

TIPS AND TRAPS OF EMAIL MARKETING



1

EMAIL MARKETING BASICS

Ever since the Internet went online, email has been hugely popular with everyone. At first, it was just a tool to keep in contact with people in one's office, but soon, it became the tool of choice for marketers online. Knowing how to develop an email contact list and how to market to people online can establish your business and make your sales grow exponentially. Doing it right has many rewards, but doing it wrong can also cost you.

THE BASIC STEPS

While the basic steps are easy, you can create variations and specific marketing strategies to appeal to the reader of your emails, no matter what step you're on. Literally, you will want to do the following to start an email campaign:

1. **Set up a capture page**

This is the page that entices readers to add their names to your mailing list. It can include a free offer, like a newsletter, report, or ebook, or it can give out a coupon as a nice gift for adding their names.

2. **Use a double opt-in form**

Next, you want to use specific techniques to safeguard your list from spammers and hackers. The double opt-in is the standard practice these days, and we'll go over that further later.

3. **Set up autoresponders**

After you have captured an email and verified the new subscriber, you'll want to send them a thank you for subscribing. There are numerous activities that you will want to do to confirm some step in the email campaign, and if you were to do them all manually, you'd never get off of the computer. That's why you need to set up autoresponders to work for you.

4. **Create multiple lists**

While everyone may be signing up using the same tools, they may not all go onto the same list. You should categorize your subscribers so that you can target them quite specifically with particular products and promotions that will appeal to them.

5. **Design different marketing campaigns**
You don't just want to have a generic marketing campaign; you want something that will appeal to the demographic on your email list.
6. **Use sales techniques that impact the psyche**
Create an emotional response that gets your customers to buy. Have some great ideas for triggering basic buying behavior via the content in your email.
7. **Automate the delivery of your products**
It should be part of your email marketing campaign to offer delivery as soon as possible. We'll show you what products lend themselves well to email marketing campaigns and why.
8. **Keep track of what's working**
This is crucial to figuring out whether your campaign is successful or not. Some people put all of the pieces into place except for this one and then wonder why their work is not paying off. Learn what things you want to track to make sure that your email campaigns are proving to be effective.
9. **Customize the steps to your audience**
While the basic steps will be the same for everyone, not everyone's audience is the same. It's up to you to figure what triggers will work best with your demographic and to implement procedures that will help you develop a better email marketing campaign.

WRITE IT UP ON PAPER FIRST

Like setting in place a mini-business plan, you can start to brainstorm how you will put in place the many steps that we've provided for you. Each step of the way is going to be a learning process, and you will probably need to tweak things as you go along, but if you want to start off on the right foot, put together a master plan.

This is particularly important if you are going to generate email lists across multiple websites and social networking platforms. Even though the steps are simple, the entire process can get very complicated when you are working with multiple lists from multiple websites. That's when you're going to have to plan ahead of time how to centralize your operations and how to keep track of people who may be on two of the lists that you own. What will you do if one person should be upgraded to a list whereby they are offered pricier items in email campaigns? Do you have mechanisms in place to realize that you should take them off the original list and put them on another list? If you don't do this, you may end up sending duplicate emails, and they may get confused and frustrated with your services. Simplify as much as you can about how you will track the basic steps before you start.

SET UP A CAPTURE PAGE

A capture page is a leads sales form. Here you're not so much interested in making a sale as in getting a lead. It doesn't mean that you don't use the same strategies as you would with a regular sales page; it just means that the end result is not going to be a sale. You should never try to sell something to someone right away when you are trying to capture his/her email address. It makes him/her suspicious. Instead, take the time to court your email sales prospects and offer them some incentive to sign up to your email list.

LIST THE BENEFITS

Just like a regular sales page would list the benefits, you are going to want to do that too on your sales lead capture page. Why should they sign up for your email list? Are they going to learn something through a free report? Are you going to make their lives easier? How much money can you save them if they take the time to add their name to your list? You alone know what the main motivation might be from your core audience.

List the biggest benefit up at the top, just like a regular sales page, and some other benefits after an opt-in form. If the capture page is too large, repeat the opt-in form over the length of the page so that people can remember to sign up.

ASK THEM TO SIGN UP

Just like you need to ask people to buy, you also need to make a specific request for them to sign up. It sounds redundant, but people often need a little nudge to do what they really want to do anyways. You're just making sure that they know that they are welcome to sign up.

You can even reassure the people who sign up that you don't give out the email addresses to other partners, if that's the case. Your content should be easily read, and the form should be easy to fill in.

USE A DOUBLE OPT-IN FORM

The easiest opt-in form for users is one where they are simply asked for their email address and password. That email address is verified by sending out a verification email. Once the subscriber opens his/her email, he/she can click the link that will approve the new sign-in. This keeps automatic spammers

and hackers who want to add others to your list to create mischief out of your list. It means that the user of the email address himself/herself must verify that the sign-up is valid.

SET UP AUTORESPONDERS

Autoresponders are email inboxes that receive email and automatically send out a reply. If you set up your systems right, you can set up an autoresponder to be triggered at the moment a sale is finalized to send out a "thank you" note. Anytime a customer or visitor takes an action to email you or to buy something, you can have the autoresponder kick in and market to them some more.

DIFFERENT AUTORESPONDERS FOR DIFFERENT ACTIONS

You can set up an autoresponder to welcome people to your email list. The first email autoresponse that you contact a prospective customer with should never sell him/her anything. Instead, it should be an introduction to who you are and what you hope to achieve based on this new relationship. It may seem a bit slow to start off with something this innocuous, but it sets the stage for building a gradual trust between you and the customer.

Other times you might want to set autoresponders is when they buy something from you or when they email you for specific things. You can set up an entire set of autoresponders for different functions, such as customer service and help desk functions. Just be sure that if the problem needs to be escalated to a live person that the customer can do that at some point.

DIFFERENT AUTORESPONDERS FOR DIFFERENT CAMPAIGNS

Along with setting up autoresponders for different actions, you also want to set up different autoresponders for different marketing campaigns. Once you assign someone to a list, for instance, you might find him/her to be in the low-income list. In that case, your email messages may be different to this group than to the ones who you expect to buy more because they have higher incomes.

You can also set up autoresponders to issue emails to a list at specific intervals. You will just set up the content of the email and then put it on a schedule to send out to your different lists. That way, if your campaign goes on for three months, and your customers get a new email from you every

week, you don't have to do this all by hand. The nice thing about automating your marketing campaigns is that when someone is automatically added to your email lists, they will end up being put on an autoresponder list for just the right campaign, and it goes on by itself after that. This leaves you free to concentrate on the actual content of the emails and promotions instead of trying to email people and keeping track of everyone.

CREATE MULTIPLE LISTS

As you go about your Internet marketing activities, you will find that you are creating lists at different places. You might have a separate list of contacts for leads at several different websites. You might have a few for social networking sites. You might even have some that came through via a blog setup. You need to be aware of where your contacts are coming from and how to market to them. The best way is to centralize your activities and to create two master lists.

TWO MASTER LISTS

One master list should include all of the people who are customers and the other master list should include all of the people who are sales partners or affiliates. The reason for this is that you obviously will never be sending the same emails to either of these groups, so it's safe to split them up this way. Anytime you get a new contact, and you have his/her permission to contact him/her, you should put his/her name on either of these two lists. You can do this automatically or via a mass import, depending on where you got the contact. It will be harder to add social networking emails, and you can only solicit those that go to your website and agree to sign up to your email list. These lists are not going to be used to market to anyone. They will only be used for informational purposes. In a way, they act as a mass bulletin board for two distinct classes of people who you are dealing with online.

SPLIT THEM DOWN FURTHER FOR AUTORESPONDERS

Once you have the two master lists, you are ready to split them into demographic categories. You might want three lists so you can use them to create three campaigns: low-priced items, mid-range-priced items, and expensive items. Obviously, these correspond to a three-way split of income levels if you know that information. If you don't know the information, you can just automatically add people to the low-income list unless they self-identify themselves by making a large purchase. Then, they would automatically go on the high-income list due to their own actions.

The advantage to this system is that now you know to whom you are marketing and what to offer them. The next thing is to develop a series of emails that will be sent out at regular intervals as a strategic marketing campaign. As you can see, this means that you will have multiple emails flying back and forth; even if you only have 20 subscribers, it's going to be a hassle trying to do this by hand. That's why you should look into outsourcing your autoresponding system. A service like AWeber.com is not that expensive and can help guide you on the best way to start setting up your campaigns without much trouble.

DESIGN DIFFERENT MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

Once you have a service in place to help you handle the nitty-gritty operations, you'll have a lot more time to design different marketing campaigns to test different strategies. You will want to look at separating your list into different demographics, as we discussed, whether they are by age, income level, ethnicity, or whatever. The key is to understand that you are creating lists so that you can market to them more effectively.

GENERATING DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

You can get demographic data simply by surveying your subscribers. Or you can include that data in their profile so that you can store it and later use it to determine what list they should belong to. If you only have an email address and a password, odds are that you won't know what demographic they belong to until they start to make some purchases. For those, you can add them to a low-income list and start to slowly market to them that way until they self-identify themselves.

Try to get your subscribers to self-identify their demographic, as this can really impact the effectiveness of your marketing campaigns. You can set up polls online on your site and see what the majority of responders have to say about who they are. Try to make the polls fun, but try to get some idea of what your demographic wants by giving them the chance to tell you.

BY THE THIRD EMAIL, START YOUR CAMPAIGN

After a few introductory emails, you can start your marketing campaign. You should have planned out what products and services you are going to market way ahead of time. You should keep track of what part of the sales funnel a customer is in and continue to send them emails in that order. Cycle through a list of seven to ten promotions, and if they don't pick up on them the first

time through, try them again. Typically, it takes people three times to even notice that your product might be good for them, so if you only show it to them once, they may be interested and then forget about it. If you market it at least three times, you'll know that they've definitely seen it.

At the same time you should be running other email campaigns with the same strategy. Should one person self-identify as being willing to spend more than the low-income list, quickly move them to a higher income list and start that campaign from the third email as well. This way, you are constantly marketing to people and keeping note of how you can get them to buy your products and services.

USE SALES TECHNIQUES THAT IMPACT THE PSYCHE

Within these emails, you should be careful to create offers that impact the psyche of the reader. Don't just list your product and service and request them to buy; make the content interesting and exciting to read. You want your subscribers to be happy to get your emails and to anticipate getting new ones from you. If you don't give them something of value in each and every email, they'll simply either unsubscribe or leave your emails unopened before deleting them.

INFORM AND ENTERTAIN

You will want to always have a great subject heading that delights the reader and gives them an inkling of what's inside the email. Often times, that's all an email recipient will see before making the decision to read the email or to delete it. Make it a subject that draws the reader into reading your email.

The reader will start to gain confidence in you and your expertise if you show them that you know what you are talking about. Give them content that helps make their lives easier, teaches them something, or gives them a moment to laugh and to gain insight into their lives. Don't market to them on the subject line or ask them to buy immediately upon opening the email. This type of behavior makes people wary. Instead, you can market to them with various strategies to reduce buying resistance, to get them to trust you, or literally to light a fire under their fannies to get them to buy.

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGIES THAT WORK WITH EMAIL MARKETING

Here are a few strategies, but are by no means the only ones available to you:

- **Limited-Time Offers**
One thing that people hate is to lose out on a good opportunity. The fear of loss far exceeds the hope of gain in many cases, and offering a limited-time offer can really get people to act now instead of thinking about buying it.
- **Tell A Story**
Parables and stories work on the deep subconscious part of the human mind. Tales about ordinary people who achieve extraordinary things with the use of your product or service can be a source of inspiration and good motivation to risk buying the product from you. In this case, they may reason that the hope of gain truly does outweigh a minimal cost of loss. This strategy works very well for products and services that are low-priced.
- **Make It Selective**
For higher-priced offers, you might want to take on an air of exclusivity and status. This psychological trigger appeals to people in the high-income brackets and can be a reason for them to buy.
- **Limit The Quantity**
Maybe you want to give the impression that whatever you are selling, it is scarce, and thus, more valuable. Even if you are selling an infoproduct, you can set up delivery to limit it to a set quantity and advise your readership that it is a limited-quantity order. This works well with things that have master resell rights included with them too by letting buyers know that it will retain its value since the quantity is limited.
- **Elicit An Emotional Response**
For people who may be using logic to reason their way out of your product or service, you can bypass that mechanism by evoking a strong emotional response. Anytime you can get someone to really empathize with what you are saying, they are more likely to be drawn into the sales process and to close it.
- **Ask Them For The Sale**
This strategy should always be included in every email. You must ask for the sale. The reason is that there are few self-starters out there, and many people even want to be invited to buy. If you ask them for the sale, they will be more likely to buy.

MATCH THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TRIGGER TO YOUR DEMOGRAPHIC

There are so many other sales triggers out there. If you're not sure what works, just visit your competitors' sites and see what types of psychological triggers they are using. It may be subtle at times, but if you try to think of why they've got copy up with a specific type of scenario, it's usually because they've found that it works with their demographic. Similarly, you are going to find times when you trigger massive buying behavior by stumbling upon the right trigger for your audience.

If you understand that you are trying to determine why people buy, then you know that your marketing campaigns should implement various triggers in different emails. You should be tracking which products and services are selling the best and what triggers you used. It may not be the case that the product itself is popular; it may be that you got the marketing campaign just right. In that case, you will want to know what's working with your audience and to tweak it a little further. Try it out some more. Try variations on the same trigger with different products and services. It will teach you a lot about marketing and about how to figure out your subscribers' desires, even before they are aware of them.

AUTOMATE THE DELIVERY OF YOUR PRODUCTS

If you want to give your customers instant gratification in your email campaigns, offer a line of products that you can automatically deliver over the Internet. Every Internet marketer should establish several products and services that they can do this with, as it is one of the best ways to generate excellent customer satisfaction.

There are also other reasons why this is important. It gives you the opportunity to reestablish contact with a buyer after a sale in a way that is friendly and helpful, as well as to give you another opportunity to market to them. No matter what you're selling online, you can include the different types of informational products to help give you some additional leverage with customers.

TYPES OF PRODUCTS TO AUTOMATICALLY DELIVER

Obviously, if you put information on a CD or DVD, it will have to be delivered via mail. However, all electronic information has the advantage that it can be delivered via electronic file in various popular formats from .pdf to .doc. Even music files can be sent and downloaded automatically from the Web. Video files can be viewed too, making it an ideal way to send out lengthier products. Here are a few items that you can offer on your website:

- **E-books**
Electronic books can be read via .pdf files online. They are easy to download and can be kept from being tampered with by making them read-only. An e-book can be 50 to 100 pages and requires no layout or printing costs. Once a person buys the e-book, it can be sent straight to his/her inbox.
- **Reports**
Reports are shorter versions of e-books that can offer brief overviews, but maybe not as many details as e-books can offer.
- **Videos**
You can set up videos for "live" demos of a particular task. You can also set them up for online courses and tutorials. Videos are very popular as entertainment too.
- **Music files**
Maybe your sites are about music. If you want to offer special music files for download, you can do that also. Just be careful not to infringe on anyone's copyright, as that can lead to more trouble than it's worth. You can also sell other audio files like ring tones or offer them for free for signing up for some of your promotions.

KEEP TRACK OF WHAT'S WORKING

All of these tips and hints will work sometimes and not at other times, depending on your audience. Since your site is as individual as you are, it's your responsibility to tweak your online email marketing campaigns to produce the best results. For that, you need to keep track of statistics that will show you how well you are performing. If you do everything and fail to track performance, you will not get the best results. Always look to figure out how well you have performed and then tweak it some more.

THE STATISTICS

If you've joined a site like AWeber.com, you'll find that they track most of the relevant statistics for you. That's the advantage of outsourcing some of your email campaign marketing to experts. They will tell you your "open rate," which is how many times that your emails have been opened. It will also tell you who is opening your emails and who is not. There are also statistics for click-through rates for people who are clicking links within your emails. This gives you an idea of which people are interested in your offers and which are not. With AWeber.com, they also offer reports that show the sales by subscribers and how you can start to get an idea of who your best customers are and how you can offer them better incentives to buy.

INCLUDE TESTING

You can even get split testing for emails, just in the same way that you would split test a sales page on your website. In this case, you might send out two different versions of an email. Fifty percent of your subscribers would get one version of the product offer and another fifty percent would get a different one. It's a way to test to see what's working for you very easily.

Split testing can just consist of having two different subject headings and sending the exact same copy of the email otherwise. It's not too hard to test just one element of an email campaign with split testing, and it can tell you a lot about why people are buying or not. You might want to change the wording of the click-through link only and keep the rest of the email the same. Or you can try to see if just changing fonts or adding small changes work to create a bigger impact. Once you can study the results of your changes on your audience behavior, you'll have a better chance of getting peak performance later on.

CUSTOMIZE THE STEPS TO YOUR AUDIENCE

The key to generating the best results with email marketing is to customize your steps to your audience. Tools like split testing and tracking psychological triggers, along with creating a relationship of value and trust, is going to help move your sales upward. As can be seen, selling via email marketing is simple in operation, but once you get into using the techniques across multiple audiences and platforms, it requires thorough planning and tracking to make you excel with it. Luckily, it's not too hard to do once you know how, and everything you learn will bring you the potential for more and more sales in your marketing efforts.