

10 Steps to Build Your EMAIL LIST THE RIGHT WAY



One of the most challenging aspects of email marketing is growing a quality mailing list. There are two basic characteristics of a mailing list: size and quality – Traits that don't happen over night.

Some may be tempted to speed up the process of creating a hefty mailing list by renting or buying lists. This approach is problematic due to the expense involved, the liability (not all purchased lists are legitimate) and a lack of specificity. Also, most email service providers won't allow purchased lists to be mailed to through their systems. With that, here, are 10 ways you can build your own organic, robust, opted-in list of people who want to hear from you.

1 Plan Thoroughly

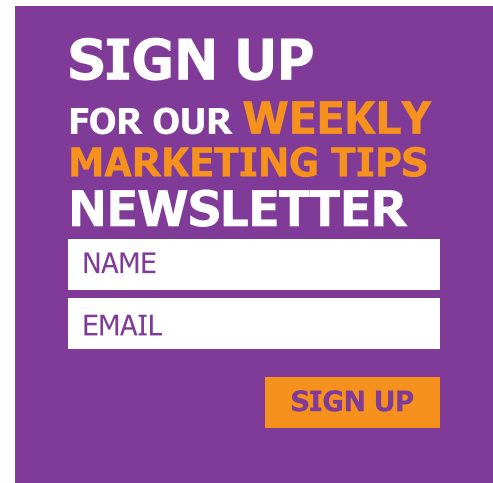
Many list building tactics flop due to a lack of planning and strategy. When considering how to grow your list, it's important to identify your target audience and its interests as specifically as possible. This will allow you to cater to your list members' needs, which will improve engagement and limit turnover in existing members.

IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE



2 Manage Expectations

Tell subscribers what you'll mail them (promotions, a newsletter, etc.), how often you'll mail, and when. Make it clear what subscribers will gain by being on your mailing list and you'll get a lot more people to sign up.



SIGN UP
FOR OUR **WEEKLY MARKETING TIPS** NEWSLETTER

NAME

EMAIL

SIGN UP

3 Provide Value

Focus on content, specifically providing something of value to your readers. If you want to keep readers around, provide them with interesting information, tips, discounts, special offers and/or giveaways. Include an opt-in form on your website with an explanation of the value readers will receive as a way to encourage signups.



4 Keep it Simple

Make it easy for prospects to find and sign up for your email – Put your sign-up form in a prominent place (or places) on your website, social networks, blog, etc. Reference your emails or newsletter in other forms of communication.

Use the **K.I.S.S.** method

**Keep
It
Super
Simple**

5 Don't Ask for Too Much Information

Don't scare away prospects with lots of prying questions. Collect only the information you need for the list sign-up and leave it at that until you've developed a relationship with your list members. Requesting sensitive information such as age or a phone number on your opt-in form can deter people from signing up.

**SIGN UP
FOR OUR DAILY
TIPS EMAIL**

FIRST NAME

LAST NAME

EMAIL

SIGN UP

**SIGN UP
FOR OUR WEEKLY
NEWSLETTER**

FIRST NAME

EMAIL ADDRESS

SIGN UP

**SIGN UP
FOR OUR
WHAT'S NEW
WEEKLY EMAIL**

EMAIL ADDRESS

SIGN UP

6 Use Opt-in, Not Opt-out

There are two common ways to gather email addresses for a list: opt-out or opt-in email acquisition.

In opt-out formats, an email asks recipients to unsubscribe or reply if they don't want to receive future mailings from a business. If they fail to do so, the mailings continue, a practice many people view as coercive.

OPT-IN



OPT-OUT



In opt-in scenarios, a company sends a message asking the recipient to “opt-in” or reply only if they wish to remain on the list. VerticalResponse is opposed to spam and unwarranted mailings, so only opt-in lists are allowed. We provide free opt-in forms in each account that can be placed on your website, social networks and/or blog that can be used to collect email addresses. It's a selective process that results in a more engaged, more responsive list membership in the long run – and reflects well on your company's business practices.

7 Guarantee Privacy

Share your commitment to privacy, which will help establish a level of trust and result in more sign ups.



8 Micromanage

Monitor your list growth at least once a week, if not more often. Some list managers run activity reports on a daily basis to track performance and establish benchmarks.



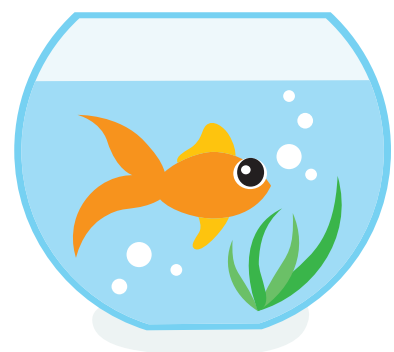
9 Leverage the Web

Once you've highlighted your email or newsletter in your corner of the web, think of other places on the Internet where you can advertise your business. Identify websites, social media sites, search engines, newsletters, blogs and other online spaces where you can promote your mailings.



10 Don't Forget the Real World

Because of its highly viral nature, the Internet is an ideal place to advertise your emails, but that doesn't mean you should forgo real world promotion. Traditional ideas like placing a fishbowl on the counter in your brick and mortar (if you have one) to collect business cards/contact information still works, as does mailing postcards.



Building an email list is like growing a plant, it requires time and care, but the results are priceless. If you employ these techniques, you'll be reaping the benefits of an engaged list for years.