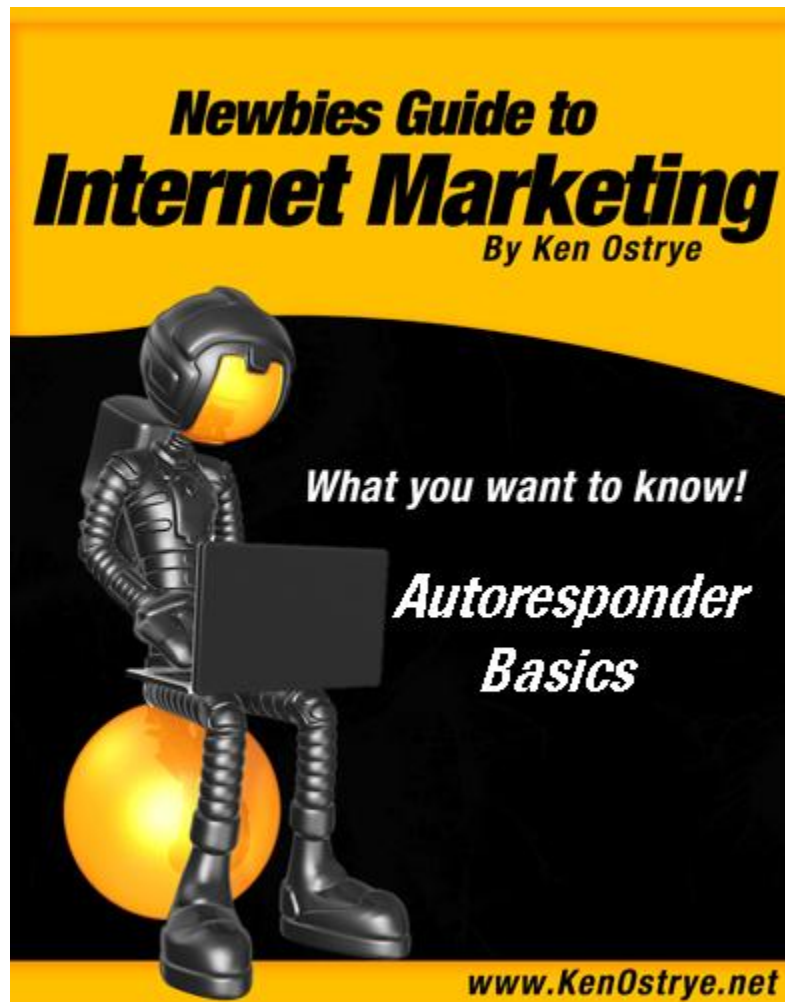


Newbie Training Center Guide To Autoresponder Basics



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Autoresponder Basics

Let me tell you a brief story...

When I first started my online business, I knew I had a lot to learn. One of the first things I realized was there had to be a better way to communicate with my prospects and customers. And there had to be a better way to keep track of them, other than making a special group in my email addresses.

I learned that I had to use an autoresponder to stop all the chaos and eliminate all the notes I had stuck all over to remind me to contact someone on a certain date. And I had to have a list. They go together.

OK, I thought, what are they? As I continued to read bits and pieces here and there, I began getting a picture of what an autoresponder does.

But I still didn't understand what they were and how they worked. I just knew they were all important.

Surely, I thought, somebody has a website that thoroughly explains these things and why every online business has to use them.

But I couldn't find one!

Take your pick of search engines. I searched everywhere. There were tons of sites to visit, but no real answers. Or there were answers for people that already knew what an autoresponder is. But nothing to explain it to me. Weeks (truly) of research only added to my confusion.

I wanted to start a newsletter for a niche I was working, and needed an email list handler. I saw an autoresponder product that claimed to be the ultimate product to handle opt-in lists, so I purchased it and paid to have it installed on the server at my web host.

But I quickly found that it was missing a critical feature for my purposes, even though it was shown to be a good list handler. A \$189 + install fee mistake!!

Surely, I thought, somebody has a website that lays out all the autoresponder products side-by-side so I could see which one has the features I need.

But I couldn't find one!

Scattered Information

I learned that information on how to use automatic responders was scattered here and there on the web, but not in any one place. I also couldn't find a single place with good automatic responder reviews and an explanation of free automatic responders versus the "pro automatic responder" types. How could I make an informed choice if I couldn't see a side-by-side autoresponder comparison?

Autoresponder Basics

And I decided that somebody needed to put together a package that:

- provides a comprehensive feature and price comparison of autoresponder products, and
- explains autoresponders from the basics to the nifty marketing techniques that make them such powerful tools.

And I decided that somebody might as well be me!

I've learned a lot since then, the slow, hard, painful and expensive way.

Now you can take advantage of my mistakes and months of hard work, to kick your autoresponder power level to maximum!

I will reveal what I found to be the best all-around autoresponder and save you the time of looking at a comparison chart until your eyes fall out from bleeding to death. But we'll get into that later. Some of you already have chosen an autoresponder and wonder what to do with it. So I'll cover the uses and more first.

Autoresponder e-mail marketing is a primary method of doing your business online.

There are 2 basic types of autoresponders with some variations of each that you would use for your business; software & service,

Autoresponder Software

Autoresponder software is available from several sources, and is divided into two main types.

- One type is installed on the web host server.

Software installed on your web host server may be complicated enough to require the services (and cost) of an installer, and may be limited to providing a single autoresponder address on that server. Server-based autoresponder software maintains the list of autoresponder addresses and needs to be backed up with other web site files. The process of sending emails to a large list is handled by the server. This is also the type of autoresponder that is provided by an Autoresponder Service.

- The second is installed on the user's computer.

PC-based autoresponder software, on the other hand, is generally easy to install, but still imposes the burden to back up the list. Sending broadcast emails to the list may strain the capabilities of the ISP (Internet Service Provider, which is how

Autoresponder Basics

you connect to the Internet), or may simply exceed the allowable limits of messages the ISP imposes.

In order for clients to access the autoresponder, especially if signing up for your service or product, that PC has to be on and connected to the Internet 24/7.

There can also be issues if an existing email address on that computer is used for the autoresponder; more on that later.

Autoresponder Services

The autoresponder function is most commonly provided by autoresponder services provided by companies hosting the function on their own servers. Access to the functions is over the Internet and has many advantages. None of the issues of installing software, being responsible for backing up the list or dealing with ISP message limitations apply when autoresponder services are employed. Autoresponder services are usually provided for a monthly charge, and may consist of one, several or an unlimited number of autoresponders. This is my choice, but read on.

Best Autoresponder?

What is the best autoresponder? There is no single answer. Your needs are different than that of another business. And what you choose today may be quickly outgrown as your business grows. Beside the choice of autoresponder features, costs vary from free to expensive.

Two things to keep in mind when deciding on the autoresponder you are going to use for your business:

1. Deliverability Rates - Will your broadcast email make it to the subscribers' inbox or their spam folder? Autoresponder services will have a much higher deliverability rate than either your own server based system, or from your PC. If it's not delivered, why bother.
2. If you outgrow the service, common with PC based and Free services, you will have to find a service that allows you to:
 - import your leads. This is uncommon, as unscrupulous marketers have imported leads from various list sources, not actual opt-in leads, that generate SPAM complaints; or they do allow the import, as most of their emails already go to SPAM folders, and
 - import all the hard work you spent creating your follow up emails, so you don't have to painstakingly recreate all those messages.

Autoresponder Basics

Recommendation

Start out with a service rather than a PC-based or self hosted autoresponder, I know that FREE or Cheap sounds really good when you are first starting out. But as your list grows you will start to use more and more server resources with every broadcast email you send out.

Eventually it will be more cost effective to use a service and when you go to import your list into the service, most will require the subscriber to re-confirm their subscription and you will loose 1/3 to 1/2 (or more) of your list. I usually look at it like I don't make enough money to buy cheap, because that usually means I'll have to buy it again.

A major reason not to use free autoresponders is the fact that most free services include an ad with every autoresponder message. Having an ad is bad enough; you may even find that your message carries an ad for your competitor's product! **Crap!** Like I need that ... Some free autoresponders limit their ad subject to the their service itself, But still ... You certainly want to appear more professional than that.

And you do not want to be doing advertising for someone else, even if it is only the autoresponder company

Why Do I Need An Autoresponder?

Now that you have an understanding of what an autoresponder is; do you have any idea why you want one? If you have followed my eCourse, you have some idea, let me expand on that thumbnail view and help those that still have no idea.

First You Need Your Own List! - Why build a customer list? ...

There are a couple of powerful reasons for keeping an updated list of your customers' names and email addresses.

Obviously the first is that prospects can be turned into customers.

But here's another important reason: It costs five to ten times more to acquire new customers than it does to sell products to your existing customers.

Think about all advertising costs involved in trying to attract new buyers. It's much easier to sell to people that already know you.

If you sell a quality product and deliver great customer service, you build customer loyalty and help prevent customers from switching to your competitors.

Autoresponder Basics

Also take advantage of "cross selling." If customer X bought Product A, make sure they know about Product B, C, etc.

If your customer doesn't purchase your other products, send an email and politely inquire. When you find out their specific objection to buying, you can then address the problem.

Perhaps you can offer the customer a volume discount; two for one deal (which sells better than 50% off), or add a gift as a bonus when they order.

Be creative in ways to overcome customer resistance.

And check through your list often.

When was the last time you were in contact with each of these customers?

You should be keeping in touch with them at least monthly, even if it's just an email asking how they are enjoying your product or service.

Ask them if they were pleased with the customer service they received or how you can serve them better.

One of the most effective ways to keep in contact with your customers is to send them a newsletter. With email, it's easy to create your own electronic newsletter or ezine (e Magazine).

But make sure your newsletter or ezine is more than just a sales pitch. People will tire of that quickly.

Instead, offer tips and creative ideas on how to use your products, include new product information, offer discounts on upgrades, or create a frequently asked questions (FAQ) column.

Your goal is to be more than just a company that sells products; your goal is to be the solution provider to your customers' problems.

If you're stumped about what content to include in your newsletter, send out an email to your customers asking what they'd like to read.

TIP: You'll get a much better response if you offer an incentive to them for a reply. Offer a free eBook or something works better than a discount on your other products (but a discount still works).

Much of your Internet marketing success will depend on building a large customer list. When you give your website visitors something free your list becomes larger much easier. Collecting the email addresses of potential

Autoresponder Basics

customers in the target market where you operate your website is the way to build a responsive list. By doing this, you are able to market to the same people repeatedly.

You are also capable of letting prospects know about new products and updates by sending them an email in the form of a newsletter and by giving them something free, the chances will increase that they will turn into a customer.

Often a visitor will not make a purchase the first time they visit a website. Because people are price conscious they like to shop around. Unless they are looking for something specific, the chances are that they are just window-shopping. If you keep in touch with these prospects on a regular basis, the possibility of turning them into a customer increases.

Newcomers to Internet businesses often make the mistake of having no way to collect the email address of a visitor to their site. The problem with this is if you do not collect their email address, you will more than likely never see them again. Building a large customer list is vital. While the number of visitors you receive at your site is important, it is futile if you are not actually collecting any information from them.

The way to collect this information is to build a landing page; this is also referred to as a “squeeze page” or “splash page”. This is a one-page web site, which is very simple to create, and it is only used to collect information such as the names and email addresses of all the visitors to your site. It is never used to promote or sell products or services and is the key to feed information to your autoresponder.

By building a large and strong responsive list, you are able to ensure the longevity of your online business. Even though you do want a large list, you also have to keep in mind quality versus quantity. A quality list means that you have the addresses of people who are pre-qualified as they are interested in the product or service that you offer; and marketing in a “hungry” market guarantees you more sales than you would achieve if you were trying to market your product where no one is interested.

Make sure that you offer them valuable free information such as tips contained in a free newsletter to build a rapport with your prospects. Building this trust means that your pre-qualified prospects will be more likely to take out their credit card and purchase something from you.

Assume you are involved as an Affiliate with Program X and they give you a nice capture page with fully written Autoresponder messages and tell you to go out and promote program X. As people subscribe on your program X page, program X sends messages to your prospects to get them to join you in the program. Some do and some don't, it's just business.

Autoresponder Basics

It's a nice concept for sure, but very flawed for you. What if those people who subscribe never join program X? What happens to them? You don't get them because you don't own the Autoresponder or messages; nor do you have any control of what happens to those prospects you spent time and money, and perhaps your reputation to get.

What happens is they become the property of program X and can be sent information later regarding anything program X wants and all your efforts are lost.

If your choice is Affiliate Marketing, you want to direct your prospects to your Capture Page (more specific info later, for now, your Web-Site) where you will provide the next level of tickler that the Affiliate Program provided you and offer them more information or a free relevant gift when they fill in your form. So they will sign up to your list and be redirected to the Affiliate Program. Now they are your customers.

Another reason for you to build your own list is; let's say in 6 months you find a great product that you feel will really sell well and help people. If you do not have your own prospect list, you are back to square one where you have to spend money to advertise the offer and hope you get some sales. When people do this, they seldom make a dime.

Now imagine you have been building your own prospect list for 6 months and you have a list of 300 subscribers and you come across the same product. Instead of looking for advertising places or working the Traffic Exchanges and spending money, with your list, a simple autoresponder broadcast message contacts them all taking you less than 5 minutes.

A percentage of those people will buy based on your recommendation and a percentage will buy because it is a good product, but either way, you make money.

As you continue building your list, you increase from 300 subscribers to 1,000 and keep going. The more people on your list, the faster it grows because you will learn over time exactly how to grow your list, where to advertise to get prospects and how to work with your prospects so they are more responsive to you.

Zig Ziglar said it best when he said: "You can get anything in life you want if you just help enough other people get what they want".

I hope you take my advice and start a list as soon as you start your business or, in 6 months you are going to be in the same position I was in before I started building my own list nowhere.

Autoresponder Basics

The most common uses of autoresponders are the confirmation of subscriptions, un-subscriptions, or automated responses to inquiries for information and eCourses.

These applications are only the beginning of the amazing possibilities that an autoresponder opens for you.

You can establish yourself as an expert in your field using regular newsletters. A stream of quality information and knowledge that comes for free is a great boost to your reputation and increases your chance of turning a visitor into a buyer.

Alerts to upcoming specials or one-time deals, help your customers realize the benefits of keeping an eye out for your mailings and lead to repeat purchases.

Why You Should Use an Autoresponder

When it comes to Internet network marketing, a lot of people get all wrapped up in the making money, business end of the concept, and forget all about the most important part: Networking.

The autoresponder is an indispensable tool making this part of your business easy to manage. You did a great job calling your leads and getting people signed up in your opportunity; or, maybe you placed ads in key places and got a terrific response and lots of sign ups.

You've got the business opportunity. You've got the downline. Now what do you do? If you only have one or two people in your downline, this isn't a huge issue. It's easy enough to stay in contact with just a few people by phone and/or email. But, what happens as your network grows, or as you develop leads that haven't signed up yet? When you have 10, 20, 50 or 100 people on your list, do you want to email each of them individually?

If you don't have an autoresponder, you need one.

It will save you time and energy, and will help you convert leads to downline on autopilot. What Do You Look For in an Autoresponder?

Multiple List Capability: Can you have multiple lists? This is important for several reasons. If you have a variety of niche sites, you need a separate mailing list for each one. You may want separate mailing lists for customers, leads and downline.

Deliverability: What is the rate of deliverability? Not all autoresponders are created equal. You need one that is dependable and will get your messages through quickly and consistently.

Autoresponder Basics

Pre-loaded Messages: How many messages can you pre-program into your auto-responder? Ideally, you should be able to pre-enter a year's worth of emails or more that will be automatically delivered based on the date someone signed up for your mail list.

Broadcast Messages: Make sure you can send out a broadcast message to your list. In fact, if you can choose to send it to any or all of your lists, that's even better. That way if something comes along and you want to notify everyone, you can type it in one time and send it to all of your different groups at the same time.

Scheduled Delivery: Look for an autoresponder that will allow you to schedule delivery of your emails. That way, if you are entering fresh content in addition to your uploaded emails (which I highly recommend!), you can write a few at a time and then schedule when they should be delivered to your active list. This feature is especially useful if you are planning to be away from your computer and don't want to drop out of contact with your list.

Personalization: Make sure your autoresponder allows you to personalize your emails. It is much nicer to get an email that refers to your customers by name, rather than one that starts out "Dear Friend".

How often should you send messages?

That depends on who your target audience is. If they are leads, I personally think you should send messages every day. Some people may think that's too often. You may even have some people unsubscribe. That's OK. The ones who identify with you will actually look forward to your daily messages. The ones who don't, you don't need on your list anyway. Sorry for being so cold, but it's all part of the sorting process.

This just barely scratches the surface of the art of using an autoresponder to build and maintain your business. Your own creativity will add many uses, as the ones mentioned are the ones I've come up with.

When and When Not to Use an Autoresponder

You've got your business, you've got some ads ready to run, and your site is ready to take orders. All that's left is to buy some advertising and get people coming to your site. But should you send people straight to your site from your ads or set up some auto responder messages and direct them to those?

Hmmm. Good question. Here are some thoughts to help you with the decision.

When **NOT** To Use an Auto Responder

Autoresponder Basics

In general, if you're selling a single product, something that's not really that complicated, only requires a limited amount of information to stimulate interest, or you are using the excitement of the moment to make the sale, do NOT use an auto responder, just direct people straight to the site.

As an example, eBooks generally, any information you need to stimulate interest can be done on a single page site. You don't want to give away too much either, and if you are setting up multiple messages in an auto responder, what are you going to talk about?

When You **SHOULD** Use an Auto Responder

A more complicated topic, products or opportunities that require a somewhat larger investment, or plans to cover multiple products or multiple benefits, require the use of an auto responder.

Auto responders give you more time to explain your business or product. Or, you may just need to keep in touch while your prospect considers a way to come up with the money for what you are offering. In these cases auto responders are excellent. You simply provide more information or feature different benefits in each message and then direct prospects to your site to learn more or to make a purchase.

And my prime scenario is one that we all have experience doing. I'm out there searching for something, find several sites of interest and decide to do some research. One of the sites holds my interest but I haven't made my decision yet, so I bookmark it with the thought that I'll come back to it. Do I? Do you?

I suggest putting something relevant to what is being sold as a free gift in exchange for their sign up on the sales page.

As an example, I had a student that put together a web site for Bonsai trees. After about a month, he was getting just over 400 visitors a month, but no sales. He asked me what to do.

I visited his web site and looked it over. He had done a real fine job with the site. So I suggested he give away an eBook about the care and maintenance of Bonsai trees in exchange for the person's sign up. That way he could follow up with more information and have a greater chance of making the sale.

He didn't know where to get an eBook like that and we made a deal. He went ahead and set up his autoresponder messages and got the form ready for the web site. I wrote the eBook with the understanding that if it was a success, he would pay for the eBook.

Autoresponder Basics

The first day he had 18 sign-ups. That's 18 potential customers. After a month he had half of his visitors as customers. Do the math!

Over 1,200 visitors in 3 months ... no sales ...

Add follow up ... one month; over 200 sales ...

He paid for the eBook! And he sent me a glowing testimonial!

Exceptions

No rules are perfect, so we should all learn to put what we read into perspective when considering our own businesses. So, even if your product is expensive or complicated to understand, if that's better 'shown' at a web site than 'told' in an email, send people directly to your site.

As well, you can use email information to keep referring people back to your site for just one simple product.

Ways To Complement A Site With an Auto Responder

I've had quite a few sign-ups on an auto responder I placed on my site. I simply ask, "In a hurry? Want more information by email?" and provide a link. That way, even though everything is right there on my site, if they are intrigued but don't want to spend much time right then, there is a way they can get more information later, and I still get to keep in contact with them. This one also fits the 'Bookmark' scenerio.

Also, you can offer different information courses through autoresponders and put them on your site. This way, even if people don't buy from their initial visit, you'll get repeat contact and get multiple chances to convince them to return.

Auto responders are extremely useful. There's no replacing them. It's just a matter of considering your product or opportunity, and your options when deciding how best to use them.

All About Email Auto Responders

Throughout the Internet, autoresponders are a top promotional tool.

All types of email auto-responders are basically the same, as they will without human intervention, send an email out when predetermined by you.

Although auto-responders are ideal for promotional reasons, the potential for abuse is great. Autoresponders can replace repetitive daily tasks, as they will

Autoresponder Basics

basically do all of the work for you. Conversely, they can also be quite dreadful on those who happen to come in contact with them.

When you suggest your website to search engines, directories, or classifieds, you should never give your auto email responder address. Most of these website types use email auto-responders themselves when they respond with their emails. If their automatic email responder happens to send an email message out to your auto-responder, they will continue answering – which can be very aggravating.

When you opt to be a member to an e-mail or ezine newsletter you should always use your authorized e-mail address and never use the address for your email auto-responder. If you use your email responder, there's a good chance you'll have your subscription removed. It can be very irritating if a group sends out emails, only to find that your email auto-responder keeps sending return emails. For that very reason, you should never use your email list responder address to contribute to anything.

Often times, with email groups or magazines, it can be very exhausting to track down someone who is using an email responder. Usually, those who use an automatic email responder don't have the same reply-to or from address as they did when they signed up. If this is the case it can take quite a lot of time and effort to pinpoint the e-mail address.

If you are mindful of your auto-responder and don't use it to badger others or sign up for e-mail subscriptions, it should treat you well. An auto email responder can be out of this world for your business, saving you a lot of hassle. Auto responders are easy to set up and easy to use, which is brilliant news for anyone who isn't technical with the Internet. With low costs and their user-friendliness email auto responders can make your Internet business less-complicated than ever before.

Just as a brick-and-mortar business loves to build a happy clientele that keeps coming back to buy again and again, so online business want to build relationships with visitors as well as customers so they will keep coming back. Physical stores may ask their customers to provide their name for a store mailing list, which alerts them to special sales, etc. The online mailing list is even more important than the physical counterpart, because there isn't an online equivalent to driving down the street and noticing a "Sale" sign in the window of your favorite store.

For an online business to compete and survive, it is virtually necessary for the owner to build an email list of people who have willingly given their names, with the expectation that they will be advised about things they are interested in. Building this list can be done several ways, but an autoresponder or email list program with autoresponder functions is usually the tool of choice. You need to

Autoresponder Basics

be careful, of course, in selecting the autoresponder for this purpose. Some are much better suited to do it than others.

My recommendation is ... listed at the end of this eBook.

Marketers all over the world use follow up autoresponders to increase sales. But, many struggle to write a compelling message series. Don't let that keep you from your share of the profits! Follow these instructions; you'll soon be following up with finesse.

(Examples in this article use the fictional product "Green Garden Lawn Fertilizer". Any similarity to actual products is unintended and coincidental.)

- Big Benefits
- Establish a Need
- Tool Talk
- The Wildcard
- Questions? Comments?
- Testimonials
- Last Chance
- Follow Up With Finesse

Message 1 - Big Benefits:

Many of the sales resulting from your follow up series will come after the very first message. Keep this message short. Just take 50 to 500 or so words to flesh out a handful of your biggest benefits. For example, part of the Green Garden Lawn Fertilizer Company's first message might read:

"A Lush Lawn: Green Garden Fertilizer will give you a lush lawn in just 2 weeks! Density will increase up to 50%...

"No More Brown: Watch your lawn become 3-5 shades greener with regular treatments"

Message 2 - Establish a Need:

Use your second message to explain why your product is necessary. First, lay out the situation leading to a need for your product. Then, show that your product will meet that need. For instance:

Autoresponder Basics

"Lawns across the country are looking dull. Homeowners water and mow to no avail. But, not those who use Green Garden Fertilizer! They've created lush, beautiful lawns"

Message 3 - Tool Talk:

In your third message, show the lead how he will go about actually using your product. Detail any tools or supporting material that you offer. In the case of our fictional Green Garden Fertilizer, part of this message might read:

"This treatment is a cinch: Simply attach the included diffuser to the end of your garden hose, creating a sprinkler. Run the sprinkler for 15 minutes each week. You will see an improvement after just one treatment!"

Message 4 - The Wildcard:

Customize message 4 for your unique product. Try one of these ideas:

- Have a customer case study? This is a great place for it.
- Selling complimentary products? Detail one of them here.
- Selling a real-world product? Explain shipping / tracking now.
- Have a bricks and mortar office? Invite the prospect to visit. Include directions.
- Are you personally a visible part of your brand? Include your bio here.

Message 5 - Questions? Comments?:

Your lead may be waiting to purchase until you explain one particular thing. By asking outright, you can speed the sales cycle to a close.

Start the fifth message by asking your prospect if he has any questions. Give him several ways to reach you, and include your hours of operation and time zone.

Take the rest of the fifth message to answer some of the questions your prospects ask most often. For instance:

"Are you excited about the lush lawn you'll have with Green Garden Fertilizer? I hope so! Let me go over some questions our customers have asked in the past"

Message 6 - Testimonials:

With your sixth message, show off your satisfied customers. Choose several of your best testimonials, and list them here. Look for quotes from customers who are obviously excited about your product, but that still sound believable. For instance, choose:

Autoresponder Basics

"I'm thrilled with my Green Garden Fertilizer! Just two weeks, and my lawn looks better than it has in years."

Instead of:

"Green Garden Fertilizer is miraculous! It turned my back lot into a rolling meadow in days - and that lot is PAVED!"

(The testimonials in this article are made up examples. All of *your* testimonials, however, must be real. Fabricating testimonials is illegal.)

Message 7 - Last Chance:

Your final message serves as one last reminder of your product. Briefly reiterate its most impressive features. Then, throw in a few testimonials or a very short case study. Round out this message with your contact information. Our example product's final message might read:

"Over the past several weeks, you've heard about how Green Garden Fertilizer can turn your lawn around. Customer Dusty Dan tried it, and he says, 'My lawn has never looked better...'"

Follow Up With Finesse

Automation means that good follow up doesn't have to be time consuming. Now, creating a message series is just easy!

How to Write A Follow Up Message

Smart marketers know that follow up autoresponders drive sales. But, many *don't* know how to write the e-mail messages they need in order to use these tools. Don't let that keep you from increased profits! Write masterful messages with these simple steps:

- **Pull the Reader in**
- **Introduce the Product**
- **Explain the Product's Significance**
- **Tell the Reader to Make a Purchase**

(Examples in this article use the fictional product "Green Garden Lawn Fertilizer". Any similarity to actual products is unintended and coincidental.)

Pull the Reader in

First, convince your audience that your text is worth reading. Make your first sentence or two very interesting: Make a bold statement, say something seemingly ridiculous, or

Autoresponder Basics

appeal to your prospect's emotional side. Later, tie this grabber in with the rest of your copy. For instance:

"Want to make your neighbors jealous? How about doing it with a lush, green lawn in just 2 weeks?"

Introduce the Product

What is the product you're advertising? What does it do? Directly after your grabber, give a compact explanation of your product. Keep this explanation short, while still being very clear. For example:

"Green Garden Lawn Fertilizer is taking the landscaping industry by storm. What else can give you the lawn of your dreams in just 15 minutes a day?"

Explain the Product's Significance

What will it do for me? This is the time for details - make this section long and rich. Suggest a variety of product uses, and give examples. Make the most of this opportunity to directly target your unique audience! Clearly explain how your readers will benefit from your product.

Tell the Reader to Make a Purchase

You've come so far - you've laid out exactly what the product is and how it will help your unique audience. Now, seal the deal - tell your readers to purchase the product!

This step may sound strange, but it's necessary. Often, people hear about a product and are genuinely interested, but fail to actually make a purchase. A clear call to a simple action cuts down on buyer ambivalence. Don't be pushy - just change your verb tenses to the imperative. Instead of:

"If you think that you fit this profile, you might want to think about buying Green Garden Lawn Fertilizer."

Say:

"Click here to order Green Garden Lawn Fertilizer today."

An Eye for Continuity

More and more opt-in e-mail is being sent around the Internet. Remind your prospect that he requested your messages by keeping an eye on continuity.

Start and end each message in a similar way. At the top, let your prospect know who you are, why he is getting e-mail from you, and where he is in the follow up sequence. This can be as simple as saying:

"Last week, you requested more information about Green Garden Fertilizer..."

Autoresponder Basics

Then, end each message with your own contact information. Use your autoresponder's personalization features to list details about your lead. Also, include a way for the lead to unsubscribe. For example:

"This message was sent to Dusty Dan at dustydan@needsanewlawn.com. On April 5th, Dusty Dan requested information about Green Garden Fertilizer. Questions? Call us at 000-000-0000. Or, to unsubscribe, click here."

Create With Confidence

Don't sweat over follow up messages - your prospects are waiting for you! Print and follow the guidelines in this eBook, and follow up with confidence.

Growing Customer Relationships With Autoresponders

How do you build and maintain a good relationship with your customers?

Practice relationship basics - remember that relationships depend on communication, and that communication is a two way street. And don't imagine that a constant bombardment of ads is constructive to a relationship. It only says to that customer that all that matters to you is that he buys.

You may be saying, "My customers are automatically put on my ezine mailing list so they hear from me regularly. I don't have time to do more than that." My answer is, the ezine is a great start. Now use my favorite tool - the autoresponder - to its full, time saving advantage to personalize the relationship. I have put together some steps that I think will build these relationships more quickly than any other

- **Personalize your communications**
- **Generate feedback**
- **Exceed expectations**

1. Personalize your communications

Make sure you use the personalization feature in your autoresponder to full advantage. You know, [firstname], how you like to see and hear your own name. Whether you realized it or not, it's your favorite word! But don't overdo it. Just as you don't begin every sentence in a verbal conversation with the other person's name, use the name sparingly in your emails. Make it flow naturally by placing it in sentences that are more personal in nature (note the sentence above where I used [firstname], for example).

2. Generate feedback

Look for ways to generate feedback from your subscribers. As you noted in "An

Autoresponder Basics

Eye for Continuity” above, I have stated your personal biographical information soliciting your feedback.

Anytime you can get your subscribers to share something important to them, they have come up another rung on the relationship ladder. You need to share yourself to encourage feedback. Communicate simply as you would if you were talking to a friend - you will find that your subscribers will come to consider you their friend!

Don't be afraid to take a stand on issues, again, just as you would with a friend. It is difficult for your subscribers to develop a friendship if no personality emerges from your emails. If you are by nature a more private person (as I am), you may need to work at being more open in your communications.

Have a friend or spouse read some of your emails to give you honest feedback as to how your personality is communicated. Obviously the latitude you have in expressing yourself is enormous.

If you have a let-it-all-hang-out personality, then go right ahead. It communicates who you are. The personality you project won't be the favorite of all your readers anyway, but that's not the point.

Use a spell checker and have someone else proof your emails if grammar and sentence construction give you problems. You have a message to communicate to your subscribers - bad grammar or incomplete sentences obscure that message. Even worse, it says that you didn't consider the message (and its recipient) important enough to get it right. Don't expect significant feedback if you don't respect your subscribers enough to pay attention to details.

Autoresponders also allow you to easily get feedback on site issues such as HTML/plain text, or whether to publish on Tuesday or Saturday. Simply set up separate autoresponder addresses for each reply, or one address with different subject lines.

3. Exceed expectations

Assuming you are already doing the basics such as delivering a good product that does all it claims, and promptly following up on support issues, nothing builds good relationships and customer loyalty better than doing little things that are pleasant surprises.

For example, your customers deserve first-rate support and you should by all means deliver it. But why not anticipate as many of their questions and potential problems as possible by including a FAQ/support email in your autoresponder instant message that immediately follows up your sale? It will not only save you tons of support time and effort, it will deliver the message that you want your customers to have answers at hand before there are questions.

Autoresponder Basics

Use another of your follow up messages to offer your customer another product that is a natural follow-up to the one you just sold him. It is not only smart marketing; it says you know what he is likely to need and are not just pitching whatever else you have to sell.

Another message could ask for a testimonial in exchange for some item of value. This tells your customer you value his feedback and are willing to pay for it.

Here's the biggest relationship-builder. Before you put your product on the market, think in advance what other less costly but closely related products your customer is sure to find useful. Offer these products as bonuses through your autoresponder follow-up series. By doing so, you will immediately set yourself apart from 95% of your competitors. Nothing I know of matches the pleasant surprise of receiving unannounced bonuses that are immediately useful and valuable. It speaks volumes about your thoughtfulness and the value you place on your customer and his needs. Even if you have to pay to get these follow-on bonuses, it will be more than worth it in the long term. One is great; if you can manage it two or three would be even better. Ideally you could continue to provide articles or tips on a continuing basis that relate to that customer and his needs.

Autoresponders make it simple!

This is just a sampling of the kinds of relationship-building jobs you can set up your autoresponder to do. Does this kind of approach call for considerable planning before the sale? You bet!

While your average customer may not appreciate the fact that you spent the extra time to set up the post-sale autoresponder sequence, he will get the overall message that you care about him as a customer and have gone out of your way to see that his needs are met.

As you build a relationship of trust and respect by applying methods such as these, that position you hold in your customer's subconscious relative to your competitors will move higher and higher. While this is an invisible, intangible thing, it will translate into future sales and a growing customer base. Combined with a continuing flow of good products, this is a recipe for online success.

It's time to crank up the autoresponder and start putting in the ingredients!

This is a sample Lead Capture Page that you should download, save and review as it shows the needed components and how to use them. [Link to Lead Capture Page Sample](#), it's another free aid.

As it is time to consider getting an autoresponder of your own to start getting set up, here is a [Link to the Autoresponder I use](#). There is a fee for using this autoresponder, but there is also a free 30 day trial. You will not need a credit card

Autoresponder Basics

to try it. The site also includes every tool you will need for your Internet business, all at the price of what others charge for just the autoresponder.

There are training videos showing how to set it up and I am available in the Roadkill Marketing Cafroom, Monday thru Friday from 4:00 to 5:00 P.M. Eastern US time.

And if you're ready to get started right now, [Check This Out](#) ...

And if you're still not sure, [Check This Out](#) ...

More to come ...

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