**Taken from**

# How to make money online: Do It Yourself E-Commerce

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ALWAYS keep a reliable backup of your business.
ESPECIALLY when hosting for yourself.

For Valerie...

# How to make money online.

**Why I wrote this book**

This guide was inspired by the worsening treatment and wages of employees all around the globe. I am a regular guy. I was working in a supermarket and I'd simply had enough of being pushed around by a boss who cared very little and paid even less. In 2007 I decided enough was enough. I started an ecommerce business. I don't need a job any more.

I am not an IT expert! I was not what you might consider 'a business man'. If you are looking for in depth business theory or professional analysis of web technologies; this guide is NOT for you. If you want a step by step, click by click, guide on how to set up and run an online business, that actually makes money and provides genuine goods and services, then How to make money online IS for you.

Now is the perfect time to start your own e-commerce business. With the big names struggling with financial turbulence and bloated infrastructure, the home/small office business is perfectly placed to take a huge chunk of the market away from the 'big boys'.

This guide is designed for ANYBODY who aspires to running their own internet business. It is not a get rich quick scheme and genuine hard work and business discipline is required to make this work for you.

It is especially useful for people with little or no e-commerce experience as it takes a step by step approach.

All you need to succeed with this guide is a little experience with a web browser and Windows and a truck load of desire to be the boss!

**Achieve your business dreams!**

# Email Marketing
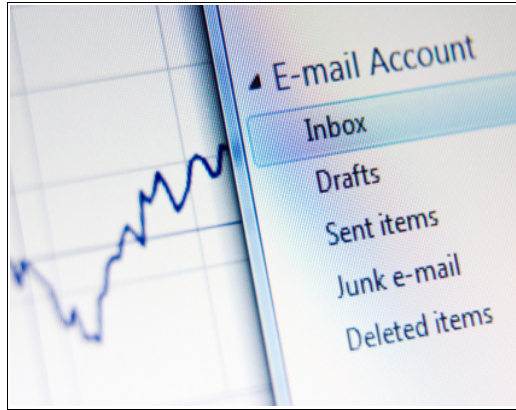


**Including**

- About email marketing
- PHP List
- Building a list
- Spam
- Designing and creating a newsletter
- Gathering and analysing statistics

"A man's growth is seen in the successive choirs of his friends. "

# Ralph Waldo Emerson

# About email marketing

### Why & when to use email marketing

It is obvious that employing as many different forms of marketing as possible, especially when they are free, is good sense. Email marketing is special however. It  is not simply 'another' form of marketing. In my opinion it is absolutely crucial to maximising the potential of any online business. This is especially true if you are paying to get some or all of your visitors through Google Adwords or similar. What do I mean by this?

Email marketing, when done well, supports, even underpins every other type of marketing you are doing. Think about all the different sources your web site receives its visitors from. The various search engines due to your SEO efforts, paid for adverts, your link building efforts and perhaps you    are implementing an ongoing social media campaign on one or more of the social networking sites we have discussed. What percentage of your visitors actually spends money on your web site. If you have achieved 10% so far you are doing very well and chances are the actual figure is nearer 5%.

So this means we are failing 95% of the time. Now assuming you have written great sales copy, provided compelling informational content, set up your chosen cart correctly and smartly there is little more you can do on your site itself. And it is probably not the fault of your web site that 95% of you visitors kept their credit cards in their pockets.

So why do 95% leave without spending? Lots of reasons. Not ready to buy, more research to do, looking to find a better price/service and many more reasons besides. The problem is that when the customer has put things right in their mind and they have their credit card poised to spend there is no guarantee, in fact it is most unlikely they will by chance, end up on your web site. So we have to, as much as possible, remove the element of chance.

What if you could 'keep in touch' with your future potential customer, what if you could help them arrive at a buying decision with interesting and relevant industry or product information. All this and more is possible with  email marketing.

Of course you have to get the email addresses of these people along with their explicit permission to be contacted. And when you contact them you need to use professional looking designs with high quality compelling content while still managing to get a sales message across. And just like with your web site in general you need to be able to monitor your email campaign to measure success and refine your activity.

All this and more is covered in this chapter. First we will look at the options to implement all of the   features above. The pros and cons of the different companies and systems available. Then, as usual we will focus on implementing list building, email design, content creation and statistics management all within the framework of a totally free, fairly easy to use email software system

## The email marketing options, pros and cons

Clearly we need a system to allow customers to subscribe to your contact list. Then after we have learned to do it well we need that system to send email to and monitor responses from that email list. It would of course be handy if that system also featured the ability to compose and format the emails professionally. And we also mentioned the need to view statistical information in order to measure success and refine our email marketing campaign. Here is what I see as the main options.

1. Use the already built in facilities of Joomla.
2. Use 1&1 (or your web hosts) existing facilities.
3. Pay a dedicated email marketing company and use their facilities.
4. Find a magical bit of software to do it all for free.

**Option 1**. There are some built in features for each of the shopping cart systems. Joomla for example has a mass mail feature. But this has no system of discriminating between people who are simply members/previous customers and those who want to receive communications from you. We will see later that this is essential for any email marketing campaign. So we can probably rule out option 1 above.

**Option 2**. Now if you consider that with 1&1 you can have tens of thousands of visitors, gigabytes of content and hundreds of email addresses you might think you would have all facilities we require. Unfortunately not.

Although they do have a newsletter (email marketing) service in the business package I recommended previously and it IS a significant upgrade to the built in facilities of the shopping cart software. However there are some significant drawbacks.

Firstly there is no statistical monitoring and secondly, although reasonable compared to their competitors they do charge for anything over 1000 emails a month. Now if you don't anticipate having thousands of members, ever, are in a real hurry to get this done and can't face another installation process, then check out the 1&1 service. In your control panel click on **Marketing tools > Newsletter tool**. You could then skip the section 'installing PHPList' and continue reading all the other aspects about email marketing.

This chapter will focus however on setting up and using your very own system (PHPList) because it is full featured and totally free. Although there is an initial amount of work to set it up.

**Option 3**. You can take out a new service with very reputable companies like Aweber (www.aweber.com) and MailChimp (www.mailchimp.com) and get a very easy to use and fully featured service but as your list grows so do your expenses. For example 2500 emails a month could cost you $49. And

if your business gets really big the charges get really big too. Go and have a look at what these companies offer but think carefully before signing up.

**Option 4** is what I am going to cover in detail. It is fully featured, fully supported and free. PHPList is one of several but probably the best open source email list management software system. We will install it on your web host (1&1 covered explicitly as usual) and then work through all the phases of starting and running an email marketing campaign using PHPList. PHPList can help you build a list create professional newsletters/emails, send them, manage replies and give you statistical feedback. So lets get started!

## Installing PHPlist

Go to businessdreams.net. Click on Resources and then Required Software. Download and unzip PHPList and then follow the instructions below. Now we need to open up 2 FTP windows in the usual way, as shown below.



Email Marketing – Upload PHPList to your webspace
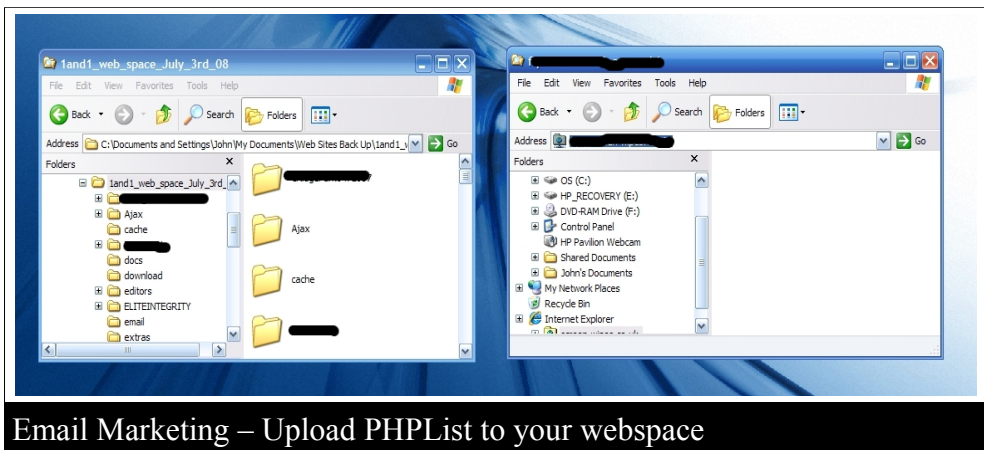
OK. Unzip the download. **Right click > Extract here**. Browse to the folder `\phplist-2.10.10\public_html` in your left hand window. First we need to make some amendments to     the file `config.php` in the folder `lists/config`. Open the file using Notepad++ and read on.

We need to get the information for the database we want PHPList to use. We do this in exactly the same way as we did when installing our main web site software accept we need to supply the information to the relevant part of the

`config.php` file instead of entering it into the install program.

Log into your 1&1 account. Click on **MySQL Administration**. You will see all the database information like Name, user name, password and host name. It doesn't matter which database you choose as long as this is the first time you have installed PHPList. Just make sure you copy and paste all the information from the same database. Copy and paste the following values from the 1&1 control panel into the appropriate line described in your `config.php` file. Replacing the default value.

| 1&1 Value | Line to insert in | To replace |
|---|---|---|
| Database Name | $database_name | phplistdb |
| Username | $database_user | phplist |
| Password | $database_password | phplist |
| Hostname | $database_host = | localhost |

Now we will create an email address to handle mail that is returned or bounced back to us. I suggest bounces@yourdomain.xxx. In the `config.php` file find the line

# $message_envelope = 'listbounces@yourdomain';

Delete the '#' symbol and the line will become active. Enter your bounces email address by amending the address in the same line as well.

Now log into your 1&1 account and create the new email address. Here is a quick reminder of how in case you need it. Log into your 1&1 control panel. Click on **email**. Now click on **new**. Type the new email address and select the appropriate domain from the drop down box. Enter your preferred password twice. And click **add** to enter and address to forward the bounces to. You don't have to add a forward but you then have to remember to log into your web mail to regularly check if you have any bounces. You decide. Click **OK** and your done. While your in your 1&1 control panel PHPList requires a few default email addresses to function properly. Why not add them now.

```
listreports@yourdomain.xxx
webmaster@yourdomain.xxx
noreply@yourdomain.xxx
```

One more amendment in the `config.php` file. Find the line.

define ("TEST",1);

Change the 1 to a 0. This had me flustering when I first set up PHPList. Quite simply this setting doesn't just control test emails it enables the sending (or not) of all emails.

Save the file. **ctrl > S**. Now a couple more minor adjustments. Open the file `.htaccess` from the folder `/lists` in Notepad++. On the last line the code reads

```
php_flag magic_quotes_gpc on.
```

Copy that line so you can paste it later. Do this by highlighting it and pressing and holding **ctrl** then pressing **c** once. Now add a # symbol at the beginning of that line. This will make this line ineffective which is what we want.

Now you need to create a new file in Notepad++, **File > New**. Paste the line you copied previously, **ctrl > v** and save the file naming it `php.ini` and saving into the `lists` folder.

Basically what we have just done is accessed a necessary feature for PHPList in a different manner so that the 1&1 system 'likes' it. If you are not using 1&1 there is a good chance that many web hosts will need the same modification. Now with all our files just as we want them lets get on with uploading them.

In your right hand window log in to the main directory of your web site using FTP. Drag the `lists` folder from your PC to your web space. The lists folder is the only one you need. The others are for information only.

Type the url <u>www.yourdomain.xxx/lists/admin</u> this will start the installation program. You should see a screen telling you "the database has not been initialised". As below.



Email Marketing – Installing PHPList

Click on the i**nitialise database** link to do just that. You will now have a nice long report telling you that the database has been initialised. Scroll to the bottom of the screen and click **phplist setup**.

You will now see the screen overleaf.

Email Marketing – PHPList  Login

Enter the default user name and password as suggested. You are now presented with a helpful list of things to do to get PHPList up and running. We will deal with each in turn but it is essential to change the admin password immediately. So click on the **go there** link next to where it says 'admin password'.

Scroll down to the table where it says 'Password' and change it to something easy to remember and hard to guess. Now click **save** and read on.

**Final PHPList configurations**

The URL

http://www.yourdomain.xxx/lists/admin/?page=setup

is the page where the list of things still to do can be viewed. If you go back there now you will see there are still three fundamental things left to do they are.

1.  Configure attributes
2.  Create lists

3. Create subscribe pages.

Lets deal with them now. Visit www.yourdomain.xxx/lists/admin. Log in if you are not already. Click on **attributes** in the list of options. Here we will configure the information that we want to collect when somebody signs up to our email/newsletter list. You can add as many as you like. I will keep it really simple and just collect the minimum. Click on **predefined defaults** to add an extra attribute from a list if you wish. Click **Save Changes** weather you have or weather you haven't added more attributes and that is number 1 on our list of things to do done.

Create a list. What PHPList is asking is for a name for your mailing list. You can have as many as you want. For example you might want separate Newsletter and Product Updates lists or similar. PHPList will manage this for you and give subscribers the choice. To keep things simple we will create 1 main mailing list.

Click on **lists** in the right hand column. Now click **add a list**. Give it a name, **check the box** to make it active. '0' for order simply means it would be at the top if you have more than 1 list. Type a short but descriptive description so that people know precisely the type of information they will receive if they subscribe. Now click **Save**. 2 down 1 to go.

Now for the subscribe pages. Click **main page** on the right and then **pages** from the list on the right. Now click **add a new one** to create the page your customers will see when they are subscribing. As you can see this is a big long page. Do not despair. Most of this can be left as it is. I will only mention the things you should do. You might see some more changes you think are relevant to your business. An explanation of everything on this page would make for a long and potentially unnecessary section. Most of the options are self explanatory. Here goes.

Enter a meaningful title. Your domain name would suffice. Scroll to the bottom and check the box to make sure all the list(s) you want included are included. Click **Save and Activate**.

**PHPList security precaution**

What we are going to do is password protect all of the critical files in the

`lists/admin` folder. What this does is prevent potential hackers from accessing files in the `admin` folder and trying to use them to manipulate PHPList. Here is how to do it.

Log in to your 1&1 control panel. Click on **Protected Directories** in the 'Webspace & Access' tab. Click the **New user** button. Enter a username and a tough password. Repeat the password. Now **click the down arrow** under 'directories' and scroll to the `lists/admin` directory. Click **add** then click **Save**. Now when you, or a potential hacker attempts to login to the PHPList control panel they will have to enter this extra username and password first. This does more than just protect PHPList control panel access it protects the sensitive information in all the files within that directory.

### Logging in to PHPList

To access your PHPList control panel at any time simply visit `www.yourdomain.xxx/lists/admin` in a web browser. You will need to log in to PHPList using the username 'admin' and the password you chose previously. In addition and before this, if you implemented the security precaution mentioned above you will need to enter the username and password used to protect the `lists/admin` directory.

We are ready to go. So lets go!

## Preparing your site

So we have successfully installed PHPList but how do you use it. What we need to do is create a link to the subscribe page. This is where your newsletter recipients enter some details in order to join your mailing list. Now we will cover the actual process of creating a link that people can click on then we will test it all works as we would like. Then, perhaps most importantly we will look at how to encourage people to join your email list. All the cool, free software in the world is no good until you have people using it. Lets get  on and make the link.

**Creating a subscribe link**

The URL you need to link to from your subscribe link or cool email icon is

`www.yourdomain.xxx/lists/?p=subscribe`

You might like to invest a small amount of money on a cool mailbox or email icon? Simply create the code in NVU as usual, copy between the <body></body> tags and paste onto your web site as discussed below.

So where do we put the link? Generally speaking, unless there is a reason specific to your business not to, I would make "Get our newsletter" the most prominent link on your site. Why? Simply because around 95% of your visitors will NOT make a purchase on the first visit. The newsletter is our most powerful tool in getting them to return when they are ready (or when we have made them ready).

Think of it like this. If 1 in 10 people who click your Google advert buy a product and 2 of the remaining 9 sign up to your newsletter you have the potential to reduce your cost of sale by 200%. So once again we come back to the fact that by specialising and intently focussing on your chosen niche by providing unique, relevant, interesting newsletter content you can massively undercut and outperform even the biggest competitors. Poor them.

**Making the link**

The easiest most flexible way to display the newsletter sign up link in Joomla is to create a new module of the HTML type. You can then, in the usual way position it or move it with a few clicks as you see fit. You could even create more than one so you can display it in different places on different pages. Here is how to create an HTML module and position it top right on every page. Vary the instructions as you see fit.

Log in to your Joomla control panel. Select Extensions > Module Manager and click New in the top right. Now click on HTML Module to create the new module. Enter. Check no to disable the module title and in the drop down box for "Position" select Right. Now paste the code in the box labelled "HTML"

and then click Save. Now all you need to do is make sure it is as prominent as you want it by finding it in the list of modules and clicking its up or down arrow to get it to the desired place.

## Testing your newsletter system

OK. Click on your newsletter sign up link. Click the newsletter you want to subscribe to enter your email address twice and hit subscribe. How simple is that? Especially when you compare it to creating an account in Joomla. Now go to your email inbox and you should have a polite message asking you to confirm your subscription (or not). Confirm it and you will get an email welcoming you to the newsletter. This is a useful thing to do other than just for testing purposes as you will see whatever your real subscribers see.

Now lets see what effect this has had on PHPList. Go to `www.yourdomain.xxx/lists/admin` and log in to PHPList. This is the PHPList control panel main page. Scroll down to the heading "List and user functions" and click on Users. You will see the subscribers (probably just you) to your list. You can delete a user by pressing the **del** link. You can click on the users email address and see all the information PHPList has about the user. From this page you can view a history of the user. Click the **history** link at the top of the page and you can view a time line of events related to them. It will show dates, times, ip address, web browser used for each event related to PHPList. Click the **Main Page** link in the top right to go back to the control panel main menu.

Now might be a good opportunity to explore the options. Click into each of the options and have a look then click back to the main menu without making any changes. We will explore in more depth all of the most important options soon.

Now go back to your welcome email and click the **un-subscribe** link. Enter your email and a comment to un-subscribe. Now go back to the history page. To do this click on **User** then the email address concerned. Notice the event has been logged.

Hopefully now you are beginning to get a feel for the experience your

users/subscribers will get, the options they have and how there actions are reflected in your control panel.

Before we look at building your subscriber list you might want to consider customising some of the messages that PHPList sends out. For example the "welcome" or "almost welcome" messages. Here is how to do it. As I walk you through the process you will notice many other options that you might like to modify to reflect your specific business.

In the main control panel menu page click on **Configure**. Scroll down the page to "Message users receive when they subscribe" and click the **edit** link. You will see you can easily edit the message that is sent and then click **Save Changes**. I like to put my name at the bottom of each of the messages to make it a bit more personal. When you have changed all the messages that you want to change scroll down the page and take a look at all the editable options you have. We will look at more of these as we proceed.

## Building your list of subscribers

Now we have things as we want them lets get some subscribers. The section on email marketing came last in the marketing section of the book for good reason. Obviously for people to have any chance of signing up they have to visit your web site first. So look at the SEO, Google Adwords and Social media marketing sections to get lots of visitors.

Now we have people visiting your site here are a few things we can do get them to sign up for your newsletter.

**Advertise your newsletter**

There is an extra avenue you could explore with regard to Google Adwords now that you have your newsletter system up and running. Consider advertising your newsletter itself. That is, why not run some Google adverts saying "Get my free newsletter – All about fluffy teddies"? Or similar. Of course you have to consider the viability of this idea to your specific business. For example a business selling low margin, repeat purchase items would

probably not benefit from this type of advertising but a business with a high margin product that involves a long consideration period probably would. An estate agent is a good example of where you might like to get and keep in contact  long before the potential customer considers actually making a purchase. You decide what is best for your business.

## Compelling content

First and most obviously you can create compelling content. Hopefully by now you have already added some articles to your web site. Why not revisit them and tweak them to include a suggestion of joining your newsletter with of course a convenient sign up link within the article.  If they like your article they might want more of the same.

## Incentives

Offer something for free if they sign up to your newsletter. You can add a tasty temptation or small image to the main newsletter sign up box as well as mention the freebie in your articles before the sign up link. But what can you give away?

Think hard about you products, business and industry. What would be really useful? If you are selling an information/music/video product its easy. A sample chapter, song, application or video. If not why not create a downloadable PDF or a short video made on a web cam of the most compelling and useful information related to your products, business or industry? Here is another idea that might work for almost any business. Offer a free software download. Revisit the chapter about sourcing free applications and find something that might benefit or be of interest to your audience. You can then direct people to the download links in their welcome email. Easy and free!

If your really stuck for incentives offer a discount voucher. Consider this very carefully before doing it because it needs to be viable financially.

If  you think really hard you could probably come up with a whole load of downloadable freebies to make your newsletter a  highly desirable must have.

**Offering MORE via email**

This strategy could work depending upon the information you are sharing and its relative ease of availability online. Write a really great article or adjust one you have already written. Offering the conclusion, punchline or vital final bit of information when they subscribe. Then you could simply finish the article or provide a link to it in the welcome email.

# Spam guidelines and laws

This is a complicated issue and varies greatly from country to country and in the US from state to state. In some places you can do what you like in others you could end up in jail for breaking one of numerous communications or data protection laws. PHPList has been designed to try and help you function within the laws of the strictest regimes. But here are a few fundamental "must do" and "must not do"

- Never buy or borrow a list of email addresses. You can never be sure how they where obtained.
- Never add someone to your newsletter without their express, specific request and without them clicking on your confirm link.
- Never use a persons email after they have un-subscribed. No matter how tempting you think a special offer you might want give them is.
- Always include the un-subscribe link in EVERY communication.
- Always make the un-subscribe page very quick, simple and clear.

You need to be wary also that even if you comply with all the laws and my guidelines above, where spam is concerned perception is everything. What I am referring to is that if a recipient thinks the email you have sent is spammy, even if they subscribed they might click their 'mark as spam' button. If this happens too often their email provider could mark everything from your domain as spam. This is a worst case scenario but it does happen. If  you keep your content good and not too commercial as well as a clear and easy un-subscribe process you should avoid this pitfall.

# Designing high quality emails

Now we have a growing list of willing recipients we need to send them something. First we will look at creating valuable content and then we will look at the different ways to package that information. And finally we will create and send a newsletter using PHPList.

## Introduction – Making your content valuable & interesting

As with all your articles you need to write interesting content that people actually want to read. Refer to the section on writing for the web and how to sell to your customers for this. But a newsletter needs something more. You can't just email regular articles straight off your web site and expect sales to go up. The 'something more' could take one of the forms mentioned below.

## Newsletter/article emails

Newsletter implies news. That is something new or updated. It's OK to rework an old article as long as it gives something more. Try getting the latest information on an article of relevance, re-writing it and turn the article title into a headline. So an article about "how a plasma TV works" might become "New innovation in plasma TV technology". Or "How to find a dream property" could be re-worked into, "NOW is the time to buy your dream property".

The key question to ask yourself is *why am I sending this now instead of just adding it to my web site?* Relevancy and topicality is important. Once you have an article that will benefit its recipients only then consider how you can make it benefit your business. Now with a purely newsletter email a few links from the article to further reading, a relevant category or product page would suffice. But make sure the link is justified. Don't simply turn a relevant word into a link. Make sure the link is properly introduced. With a phrase like "... you can see an example of this type of TV on our website here...."

For the purely newsletter style of email this is all you need to know apart from some extra formatting tips later that applies to all types of email. Generally speaking however I would usually suggest putting multiple elements into each email. Read on for some possibilities.

**Pure marketing emails**

Otherwise known as an advert. But the important thing, as with the newsletter is relevancy and topicality. Don't just send information on any old product that could have been viewed on your web site a week ago. Make sure the email is about something new and topical. A general sale, a specific deep discount etc. And make sure you try to sell the product using the features and benefits in the manner discussed in 'how to sell to customers.'

As mentioned with the newsletter style email marketing messages are usually best packaged up with less intrusive messages. Send pure marketing emails infrequently and only when you are offering something genuinely special.

**General announcement emails**

This can be anything! A sale, a new range, company/industry news, or a relevant event. Never forget you are trying to give your subscribers value. Don't just tell them about things that will benefit you. If you think your subscribers will be grateful for you telling them then do so. All or emails (as we will see soon) are branded and may result in a visit or a sale. At the very least by genuinely informing or assisting your subscriber you gain credibility . As with marketing email announcement emails can be packaged with other types of message but don't delay sending important announcements because you haven't got the other content available yet.

**Surveys?**

Some people love surveys. Strange but true. Some people hate doing them. But you don't know until you ask. You can ask for your subscribers assistance by linking them to a Joomla poll (discussed in setting up Joomla) or you can use the 1&1 free tools to create a more detailed questionnaire by  logging into your 1&1 control panel, clicking on **Form Builder** > **Launch New Form** and choose **Survey** from the drop down box. Follow the really simple instructions to create  your survey and then pasting the code into an article page and linking to it from the email.

My belief that message types should be combined is even stronger with the survey message than with all the others. If someone receives a survey request on its own it is clearly aimed at benefiting the company not the recipient.

**Combination emails**

This of course is what I have been alluding to while discussing the types of message you can send. I strongly believe that an email with multiple messages, neatly presented, is the most effective type of email marketing. It means you can easily include product or sales info without the recipient feeling bombarded or spammed. You can include announcements without being concerned if EVERY recipient is interested in it and you can include surveys that can be acted on by those who want to and ignored by those who don't.

By providing a regular but not too frequent combination email, containing something for everyone then your subscribers will actually look forward to opening your newsletters. And when they are happy they are much more likely to buy.

There are, as discussed, exceptions where emails with a narrow or single purpose are acceptable but I will now show you how to create, format, send and gather statistics on a combination email. The tips and techniques discussed will easily serve to inform you should you wish to send the more simple messages as well.

**Designing & Formatting your emails**

A good email newsletter has many of the characteristics of a good web page. Neat and well optimised graphics, clear navigation, quality content and a compelling title. All of those very specific issues are covered in the next section. But what about the overall layout? There is no best layout. It depends what you think suits your specific objectives and what works with the content of the specific email you are preparing. Next are some images that show possible layout options. And because I am so nice I have made each of them available to download from www.businessdreams.net. Just click on **Resources** > **Templates**. Download the template you want.

As you will see from the way I have labelled the layout images you not only need to choose the layout you prefer but one that will accommodate the information you intend to send. All the templates are slimmer than a typical web page because most email readers/browsers have only a modest width.

In a few sections time I will talk you through implementing your chosen template using PHPList. The context of that tutorial should also make it obvious how to implement your own layout should you wish to. Also I will point out step by step which elements of the template need to be modified to specifically suit your business.

Your company logo here

Warm greeting and a brief introduction, what is in this email, why has it been sent, who is it from.

**Article Headline**

Nice Image

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Essential un-subscribe information

Email Marketing – Template layout 1

28

| On fluffyteddies | Warm greeting and a brief introduction, what is in this email, why has it been sent, who is it from. |
|---|---|
| • <u>teddys</u><br>• <u>more t</u><br>• <u>more still</u><br>• <u>yet more</u><br>• <u>article</u><br>• <u>etc</u> | List of email content<br>1. blah<br>2. blah<br>3. blah |

**Article Headline**

Main article content blah blah blah blah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah



blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blahblah blah blahblah blah

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Essential un-subscribe information

Email Marketing – Template layout 2

**Your company logo here**

On fluffyteddies
- teddys
- more t
- more still
- yet more
- articles
- etc

Please take our newsletter satisfaction survey.
Take the survey

Hot product image

Yet another great product only £99.99 with free delivery.
Buy Now in our store

Missed any of our newsletters?
Get them here.

Warm greeting and a brief introduction, what is in this email, why has it been sent, who is it from.

**Important anouncement**
We will be holding a picnic for all teddy bears in the woods on the second Sunday in February.

blah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah Find out more...

**Article Headline**
Main article content blah blah blah blah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah blah blahblah

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Essential un-subscribe information

Email Marketing – Template layout 3

You are probably getting the idea that the range of possibilities is almost endless. It is very simple to create your own using a table in NVU or, as we will see a table in PHPList itself. It is just a matter of choosing or creating the ideal layout for your business.

**Images, links, text, headlines, subject line**

Now some specifics before we get to to actually creating a newsletter. Images should be made as small as possible but not smaller than the size they will be displayed. Exactly as if you where creating them for a web page. Too small and they distort when they are stretched, too big and they take too long to download.

Links, like buy it now links should be a call to action. "Buy abc now", "Get the free movie", "Read more on the site" etc.

Headlines should be just that, headlines. Not regular titles. Remember there has to be a reason you sent the email and a regular article (unless accompanied by other goodies) is not good enough. Make your titles into headlines.

Think about what will you use for the email subject line. This is the information your subscriber looks at to decide if they will bother to open your email. Make it compelling, exciting and original. A word of warning though. Make it truthful and accurate. If your content doesn't match the subject line then your reader will feel tricked and might un-subscribe, or worse, mark you as spam.

## Walk-through creating an email with phplist

Choose your template from www.businessdreams.net. As mentioned before they are available by clicking **Resources** then **Templates**.

Copy the code of your chosen template by highlighting it and pressing **ctrl** then **c**. Now log in to PHPList. On the right click on **Send a message**. Click

on the **source** button (shown in the next screen shot) to prepare PHPList for pasting the template code. Click inside the HTML area and paste the code (**ctrl** + **v**) as indicated in the next picture.



Email marketing – Creating a message with PHPList

Next type a compelling title in the subject line as discussed previously. If you are using a template then you are just about done. If you are creating your own then you need to make a small addition to the bottom of your code. Type:-

[USERTRACK]

Do so exactly as it is above including the square brackets. What this does is enable PHPList to track how many people open your email. Scroll to the very bottom of the page and click **Save Changes**. Now click on the **Lists** tab. Check the box next to the name of your list and press **Send message to the selected mailing lists**. Note the option to send a test message. This is useful once you have some subscribers to make sure your email looks as you want it before it is sent. Finally click on **process the message queue**.

Go to your email inbox. Have a look at your message. Note the un-subscribe links at the bottom. So what next?

## Gathering and analysing email statistics with PHPList

Here is how you can see how many people opened (and hopefully read) your email. Click on **messages** in the right hand menu. You will see a report for the message you just sent. Have a look at all the information but the interesting bit is the bottom row of the table. 'Unique views'. How many people opened the email.

The fact that the email was opened is obviously a good thing. But how can you tell what interest your readers have. Nice and easy. If a user clicks a link, buy now, more information or similar this is a very good sign. Simply log in to your Google Analytics account and look at the traffic for the pages concerned. They will have strange referral urls. But more useful than this is if you make all the links from emails go to pages that are unavailable from the website. You can then track everything that happens from a specific page(s) and know exactly what happens after users click a link in your email.

To get meaningful statistical information you need a decent number of subscribers. But very simply the more opens and clicks the more effective your newsletters. As time goes by and your list grows, look to see if certain types of link or article or email layout is more effective for your business. Then shape your future email communications to improve there effectiveness. As with all marketing, email marketing is an ongoing process. Add it to your list of weekly or monthly things to review.

## The End?

Absolutely not! Just the beginning. I hope you have the confidence to know that you can achieve a great living through your very own, ideal, e-commerce empire.

I hope you are kind enough to share your expertise, your highs and your lows with the Business Dreams community.

Have a look on `www.businessdreams.net` for more tutorials and guides. And I hope you achieve your business dreams.