

50 ways to grow your email list

50 SIMPLE WAYS TO GROW YOUR EMAIL LIST

EMAIL WORKS

Often abused and overused, email has gotten a bad reputation. But if done well, email can still deliver extraordinary and cost-effective returns. However, before you can start sending emails you need to have a good list.

This white paper contains 50 simple techniques you can use to begin growing your list. But before we get to the techniques that work, let's talk about the one method you should not use.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Do not upload membership lists from every organization you have ever belonged to, buy lists or add everyone you meet at a networking event to your email lists. Permission-based email marketing works because the people on your list really want to hear from you. When you randomly add people, not only do you risk alienating them, you are in violation of Federal CAN-SPAM laws.

Now that we have that out of the way, it is time to focus on what works!

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GO OLD SCHOOL

People live in the real world. Put your email there by offering opportunities for customers and prospects to sign up for your newsletter everywhere they interact with your brand.

1. Use a paper sign-up sheet – Do you have a guest book? As people come into your shop, showroom or office, be sure they sign in with their name and email address.
2. Put a fishbowl on the counter - Tired of trying to read scrawled handwriting? Place a fish bowl prominently on your counter, near your register to collect business cards.
3. Run an in-store raffle - To increase the chances someone will sign up, consider giving something away in exchange for the email address. A chance to win a free service or a gift card can be very effective.
4. Ask face-to-face - If you are out networking be sure to mention your newsletter to people you meet.
5. Answer the phone – It seems pretty obvious, but every time the phone rings you have an opportunity to transform a casual conversation into an ongoing relationship.
6. Update your company records - Pick up the phone and call all your former clients to update their records. This is a great way to reconnect and possibly make a new sale along the way.
7. Don't forget family, friends and strategic partners - These people know and love you. Now keep them informed so they can help you.
8. Add to your menu - As customers are browsing your menu or service listing, be sure to mention your newsletter.
9. In-store signage - These are things customers will see as they are waiting for a service. Mention your newsletter and why they should sign up.
10. Sidewalk sign - Located on a busy street? If you use a sidewalk sign, mention your newsletter too.
11. Shipping boxes - This is a giant blank canvas many business owners leave blank. Either preprint the information on the box or add a colorful label. This is especially valuable if the people receiving your product are not the same people who place the order.
12. Offer an incentive to your employees - Want to grow your list? Get everyone involved. Run a contest or offer a bonus for each name added to your list.
13. Print a hard copy of your newsletter to distribute at networking events or trade shows - Be sure to have a link to your newsletter included.
14. Business cards - If you are not using the back of your business card, why not mention the benefit of receiving your newsletter?
15. Promote it in a brochure or direct mail - Don't create print material just to promote your email, but if you are already planning a direct mail campaign, add the email promotion offer.
16. Run an ad in the newspaper - Like the brochure, I wouldn't necessarily just promote your newsletter, but if there is room, carve out space to let people know how to learn more.
17. Include a link in your press releases - Encourage editors to sign up for your newsletter to stay informed. This is especially helpful if you are in an industry which is changing rapidly.
18. Create a survey - Collect email addresses by using a customer satisfaction survey after a transaction.

GO HIGH TECH

We live in a digital world. You need to start utilizing smart phones and tablets.

19. Use a tablet – Instead of using a guest book, have customers sign in using an iPad.
20. Use “text to join” campaign - Create a dedicated code people can text and an automated reply when they enroll.
21. Use a QR code - While many times these codes are over used or used inappropriately, this is a natural fit. Add a QR code to anything printed so readers can scan and opt in.
22. Your email signature – This is a great place to include a link to your newsletter sign up page.

USE SOCIAL MEDIA

Your email and social media strategies should work hand in hand. Links, offers and sign up forms scattered throughout your social media profiles will drive people to your email list. In return, your weekly or monthly emails can make your readers aware of contests, promotions and offers available to your fans and followers.

23. Social network bios - Add a sign-up link in all of your bios on the social networks you use.
24. Add a sign-up form to your Facebook page - You can even create a custom landing tab you can drive visitors to.
25. Promote your newsletter in your Facebook page cover photo - Instead of a generic image; use the real estate of your cover photo to drive people to your newsletter.
26. Buy a Facebook or LinkedIn ad to promote your newsletter - Instead of driving fans back to your social media profile, spend the money wisely, and drive fans and followers to your newsletter. Once you have email addresses you can control when and how people will see your message instead of relying on the Facebook or LinkedIn algorithms to present your content.
27. Run a contest on Facebook - Keep the contest simple and easy to share so you can collect lots of email addresses.
28. Join groups - LinkedIn, Facebook and Google+ all have communities of like minded professionals. Look for groups with lots of interaction and sharing. Join the conversation. Offer links to your newsletter and collect links from other professionals.
29. Share links to current issues of your newsletter on social platforms - Use clever subject lines to drive viewers. Be sure to have prominent sign up links.
30. Host a live Twitter chat - Share a link to the sign up form several times during the chat.
31. Host a webinar – During the program, mention where listeners can sign up for your newsletter for more information.
32. Use Pinterest and Slideshare to promote the visual part of your brand - Include links to sign up forms in bios and image descriptions.
33. Leverage your company's YouTube channel or podcast - Add calls-to-action and URLs at the end of the videos, and include links to relevant landing pages in your videos' text descriptions.
34. Create an online survey – Make sure you ask participants for their name and email address before they take the survey.

USE YOUR WEBSITE

Your website is the center of your marketing. Be sure to let visitors know they can learn more, and keep up with all of the new information you have to offer by signing up for your newsletter somewhere on your website.

35. Add a sign-up form to your website and blog - Be sure to keep your sign-up form short.
36. Create a “reasons to sign-up” page - Describe the types of information you share and other benefits subscribers receive.
37. Test different calls to action – If one offer doesn't seem to motivate someone to join your list, try another.
38. Start a loyalty program or birthday club - You can reward frequent shoppers, recognize customers on special occasions and remind them about your business all year long when you collect email addresses as part of the enrollment process.
39. Create a free online tool, worksheet, white paper or other resource - Trade the content for the email address.
40. Offer a coupon - If coupons naturally drive sales for your business, give them away in exchange for an email address.
41. Guest blog - Write a guest blog post on someone else’s website and include a call-to-action to subscribe to your email database in your author byline.
42. Comment on blogs on other websites – Be sure to include the link to your email sign-up landing page and not a link to your website’s home page.
43. Online payment forms - This should always be a required field on every payment form; on and offline.

BE VISIBLE AT EVENTS

Don't wait for someone else to invite you to the party. Get out of the office and attend conferences, tradeshow and even host a few events of your own.

44. Run your own event – Be sure to collect email addresses during registration.
45. Co-host an event or co-sponsor a larger event - Ask the conference organizer to share links to your newsletter in the event’s promotional information.
46. Book a speaking engagement - Share your expertise at conferences and meetings. Always have an offer that encourages people to give you their business card or contact information.

USE YOUR EMAIL

This may sound weird, but you can use your email newsletter to promote your email by encouraging your current subscribers to share and forward your emails to friends, family and coworkers.

47. Add a link from your email signature - Every time you send an email have the link displayed prominently in the footer.
48. Forward to a friend – Encourage your subscribers to forward your email to a friend by offering them a coupon or promotional item in exchange for their friend’s email address.
49. Put a sign-up link in your newsletter – This allows people who stumbled across your content from social media, or had your email forwarded to them from a friend sign up easily.
50. Add social share buttons to your email newsletter – This makes it easy for subscribers to share links from your email with people who might not know about your business.

KEEP YOUR LIST CLEAN

This may seem counterintuitive after all the emphasis that has been put on growing your list, but a smaller, cleaner list is much more valuable than a large list of questionable quality. Why?

SMALL LISTS ARE LESS EXPENSIVE

Most email service providers charge based on the size of your list. Eliminating people who aren't interested may reduce your monthly fees. It will also probably reduce your spam complaints. This is important because if you receive too many complaints, your email list may be blocked by certain ISPs, preventing you from reaching interested readers.

CLEAN UP YOUR LIST AFTER EACH EMAIL

It only takes a few minutes to clean up your list. Here is what you should be looking for:

Bad email addresses. People change service providers and companies all the time. This results in bounced or undeliverable emails. Bounces alert you to changes, which might be worth following up with a phone call to find new contact information.

Undeliverable errors. This may be a momentary glitch, or a signal that there is something wrong. If you suddenly see dramatic increases in undeliverable responses, try resending to that group. If the problem persists, contact your email provider.

Blocked emails. Remind subscribers to add you to their address book to avoid being arbitrarily blocked by their service provider.

TIME TO GET T STARTED!

Want to put some of these tactics into practice? Sign up for a free trial of [ConstantContact](#) or give us a call at 317-569-1396.