-registration is a great way to build your email list. Your newsletter ad or link appears on other websites and those visitors are able to sign up on the spot and get added to your list! A good co-registration service can be found at GetSubscribers.com or on GetResponse website.

14. Use Google Adwords campaigns

Google Adwords is a relatively cost-effective type of online campaign and can get very nice results. It doesn't matter if you're promoting your newsletter subscription or a blockbuster product launch. Explore what draws the best...it's worth it to experiment. Just make sure your newsletter sign-up form is always on the landing page!

15. Use your physical mailing list

If you have a physical mailing list from your offline business, send a snail mail postcard to your customers, offering a special discount for opting-in to your email newsletter. If you don't have one, consider leaving a sign-up form one near your register or point-of-sale location!

16. Contact other newsletter publishers and vendors

Use your networking and social media skills to reach out to other newsletter publishers or even vendors with complementary products or services. Let them know that you'd be interested in promoting their newsletter or offering, if they'd do the same for you. This way, both of you can get more online exposure and build your lists faster!

17. Advertise in ezines and other newsletters

Use newsletter directories to find other newsletter and content publishers that target your audiences. Run a search for "e-zine directory" or "newsletter directory" and you will find multiple advertising possibilities in these publication portals!

18. Promote your newsletter in Article Directories

Research and submit topical articles to Article Directories like GoArticles, SubmitYourArticle or EzineArticles. Make sure to include a bio box at the bottom with a link to your website, or the email address to be added instantly (if you are using an autoresponder). It will enhance your reputation, build your brand, and attract quality subscribers.

19. Be active on similar websites

Research similar websites and newsletters with Google Blog Search or Technorati. Post relevant, helpful comments with a trackback to your blog or squeeze page, including, of course, your newsletter sign-up form! Visit discussion boards, forums, Yahoo! Answers and similar sites to provide helpful comments and information, while including a link to your subscription page in your signature.

20. Add your newsletter sign-up link to your email signature

In fact, ask everyone in your company to include a link in their signature! Start with your own, then ask them to add “Subscribe to the Company X Email Newsletter” or something catchier!

21. Promote your newsletter at every marketing touchpoint!

- Whenever you share your PowerPoint or webinar presentations, make it easy for audience members and associates to subscribe by including a link to your newsletter subscription page on the footer.
- You could also hand out sign-up forms when speaking to groups or at seminars. Don't forget to ask for them at the end of your presentation!
- Imagine how many sign ups you'd get if every incoming caller had the opportunity! Once they've established rapport, have Call Center and Sales Employees ask customers and prospects if they'd like to receive newsletters or promotional emails and get their information by phone. It only adds seconds to the call and really adds up fast!
- If you use hard copy collateral, make sure to get some of those print costs back by encouraging email subscriptions on Direct Mail, Catalogs, and all Print Ads.

Conclusion

Use sign-up forms along with value messages everywhere you come into contact with prospects and customers. You may vary the content or the design, but if you make it quick and easy, your list-building engine will generate new contacts 24/7/3.

Need help building your email list?

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