

EMAIL MARKETING

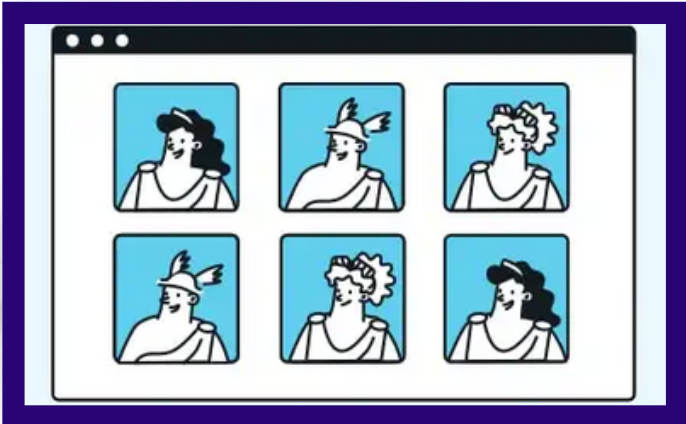
STRATEGIC

PLAYBOOK

VOL. 1

10 List Building Tactics That Work

CONTACT LIST



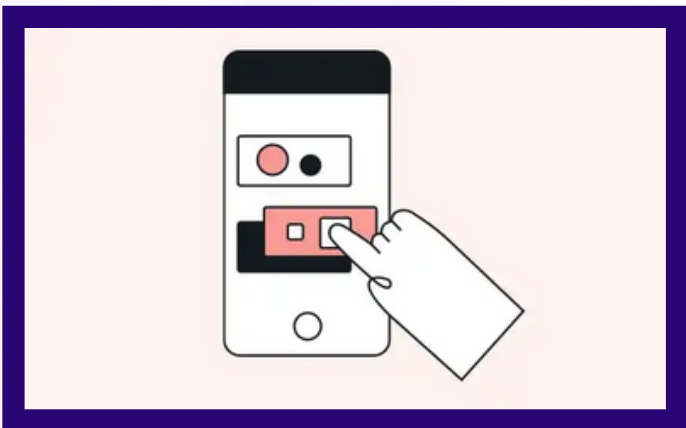
DELIVERABILITY



OPEN RATES



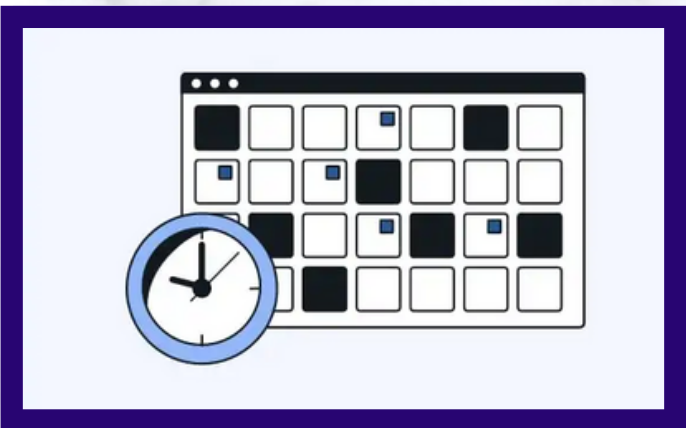
CLICK RATES



DESIGN



LIFECYCLE



EMAIL MARKETING STRATEGIC PLAYBOOK

Implementing a great email program is the most effective way to grow your business. Discover the tactics to increase your email ROI with this strategic playbook

Whatever your email goals are, this book got you covered. Explore our tactics according to the main objectives you want to achieve.

DISCLAIMER

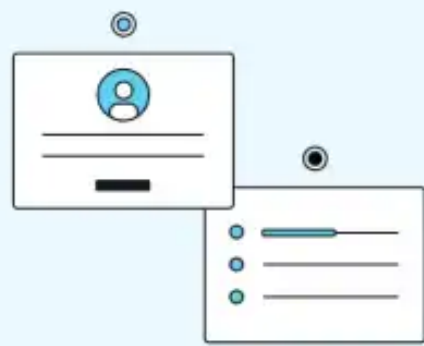
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GROW YOUR CONTACT LIST

Building your mailing list is the first step in creating an effective email strategy. Find tactics to enrich your contact list and develop an engaged audience.

1. **Include Subscription Form on Your Website:**

Adding subscription forms to strategic pages of your website is essential for a solid contact acquisition strategy. Although every website has its own special features, the areas on which subscription forms traditionally work best are the homepage, the navigation bar, and blog articles.



For those subscription forms, make sure to use a double opt-in process. A double opt-in is when a new subscriber receives an email asking them to confirm their email address by clicking a link. This helps eliminate mistyped or fake email addresses and makes sure the recipient is really interested in your newsletter.

Some emailing solutions offer the opportunity to design double opt-in subscription widgets to add to your websites and increase your email database. A subscription widget is a piece of code that you can add to your site. It creates a basic form where a user can enter their email address and sign up for an email list.

How to set up subscription forms on your website

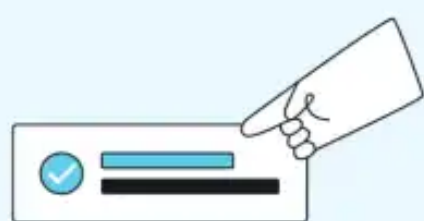
Make sure to use an Email Service Provider (ESP) that offers subscription widgets, and set them up on your website:

- Decide if you prefer to embed a registration form on your website page, or if you want the online form to be opened in a new window when a button or link is clicked.

- Fill in the basic elements of your widget, such as the contact list, where new subscribers will be added.
- Define the widget fields that are going to be linked to your custom contact properties. You can collect additional information such as the subscriber's name, location, phone number, or gender.
- Collect explicit consent from your subscribers to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). For this, include a consent checkbox on the widget that users must check to subscribe to your newsletter.
- Design your subscription form to fit your website look by changing the colors of each part of the form (text, button, background) and customizing the font. Also, design your confirmation email and confirmation page.
- The last step is to integrate the HTML code of the widget into your website. For that, just copy and paste the code into your site.

2. Implement email address validation at point of collection:

Use a real-time email validation tool to catch bad addresses when a customer is filling out a form and make sure each subscriber on your mailing list has a valid email address before you send email campaigns.



Using a good email verification process wherever you collect email addresses will help optimize your sender reputation and the deliverability rate of your marketing campaigns. It will also increase the engagement levels of your subscribers and the return on investment of your email marketing strategy. With email validation, you won't waste your budget on email addresses that don't exist.

By embedding an email validation API in your sign-up pages or form submissions, you only let valid email entries advance through your flow, get smart suggestions for common typos, prevent disposable addresses and protect against bot attacks, and ensure accuracy with checks done against the mailbox provider themselves.

How does an email validation API work

It's pretty technical, but here's how email validation functions:

- The API endpoint is an email address validation service. It will validate the given address based on: mailbox detection, syntax checks (RFC defined grammar), DNS validation, spell checks and ESP specific local-part grammar (if available).
- Email validation service is intended to validate email addresses submitted through forms like newsletters, online registrations and shopping carts.
- Different email validation rates are given based on the API endpoint. Both the public and private API endpoints are limited to a burst-per-minute rate. The public endpoints have a default limit of calls per month. This can be changed to prevent abuse of the public API key. We encourage the use of private API endpoints for email validation, and there is no limit past the initial burst per minute rate. We highly suggest that you use the private key whenever possible.

3. Create premium downloadable resources:

Downloadable premium resources, also known as gated content, may take many forms such as webinars, case studies, guides, templates, infographics, or white papers. Create premium resources like these, fill them with valuable insights for your target audience, and make them downloadable via a contact form. People are ready to share personal information as long as they'll get value out of the content. At the bottom of the contact form, add a box encouraging people to subscribe to your newsletter or email campaigns in order to enrich your contact list.



Be careful – the fact that someone has downloaded your premium resource does not give you the right to include them automatically in your contact list. In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), they have to give their express consent to register by ticking this opt-in box in your download form. GDPR applies to persons and entities of all sizes that process personal data of EU residents, regardless of where they are based.

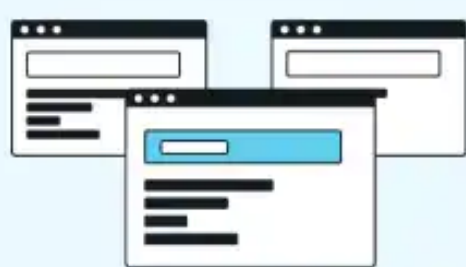
How to give your downloadable resources maximum visibility

To be effective, your premium resources need to be easily searchable. To do this, you can:

- Create a “Resources” section on your website’s navigation menu. This is a sort of online library that refers to all of your premium resources on a single page.
- Include banners and call-to-action buttons in content related to your premium resources, like blog articles or strategic website pages .
- Use these premium resources to reach an audience that is as yet unfamiliar with you, promoting them on social media (such as Facebook or LinkedIn), in guest articles, adverts... The more you invest in your promotion, the better the quality of the contacts you will obtain.

4. Use pop-up forms to capture users visiting your website

To enrich your email list, one important thing you need to do is multiply the points of collection on your website. In addition to including subscription forms within your website, you can also implement pop-up forms on specific web pages to capture new subscribers. They are a very effective method of building your email marketing list.



But you need to make sure your pop-ups won’t be seen as an obstacle by the users, and that pop-ups won’t disrupt their experience. Be mindful of when to trigger them, and at which frequency. For example, you can display the pop-up after a certain delay, when the visitor scrolls a given percent of the way down the page, or when the user tries to exit the page (this is known as an exit intent pop-up). You can also decide to space out the number of times a pop-up appears. For example, you can show it only once per visitor instead of on every visit.

Note that, even if not mandatory according to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), it’s still recommended to use double opt-in pop-up forms in order to make sure the user’s interested.

How to implement pop-up forms on your website

To implement pop-ups that capture users without hurting their experience, you can

use dedicated tools such as SumoMe or Sleeknote. Those kind of tools will help you to:

- Design and customize your pop-up. Display personalized on-page messages to the right visitor on the right page and create forms that are consistent with the look and feel of your website.
- Add or remove input fields. Get more control over your contact scoring by choosing which input fields are compulsory for visitors to complete when submitting a form.
- Personalize your preferences. Invite visitors to segment themselves when opting in so they only receive campaigns that are relevant to their needs.

5. Create and share a specific subscription landing page

To collect email addresses on your website, you should include subscription forms and pop-ups across your site. But you should also consider having a dedicated subscription landing page to redirect people to when encouraging users to subscribe to your newsletter via other channels. The goal of a subscription landing page is to encourage users to take only one specific action: sign up for your newsletter.



For example, if you're promoting your email campaigns in physical shops or at events, you could encourage people to sign up via your landing page opened on a tablet. You could also include a link to this landing page on some of your social media publications, or at the end of a guest post for an external blog.

How to create a high-performing subscription landing page

Here are some steps to follow in order to create a performing subscription landing page and effectively convert visitors:

- Choose a dedicated tool, such as Unbounce, to easily create a customizable landing page via a drag-and-drop builder without having to code or to add anything to your website.
- Design your subscription landing page so it fits with your website graphic guidelines. The look and feel of the landing page design should be similar to your site to gain users trust. Also, make sure the design is responsive so it displays correctly on different devices.

- Add a convincing messaging, a simple form, and a clear call-to-action (CTA) button. Your user should immediately know what to do on the page, and have no other option than to undertake the expected subscription action.
- Just as you do for email marketing, experiment with some A/B tests on your landing page. Create different versions of your page, and implement the winning version in order to optimize the conversion rate. Keep in mind that you should only test one element at a time (for example, the design of your CTA button) to analyse what's impacting the results. Always remember that A/B testing is key for result optimization.

6. Leverage in-store promotion to convert customers

When thinking about enriching newsletter contact lists, digital channels are key, but retailers should also keep face-to-face channels in mind. If you have physical retail stores, face-to-face channels are great ways to boost your marketing strategy by encouraging your customers to subscribe to your mailing list. Not only is it more personal – adding a human touch to the subscription process – but it's also an opportunity to deliver a more convincing and comprehensive speech about your newsletter and its benefits.



To allow customers to subscribe in shops, you could have a landing page with your subscription form open on a smartphone, tablet or computer at checkout areas – promoting your marketing campaigns and offering them to subscribers at the time of payment – in order to provide a seamless in-store experience.

For example, when a client buys a pair of jeans in a clothes shop, you could offer them the option of signing up to your mailing list to receive exclusive discounts and the latest catalogues. Also, leverage offering digital receipts to your customers: when asking them to share their email address in order to receive the transactional email with the receipt, advertise your newsletter and encourage people to sign up.

How to properly collect subscriptions via in-store promotion

No matter how you collect information from your customers, you must remember that they need to give their express consent – and that you have to store this consent. This is one of the main requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). A few things to remember under GDPR:

- Write a clear and concise consent message. The consent message needs to be easily understandable to individuals. Practices such as confusing or vague language are banned by the regulation.
- Store the consent, which should include: the person who gave the consent, when the consent was obtained (data and time stamp, for example), and the specific purpose for which the consent was given.
- Consider using privacy dashboards to make it easy for individuals to update their consent preferences. Any consent withdrawal requests should be processed as soon as possible and records for withdrawals should be kept.

7. Make the most of social media ads

Social media advertising is one of the most effective ways for marketers to build brand awareness and grow their business. Social media ads don't have to only be about promoting content like blog publications, guides or commercial promotions. Launch specific ad campaigns on social media platforms, such as Facebook or LinkedIn, to promote the benefits of your newsletter and encourage social followers to join your mailing list.



Redirect social users to your dedicated subscription landing page in order to improve your chance of a conversion. When configuring your adverts on social media, segmentation tools are so advanced that you can easily select the ideal profiles for your desired audience (demographic categories, interests, behaviors...).

How to create successful social media ads to grow your list

Social media is a very effective advertising platform. Here are some steps to follow in order to create an effective ad on social networks and boost your digital marketing strategy:

- First, choose the goal that will help you to achieve your email list growth objective. For example, driving traffic to your newsletter subscription landing page.
- Select the criteria of your target audience. Use what you know about people you want to reach (like their countries, age, gender and more) to find the right public for your ad. You can also target “lookalike” audiences based on your existing email list .
- Set your budget and the time period during which you want your ads to run. These limits mean that you'll never spend more than you're comfortable with.
- Pick a format for your ad (single image, video...). Carefully optimize your messaging and visual support to stand out and better convert social media users into newsletter subscribers.
- Last but not least, measure and manage your ad conversion rate to insure it's cost-effective. See if your ad is being delivered efficiently, and adapt the content of your ad to improve your results.

8. Launch appealing social media contests

Using social media is a great way for marketers to enrich their contact list. One thing you can do is encourage your social media followers to join your email list by launching a contest. For example, announce that you will be holding a draw for a special gift among all of your email subscribers at the end of each month, or among subscribers who have signed up within a certain period.



Photo contests, selfie contests, essay contests, caption contests or video contests are many contest ideas that you can try out. But make sure there's a direct link between the competition and your newsletter content so that subscribers don't unsubscribe from your communications once they have received their special gift. You need to make them want to stick around for more.

How to launch successful social media contests

There are few things to keep in mind when launching a competition on your social networks:

- First, determine which social media platform is the best based on your sector, your potential customers' criteria, and your overall digital marketing strategy. If you're a B2C brand targeting people between the ages of 20 and 35 years old with an established presence on Facebook, then a Facebook contest might be the best solution for you to attract contestants.
- Define which type of contest you want to implement depending on your target audience, and specify clear contest rules. Take note that contest rules need to be compliant with the platforms you're hosting your competition on, as well as with local and government laws.
- Make sure to offer a great giveaway that will make social users want to participate and subscribe to your email list. Running contests like rafflecopters or sweepstakes isn't worth it unless you're ready to reward the winner with something really worthwhile.

9. Provide email sign up offers to your subscribers

One effective way to get people to sign up to your newsletter is to offer them one-off discounts or special offers. While promoting your newsletter, highlight the advantages that those who subscribe to your email list will get. Make sure that they are exclusive offers that will attract attention.



Some companies choose to launch this type of campaign on a seasonal basis, like during the Christmas season or during high sales periods, while others spread them out over the year. Overall, a more scattered email offers strategy is preferable to avoid email subscribers leaving your list once the season has come to an end.

How to attract subscribers with sign up offers

Offering exclusive discounts and benefits is a great way to get new subscribers, especially for retailers. Here's a list of things you can give away:

- Free delivery. This is a powerful incentive for many people to sign up to a newsletter and make a new purchase.

Discount. A good discount can be a 50% or 15% promo code available on the email recipient's next purchase (it can be an in-store or online purchase).

- Specific credit. Like some brands, offer a \$10 or \$50 credit to any new subscribers on their next order.
- Free food. If you're working in the foodservice industry, allow people to get something free next time they come to your place – like appetizers.
- Reward program. Automatically add any first-time subscribers to your reward program to encourage customers to shop consistently.

10. Promote your newsletter over support channels

Another great way for marketers to promote their email list is through their customer support team. It can be done via different customer support channels: social media, telephone, chat, emails... Your customer support team can be a great asset to enrich your contact list as support is one of the main client touchpoints.



For example, if someone contacts your company to ask if one of your products will be coming back into stock, reply and also encourage them to sign up to your email database so they can be the first one to see the new catalogue or learn about next season's products or services.

How to promote your newsletter over support channels

Promoting your email newsletter via support channels cannot be done randomly.

There are certain rules that need to be followed in order to do this right:

- Make sure the support provided met the customer expectations. In no circumstances can the help desk promote your newsletter if the customer didn't get a good customer experience out of your support. Three things to take into account to measure the support experience should be the ease of contact, the response time, and the customer satisfaction.
- Ensure your support agents have the right messaging to promote your email campaigns and that they are able to adapt the benefits highlighted based on the use case of each individual customer. To make their life easy, define several support scenarios and draft the appropriate message for each of them.

Store consent by keeping a record of how you obtained the express consent of each new subscriber. That includes: the data subject who gave the consent, when the consent was obtained, and the specific purpose for which the consent was given. This is mandatory under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

About The Authors



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