**Email Marketing:**

* Email marketing is the use of email to promote a company's products and services or to connect with the customers.
* When it's done well, email marketing is an effective sales driver.
* When it's done wrong, email marketing can come across as spam that annoys customers.

**Why Email Marketing is Important:**

Email is a paperless way for you to keep recorded accounts of the correspondence between you and your business contacts. Email conversations and the attachments that accompany them take up less space in your email account than they would in paper form in your office filing cabinets.

**What is email marketing, and where did it begin?**

The first email, sent by Ray Tomlinson in [1971](http://www.computinghistory.org.uk/det/6116/First-e-mail-sent-by-Ray-Tomlinson/) or [1978](https://www.smartinsights.com/email-marketing/email-communications-strategy/email-marketing-evolution/) depending on your source, marked the beginning of the modern communication era. The message was nothing special, a series of numbers and letters that looked more like a password than a message, but its significance was profound.

The email was sent from one computer to another, traveling through a network of machines not unlike the internet we know today. Tomlinson also introduced the "@" symbol in email addresses to the world.

Gary Thuerk, a Marketing Manager at Digital Equipment Corp, sent the first commercial email years later, where the message reached a list of email addresses. And voila, [email marketing](https://mailchimp.com/marketing-glossary/email-marketing/) was born. There were only a few hundred people on the list, but that was enough for Thuerk to claim the mantle, "Father of [Spam](https://mailchimp.com/marketing-glossary/#spam)."

Today, we're inundated with [email marketing campaigns](https://mailchimp.com/features/email/), and yes, some of it still feels spammy, but there's no denying the impact a well-crafted message can have on your customers—not to mention [CRM](https://mailchimp.com/crm/what-is-crm/) and lead nurturing.

Email marketing helps you connect with your [audience](https://mailchimp.com/resources/grow-your-email-marketing-audience/) to promote your [brand](https://mailchimp.com/resources/the-basics-of-branding/) and increase sales. You can do a lot of things with emails, like sell products, share some news, improve your [cart abandonment rate](https://mailchimp.com/features/abandoned-cart/) or tell a story.

With Mailchimp’s campaign builder, it’s easy to find the right [email templates](https://mailchimp.com/features/email-templates/) for any message—whether you’re welcoming new subscribers, notifying customers of a sale, or wishing someone a happy birthday.

## Does email marketing work?

When you want to communicate something about your brand or sell your stuff, email marketing is one of the most cost-effective ways to do so.

In fact, [a 2015 study by the DMA found that for every $1 spent](https://dma.org.uk/uploads/ckeditor/National-client-email-2015.pdf), email has an average $38 [return on investment (ROI)](https://mailchimp.com/marketing-glossary/roi/). When shoppers are ready to buy something, they often look for emails from their favorite stores.

Still, people receive more and more email all the time, and it can be challenging to stand out in full inboxes. That’s why Mailchimp gives you the tools you need to shine (plus, we’ve got a lot of [tried](https://mailchimp.com/resources/avoid-spam-filters/) and true tips on [sending outstanding emails](https://mailchimp.com/resources/email-marketing-field-guide/)) and develop effective email marketing campaigns. Check out our [email marketing statistics](https://mailchimp.com/resources/email-marketing-benchmarks/) by industry for more on why email marketing works.

## How do I get an email list?

You’ll see the highest [ROI](https://mailchimp.com/marketing-glossary/roi/) when you build and maintain an engaged subscriber list, made up of people who want to receive your messages (and who opted in on purpose). Although building a clean list can take more work at the outset of your email marketing strategy, Mailchimp lists have built-in tools to help you along the way.

There are lots of ways to find people who’ll look forward to getting your emails, but we’ve rounded up a few that work best.

To [build an email list](https://mailchimp.com/resources/how-to-build-your-email-list/):

* Create a signup form on your [website](https://mailchimp.com/features/website-builder/). When people come to your website for the first time and like what they see, they’ll want a way to stay in-the-know about your brand. Create a [form for newsletter signups](https://mailchimp.com/features/custom-forms/) and install a pop-up to collect customer data from your visitors.
* Use a good old-fashioned signup sheet. Whether it’s at your brick and mortar store, or an event that you’re hosting or attending, when you’re surrounded by people who are into what you do, provide a place for them to sign up and learn more.
* Drive signups through [social media](https://mailchimp.com/marketing-glossary/social-media-marketing/). If you don’t have a substantial email list (or you’d just like to see it grow), but you’ve got an engaged social media following, tap into that resource. Share your signup form on your social channels.

To add more subscribers to an existing list:

* Host a contest or offer a discount. We’re big fans of giving people an incentive to sign up for your email list—and we know that contests work. Try offering a prize for some lucky new subscriber or a discount code for a first purchase.
* Make your emails easy to share.When you create beautiful, compelling emails, with a lot of valuable information people will want to share them. Mailchimp gives you features (like share buttons and social media post builders) that let the word about your emails spread quickly.
* Build a [landing page](https://mailchimp.com/features/landing-pages/) through Mailchimp. Landing pages offer one more way to grow your email list. Using your best imagery and content, landing pages give people a clear call to action and drive email signups way, way up.