

List Building Expert



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Introduction

If you're looking for great up-to-date information about list building you came to the right place, because this guide is supposed to give you a headstart on what you need to know about the subject.

If you're new to internet marketing, you need to know that list building is one of the most popular topics. Usually at this point you might ask yourself "what is list building?" or "why do I need it?"

The answer to both questions is very simple: "list building" is a process by which you create a list with potential customers that are interested in the products from a specific topic, be it a physical product, service or just the experience of a professional.

One way of list building, if you're a website owner, is to use a newsletter form to collect subscribers. However, in such a situation, the visitor might not have anything to win so he will disregard signing up. In this case, a good way to raise interest in your visitors is to offer them a free bonus, but before doing it you have to list all the perks of why the bonus would be of great significance to them. More on this later.

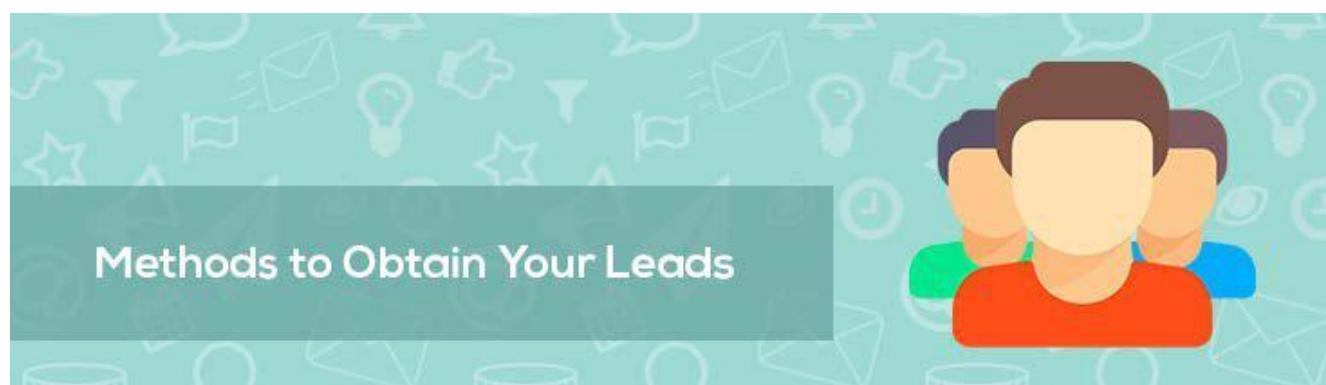
Building a subscriber list is essential in order to lay the foundation of a successful business.

As with anything in life, when deciding to grow your business there might be

people who will oppose you, or you might get scared by the fierce competition. In order to overcome this you will need perseverance and strength. Let us begin.

Simple Methods to Obtain Your Leads

Success never comes suddenly, it's the result of small actions. Take advantage of the small opportunities that can kickstart your business to a new level!



It's not at all bad to rely yourself on something so simple as a list. Start small and watch your business grow over time.

Opt-In Leads

Opt-In Leads refer to collecting subscriber data through autoresponder systems. For example, you might have a subscription form on your website where users enter their name and email address, directly allowing you to save that information and contact them in the future for products that are related to the website they've opted-in/subscribed for.

Of course, most of the time, people won't just enter their information freely. You have to encourage them to do so by creating a "win-win" situation. By providing them with a bonus, like a product that solves a problem they might face, you are offering them a "win", and their contact information will provide you the "win".

You can include as a bonus for opting in an eBook, report, etc. Use online services in order to generate leads on a continuous basis.

Survey Leads

Another approach to driving leads is to collect contact information through a survey on your website.

People usually like to express their opinions, measured in this case through a survey, so you would have a better reach using this method. There are, however, people that don't. For those, you could employ simple advertising tactics like expressing the benefits of them filling out the survey form.

You could also tell them that their contribution will improve the content they are requesting access to. Or you could do weekly giveaways and people who complete the survey will be automatically registered for the giveaway.

Giveaways are a great way for persuading people to give you their contact information. We'll talk more about free gifts later on.

Make sure the benefits, especially if you apply the giveaway case, are really

good so your customer can't refuse the offer. This is a very simple way advertisers produce new leads.

Mailing and Subscriber Lists

We've talked about building a list earlier, which will guarantee you a greater reach when advertising your product on the internet to a list of people that are interested in new developments for a specific field.

In this chapter we will take a closer look at ways of building your subscriber list.

A lot of newcomers prefer simpler tactics like buying pre-made subscriber lists from 3rd parties. Even though this might seem as a great way to kickstart your business, it isn't. These lists usually contain people who didn't want to have their contact information shared with others, and you contacting them will make them resent you. They might even flag your emails as spam or report your website, which in return would mean a steady decline for your online business.

Buying pre-made subscriber lists is a big no-no! Make sure you create your own..

You see, 3rd party mailing lists are usually collected by companies using automated tools. They are usually not specific either, so people that subscribe to websites from various topics will be all bound in the same list, thus having ~10% of the mailing list with customers interested in your topic,

to which there is a 50% chance they will be interested.

Building Your Own Mailing List

As I've said earlier, don't rely on 3rd party mailing lists and instead create your own. This will not only save you from potential problems you might encounter because of angry people, but it will also guarantee that any success you have is all because of you.

A mailing list is a sure-fire way to achieve large-scale sales.



You might ask yourself why do you need to make your own mailing list and the answer is simple: studies show that in order for a product to be sold it needs to get into the attention space of the customer for at least 7 times.

Adjusting this to a website instead of a physical store, you need your customer to return to your website several times, and the best way of doing that is by collecting his contact information and emailing him once in a while about topics that he's interested in, so he'll return to your website.

Statistics also show that people are very inclined to buy products from email

advertisements, so make sure your emails or newsletter look professional and you include some form of ad to the product you're selling in any email you send out to your mailing list.

Avoiding Mistakes When Creating A List

Before moving on to tips for creating a mailing list, let's talk about what you should NEVER do.

Besides buying 3rd party pre-made mailing lists, make sure you don't sign-up for online paid programs that tell you they will drive tons of traffic to your website which will convert into leads. Almost every time you hear this, it's either false, or just a scam.

Don't Bulk Email Customers

Buying 3rd party lists are owning multiple businesses and throwing all subscribers in the same list would run the risk of trying to advertise products that people won't be interested in, or products that will show your potential customers that you don't have an actual interest in solving the individual's problem, but you'd rather just throw some products randomly to people and see what sells.

Imagine trying to sell sport products to a bulk mailing list where you have a lot of people from a side-business, like baby care products. Not a good choice!

Don't Fall for Guaranteed Traffic Scams

As a beginner, there are a lot of online programs that will sell you a “newbie friendly way of generating leads” by sending “tons of guaranteed traffic”.

Even though a part of their statement is valid (they will send a lot of traffic which you can track), the other is not, and honestly there is no way they could know.

You see, when such a business drives traffic to your website you will receive let's say 1,000 visitors, which is exactly what you wanted: people that will load up your website and check out your products.



However, most of these visitors come from popups, hidden iframes or forced redirects from shady websites, which doesn't only risk your website's reputation in search engine rankings, but it will also do nothing when it comes to leads.

If you were to analyze that traffic, you'd see that either all those visitors stay for 1 second on your website (typical of popups) or they stay longer but they

don't browse any pages (like separate products) because they are bots.

In the end, you get the traffic, but it won't convert to any sales. The moral of the story here is that you need to create targeted mailing list in order to generate leads.

How To Design Subscriber Pulling Web Pages

There are 2 ways you could go about this, the direct way and indirect way of asking people for their contact info.

The direct way involves using a popup that asks them for their name and email address when they visit your website. You could use some bonuses to encourage them to do this.

The indirect way involves you using an opt-in form in the sidebar of your website, on all pages. You could encourage people to complete it and subscribe to you "in order to get updated when there is something new".

Both ways work extremely well and statistics show that if customers subscribe to your website (meaning they give consent that they want to be contacted in the future) there is a higher chance of them returning to your website when they receive an email, and even buying your product.

A great way to make sure they didn't do this by mistake is to send a confirmation email, where you could also include a freebie.

Personalization

People like to feel as though you focus all your attention on them, so when mailing your subscribers make sure to do it in a personalized matter.

This could be anything from basic stuff like addressing them by their name, to more advanced stuff like referring them to a new product based on their previous purchases from you.

Offering A Free Gift

We've previously discussed the importance of including something of value to the customers – and what better way is there than including something like a product, software or report to your mailing list?

This is a great way to pull in more visitors, because these customers could talk about your freebies in other places and refer new people who have similar interests to your website.



The goal here is to offer a product that has real value to the customer, not just some low quality freebie, because in that case the customer might think

everything you have to offer is of poor quality. Also, don't forget to be creative.

If you're in the service industry, a good way to build an audience is to offer your expertise. For example, as a freebie you could review the marketing plan of a customer, or provide some helpful tips and suggestions to improve his business. The sky is the limit!

Adding this strategy to your business will increase traffic to your website, as well as generate leads, because you're proving to the customers that what you do is not only valuable, but you also allow them to sample it beforehand.

Another important aspect of collecting contact information from customers, if you're not using the method previously mentioned, is having a good landing page.

As with the previous method, in order to increase the chances of people subscribing to your website, you would have to offer something free in return.

A great landing page doubles as both a sales letter and webpage, thus it must be professionally written.

Don't worry though, because the effort spent on creating your landing page will either result in direct sales, or in subscribers to your mailing list.

Also, besides having the landing page / sales letter professionally written, you need to make sure that everything looks good at the elements flow together, so if necessary, hire a good web designer for this task.

Key Features of a good Landing Page:

- A brief introduction where you explain who you are and what you're offering. Don't forget to explain why what you're offering is important
- Your offer, which might mean a product, newsletter, or the special report you're offering in exchange for their contact information
- A reminder that your visitor gets something for free without any string attached, and as such, there is no potential risk or loss for him or her
- Make sure you don't have any outbound links on your landing page. The only links you should have are:
 - A privacy statement where you let them know that their contact information will be kept private
 - Any other disclaimers that might apply regarding to your product or service
- Make sure your product looks professional, even if you're giving it away for free. Hire someone to take care of that, if needed
- Attach a small head-shot picture of you at the end of the sales letter,

complete with your handwritten signature in order to build trust

Abiding to these tips you can create great landing pages that might grant you 70%+ conversion from regular visitors of your visitors into subscribers.

As I've said earlier, if you feel you're not very competent in writing a good sales letter, product or cover design, there is no shame in outsourcing these tasks to professionals from such platforms as Freelancer.com, Fiverr.com, etc.

The only thing that's worse than no sales letter at all is a poorly done one. Get help if required!

Convert Subscribers into Paying Customers

"I have my list of subscribed customers. What now?" you might ask.

The answer is simple: it's time to convert these leads into sales.

In order to do that, you have to create a one-time offer between the landing page and the "thank you for your subscription" page.

In simple terms, you want to offer your visitors the chance of getting something at a discount due to an action performed by them.

Psychological studies show that people respond well to marketing techniques such as saying that this offer is limited time-wise (only when you become a new customer or on orders bigger than X) or quantity-wise (only X

copies remaining). Statistics in the field of internet marketing confirm this fact.

Take advantage of this neat psychological trick by redirecting your visitors to your one-time offer page right after subscribing, but before offering them their freebie. Also, make sure you make it very clear that this is a “ONE TIME OFFER” and skipping it will mean they will have to buy the product or service at full price later on.

What you really want to do is create a better sales letter for this product, which will make customers not skip this one-time offer.

To increase the chances of them accepting your offer, make sure you create a sense of urgency.



Another thing that would help a lot is if the product you’re offering as a one-time offer is an important part of what you’re offering them for free. If they see on the landing page what you’re offering for free and then they see the paid product they’ve heard referenced, there’s a greater chance of them

accepting the offer in order to have all the necessary tools.

For example, if on your landing page you tell potential customers that you have a freebie eBook on how to better manage their finances and you make clear the fact that the freebie itself refers to doing so with a piece of software, there is a bigger chance of the potential customer to accept your one-time offer if that offer is the software itself.

“One-Time Offer” Tips

- Highlight the fact that this offer won't be available anywhere else. This is their only chance.
- Highlight the fact that the product you're offering is at a discounted price for a limited period of time (one-time only chance) to create urgency.
- You include a “Skip Offer” button that will take them to their freebie. The customer must not feel forced into it in order to have a greater chance of converting this into a sale.

Even if they skip your offer, don't feel bad, because you haven't lost anything! You have just gained a new subscriber. Also, you'd be surprised how many people will return and buy products if they find that their freebie is of good quality. However, don't forget to setup your website properly so that the customer gets their freebie even if they accept your one-time offer.

Make sure to do a follow-up via email with customers that took your one-

time offer to make sure they are pleased and to help with any issues they might have. This builds a trusting relationship between you and the customer.

Double Opt-Ins

They are what exactly what their name suggests: a way to truly confirm that the user wanted to give you his contact information.

The way double opt-ins work is by sending an email to the email address they've used to enroll themselves into your mailing list. Afterwards, they have to confirm this subscription by re-entering those details (and you can ask for more as well).



In this case, double opt-ins serve two important roles: 1) they make sure that the user didn't subscribe by mistake and 2) in the case of users who subscribed out of interest, it makes sure the email address they have entered in the system is a valid one.

Often, people will enter random email address (or addresses of friends, co-

workers, etc.) as to skip that step and just get their freebies. By using double opt-ins, there is no way for the visitor to move forward to the freebies unless he confirms his e-mail. If he used someone else's email, that person will only receive the confirmation email and if they delete or skip it, they won't be bothered ever again by you (not being added to your mailing list).

You don't want to accidentally annoy someone that didn't want to register to your mailing list, as they might report your emails as spam.

Advantages of Double Opt-Ins

The purpose of mailing lists is to create groups of people with a high likelihood of becoming paying customers. Using double opt-ins will guarantee that your mailing list will contain only people with interest for your product or services.

Using double opt-ins will yield you much smaller mailing lists, but a higher conversion rate than regular opt-ins.

Using a double opt-in list will also lower the likelihood of people reporting your emails as spam.

Not sure what double opt-ins are? You could check Aweber.com, GetResponse.com or TrafficWave.net for more information on how the system works.

Maintaining Your Subscribers

Due to the fierce competition in the internet marketing field, in order to stay relevant you got to become aggressive in your techniques. This isn't always a bad thing, as long as you employ the correct tactics.

Proper Usage of Autoresponders

There isn't an easier way of keeping in touch with your subscribers than using an autoresponder to send out scheduled emails.

The current online marketplace wouldn't have survived without the use of autoresponders. These tools are a great way to initiate contact and reply standard messages to customers until you have time to do actual one-on-one work with your customer. It's because of this fact that a good, paid autoresponder service is crucial for the survival of your business in today's world.

Being the 1st line of advertising employed by most online business owners, it's important to understand how these work. Basically, they take 2 important inputs: the recipients and the message. The recipients would be your mailing list you've compiled, while the message could mean a sales letter, offer or simply an email that notifies people about new developments in the line of products you're selling.

You can automate these autoresponders to send out email messages at

certain hours, as well as certain days, and most of them have a randomize function, which will make sure not everyone receives it at the same exact moment.

When using autoresponders you don't have to work as much on contacting people and there are less chances on double-emailing someone. As such, when using autoresponders make sure you engage with your customers at least once a week.

You could also make 2 separate mailing lists, one for regular subscribers and one for people who bought from you in the past. In this case, you could contact the previous buyers more frequently, because it's more likely that they will buy again..

Using E-Zines to Maintain Your Lists

Another way to maintain subscribers is by creating eZines and sending them to your subscribers as often as possible. This is a great way to engage with them without actually advertising a product, even though you could include subtitle ads as well. Use these to create anticipation for a product instead.

What might be the advantages of such a thing? Well for one, it allows you to expand your target audience gradually. You can also get to know your customers better and find out their exact interests.

This will allow you to create custom tailored ads for them in order to

promote products that fit their needs.

There are a lot of system that allow you to create eZine-style or newsletter-style autoresponders, the most popular being the aforementioned Aweber.com, GetResponse.com and TrafficWave.net, which will also allow you to create customized templates.

Advantages and Disadvantages of eZine

There is a clear advantage to using eZines: you will be able to have a greater reach for your products or services.



The biggest drawback with ezines is that not everybody has the time or skill necessary to pull off weekly newsletters. It take an enormous amount of work to provide good quality content on a steady schedule, especially if you're not a writer. Even if you are a writer, chances are that you'd much rather invest those skills in 100% guaranteed income tasks, rather than losing time and potential money writing for your subscribers. Not to worry though, there are a lot of places where you can find good quality content

and there's no shame in using it, as long as you credit the original author(s).

There are a lot of freelance websites where people can bid on a contract with you. Use something like eLance.com to post your project and watch as people place competitive bids in order to work with you. Once you find someone that seems competent enough (good feedback, portfolio that meets your criteria, etc.) you'll save money in the long run.

Another way to resolve this issue is to pre-write (or buy) most of your content beforehand. Doing this will allow you to put all your articles in the autoresponder you've picked and schedule the emails. This is also a good option if you're someone who travels a lot or has a limited amount of daily hours for online work.

How to Choose an eZine Topic

Make sure that the content you provide isn't time or region specific. The more general your content is, the better it will fit all your subscriber's interests.

What works best for eZines are short stories, tips & tricks, as well as interviews with other professionals from the field you're working in. The best course of action is to brainstorm for these topics. Think of what you would enjoy reading in such a format and start from there.

Look for topics that are in high-demand and as such offer a greater conversion rate. Dating is one of these topics, as it might apply to almost

anyone and thus will grow your subscriber base, leading to a a larger amount of people buying your product. However, you should also pick a subtopic that isn't saturated, in order to make sure your subscribers haven't given up interest in these topics after buying similar products from other providers before you.

You can also create a steady flow of income by partnering up with other providers of similar products in your field and suggesting these products to your customers.

Conclusion

List building is at the heart of successful online marketing and must be treated as such.

By creating mailing lists with subscribers through hard work and passion you will transform your online business in a reliable form of income.

Even though list building takes a lot of time, especially if you want to create highly targeted lists, in the long run it will help your business grow. Maintaining lists is not an easy task as well, but doing it will guarantee that the subscribers from your list will be more likely to buy a product from you, as they are newer.

A good list builder is someone who inspires trust and loyalty into his customers. Be that list builder!