

# Building an Email List

## The Ultimate Checklist





# The Ultimate Checklist for Building an Email List

If your business is new or you're new to email marketing, your first step in email marketing will be to build your email list using these four steps:

## Step 1: Have a plan.

Be able to describe what you'll do with the email addresses you receive and what value you can offer to subscribers for providing their address.

### Your email planning checklist:

- ☐ Define your target audience(s). You don't want just anyone's email address. You want email addresses of qualified prospects and customers. Make sure you know who they are.
- ☐ Create a plan for using email as a marketing channel. Are you primarily planning to nurture leads into paying customers? Are you planning to acquire new Website subscribers? Is your goal to get existing customers to make repeat purchases?
- ☐ Whatever the goal, make sure that you have the tools, content, and offers that are required for each type of email you plan to send before you start building your list. Offer relevant, useful content such as:
  - Monthly newsletters filled with tips and tricks
  - Free research reports
  - Ebooks
  - Exclusive promotions "How to" videos
  - Etc.



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## Step 2: Create an email signup form.

### Your email signup form checklist:

- ☐ Use your email software to create an email capture form. The software will usually provide a script that you or your Website administrator paste into the HTML on your site).
- ☐ Include an email signup form on every page of your Web site.
- ☐ Explain why your visitor should give you his or her email address. The better the reason, the more addresses you'll get. Examples: "Sign up for exclusive offers!" or "Register for our free Webinar."
- ☐ Make the signup form prominent & simple.
  - Above the fold (viewable without scrolling)
  - Clear, easy to read, impossible to miss
  - Contrasting colors & white space surrounding the form
  - As few form fields as possible (ideally, email address only)



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Step 3: Drive traffic to your email signup form.

## Your checklist for driving traffic to email

- ☐ Add newsletter opt-in checkboxes on your Contact Us form and shopping cart checkout pages.
- ☐ Optimize your Web site for search engine visibility
- ☐ Use paid search or social media advertising campaigns that promise helpful articles, case studies, white papers, exclusive offers, coupons, etc.
- ☐ Incentivize people to give you their email address using a free giveaway or a contest for a high-value prize.
  - Give away your own product or service or something related.
  - Include an incentive for people to share information about the giveaway with others.
  - Make sure to clearly define contest prizes, rules, and other details.
  - Announce winners in social media.
  - If the giveaway or contest works, make it a regular event.
- ☐ If you're a good writer and a subject matter expert, offer to write guest posts on popular related blogs.
  - Search the Web for blogs related to your market and expertise.
  - Check the PageRank (Google search rank) for each blog.
    - Visit: <http://pagerankchecker.com/>
    - Look for blogs that have a higher PageRank than your own blog or Web site and at least a PageRank of 3.
  - Contact the blog owner to inquire about writing a guest post.
    - It may help to establish a relationship first, such as via comments or social media.
  - In your blog post, offer a strong incentive for readers to subscribe to your email list (a giveaway, free ebook, exclusive promos, etc.)
- ☐ Go offline! Collect email addresses in person.
  - Conferences & trade shows
  - Speaking
  - Classes
- ☐ Attract people to your email signup form via other marketing collateral (business cards, brochures, etc.).



Notes:

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## Step 4: Encourage your email subscribers to share your emails with others.

### Your checklist for encouraging your subscribers to

- ☐ Create valuable content and offers that people will want to share.
  - Ask yourself, “Is this something I would forward to a friend of mine?”
  - You may wish to incentivize them with giveaways, etc.
- ☐ Add “Share” features to emails to let people easily share via social networks.
- ☐ Add “Forward to a Friend” feature to email campaigns.



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