List Building Super Tips

How To Build & Run A Successful Opt-In List

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Chapter 1- Introduction

The Role Of Building Lists In Internet Marketing

Introduction

One of the most important things in an Internet Marketing business is a list of contacts. Just as in any other business, online businesses also need to build relationships with their customers. Subscribers are the contacts on your lists that are the most valuable asset of your online business. Therefore, list building leads to building relationships, which in turn encourages prospects to visit your website, sign up and get closer to buying your offer. But people are not just going to flock to a website and leave their contact information! To attract them, they must perceive some value. The first thing they are going to think about is how they will benefit from giving you their contact details. That's why every business that does online marketing must build its own lists, targeted at specific prospects. It is time consuming. You have to work really hard. But in the end, you will directly enjoy the fruits of your efforts.

Lists – The Online Marketer's Treasure

Everyone talks about his or her 'optin' lists. It's their treasure. They are always looking for new and innovative ways to build their lists to keep visitors coming to their sites continuously. They offer various things to the prospective customer like free reports, ebooks, software, memberships, services etc. just to get their email address and other identifiable information. It is essential to keep following up with people who might be interested in what you are offering. Only when you have a growing list can you facilitate your users to visit your site. It grabs their attention and takes them to those areas of the site that are of particular value to them.

Why Have A Growing List?

Is it not sufficient to have a few hundred contacts? In online marketing, not every visitor buys from the site he or she is visiting. Sure you may have built a huge database of contacts, but unless each one is a qualified contact, there is no guarantee that they will take any purchase-related action when they visit. Even in the offline world, you usually cannot get a buying decision out of your prospect right away – it takes not less than 5 visits unless they are

desperately in need. Again, if you deal with more than one product, different visitors may be interested in different products. That is why you have to get your visitor's email id and name as they browse through your site. This will let you plan a frequency at which you can remind them and keep them updated about current offers to keep the sales coming in. You must use ethical methods to build your lists. The worst thing in Internet marketing is acquiring a bad reputation, because that will ensure that you can never do business again.

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Chapter 2

What You Need To Build Lists

The people on your list are your target customers. You must convert them into a base that looks forward to what you want to tell them.
You yourself must be easily reachable. When you do this, people slowly begin to have faith in you. When you communicate with your contacts, you must sound approachable and friendly rather than seriously formal.

Let us talk about the basic things you need before you actually experiment with different methods of building lists and stick to the ones that work most profitably for your particular line of activity.

A Website

The first thing you must set up is your website, so that your contacts have a place to come to and find you. They also need a place where they can securely leave their email and name. You must ensure that they do not have any difficulty in the process. Not only that, you want to give them something of value to remember. Your website is practically your main point of contact with your users. So make sure you build a site that is good to look at. That does not mean graphics rich and jazzy, but something that is designed to be professional and effective. It must attract your users enough for them to want to browse around and check out what you have for them. Use pleasant colors and relevant images, a good layout and useful information.

Your site must provide crisp content. Write it in such a way that it draws their attention – like a magnetic headline, bulleted points, etc. On top of everything else, it should endorse your own image.

Do it in a way that is unique and memorable for your visitor. They are only going to be there for seconds before they move on to browse elsewhere. It must have something special for your prospect to remember and come back. The number of sites on the Internet is growing rapidly and it is up to you to make yours look special.

A point to bear in mind here is that even after you've drawn the visitor to your site, there is no fixed rule that says they must purchase from you the first time they go by your site. Which means we must make sure there is some way by which they can leave their contact information behind before they go? You do need to remind them and follow up, don't you? You can do this by asking them to sign up in exchange for something valuable to them – like a free download or newsletter. In this manner, your list continues to build. You must find a way to follow up with these contacts so that they become your customers. The Ultimate Marketing Center has everything needed to start and then operate a profitable online business.

Autoresponder

The next thing is your autoresponder. (We will talk about this more in detail in a subsequent section). Subscribe to one that suits your needs best. These are a wonderful way to automate your follow up, when you have to keep in touch with your customers regularly. You might find it easy to keep in touch with, say 200 or 300 people, but when the list runs to thousands, just imagine the amount of time you'll spend, time that you can devote to more creative activities. Instead, a good Auto responder can help you tremendously in keeping up with your reminding and emailing.

Ways To Bring Traffic To Your Site

Coming to the main purpose of this ebook – unless you bring traffic to your site, how will you build lists? Right. But bear in mind that your traffic must be relevant to your requirement. In Internet marketing, the pay per click advertising campaign method is effective. What you really need to take care

about is the keywords you use; they must especially relate to your unique product. Also, writing articles about topics related to your business and posting them on online directories can bring in traffic. You can tie up with an allied business so that together you can offer a range of services and mutually benefit while building those lists.

Relevant Content

It follows from the above that you must be attentive to what you write in your emails. You users will look for information that is useful and relevant to them. If you don't send them messages that are meaningful, they will cease to read them. On top of that, they will unsubscribe. So make sure you provide value, because it will be a worthwhile investment. And, though it seems obvious, each contact must be able to sign up with you easily. Which means, every official communication that goes out of your office, whether online or snail mail, must contain your web URL, and encourage them to get on your list.

You must remember that it is not just for size that you are growing your list. Why you are doing it is so you can convert it into business. You can start with a strong small list and build it as you go along.

If you haven't already decided what you are going to offer and to whom you are going to sell it – your product and your target market- do it now. Pick something you are interested in and get familiar with it. Some people even select products sold by others, and when they become confident, choose something similar and market it.

Chapter 3

Kinds Of Lists

Obviously the best list you can maintain for your email marketing is the one you build from your own customers and visitors who browse your website. But it is not enough to only have a list of those you know. You also want to bring in new customers all the time. Lets talk about different kinds of lists in online marketing.

Opt In lists

An opt-in list is your list of subscribers who opted to receive your email, ezine, newsletter or whatever you offered when they signed up. It means they have allowed you to contact them via email. Here, a targeted opt in list would be a list of users who have been qualified for your specific market. Your subscriber becomes a part of your email list.

How Does An Opt-In List Differ From An Ezine?

Opt in lists are informal and brief. They are full of tips, etc. and have limited period offers. Invariably opt in lists are mailed when something new is to be introduced or to tell its users that a particular offer is available only for the next 48 hours, or something like that. Ezines, on the other hand, are formal. These carry articles and other hints. The periodicity of Ezines can be anything from a daily to once in two weeks or once a month. Actually if you really look at it, you'll find that both opt in lists and Ezines are quite integrated. Ezines have opt in lists built into them, in the sense that along with their usual features, they include a section where they announce a new product launch, perhaps offering it to their subscribers at a special price or as a free download in the next 24 hours.

Double Optin Lists

Double opt in is when your subscriber opts in two times. How? First on the website when he/she click and confirm their subscription after giving their email id and name. After this they click on the link sent to them at the email address which they signed up with to confirm their subscription. So it means not only opting to be on the list, but also confirming it by verifying their email ids.

Opt Out Lists

Opt out is when your subscriber asks for his/her email address to be deleted from your list when they no longer want to receive messages from you. They can do this through the "unsubscribe" link that you include in your emails to them. But did you know that some online marketers provide their users an unsubscribe link that does not work. When the user clicks the link, it sometimes goes into the wrong hands adding the user to some spammer's list under the assumption that the email address is being validated.

These days, reputed companies make sure that they only send email to subscribers when they permit them to. By sending email to those who opted not to receive them will only end up irritating the user and mess up the credibility of the online business. Why lose all the effort you put in by simply not respecting your customer?

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Chapter 4

How Do You Build A List?

There are numerous ways in which you can build a credible list. More are evolving through the experience of innovative online marketers all the time. We have discussed the most widely used methods in this ebook and how they can work for you. Almost all of them are simple to get in place to get you going on your path to profit.

Auto Responders

The online marketing business wouldn't be where it is today without autoresponders. It saves a tremendous amount of time by completely automating the process of communicating with your subscribers. An autoresponder uses software that can be programmed according to your requirements. Once you set the parameters of how you want things done, it just follows instructions. You can be as creative as you want. You don't even have to make a major investment on one these days – several sites offer them for free.

Why Is An Auto Responder So Important?

Autoresponders save time and time is money while building your lists. If you send promotional emails from your ISP, you will be reported as a spammer. The next thing you know, you might have to close shop. Autoresponders can be exclusively used to send these routine follow up emails to the thousands of contacts on the list. You can plan and keep your emails ready, and set the autoresponder to send it at the specific intervals you want. It can keep track of subscribers signing in and even respond to let them know they have been signed in. Practically every single routine emailing activity can be handled by the autoresponder, which is why no online marketing can do without it.

How It Works

You can use a follow up autoresponder that can keep the follow up work ongoing with your contacts. No subscriber is going to worry about when your next email is coming, and you certainly cannot expect them to remember your particular message among the hundreds they must be getting on a daily basis. That's where an autoresponder comes in. To keep your business information alive in the subscriber's mind.

Program It And It Does The Rest

You only have to keep your messages ready, decide on a sending schedule and your autoresponder takes care of the rest for as long as you have set it. This will mean that you can concentrate on other equally important issues while your sales keep coming in, thanks to your autoresponder's faithful follow up. In fact, it even lets you go on holiday while it keeps your office practically running!. Your autoresponder can help you send out useful information to your contacts. Instead of using the same: dear subscriber: for all your contacts, you can make your autoresponder address each contact by name and send the email. It is always nicer to receive an email addressed to us personally than get the feeling that we are one in a massive group of recipients. The autoresponder can even be programmed to wish your contacts "Happy Holidays" or "Seasons Greetings"

List Tracking

It can track your lists. This means you can make carefully thought out offers to your target audience. They just want to know what is in it for them. So you can structure your message accordingly so that it appeals to them. Experienced online marketers recommend that it is better to use autoresponders that give you an update about contact statistics. This can be split into month/week/day to tell you which of your leads are active and which ones have opted out, helping you in healthy list maintenance.

Keeping In Touch

Autoresponders help you in keeping in touch with your subscribers, giving them relevant information about your business, say, when you get fresh stocks or if you are planning a discount sale. Or you can even make your new subscribers some kind of special offer. This will keep your contact list alive and help you turn them into continuous sales!

You can also get your autoresponder to get activated when a contact signs up at your website. After they write their name and email address, when they send the information, it goes to the autoresponder URL that will send an acknowledgement right away.

Factors To Consider While Buying An Autoresponder

When you decide to use an autoresponder, you want to ensure that it is the one best suited to your needs in terms of performance, customer support, features and cost. These parameters must be balanced and convince you that it is the right one for you.

In terms of **performance**, the main thing to consider while getting an autoresponder is delivery of email. The higher the ability to deliver emails, the better. The provider of the autoresponder must support you with **prompt customer service** that knows what it is talking about. Just imagine getting stuck half way through your campaign! So look for one that is accessible easily and responds quickly.

Features are only as useful as you find them for your business. It is possible that you may not use all the features your autoresponder provides. But you can have it working efficiently for you when you are clear about what you want and set it accordingly. Next, you want to check that **what you are paying** to use your autoresponder does not cut into your profits. After all, you are trying to find ways to build your lists, not incur losses. So check what it will cost you in service, set up, monthly expenditure and other costs that may

not have been mentioned. There is no use getting an autoresponder that you can't afford.

Sequential Auto responders

Technology is advancing all the time to make the online marketer's life easier. Many online business use what are called sequential autoresponders. These collect and save the names and email addresses of your contacts. This enables it to continue to send messages in sequential intervals, set by you, to your potential contacts. It can also take attached documents.

To summarize, your autoresponder can help you build massive lists depending on what you use it for. It helps in building an impression of your reliability, makes your customers have more faith in you and keeps them thinking about you. This will lead to more profits through frequent sales.

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E-books

A lot of online marketers have tested and tried this strategy to build their lists. The main thing here is to make a good ebook that the user will want to get for free. This is usually offered as a sign up bonus – when the customer leaves his email id and name. As a next step, the user is taken to the website URL to download the ebook from there.

In fact, these days you need not even go through the trouble of writing your own ebook. You can outsource it to writers who then give you the full resale rights of the book. After you get your ebook ready, ensure that you add your optin page or autoresponder URL to every page of the ebook, to help the user find you right away.

You can make an ebook that runs to several pages or just a few, there's no standard length. People like to receive free ebooks, particularly if they are interested in the information it contains. Ebooks are inexpensive to give away because you don't have to maintain physical stocks since they are in the digital format. You can send them to your users through your autoresponder, so delivery is quick. You don't incur shipping charges. What's more, you can give away as many copies as you like.

Ebooks can be given away for free as an incentive to sign up with you, or you could also charge a nominal fee and give away the reprint rights to your subscribers. They, for their part can also give it away for free and make money by doing this. But these tend to be hot for a while and then the excitement wears down. The trick is to keep writing new ebooks all the time to keep your audience eager. You aim here is to increase your list size with more subscribers. By increasing the number of links pointing to your own website, you can also rank high with the search engines.

Ways In Which You Can Use The E book To Build Your Lists:
You can use your ebook to build your lists in different ways. Many people enjoy receiving relevant information that they are interested in.

An ebook given away free draws the visitor to your website. Ebooks can be used in the following manner:

- Offer the complete ebook in return for referral email ids or testimonials, which you can use.
- Writing your own ebook makes you look like a specialist or professional in your field, and builds credibility.
- You can post your ebook on various free websites, which will ensure an increase in the number of downloads.
- Some marketers offer just the first two chapters of the ebook, giving the visitor the choice to buy the full ebook.
- Make your ebook work for you to build your lists by making it a limited offer for that particular topic. You can inform your visitor this ebook will only be available for the next 24 hours for free download, encouraging them to take advantage of the offer right away by signing up with their email id and name.

E zines

Ezines are not only useful as great list builders, but are an inexpensive and efficient way to keep in touch with your subscribers and interact with them. You can keep them updated with what is happening in your organization, telling them about new product launches and other innovations you have introduced. Not only that, it's a good publicity tool for your website. Ezines help in following up with the customer on an ongoing basis. Through its content, the subscriber is encouraged to visit your website often. People don't take action on a single message. They need to be reminded constantly before they can consider buying your product. Ensure that you have an online version of your ezine on your website. This will help it to be indexed by the search engines and bring lots of visitors to your site. In each issue of your ezine, use keywords related to your business because gradually your ezine pages will get into the search engines.

Theme Based Ezine

When you plan your ezine, decide on a specific theme that suits your market, and the kind of people you want signing up with you to buy your products. This will enhance the type of list you want to build. You want the people who opt to receive your newsletter to read them and recommend them to others, who will also build your list by subscribing to your ezine. Initially it is better to just have an easy sign up box where your visitor needs to only fill in email id. Some people tend to think that online marketers are always looking to get personal information. You don't want to put them off. Your subscribe link must appear on every page of your website, preferably at the top left hand corner as everyone tends to look there first. Remember to mention what you are offering for free near all the links.

Exchanging Ads With Other Ezines

You can use your ezine to expand your lists by putting an ad for it in other ezines and websites, preferably related businesses that are non-competitive. Here also, remember to include information about your freebie. You can in turn carry ads for those websites/ezines and divert traffic toward each other and benefit mutually. The more web partners you have, the more busy the traffic will be on your website.

And by the way, you can use free content on your ezine as well if you cannot write your own. The biggest advantage of an ezine is that you will make people get used to seeing communication from you at frequent intervals. Your ezine can carry special offers without the risk of spamming.

Over a period of time, you can skim through your old ezines, make ebooks out of similar content, and use these as free gifts. We all intend to save some of the information we receive but never really get around to it, what with the volume we receive. So this will be a nice little idea to use. You must make sure you write/use good stuff in the ezines; otherwise no one will bother to read it.

Every email you send out must have your registration/subscription link. Add a registration button or link to all e-mail correspondence. Also have a "if you liked this, recommend it to a friend" kind of link in every ezine. That helps in spreading the word about your products ethically.

Interacting With Your Prospects Through Your Ezine

The reason why your prospects signed up for your ezine is because you said that you would give them information they can use. It is important to stick to this promise over and over again to maintain this list. Make sure you provide the content you promised. They must look forward to your next ezine. Let the tone of your ezine be informative, instead of as a tool to increase sales. This will give it a sort of consultative approach and build good relationships with your list. So how can you use your ezine to interact with your prospects? Read on…

- Ask questions in your ezine. Request your subscribers to answer the question from a choice of 3 answers, which they can do by clicking a link.
- Encourage feedback from your subscribers; you can provide a link where they can post their feedback and other remarks. Make sure you acknowledge these and maybe even have a small giveaway to those whose feedback is included as a tip in your next ezine. How's that?
- Invite questions and suggestions from your readers. Ensure that you reply to these in subsequent issues. Ezines give you the image of being an expert, which in turn brings you respect, making you look trustworthy.

With this, I am sure you can come up with some more effective ideas!

Articles

Yet another proven method to build substantial lists is by writing keyword rich articles, pertaining to your line of business. This can work whether you post them on your own website or in other big article sites and directories. These article directories and other site owners look for content they can share with their readers. These sites get continuous targeted traffic from people, who are looking for different kinds of information, and when you post there – it is almost guaranteed that your article will come up in the search results if it is related to the search. When you include your opt in URL at the end of every article you post, this ensures more visitors to your site. A brief message with your URL will also trigger your reader's interest, making them want to visit your site for more, putting them in a receptive mood to sign up with your list.

Let other ezines and sites reprint your articles, insisting that they can do so as long as they keep the links to your site. You can keep track of these users so that you can continue to send them subsequent issues. You can also ask them to send you an email asking for your permission to use your material. This makes more validated contacts.

Just like other information you post in the form of ezines, ebooks, etc., your articles must also be concisely written and loaded with the kind of ideas your reader would like to see. If you cant write articles, you can also get free content from various sites across the Web.

Blogs

Blogs are a terrific method of building lists, extensively used by online marketers. They are the current trend with most organizations to keep in touch with their customers – both old and new. It is an interactive tool, and

what's more, the search engines like blogs. Your other list building tools can be included in your blog by providing links to them.

What Are Blogs?

Blogs or weblogs are websites or parts of them where there's information on a regular basis. This is related to the target user and reflects the main website of the business. Its almost like talking to your visitors through a diary. Blogs are written in an informal manner. They use what are called RSS feeds to update your user on what is happening on the site. Blogs are also permanent, since all the content can be archived. This means the person visiting your blog can get hold of everything you've done so far. Blogs can be linked to your other promotion URLs. When this is done, every time you put new information on your blog, your entire network of links will bring in visitors who can then be followed up using your autoresponder.

Most smart online marketers post and offer and invite their visitors to leave feedback. We always tend to identify with fellow-buyers – in that way this interaction is valuable, authentic and a great way to increase your sales.

Content On Your Blog

What you post on your blog is up to you. As with all other communication material, you must take care to post keyword-rich content so that it is picked up by search engines to attract traffic.

Some people even hire professional bloggers to do this work for them.
You can post information about your products, news relevant to your industry and even personal experiences. Its basically an ongoing conversation that builds trust in the long run and keeps your visitors coming back if they liked what they saw.

How To Let Your Contacts Know About New Content?

Your blog is a web page. So unless your contact visits it, he or she won't be able to read new content. How will you let them know you have added new information? You can email your list through your autoresponder to let them know. In fact, include a couple of lines from your post with the link to the blog so that they can reach your blogsite through the link and read the rest of your post. Some marketers go further and send the new content fully via email, just like you would send an ezine, to the subscriber's email.

Even in the offline world almost all businesses maintain a blog of some sort. There was a time when they were not taken very seriously, but now, they are viewed as one of the best marketing methods. Every business must maintain a blog, since it is extremely easy to manage, particularly in the online business. There are many marketers who start a blog even before they build their website, because of various free blogger sites available.

E-courses

E-courses are much like ebooks, except that they keep your subscribers anticipating the next part. They are sent to them in series at varying intervals. This is easily possible through an autoresponder. This is feasible when you want to maintain steady contact with your users. Ecourses can be of any frequency. They are easy to put together. Once you decide on the topic you can write your own ecourse or outsource the work.

How To Organize

You would want to organize a week's worth of daily material to keep the flow. Suppose you are sending out an e-course on say, how to build lists. Each issue must have the link to your website or autoresponder and also give your subscribers the option to unsubscribe. If they are not interested, there is no point continuing to send them content. At some point they may report you as

a spammer and that's an unpleasant situation. It would be a good idea to begin every issue on a personalized note, introduce that specific part and end it with the title of the next issue. Sending one part every two days will give your user time to go through the content.

When The Course Comes To An End

At the end of the course, you can ask them to recommend other users to you, if they enjoyed what they read, so that it can grow your list. But why would they do that? What's in it for them? Tell them that they have a chance at winning a special giveaway – mention what it is – and then ask them to forward it to three people for a chance to win it. This is also a good time to give them a special introductory offer to encourage them to take action toward purchasing your product. Don't forget to ask them for feedback regarding the ecourse.

Squeeze Pages

Squeeze pages are an interesting concept as list-building tools. They have revolutionized the online marketing business by their utility in increasing traffic. With a well-designed squeeze page, the marketer can enjoy limitless benefits. Assuming you have a website, you can make a squeeze page that will have something attractive for your visitor to want to be on your list. It has a web form, through which your autoresponder can subscribe them automatically and send them further information.

What Squeeze Pages Do

Squeeze pages let you get your visitor's contact information so that you can send them information at their email id. They are a prelude to your main website, almost like an advertisement – with an eye-catching headline, good content that is relative to your main website along with a sign up form through which the visitors can give you their email address, permitting you to send them more information regarding your products or offers. The content

should preferably bulleted points so that your visitor can quickly decide to sign up.

But again, why would your visitors volunteer contact information to you just because you want them to? You have to offer an incentive. So come up with something that they perceive as valuable to them that can convince them to agree to receive your promotional emails and give you their email ids.
The entire idea here is to tempt your visitor to want to know more about what you have written on your squeeze page, and therefore sign up with their contact details to receive that information. You are trying to bring them to your main website. The advantage here is, even if they don't end up buying something during the first visit, you've got their email addresses – so you can remind them from time to time.

What If You Don't Have A Web Site?
Now suppose you have no website. What can you do? One of two things – get one right away, or else use your autoresponder URL. So your squeeze page will carry your autoresponder URL, which means your visitors will sign up by using that link to subscribe. But it is better to get your website as soon as possible since you will need one anyway.

Free Reports

This is a good method that will build your contact list. If you have expertise in a particular field or are knowledgeable about a subject, write interesting reports and give them free as sign up bonuses. Send the report only after they leave their email and name. This way you also make sure that you have their permission to send them the report. Your autoresponder can take care of mailing this.

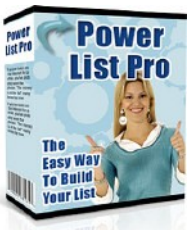
The report could be a generalized report on your industry or a specific topic that relates to your business, that gives information of value to the reader. It

can also summarize the results of a survey you took. Make sure it contains links to your ezine, website, autoresponder URL, blog, etc. Also include a link, which enables your contact to pass the free report around.

We've put together a quality package of powerful, easy to use tools and resources that can finally **set you on the road to success.**

- Create Effective, Power-Packed Squeeze Pages Instantly
- Visitors will NOT be annoyed when you use the bypass feature
- Have a newsletter sign up form slide into the middle of the page
- Partially gray the sales page with the popup over the top
- Have a fixed popup appear at a fixed position on the screen
- Display your visitor's name on the web page
- After subscribing, have your visitor return to the same point on your sales page
- Get an encyclopedia chocked full of effective, proven list building strategies
- Plus even more bonus resources like 52 home business newsletter emails, 70 ready-made niche autoresponder emails, List Building Mastery 3-Volume Course & More...

These tools and resources will make it as *easy as pie* for you to apply the very latest strategies and technology to your business, building your list on autopilot.



Free Classified Ads

The very first place we all look when we urgently want a service or product is the classified ads section. They are effective and specific resources for a wide range of services and products. Classified ads are inexpensive, especially when you haven't set aside a big marketing budget. That is why they are a good method for building lists. With the number of websites mushrooming all the time, there are scores of them that allow free classified ads. Most of us spend a majority of our work time at the computer, which makes it very easy to just search for a particular item we want. As an online marketer you can use these sites that host free ads. It is a successful way to get through to millions of prospective users.

So let's look at the mental state of the people who browse the classified sections. They want what they are looking for and they are ready to spend. They are your hottest prospects, ready to buy and the most important people you can draw to your website.

How To Reach These Prospective Customers

It is not as if you can just post an ad in the classified sites and sit back and wait for them to visit your site. What can we do to get the correct kind of response, the one we are looking for? Consider the business you are in, and decide what you are offering. Think about the most appropriate sites your ad would fit in to. It should be with other similar categories because that is where your customer will be browsing.

The more number of classified sites you post your ad on, the more will your response be. That is obvious, because of extra exposure and more people seeing it. Even though it may take a little while to post your ad on different sites, you will benefit from it through increased business.

Most local businesses advertise in their specific area. If you do that too, you will also build a reputation faster.

How Should Your Classified Ad Look?

Actually text ads are effective enough. That is what most people do. You can jazz it up a bit by using a couple of bold colors. A difference in appearance attracts attention, though it might cost a little extra. What to say in your ad? You must include the name, address and phone, email and URL of your business, plus a very briefly worded offer.

Posting Classified ads ensures a continuous flow of traffic to your site because of the simplicity with which they work. They don't cost much, and are considered an investment well worth it considering the kind of audience reach they enable.

Gifts

The age-old traditional method works in online marketing as successfully as it does in offline marketing. Free gifts are attractive to contacts when they have to sign up – you don't really have to offer costly gifts – just think of something that is useful to your visitor. Give it to them after they sign up and grow your opt-in list!

Coupons

Gift coupons, discount coupons or coupons that your visitor can download and print to exchange for a product or service is a very good idea as a sign up incentive if you happen to be in the retail market. Make it so that they can redeem it for something that is likely to appeal to them. They will remember you when they enjoy the gift coupon.

Contests

We've all entered contests at one time or the other. And isn't it really exciting when we win? Everyone enjoys the feeling of winning a prize – so why not try running a contest on your website or through your ezine and emails to get your users enter for a chance to win? It's a valuable way to get a huge optin list. Ask your visitor to give you their name and email id for a chance to win. Your autoresponder can send a confirmation email back to them saying that they are in the running to win a prize. Let the prize be some kind of useful information or tip or idea.

Different Kinds Of Contests You Can Run

You must again think about what is relevant in your business and what can suit your readers and use the following ideas:

- How about an essay-writing contest? Give your readers a particular word limit and tell them that the selected ones will be published in your ezine. This will also ensure that they sign up to receive your ezine. Who doesn't like to see their name in print? Give them a limited period within which they must submit it, with guidelines as to what is acceptable. Make it clear whether it will become your property or whether the writer can feel free to post it elsewhere as well. This can generate a lot of enthusiasm and create rapport with your visitors.
- Some online marketers run photo contests, according to the theme of their sites. Works in the same way as essay contests.
- Get your visitors to link to your site – that is, put your link on their site. Ask them to give you the URL where they've put the link. Every fortnight or whatever timeframe suits you, have the draw. The winner is the name you have drawn!
- A much simpler version is having a draw of your contacts' email instead of the essays and photos and links. The email you draw is the winner.

Make the entry free for all these contests, but be sure to get the name and contact email id before they enter. There are several contest directories where you can post your contests, in case your site doesn't get that many visitors.

What About Prizes?

You can give away information in various forms – they are simpler to handle because of the sheer numbers. An ebook you would normally charge for can be promised to get the visitors to take part in the contest. Be sure to mention the value of the ebook or whatever you plan to offer. Merely saying 'valuable' is not enough. You have to say it in terms of specific $. If you run a paid ecourse, your winners can be offered that for free. If you have premium paid memberships to your site, offer your winners the same for free. Give your contest a catchy name, get those entries and go build your list!

Trade And Exchange Ads

You can build your lists by exchanging ads with other ezines. After a substantial number of contacts have been added, you can do this with a different set of publishers.

Pay Per Subscriber

We've all heard of Pay Per Click. This is an instant traffic generator. As a cost based method, what you do is put an ad with the keywords most relevant to your business in the search engine results page. You make a fixed payment every time a user clicks on your ad. This is an effective and widely used method that draws targeted traffic to your website.

How It Works:

You make a good list of chosen keywords, which you think are popularly used by users to look for information in your line of business and bid for them.

When you win certain keywords, if you are the highest bidder, you are put right on top of the search engine results. The next bidder goes second, and so on. The biggest search engines are Google and Yahoo. Yahoo operates Yahoo search marketing while Google has its Adwords program. It is okay to bid for as many keywords as you want – you will be paying per user's click. You use the keyword in an ad that will bring in your visitors to your site. The biggest advantage of pay per click is that you do not need any expertise to run it. You see results within minutes of having launched it.

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Google Adwords

Works like the classified ads. When your visitors browse Google, they are prepared to buy when they find what they are looking for. While it can cost you some, you can certainly increase targeted traffic to your site and get them to sign up. You need to be effectively doing your homework in terms of which ad works best among the ones you have, and bid carefully on the keywords you select. You must be able to forecast how much you will be paying per click and how much you will get in return. In other words, you not only need to break even real fast, but start getting profits at the earliest possible time. Your ads must appear in a suitable spot. Response tracking to find out the result of putting your ad will help you decide on its effectiveness. Sometimes there may be too little response, in which case you will have to revise your ads. Try using different combinations of words for your ads. Use the ones that work best.

E zine Advertising

Just as you can benefit from ad space in your ezine, so can you advertise in other ezines. Choose an allied business that does not compete with yours directly. When you advertise in those ezines, you will reach focused audience in an inexpensive way. The Internet is full of businesses that use the ezine method to expand their lists. If you select the right ones and advertise in them, you can multiply your contact list. You can invite these people to read your ezine as well as consider buying your products.

Another big advantage is that most people archive their ezines online. So every time people browse, they are going to be seeing your ad, giving you more visibility and mileage. This works great in the long term without spending additionally. You also benefit from the trust built by these ezines with their own contacts. The audience will readily read your ad because it is

reaching them through an ezine they have consented to receive. Without spending much, you can use this method of building your lists with hardly any risk involved.

Choose Your Partner

You mustn't go only for the least priced ezines. Rather, you must choose the ezines that are related with your business in some way. Your products must be attractive to your partner's audience. Placing your ad in the right place in the partnering ezine is also vital. Select as many related ezines as you can – since the more you are exposed, the more people will see your ad and get converted to sales.

Track Them

You have to track every method you use when you are building your lists. All those emails you are sending out reach a mix of contacts. Among those that signed up, some could be active, and some could be inactive ones. How will you handle this? You can do it through putting tracking links to all your outgoing messages, so that you can find out how effectively your contacts respond.

Search Engine Results

A time consuming way to build your lists, but the point is when you increase the number of sites you are linked to, you go up in the search engine page ranks. This in turn builds your contact base thanks to the high visibility.

Co-Registration

Many online marketers have started buying leads. Done with caution, this can be quite time saving in the long run. It will also help you get started on your own opt-in list. We all know that we must constantly build our lists to be successful in online marketing. Unless there are fresh prospects coming in continuously, business will come to a standstill. When buying the list, you are basically buying the right to contact the people on the opt-in list. But take care you don't end up buying harvested names – names that are built illegitimately. You have to ensure that you include an 'unsubscribe' option in each of your email messages.

How Co-registration Leads Work

When someone signs up for a free membership or ezine, and then gets offered something more on a related topic, co-registration leads are collected. The visitor may be visiting a particular website, when they get a pop up asking them if they would like to sign up for more free information. Another method is when the visitor signs up for one service, like a free email account asking them whether they want information to be emailed to them about various connected topics. Hotmail does that. As soon as you sign up for an email account, you are taken to a page that asks you to check the various checkboxes for certain categories of relevant information. Whether you choose to receive that information or not is up to you. But the general tendency is to get subscribed without even realizing it. This happens when the boxes are pre-checked. The visitor must remember to uncheck these boxes if you don't want to take up the offer. They have the option of opting out. You see, you are not actively requesting your visitor for information. When they opt in by default, they are asked to confirm through a link in their email, this is called a double opt in. So, in co-registration leads, the cost of the lead is higher with higher levels of confirmation.

What About Spam In Co Registration?

There is worry of spamming in this method, but not if you pay attention to the quality of your list. There is every chance that someone who opted to receive information might not remember that they did. So when they receive mail from you, they may report you as Spam. This is a risk especially with pre-checked boxes when the visitor does not uncheck them. It is better not to provide pre-checked boxes as this will avoid being called a Spammer.

What Is The Timeframe Needed To Build A Contact List With Co Registration?

This depends on several things. You need to place your ad, after which the visitors contact information will come to you. This can take up to 2 weeks. Suppose your ad does not get the expected traffic in a particular span of time, another could replace your ad. This is possible especially in sites that are in demand and have limited space. So take care to ensure that your ad is composed in a way that will invite people to click on your link. After your contact list comes in, let your autoresponder follow up and send the information that you promised to send.

What Kind Of Co-Registration Leads To Avoid

You need to be clear about what kind of leads you want. Here are some tips you can use to check the quality of your lists:

- You must have a targeted list that is likely to be interested in what you are offering rather than just a bunch of names. Your list must be opt in, with contacts who are sure about the information they requested.

- Make sure your contacts have consented to receive information from you. It is just not worth it to hear your contacts complain or get a negligible response from people who did not ask for information.

- Keep on getting new lists. You don't want to use the same list over and over again. You cant keep pestering the same people many times. Also, small lists are likely to give you a low response. Instead have a list that is very big – so that even if a small percentage of contacts on it buy from you, you make substantial sales.
- Don't pay money to your contacts to sign up with you. Such people are not usually reliable.

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Pop-Ups

We know what pop-ups are – those little windows that pop up and open when a visitor clicks a link. This could while entering the site or leaving it. These can be great list builders. But traditional pop ups have a problem –they can be easily blocked, what with the number of pop up blocking tools on the Internet. This brings us to the question of how to solve it. It is possible to get past the blocker! There are what is called unblockable DHTML pop ups. These are used by many online businesses when they partner with other sites to share traffic. These are a very valuable way to collect visitor's email ids to enable you keep in touch with them to send them promotional information.

How To Add Pop Ups To Your Site

You can create these DHTML pop-ups using free software downloadable off the web. They are simple to make without having to use the services of a professional. The most important thing is what you write in the Pop-up. Your words must be convincing enough for the visitor to take action, namely fill in his or her contact information in the form. How can you get your visitors to do this?

- You can offer something in exchange for their email ids. This could be a free report or an ebook.
- The title of your pop-up could be an effective keyword that can also help in taking it up in the search engine ranking. Make it catchy.
- Then write a really attractive headline. Your visitors are not going to wait for long while they browse through the Internet. You must get their attention in the first few seconds – so write something that will capture their eye and make them continue to read. It should be something that will excite them enough to want to sign up.
- Minimize the graphics or use none at all. If your pop-up takes forever to load, there is every chance that your visitor will simply close the pop-up and keep moving on.

- Your pop-up must look good and appealing. A simple design can have the desired effect.
- Often we find that some pop-up windows do not have a close option. Make sure you give it one. There is no point in forcing your visitors to sign up just so that your pop up will go away! Those that are not interested are not going to buy from you anyway. Why have a fake contact list, then?

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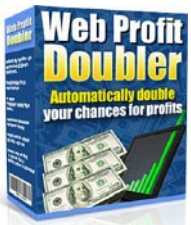
Link Exchanges

You could compare these to exchanging ads with sites similar to yours. Exchanging links with sites that have content relevant to yours can go a long way in building your lists. They hardly cost a thing and are useful in attracting the kind of traffic you aim to have.

How Do You Go About It?

You and the site you've chosen put a link on each other's website. This benefits both of you. Special care must be taken so that the other site does not look like an advertisement on yours. Since you will increase the number of links across the World Wide Web, your search engine rankings will also go up.



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Joint Ventures

Joint ventures are formed for mutual benefit. Your promotions must be innovative. Rather selling space in your newsletter or blog advertising, ask your associates to promote you instead. The important thing is not to be competitors in the same line of business. Joint Ventures are a wonderful way to build lists and expand your customer list while getting great exposure. Some online marketers join hands with similar sites and exchange links and content; they even sign up with each other's affiliate programs, promoting each other while making money in the process.

Joint ventures can apply to your blog and ezine too. Just imagine: here you are, running an ezine and a blog to a targeted audience. You have got a massive readership. This makes you a very attractive business proposition for other online marketers. Why? Because if they tie up with you, they can build their lists through your traffic too, without competing with you. That's why ezines and blogs are like valuable property. What do you do when people are interested in partnering with you? Exchange links, grow your profits and build your lists at absolutely no extra cost.

Getting The Right Kind Of Partner

The most critical factor to consider, if you want your joint venture to be highly beneficial is the kind of partner you select. This means, your partner must be someone whose business is complementary to yours. Without being direct competitors, your businesses must be related. Your visitors must find both of you attractive. If you subscribe to newsletters that are related to your business, you will probably be able to start building your lists right from there. You can check the ranking of a site and then decide whether to partner with it. When you choose your JOINT VENTURE partner, check whether their strengths influence your products positively.

Types Of Joint Ventures

Your joint venture could be a joint subscription - **an ezine Joint Venture**. This is how that happens – you get a user on your site who signs up for your ezine. You send them a thank you message and invite them to join other ezines of interest to them. These other ezines are you JOINT VENTURE partners. They do the same for your ezines. You promote each other. When you let them advertise on your site, you get to advertise on theirs. It is a good idea to have a simple message for your user but remember to focus it on the kind of users you want.

These days **exit pop-ups** are being used very effectively by online marketers to partner with similar sites on the Internet. You will be incurring a cost for each visitor who clicks through your site while only a few will actually make a purchase. It does not matter whether you got them through an advertisement or a search engine, you are paying in some way. The solution is to make them all yield a return for what you are spending. As soon as a visitor leaves your site, exit pop-ups show them another site. What is clever about this is the fact that your visitors are through with browsing your site when the exit pop up opens in a new window. Suppose your visitor becomes a customer by buying something from you, and then they need not see the pop up. If they don't, you can trigger the pop up when they exit your site.

How about making use of **your email list** to let your contacts know about your joint venture partner's offers? Your list will hear it from a reliable source – you. You should get the partner to do the same for you.

Joint ventures and their success depends on how complementary the services of the two partners is.

Your Joint Venture Should Be A Long-Term Arrangement

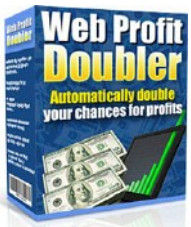
One tactic that works is to give your visitors something exclusive, not commonly found elsewhere. This could be someone else's services also, but

should make your visitors feel that they are getting something special through your site. Your partner should also offer something of equal value to your visitors.

Keeping Track Of Your Progress

Any business activity must be tracked to see how successful or effective it is. In online marketing, it is vital to keep track of your advertising's results. Make sure your joint venture partner sends you as much traffic as you send them. It makes no sense to send 5000 visitors when you are getting only 50 in return. So keep track of your sales as you share visitors.

The greatest thing about joint ventures is that you not only have access to the visitors on your partner's site, but you also have full access to their buyers. Its much easier to make an existing customer consider your product compared to the effort to make a new prospect buy from you.
Joint ventures are one of the most effective tools for building your lists.



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Press Releases

Press releases usually convey news to the media. They generally don't use advertising. You can leverage a press release by using it effectively to build your lists. If you write the appropriate message on your press release, it can give you the kind of publicity that can direct more traffic to your website, increasing your sales at a very low cost. Press Releases also build the credibility of your business.

As a marketing tool, Press releases are very cost effective. The kind of integrity that can be built is amazing because your readers will believe independent authorities or reporters rather than promotional material. If you plan to send the press release by email, never send an attachment. Your press release must form the body of the email. Forget bulk email – address every email personally. Your autoresponder can do an efficient job here. You can also submit your press release to many free online newswires and websites.

When To Distribute A Press Release

Whenever you want to make an announcement about your website or your products, distribute a press release. It must convey something your visitors will be glad to know, that is out of the ordinary. This could be when you launch a website, or when you increase your product range. Or you might be entering new alliances, or maybe when you win an award for customer service, and so on. Some online marketers hire professionals to make an effective press release. While this could cost you some, it is a worthwhile expense.

Getting Mileage Through Someone Else's List

The online marketer's most successful way to build lists is through Opt-in email marketing. You can take advantage of other people's lists too, to grow your profits. We have already looked at ezine advertising, article marketing and joint ventures, which are very useful to build your lists from someone else's.

Forums

Forums are the most interactive places on the Internet where we see huge amounts of traffic. People constantly post messages regarding their opinions on various issues. They also ask questions that are addressed by other forum members. We can find forums that discuss issues related to our line of business and take part in the ongoing conversation. Many forums let you add a signature file to your post – here is where you place your subscription link. But this must be done properly; otherwise you will be labeled as a spammer. Ensure you post useful information.

Forums are a very viable list building strategy. We come across a lot of marketers trying to sell on these sites, but the right thing to do here is to launch yourself as an expert in your field. When this happens, people begin to have faith in your knowledge. They are in a better state of mind to visit your website and consider your product, simply because they believe what you say.

How To Go About It

Forums are online discussion boards wherein members voice their opinions, answer questions that are posed by other members and share relevant information that might be useful to the entire group. They are not a place where you can sell directly. So your aim must be to contribute information. You can easily find numerous forums for your specific keyword relating to your business. Become a member of several of these. Many forums let you

update your profile, which you can make visible to the public. You can also create what is called a signature – which will be appended to the end of every message you post on the forum. Just put your name and website URL or squeeze page URL. Those who are interested in your message will almost always click to know more. You can then introduce yourself in all the forums. Take care not to write any hard sell message – just what you do. Generally, most forum members will respond by welcoming you into the forum. It's a good idea to thank each and every one of them.

Participating In The Forum

Browse around the forum posts to see whether you can make a meaningful contribution to a thread of conversations or answer any questions that are yet to be responded to. Always remember to come across as someone with the knowledge to be a part of the forum. For example, you cannot ask them to click through a URL where they can find the answer in your book! That is not what you are here for. Regular participation will build your credibility and show you up as someone who is genuinely interested in the topic. Trust will build through your communication and then eventually, they will visit your website – not only that, they will also recommend you to others.

Building The List Through The Forum

The main aim of being on the forum is to build a targeted list for your business. So, continuously enhance your knowledge of your subject and active forum topics. Start a relevant thread of a current issue and write meaningful information. Don't ever sell your website. Everyone on the forum can see your links in your signature. If they see you as someone who is there to sell, they will never click your link.
Most forum members will rate your product by the kind of messages you post. Share positive experiences related to the forum content. Offer tips that will successfully increase their profits or add to their skills If you have a constant

presence in the forum, that makes a difference too. The effect here is, when people perceive you as an expert whose ideas work for them, they trust you and feel eager to click through your link to know more. They will not mind giving you their contact information to subscribe to your list. Knowledge, definitely, is power!

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Chapter 5

Messaging Etiquette

We've talked so much about writing the right kind of email messages to your prospective customers whom you have got, or in the process of getting on your opt in list. Now, let us see what goes into making a good email message. This is relevant because the appearance of your content matters in the online marketing business. To look at the various steps involved in getting your message ready to send to your customer:

Composing Your Message

Use WordPad or notepad. Preferably only have 65 characters in each line of text that you write. You must break the line manually after this limit because most email clients have their default set to 65 characters when the message opens. Now if your message exceeds this limit, its very aggravating to have to scroll horizontally and see the entire mail as one long line! It is equally irritating to see emails that have unevenly laid out lines. Looks very untidy and gives the impression that you don't care about how your messages look. Since none of us want to create that impression, this simple precaution can take care of that.

Making Your Message Personal

Think about how you feel when you are addressed as Dear Subscriber, and how you feel when you are addressed as Dear (your name). You can easily handle this through your autoresponder – getting it to fill in subscriber's name in the email addressed to them, as if you are writing the email especially for them. Also, use their name at various appropriate places in the message – like "Did you know, (name)", as if you are actually speaking with them.

You are aiming to build your lists and simultaneously starting to build a relationship with your list. So when you care enough to personalize the email

to them, they will also feel comfortable about approaching you, and building a rapport.

Layout Of The Ezine/Message

Every message starts with a title or subject. If your email is an ezine, give it a catchy name and include the name of the publisher, URL links, issue number, etc. This will inform your recipient about where it is coming from and identify you. Readers like to recognize who it is right away to encourage them to read on further.

Listing The Contents

Can you imagine this ebook without a table of contents and the page numbers of each? Just think about having to search for something without a clear idea of what the ebook contains. The title alone is not sufficient. To enable your reader know exactly what to expect, build a table of contents with a list of everything you have included in your email/ezine, so that they not only find you organized, but find it easy to browse through.

Proofreading

This one is obvious. We can't ever imagine reading an ezine or email full of spelling errors and grammatical mistakes. We form a negative impression of the sender. It looks like they did not bother about what the reader might think. It is always necessary to send out quality content to your prospects. Make sure you check spellings and grammar, or get someone to check them. Send them out only when you are sure they are free of errors. Check every link to see if it works, if you are providing any. It can be annoying to the reading to click through a link, only to find that it does not work because of a simple error in the link. You will just end up losing a member.

Check To See If You Are Spamming

There are certain standards to follow to check whether your message is spam free. Ensure that you are aware of them and do not use keywords classified

as spam. This will not only get your messages filtered, but you will reported as spam and spoil your credibility.

Can You Use HTML In Your Emails?

Most ezines offer the option of receiving them as text or email version, according to the receiver's preference. HTML can make your ezine look very good. But there are email clients who just don't display these. All that time and effort in creating a jazzy ezine just goes waste. If your subscriber has low Internet bandwidth, they may or may not have the patience to wait till the page loads. What to do? Make both, and give your contacts the option of whether they want HTML or plain text emails. Many people prefer text emails, while some prefer HTML. The advantage of your HTML version is that you can put it on your website and make it look great. You can also give the text version a link to the HTML version – which gives your contacts the choice to click and see.

Helps in improving your page ranking as well.

Include A Quote For The Day

It is nice to see a relevant quote by a famous person that is related to the content of the message. This can add to the emphasis on your theme.

Original Content

This is always a plus point. It helps in relationship building. When you write your own original content, your personality just comes through in your words.

Does It Work?

The only way to find out is to try it on yourself. Do this: send the emails to yourself first. Try clicking all the links on a variety of email clients to take care of any possible glitch. After all the hard work, you don't want your contacts to have a problem reading your email or ezine, do you? Online marketing is all around your optin list. Give it the respect and consideration it deserves.

Chapter 6

A Word About Tracking Your Visitors

We have looked at the various ways in which we can build a massive list – as you try each of those methods – separately or in combination, you will definitely find ways to get the maximum benefit from them. Building lists being the foundation of your online business, you also need to get a clear understanding of what your visitors do when they visit your website. You need to monitor and track this vital information, to be able to study your visitor's habits and decide which avenue is bringing in the most number of visitors. Any system needs to be monitored and adjusted for optimum performance. It is the same with list building techniques.

You want to know when most of your visitors seem to quit half way at a particular page on your site when they are on the way to buying a product. Ensure that the process of shopping is easy for your prospect. They must not find any part of your website difficult to use. Be aware of any issue that might cause a delay or sidetrack your customer. You might even find a positive difference by changing the content from time to time to sound more appealing to your visitor. Simplify your order process. Web surfers are impatient. They do not like to get stuck on a specific web page.

It is good to have detailed tracking information about the visitors to your site. You can get efficient packages that let you do this automatically. It is not enough to just know how many visitors browsed by your site. You also need to know what they did there. This will help you smooth any wrinkles on your site. Getting a traffic log lets you understand the source of traffic being referred from different places like search engines, directories, etc.

Rather than the tracking reports that come as complex text files, opt for a traffic-logging package. You can have a log analysis package or subscribe to a traffic logging service. The latter is more economical. The procedure involves

putting a code on the page you want to track. Every time the page is viewed, related information gets stored on the traffic logging service's remote server. They make this available to you in real time charts and tables. This is the kind of information you can expect from an efficient traffic logging service:

- Number of people who visit your website
- Where they came from
- Source of traffic and numbers from each
- The keywords that are bringing them to your site.
- Which of your pages are being visited the most number of times.
- The route by which your visitors navigate your site.

When you have the above information, you can look at the best ways to optimize the benefits on your investment. Your tracking software can equip you with the necessary information to analyze the results of your efforts. You can assess your success with the number of hits, visitors and the number of times the page was viewed. You can track the hits when a picture or page is loaded from your server to the visitor's browser. More important than this is the number of page views and visitors. You can track how many people visit your site and how much time they spend when they are there. You must aim to make your visitors stay longer by reworking the content on your site, to get a minimum of two page views per visitor, if it is not already happening. This helps you keep tabs on how well your site is designed and the effectiveness of your marketing methods.

Chapter 7

Be Wary About This

While most list building methods are tried, tested and proven effective, there are still some things we need to be wary about. Some techniques do have some drawbacks that you must watch out for and avoid.

Two such really efficient list-building methods are co registration and product giveaways. Not only do these build your lists quickly, they also take advantage of various other methods to save you valuable time and increase your profits.

So what is it that we really need to be on our guard about? Consider the following situations:

1. When a visitor signs up for your list, he or she is also signing up with the competition. This is something you just cannot avoid. These visitors will get your emails as well as the competitor's and might probably decide to unsubscribe from one, which could be yours. How do you tackle this? One way is to make sure that you send distinctive emails. Never send the same email twice. Keep yourself up to date with what is happening with your competitors. Be different.
2. If you are part of an affiliation program, you will be promoting someone else's products. This means you will be directing traffic to a squeeze page. Here's where they will sign up with the original seller of the products being promoted by you. Now, even if you are earning a commission through the sale of the product, you wont have the contact information of the person who bought the product. Whereas the product owner will. Not only that, he can continue to keep in touch with them, thanks to your efforts. To counter this, what you can do is send these visitors to your squeeze page first – where they can sign up with you for a free ebook or product related information. From here, send them to your

affiliate's squeeze page or link via your freebie or autoresponder. This way both of you will have the email list and you will be building a targeted email list.

3. Those free ebooks that you got from the web to give away can backfire. There is nothing wrong with not being able to write your own ebooks – what with the multitude of free stuff available for use; but what you need to do is to check the contents of the ebook you are offering as a freebie for signing up. While its only normal to include the name and URL of the author of the ebook, these days many authors have an opt-in form in their ebooks making it necessary to register with them to access the ebook. This means your subscribers will go there. Here, you can handle this by first asking your prospective customers to opt in to your list first before you give them the link to download the ebook. Many marketers offer a package of many ebooks related to the same topic and give them as an incentive for signing up on their lists. How about getting the resale rights of the ebook? Many authors do not mind doing this. This will enable you to rebrand the book with your own opt in form and offer it. You are happy, and so is the author. You get your lists; and the author is appreciated for his or her work.
4. The trick with different methods is to get both the email id of the visitor as well as keep them happy by offering them something.

Chapter 8

Other List Building Tips

Lists are the frameworks of the online marketers business. To that end, we have had a detailed look at different successful methods. Apart from these structured methods, there are many things you can do on an ongoing basis to collect addresses whenever you can. You must take full advantage of your existing resources. Each time you interact with a customer is a chance to build your list. Here is a quick checklist for your immediate reference:

- Every web form you have must have an email list opt-in box, be it for registration, placing an order or requests for information.
- Whenever you circulate physical paper forms or send out direct mail, request your customers to fill in their email addresses. When you have an event or road show, urge your visitors to write in the 'Visitors' book' giving you their email and contact information.
- Every paper that leaves your office must have an email request. This could be regular correspondence, your answer to customer queries, your bills and other customer correspondence. You might find collating email addresses manually quite tedious, but the more channels you use the better are your chances to increase your list.
- Use your URL. Put it on all your official stationery like your letterhead, leaflets, newsletters, magazines and advertisements. This will serve as a readily available reference for people to visit your website. Your visitors must be able to opt in for email communication with you from anywhere on your homepage.
- Be careful about using agencies that match postal addresses to various databases and come up with email addresses. You can never be sure of the success rate you will have. And its tough to find an agency that will charge you by how many emails are valid rather than file size. If you really have to try this method, you must be prepared for the possibility of

unpredictable results. Some email ids may be wrong. The ones that are right may not be interested. Since you have not asked their permission to send them email in the first place, they may treat you like Spam!

- You can use your existing contact list and build on it. Not only will it be a verified list but also an effective strategy. Get your existing contacts to forward emails or recommend them to their friends and family. This is called viral marketing. Since these people receive it from a known source, there is no danger of spam. Make a nice relevant message that can be passed on. Make it easy to be sent on. When these people see the forwarded mail, they will opt in as well. Every communication you send must therefore include a 'forward' link option.
- On all your web pages, put a tell-a-friend option.
- Too much is too bad. Don't bombard your subscribers with one mail after another. At best, they will simply block you. Decide on a frequency based on the content of your message. It is a good idea to let your users know what they are signing up for before they opt in. Once you have them on your list, get feedback about what they think is the correct number of emails and they will be happy to tell you. Can you guess what will happen if you don't do this? You will receive an opt-out or an unsubscribe request.
- An exciting way to build your list is post events on your web page that are of common interest to the traffic passing through your site. In the events page, invite the participants to get others to sign up and also receive email communication.
- Many businesses keep their prospects and customers updated on industry news by emailing them. You can do it too, and request the recipient to send it on to their associates who can sign up to receive it from you directly. And you keep building your list.
- Think about this: many people have email ids from their universities or professional memberships forever. But these people prefer to have multiple email ids, one for each of their interest so that they can be organized. You can use this to your advantage by offering these people an email address with your business' brand. This will help you spread the

word about you; as well as you can be sure that you have an active email address in your list.

- For your visitor to stay on your list, you have to provide value and a valid reason for them to want to be there. Use your autoresponder to keep your message alive in your prospect's mind. Wont cost much – will work.

As you keep experimenting, experience will show you more ways to success.

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Chapter 9

Importance Of Spam And How To Avoid Being A Spammer

Spam is a terrible thing. We are all victims of spammers from time to time. Some unauthorized person gets hold of our email ids and we end up getting unsolicited mail. Lets look at how spam happens.

How Spam Happens

- It is normal practice to maintain a list of your existing customers' email ids. Most business have to do this so that they can be in touch with them to keep them updated. But what happens at times is, they unethically rent out these lists to outside parties. These people send out unsolicited mail to the list. On the part of the business, they betray the trust of their contacts by disclosing their contact information without their permission.

- Spammers are experts at guessing and generating random email ids. It's not very difficult to do so. Take email ids like hotmail and yahoo – many of these emails can be guessed easily. If domain names are known, those emails are also easy to guess. Once they come up with a list, they get going on spamming them.

- A sinister way of collecting email ids is web spiders that behave like search engines which save page information. But the spammer's web spiders just save any email id they encounter. With all of us putting contact email ids on our web pages, can you imagine the number of email ids they will get hold of?

- At some point or other we have participated in chat rooms using screen names. Most people use a screen name that is the first part of their

email id. When spammers hang around these chat rooms for a while, all they have to do is grab these screen names, add the ISP and there you are! An active list of email ids! As easy as it can get.

- Another irritating method that spammers use is to keep a list of email ids that they have come across. They take someone's list and spam him or her, under the false illusion that if it is their friend's lists, its okay to email them. It never occurs to them that unless the email id's owner specifically permits them, they cannot send them any email.

Fighting Spam

- Thankfully, most email clients now use filters that let you block email ids from which you don't want to receive email. So every time you receive spam, you can simply block the sender.

- It's a good idea to have multiple email ids for different purposes. This minimizes spam. Use one id for personal uses, another for signing up with online businesses and receiving mail from them and so on. Don't use your personal email on the web. Especially for chat rooms, have an email you don't use for anything else.

- Alter your screen name and protect your email id. More than anything, before you give out your email id, check whether the business has a strong antispam policy in place. If you've noticed almost everyone who asks for an email id makes it a point to mention that they will never rent, sell or give away your email id to third parties. They also specify exactly what they are using your email for.

The above points tell us, as online marketers, what not to do when it comes to spamming. Okay – you have seen the customer's aspect regarding spam. Now lets make sure you don't spam!

Don't Be A Spammer

Sometimes by oversight, online marketers tend to spam their lists. A few complaints and he checks himself. But what happens if your ISP brands you a spammer? They act first and then investigate. They present you with a hefty penalty and ruin your reputation.

How Can You Avoid Spamming Your Lists?

First, understand what spam is. Simply put, when someone does not ask to receive communication from you, you simply must not email him or her. If you go ahead and email them anyway, that means you are spamming them.

Make the effort to build your own opt in and double opt in lists. Even if it is time consuming, it is safer in the long run. Don't buy them from a spammer, however cheap or tempting.

When you choose your partners for joint ventures, etc., make sure that you work only with those who have a firm stand on anti-spam.

Even if there is one spam complaint from one of your recipients, it can close your entire business and cost you heavily. Why waste all the hard work and effort you have put in by sending a message to someone who didn't ask for it?

Take care to see that your email messages conform to the CAN-SPAM law. Constantly update your lists. You must maintain a record of all your subscribers. Keep strict track of those who unsubscribe from your list for whatever reason. Use your autoresponder to keep track of when the visitor signs in along with their IP address.

Avoid Opt-In List Providers

Another segment to avoid is opt-in list providers. They sell you lists of relevant emails collected for you from others. You can't be too sure about the genuineness of these lists, as there are different types of providers of varying quality. What you can do to minimize the risk is hire someone who will build an exclusive list for you, compulsorily having double opt-ins. The last thing you want is to be stuck with a list belonging to someone and be accused of spamming.

There are times when you cannot avoid using a subscriber service. What you definitely can do though is to make sure their practices are ethical.
These subscriber services put an ad for various opt in offers. The visitor has the choice of selecting the ones they would like to sign up for. After that, they directly sign up on your list. See the anti spam policy of these services.

Don't even look at free for all sites. Nothing comes free in life.

Provide Quality Content

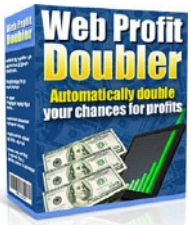
Make sure you write informative and good quality content when you message your contacts. There are certain words classified as spam filter triggers that can activate your customers' spam filters and block you. You will never be able to reach them after that. So be aware of what these words are and compose your message accordingly.

Include an anti spam clause in your agreement if you happen to run an affiliate program.

Don't say, "this is not spam" in your messages. Replace it with something like "this message is being sent to you because you because you, or someone using your contact information, subscribed." Also add that your subscribers have the option of opting out of your list in every message that you sent.

Don't ever use email addresses from online groups or communities without their permission. Forums as we know are very powerful and the kind of negative publicity you will get from them will ban you from half the sites across the world.

And finally do not plug your promotional material to newsgroups and mailing lists, unless they give you their express permission. You will recall all that you read in the 'Forums' section in Chapter 4 of this book. It is hard work to build your lists. Do it the legitimate way. Follow the rules and be successful!



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Chapter 10

Keeping A Clean List

We have a good head start on how to build lists. We know the risks of spamming – and we know how to avoid it. We will now consider a crucial aspect of list building – keeping a clean list. What do we mean by clean lists? Just that we don't retain inactive email ids and weed out the ones that are not likely to yield the result we expect. Only keep those email ids that are active, prospective and likely to contribute in a positive way to your business. Your email provider can give you the tools necessary to keep a clean list of email addresses, by helping you remove the emails that are invalid. Do not forget to make sure that each and every email you send out has a link that lets your recipient update their information and contact details through your Web site.

Your List Is Your Bottom Line, Respect It

You just cannot continue to keep the email id of someone who is not interested in receiving your messages just to maintain the size of your list. No matter how attractive the idea is, do not try to hold on to email ids unless they are responsive and happy to receive the information you send them. If you do not respect their wishes and email them even if they do not want it, they will just report you as spam.

Coordinating Within Your Organization To Keep Updated Lists

Some organizations have several divisions handling different aspects of the business. It is possible that one division has an email list that has a different set of addresses compared to another division. Now imagine sitting with them to compare and share. Both divisions have legitimately valid and verified lists! What a valuable resource! Practically a goldmine. But wait. It is not nearly as simple as that. You have to ensure that there is perfect coordination while using similar email lists within the same organization.

Different divisions send emails about various subjects. If you are sending emails to one set of contacts on your list, another division might be mailing similar content to the same set. You cannot afford to send too many emails to one contact from the same organization and increase your opt out rate.

One more aspect to this is that the lists within an organization must make sure that the email ids of the people who have unsubscribed are updated in all these lists. This is necessary particularly if you have multiple email systems. Just imagine, one division continues to email a list that has actually opted out from the list. In such a case there is the risk of being reported as spam with serious consequences.

A coordinated strategy throughout the organization can take care of this.

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Chapter 11

Conclusion

For any online business to grow, there must be an optin list. Building this list is an ongoing process if the business is to survive. More than anything else, marketing and emailing a list that has consented to receive your information is important. It is the only way that can build customer loyalty and build your bottom line. If you expect your customers to recommend you to others, you must follow ethical methods of building your lists.

Online marketing is such a continually evolving business that you have to constantly keep in touch with how your competitors are doing and what methods they are using to succeed in this line. You have to keep on trying new things, innovate and test whether your efforts are bringing in the desired results. Some people are content with trying proven methods that have worked for years for others, while some prefer to take the chance to try new methods. Once in a while, there is a revolutionary system that is experimented with and found extremely effective for those prepared to grab the opportunity.

Good luck with your list building!

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