



21 Ways to Build Your Contact List



Introduction

Email marketing can be profitable for any business, no matter what kind of product or service you offer. But the foundation of email marketing success is the quality and size of your permission-based email list. If you build a list of subscribers that trust you and consider you 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. Whether you're at the beginning of your list-building journey or already have thousands of contacts, list management is hard work. Addresses change, subscribers become inactive, and some unsubscribe, chipping away about 20-30% of your 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 marketing 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.
- ✔ Place your sign-up form on Facebook

List building tips, to get 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 indicate clearly what subscribers receive. Don’t forget your website and any blogs you control. Blogging is a great communication tool, so include a sign-up form in every posts and continue the conversation!

2. Boost sign-up activity

Make it quick and easy for your visitors to sign up. A first name and email address are all you need initially. If you ask about frequency or other preferences, keep it brief.

- ✔ Be clear, persuasive and honest about what subscribers receive and how they benefit from subscribing. Include one or two short customer testimonials.
- ✔ Let them know how often to expect your newsletters and other emails. Don’t inundate subscribers, even if they indicate no preference.
- ✔ Link sample newsletter issues to your sign-up forms, so prospects can make an informed decision. You’ll get more responsive subscribers!

3. Address visitors’ privacy concerns

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

4. Add incentives to sign up

Decide early whether to use incentives then be as consistent as possible. 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 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 explaining why they should subscribe. Or consider letting a customer provide the message! It creates that “human connection” and is an opportunity to direct them to the sign-up form on your webpage while you're winning them over!

6. Include testimonials in your squeeze page

This is crucial. Customer opinions 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 the people behind the opinions, so they can make more informed judgments.

7. Use social media and Subscribe-Via-Facebook options

Social media sites have become effective places to collect email addresses. Place a sign-up form on your FanPage, so fans can subscribe to your list. Then create a bond with your fans by sending personalized messages.

Social login allows people to sign up to your newsletters using their Facebook login. Research shows that nearly 8 in 10 respondents prefer to log in to sites using a social identity. And those who

are active on social networks are more likely to comment on your services and products. By the same token, they're more easily influenced by what others say on social sites.

8. Include a “Sign Up” button inside 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 shares it on social media sites? Or reproduces it online? You could explode your sign-ups, just by adding a form!

9. 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 whether 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!

10. Include “forward to a friend” and “share” links in newsletters and promos

This is the best way to encourage subscribers to share your newsletter content, offers, and articles 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'll pass it on, multiplying your readers and hopefully your sign-ups! It's a powerful source of new subscribers – achieved with minimal effort.

11. Add sign-up forms to blog updates

Place a sign-up form on your blog to notify your readers of new posts. This has a threefold benefit: you build your email list, strengthen relationships with your readers, and get more traffic to your blog!

12. 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 registrations 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!

13. Let others reprint your newsletter

Encourage others to distribute and republish your newsletters, specifying that your newsletter content is not to be modified or used inappropriately. Many webmasters and newsletter publishers are actively looking for high-quality content, and if they reprint your newsletter, you may get new subscribers, traffic, and links to your site. If there are limits and conditions (on commercial use, for example) just state your policy clearly and concisely.

14. 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 visitors can sign up on the spot to be added to your list! Our favorite co-registration service can be found at GetSubscribers.com or on the GetResponse.com website.

15. 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 whether you promote your newsletter subscription or a blockbuster product launch. Explore to find out what draws best...it's worth it to experiment. Just make sure your newsletter sign-up form is always on the landing page!

16. 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 signing up to your email newsletter. If you don't have a snail-mail list, consider leaving a sign-up form near your register or point-of-sale location!

17. 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 list faster!

18. Advertise in e-zines 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" to find multiple advertising possibilities!

19. Promote your newsletter in Article Directories

Research and submit topical articles to article directories like GoArticles, SubmitYourArticle or EzineArticles. Be sure to include a bio box at the bottom with a link to your website or an autoresponder email address for instant sign-up to your email list. It enhances your reputation, builds your brand, and attracts quality subscribers.

20. Be active on similar websites

Search for similar websites and newsletters using Google Blog Search or Technorati. Post relevant, helpful comments and 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, including a signature linking to your subscription page.

21. Promote your newsletter at every marketing touch-point!

- ✔ 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.
- ✔ 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 to subscribe! Have call-center and sales employees ask customers and prospects if they'd like to receive newsletters or promotional emails, once they've established rapport. It only adds seconds to the call and is an ideal source of qualified subscribers!
- ✔ If you use hard-copy collateral, get some of those print costs back by encouraging email subscriptions on Direct Mail, Catalogs, and Print Ads.

Conclusion

Include a sign-up form with every value message – everywhere you come in contact with prospects and customers. Feel free to vary the content and the design, but make signing up quick and easy. Your list-building engine will generate new contacts 24/7.

Need help building your email list?

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