

Essential List Building Guide

Building a prospective customer list is one of the most important business activities every entrepreneur should make a priority. As soon as they launch their business, they should start to grow their list, and then try to grow that list a little every day or week in a number of ways.

The benefits of list building

List building is important because it gives you the chance to get to know your prospects better, and for them to get to know you. One of the most common mistakes business owners make these days is in focusing more on social media marketing than on email marketing list building. They've heard, "Email is dead," and so they don't spend the time on list building that they should.

Nothing could be further from the truth. People still spend about 2 minutes of every 5 on their Smartphones reading and acting upon emails.

Email list building opens the door to more effective relationship building than you could ever manage on something as fleeting as a social media post. Once they are on your list, you can send them helpful content that will hopefully be so useful, they will look forward to reading more and perhaps even pass the emails along to others.

Money-making opportunities

You can also earn money from every email if you provide a link to one of your products or services. The topic of the email can provide a logical context for the link and the product, such as, "If you would like to learn more, visit URL."

Studies have shown that a prospect is around 75% more likely to buy a product that they have received an email about, rather than if they only see it online or at one of the popular social networks.

You can also send out promotional emails about a specific product, and/or a special deal you are offering. It could be a special seasonal sale, or a new product launch. Treating the people on your list as special is one of the best ways to keep them on your list, and one of the best ways to make them feel special is by offering them insider pricing. The deals should be so good, they would feel silly to pass them up, and might even be so excited, they share the deal with others.

Getting them on the list

In the early days of email marketing list building, offering a newsletter was enough. These days, it can be a harder sell. Now most people will expect a high-quality incentive to get them to part with their valuable email address.

The two best incentives for building your list are a free download such as an ebook or special report, or an ecourse of several lessons, such as 5 or 7. Both will work well provided the incentive focuses on a hot topic in your niche or industry. Think of some of the most common things people have trouble with in your niche. Also review your product line to see which would be the best ones to link to in order to make a sale once they signed up.

An ecourse is a better option for 2 reasons. The first is that the would-be prospect might register, grab the download, and then unsubscribe. The second is that the more emails in an ecourse, the more points of contact and chance to build a relationship, show what you have to offer, and perhaps even make sales.

The steps for setting up your list are:

- 1. Register with an email marketing platform.**

MailChimp and Aweber are two popular choices. MailChimp is free up to the first 2,500 subscribers on your list. Aweber is a paid service that runs at about \$20 per month. It is pretty much the industry standard for small online businesses and offers a range of attractive templates and a step-by-step process for setting up each new list.

- 2. Create your incentive.** It can be just about anything; report, checklist, ecourse, etc. But it must be informative, inspiring and valuable in your readers eye.
- 3. Organize your promotional links.** These include links for each product you are planning to sell within the context of each email. Any resources (free or paid) you plan to discuss in your emails. Any affiliate links you may be adding to your emails and so forth.
- 4. Create a new list in your email marketing platform.** Follow the instructions given by the service provider you choose to go with.
- 5. Create or edit the confirmation email.** This email will be automatically sent when potential subscribers sign up. They will be asked to click the link in the email to confirm they really do want to be on the list. This is known as a double-opt in and helps avoid accusations that you are a spammer.
- 6. Create the confirmation page.** This is where new subscribers will be redirected to once they confirm they want to join your list. It should thank them for signing up. It might tell them to check their inbox for further information. It might contain a download link or other information that they may need to know.
- 7. Create the welcome email for the list.** This will be in the Follow Up or Autoresponder messages area and will:

- a. Thank them again for joining.
 - b. If you are offering an ecourse, introduce it and start your first lesson.
 - c. If you are giving a free download, give the link here.
 - d. If you are offering a download, create the page where they can get it and use that email in Step 7a.
8. **Create the sign-up form** they will use to subscribe. You will need a minimum of their first name and email address. You might wish to ask them for their last name or other details you require. Short and simple works best though.
9. **Paste the sign-up form code into your website page.** Add details about the incentive, paste the form code in, and save. Then publish to your site and start driving traffic to that page, which is known as a squeeze page because you are squeezing the information from them.
10. **Upload follow up messages to your autoresponder.** These might be additional lessons, if you're offering an ecourse. It might be follow-up emails to try to sell subscribers your products or services.

An ongoing process

One of the reasons why small business owners struggle with list building is that it's not just, "One and done," but an ongoing process that needs to be performed regularly. There are several ways to make the most of the opportunity, and to keep it going in a relatively hands-free way.

Always ask for a person's email and permission to add them to your list. They might be people you meet at a networking event, a customer in your bricks and mortar store, or someone you are trading business cards with and you both agree you want to keep in touch.

You can also create more than one list online by focusing on different topics related to your niche. For example, if you were working in the Internet marketing niche, you might have a list and incentive about successful email marketing, one on how to use Facebook ads, and so on. Each list would follow the same format as that listed above. The main selling point will be a tempting incentive to get people to sign up.

Templates can also help. See which sign up form is the most successful and reformat it for a new list building campaign. Template your confirmation email and confirmation page, and your squeeze page. The more you systematize your business, the easier it becomes to run it and market your information and products in as an automated a way as possible.

Nothing happens in your business without traffic to your website, so by focusing on free and paid traffic-getting strategies, you have a much better chance of growing your list.

Publishing high-quality content regularly will get you organic or free traffic. So will posting links on social media to your squeeze page.

On Facebook, you can create a button on your page so they can subscribe through the interface without leaving Facebook. You just have to link it to your email marketing platform using what are called integration and automation tools. All the instructions are available when you create the button.

If you have a budget, you can drive paid traffic through ads. Facebook ads can help you pinpoint people interested in your niche. Facebook Lead Ads are designed to generate leads, that is, get prospects on your email marketing list. You'll find them in your Facebook Ad Manager, where it asks for your ad goal, in this case, list building.

Having your own list isn't quite as easy as having your own ATM machine in your computer, regardless of what some marketers claim, but it can be one of the best ways to connect with your niche, build relationships with your prospects, and sell products all at the same time.

Let's Talk About the Templates and Tools:

Defining Your Ideal Audience Checklist (.docx) & Planner (.xlsx)

This checklist and planner is designed to help you brainstorm all of the important aspects of determining exactly who your ideal audience is.

Creating an Effective Lead Magnet Checklist (.docx) & Planner (.docx)

This checklist and planner is designed to help you create all of the important parts of an enticing lead magnet that will draw in new subscribers to your email list.

Creating a High-Converting Opt-in Page Checklist (.docx) & Planner (.docx)

This checklist and planner is designed to help you with the important aspects of creating an opt-in page that converts visitors to subscribers.

Turning Subscribers into Customers Right Away Checklist (.docx) & Planner (.xlsx)

This checklist and planner is designed to help you quickly convert your subscribers into customers using thank you pages and a welcome email.

Creating Effective Follow Up Emails Series Checklist (.docx) & Planner (.xlsx)

This checklist and planner is designed to help you create an effective email follow up series that converts subscribers into customers.

Using Your Blog to Build Your List Checklist (.docx) & Planner (.docx)

This checklist and planner is designed to help you turn your blog into a list building machine.

Using Facebook to Build Your List Checklist (.docx) & Planner (.docx)

This checklist and planner will give you ideas on how to use Facebook to drive traffic to your opt-in pages.

Using LinkedIn to Build Your List Checklist (.docx) & Planner (.xlsx)

This checklist and planner will help you build a network of targeted people in your LinkedIn account which will help you build your list.

Using Instagram to Grow Your List Checklist (.docx) & Planner (.docx)

This checklist and planner will help you gain more followers and convert them into subscribers on Instagram.

Using YouTube to Grow Your List Checklist (.docx) & Planner (.docx)

This checklist and planner will help you quickly convert YouTube visitors into subscribers.

Using Live Video to Grow Your List Checklist (.docx) & Planner (.docx)

This checklist and planner will help you quickly grow your mailing list using live video.

SEO to Grow Your List Checklist (.docx) & Planner (.xlsx)

This checklist and planner is designed to ensure your SEO is working hard to drive traffic to your lead magnet pages.