

The background is a solid teal color with a repeating pattern of white hexagons. Each hexagon contains a different white line-art icon. The icons include: a ruler, a key, a calendar, a pencil, a smartphone, an envelope, a magnifying glass, a watch, a lightbulb, a download arrow, a pie chart, a clipboard, two people silhouettes, a computer monitor, a padlock, a wrench and screwdriver, a bar chart, a speech bubble, and a speech bubble with a checkmark.

# INTRODUCTION TO AUTO-RESPONSE CAMPAIGNS

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## WHY SHOULD I BUY FROM YOU?

There is that moment in every sales conversation when a client must decide if you are the right choice. Whether they come out and ask, or simply wonder internally, the question on the table is very simply “Why should I buy from you?”

With a well-planned auto-response campaign you use information on your website, social media profiles and email campaigns to answer the question before they have to ask. Then you stay in touch throughout the sales process and beyond.

So how do you put together an effective auto-response campaign? You need both an interesting offer and a series of messages sent over time to nurture the prospect until they are ready to buy.

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## THE OFFER

Your auto-response campaign begins with an offer. It may be information or a resource which your prospective customer will value enough to trade their email address to receive. What kind of information? Here are a few examples.

In exchange for their email address you have to offer something of value that might include:

- **Cookbooks** – Food companies might use recipe bloggers to develop original recipes. Collecting 6 – 10 into one document, with a cover and a table of contents and you have a resource any chef might value.
- **Buying Guides and Checklists** – For clients with a more technical or expensive product, these outlines educate prospects giving them all the information they need before they start a project.
- **Fee Audits** – These interactive forms allow visitors to assess themselves or their business. They are then offered general suggestions and an invitation for a more detailed conversation.
- **Webinars and Podcasts** – Recorded programs on a range of topics are offered in exchange for contact information. Visitors can watch again and again and easily share the link with others. The only requirement is that they log in each time they view.

What will you use to fuel your landing page?

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Your offer doesn't need to be complex. Visitors are looking for information so a Word document or excel spread sheet saved as a PDF may be all you need to product.

## THE FOLLOW UP

After a visitor clicks on your call-to-action, fills out a landing page or downloads your whitepaper, the next step should be one or a series of emails focused on useful, relevant content. This “drip campaign” builds trust and moves them easily to the next stage in the sales process.

Drip campaigns can also be used after live events, a meeting, proposal submission or program registration. And they are equally effective with existing clients. Examples of common drip campaigns include:

- **Reasons to buy or competitive analysis** – Remember to avoid being too sales oriented, but if you keep the tone informative after an initial interaction you become viewed as an impartial source of industry information.
- **Educational programs** – After the download of a workbook, a series of emails can be used to send subsequent information as part of an online course sending participants back to your website for more resources.
- **Kickoff forms** – At the beginning of a business relationship there are always a few housekeeping issues. Whether it is a medical practice setting up a new patient or a web design firm starting up a project, a series of short emails sent over a few weeks leading up to the first interaction delivers information in manageable bits.
- **Reminders** – Any product which is purchased regularly or seasonally can benefit from a date-based trigger program. These emails are sent on anniversaries for example:
  - Monthly reminder to change your contact lenses
  - Seasonal reminders to have your car serviced or furnace checked
  - Reminders to grooms on the one month, or one-year anniversary to send flowers to their brides
  - Customer satisfaction check ins – Whether it is a formal survey or a simple question, this touch base will remind your clients you care about them.
- **Refer a friend** – The best source of new customers is often the customers who already know and love you. Periodically send new information to clients and ask them to share it with their friends. In some product categories it even makes sense to offer incentives for them to pass on the information.

## Content Tips

**Evergreen Content** - As you produce the follow up emails remember that these will be sent whenever someone completes a submission form. That may be next week, next month or next year so it is important to keep the content evergreen, information which isn't likely to become obsolete.

**Keep the content short** – Since you are going to be sending a series of messages, keep them all short with only one key call to action or next step.

**Match the timing to the rhythm of your business** – If customers typically spend a few months evaluating options than an email every two weeks will be enough. If they are likely to buy more often than that, you may want to send information every few days.

List the subject lines for three emails you will send as a follow up to your offer

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## FINE TUNING YOUR CAMPAIGN

Check your analytics – Look at the results of your campaigns and adjust your campaign to improve your results.

**Timing** - The real key to making sure you're sending your auto-responder at the "optimal" times is to watch your own data, and adjust your send times from there. Look at both your open and click through rates.

**Subject Line** – Create two different versions of the same campaign with different subject lines. Look for the one which one gets better results.

**Test calls to action** – After someone downloads information from your website, what is the logical next step? It may be presumptuous to have them go from hello to buy now so consider what additional information or resource will keep them engaged in your process.

## DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE PERSONAL INTERACTION

If you find someone who is opening every email you send, this is a hot prospect. Pick up the phone and see if they are ready to take the next step.

And if someone buys from you, remember to remove them from the campaign so they don't get annoyed and unsubscribe.

Looking for more on this topic? [Check out our landing page guide.](#)