

# MORE SUBSCRIBERS

**100 Quick Tips To Generating  
More Subscribers To Your Email List!**



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# Introduction

People develop lists for many things they do in their lives. If you have a party or a wedding, there's a guest list. If you are a member of a club or organization, there's a membership list. In fact, you're probably on lists that you don't even know about, like those dreaded telemarketer lists. Lists are an organizational tool we use in many aspects of our lives. We even have grocery lists. Lists have stood the test of time for one reason—they're effective!

There are many types of business, and even a wider variety of customers. No matter what type of business you're running—online, actual brick and mortar, small business, large business—you have to have a way to stay in touch with your current customers and potential customers. Practically everyone has an email account. You can probably count on your hands the number of your customers that don't have one. For that reason, building an email list is one of the most effective, inexpensive ways to grow your business.

Email correspondence is also easy for you. You only have to prepare the newsletter or email with your current information or promotions once. After you prepare it, with a few clicks of a mouse, you can send it to every customer you have. Whether the customer is across town or across the world, they can receive your valuable information in a matter of seconds.

Prior to email, you had to not only write the mailings, you had to address every envelope, determine the amount of postage you needed, put on the postage, and lug all the envelopes to the post office. It could take hours for larger businesses. For small businesses, especially those just starting out with an employee of one—you—it not only took a lot of time, it took away from your other important duties. Your time is valuable to the success of your business, so having an email list and sending information in that manner allows you the time to tend to those other tasks.

If you don't have a clue where to start, then you've found the right resource. You've taken the first step. Remember, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step." Now get ready to take the journey. Learn how to build an email list that will expand your business boundaries beyond what you've ever dreamed.

# Chapter 1: What is List Building?

Building an email mailing list is done much the way you do a grocery list...one item, in this case subscribers, at a time. When you build a list, you grow the list every time you add a new subscriber to the list. Usually, when a subscriber wants to sign up for your mailing list, they furnish you with their email. They give you specified contact information for your list, which can include name, email, location, DOB, etc. In return, you give them certain information, a special offer, or a free gift from you. Sound easy? It can be, but the key is to know how to go about doing it.

The process of list building isn't a new one. It's been around for a long time. You used to fill out your name, address, and phone number on sheets of paper at places like trade shows and seminars. You would receive mailings throughout the year from these companies. Today, some people still prefer offline list building. If you do, that's fine. You can also, however, do it online by using your website, blog, or video posts. A combination of offline and online techniques can be a powerful combination. There are a lot of different ways you can increase how rapidly your list grows and the size your mailing list ends up being. If you're a new business owner, you're wondering how long it takes. There is no set amount of time. It all depends on you. It depends on the methods you use and the effort you put into building the list. Once you start building the list, however, you never stop. You'll always have new people who hear

about you and want to know what all you have to offer. Every time you do, you add them to your list and your list continues to grow.

You'll also have people from time to time that will unsubscribe from your list. If you don't have new contacts to take their place, your business can't grow. That's why it is important for you to continue your efforts of list building throughout the operation of your business. Many times people go after list build aggressively during the early stages of their business and then kind of forget about it. It's important to the success of your business that your list continues to grow.

Now that you know what list building is. What's next? Before you begin to use any of the tips in this book to begin building a quality email list, there are a few other things you should think about:

- Who your target market is—When you begin to prepare your list, you need to know what kind of people you are targeting. If you do, you won't be wasting your time sending emails to people who have no interest whatsoever in your business or what you have to offer. A targeted group helps you focus on those people you can easier convert to customers to keep on your mailing list.

You want to keep them informed of what's going on with your business, any sales or promotions you're offering, or industry news. It doesn't matter how large your list is if you're wasting your time sending your information to people who don't care about it. Having a large list isn't as effective as having a smaller quality list. By knowing

who you're targeting and using techniques to reach those people, you can build a quality list of email subscribers.

- Whether or not you want to, you need to allow people to “unsubscribe”—Realize, that if people do this, they aren't doing it to hurt you. It doesn't mean they don't like you or your business anymore. It simply means they no longer want to receive emails.

People may be really interested in what you have to offer. You meet their needs and make the sell. Then, their needs are met and they have no interest in receiving emails from you. Giving them the chance to unsubscribe from your email list allows them to remove themselves, and keeps your email campaigns focused on those who are interested.

- You want to have permission to send them your emails—Don't send emails to people without their permission. Your list should be something they sign up for. If you send unsolicited emails, they will mark you as spam, and never receive the information. Remember, the people you're sending them too are busy too. Sometimes you open your inbox to so many advertisements and newsletters that it can be overwhelming. If they don't want to receive your email, you may not only not get their business, you may hurt any future dealings with the person.
- You have to market to subscribers—You need to learn how to market what you have to your subscribers while simultaneously continuing to

build your list. You can't just keep trying to grow the list and forget about those you have. You want to keep those you have, so you need to market to them as well. One of the best ways to build your subscriber list is to give your subscribers valuable information on a regular basis. If you do this while you're trying to get new users, it will make it easier to get the new ones.

You might find out that building the list is actually the easy part. Getting the most out of your subscribers can take a bit more effort. It all starts, however, with building the list. You have to gather people's contact information so you will have the ability to communicate with them from that time forward.

## Chapter 2: Benefits of Building a List of Subscribers

Lots of people, online and offline, use internet marketing to attract potential customers and build their email contact list.

You probably either know or you're beginning to realize that list building isn't a trivial matter for your business. Having a good list of subscribers can be beneficial to your business in many different ways. Here are a few of them:

- You can contact the people on your list each time you have a new blog post. They will not only read the email you send them, they'll want to view the blog, and it will send a lot of traffic to your site. You want to be sure you don't give them the information in the blog in the newsletter. If you do, then why should they ever visit your blog? It works the same in reverse. If you tell them everything in your blog, then why should they ever subscribe to your list?
- It's easy to let your customers know about any new products/services you have to offer. You simply email everyone on your list and all your readers and fans will want to check out what you have to offer them on the sales page. Often, you can let your email readers know that they are getting an advance peek at what you're offering. Let them know they have an opportunity to get it first before any other customers. This will give them an even greater incentive to go view your site or come into your store.
- What good is having a sale if no one knows about it? Email lists allow you to let your customers know about all your sales and

promotions at the same time, which can cause them to want to buy. Advertising campaigns to advertise sales can be quite expensive. Advertising through your email contact list, however, doesn't cost you a thing. It only takes a few minutes and everyone on your list knows about your sale. In addition, if you're having good offers, their friends will know about it soon too by word of mouth.

- Search engines sometimes change algorithms. When they do, you may be ranked lower than you were before. Having a strong, quality list allows you to contact everyone directly, so you don't have to worry so much about where you fall on the search engine list. Search engine results are important, but having a good quality email list can be worth its weight in gold.
- Lists help you build long-term relationships—Many shoppers online like to browse and look around before they buy. They don't just jump on a site and purchase. If you stay in contact with them by email, when they're ready to purchase what you have to offer, you'll be the first place they think about looking for what they need.
- Lists can be profitable—As previously stated, if you have a new product, people who you have established trust with will be the first to buy it. What happens, however, is that this gives you a large amount of sales right at the launch of the product. You don't have to wait for months to show a profit from the new product.

You can also make profits by offering special discounts or promotions only to those who are subscribed to your list. If you specifically describe what you're offering as it may make others want to sign up as well.

Residual income is another way it can be profitable. If you offer a few advertising spots on the newsletter you send out to your list, you can make a little extra money. This will help you offset some of the cost you spend on things like web hosting.

## Chapter 3: 100 Quick Tips to Generating More Subscribers to Your Email List

Now you know what an email list is, and you know how it can benefit your company. What you're wondering is, "How do I build one?" There are a lot of effective ways to build a good strong email list. Which way you choose to do it will depend on the business you operate, and your own personal preferences. The best way to do it is by doing it in a way that works for you. If you try one and it doesn't work for you, try another. Try many different ways at the same time to do it until you find combination that is effective for you.

There are many methods you can use to build your list. There are also some things you should do and not do. Below is a compiled list of 100 tips you can use that will help you in growing a quality email contact list that can help your company grow:

1. Ask people for their contact information—You were probably taught as a child, "If you want something, ask for it." It's so simple that a lot of people forget it. Whether you're at a trade show and meet the people in person, or whether it's online, asking is so simple. Think about it. If someone reads all of your article, they're definitely interested. They must like the way you write, or they would have clicked out. The end of the article is a perfect place to ask people to sign up.

2. Post “Popular Posts” on your site—This can work two ways. People may read your post and it may not be what they want. They can see all your other titles and see something else that does give them what they want. They may also read your article and think it was good. When they see you’ve written a lot of other related posts, it will give you a certain amount of credibility. This may make them want to sign up for your email newsletter.
3. Give them valuable content—If they read something you post and it’s valuable to them, they want more. Give them the opportunity to sign up for more, and they will. On the other hand, give them content that stinks, and they will never want to look at anything you have to offer again.
4. Encourage your email readers to reply—Give them a real email address to reply to. Nothing is more impersonal than getting an email that says [donotreply@leavemealone.com](mailto:donotreply@leavemealone.com). If you never let them reply, how do you know if they like what you write, or if they have questions?
5. Encourage people who read your posts to write comments—When they leave a comment, make sure your comment box has them fill in their email address. This way you’ve begun the relationship immediately. You’ve started communication with the person and you have their contact information to stay in touch with them.

6. Tell them what you want them to do—People read your posts and wonder what to do next. You don't want them to just click out. Give them a clear call-to-action message. Tell them to sign up for your newsletter or ebook. Tell them to subscribe to your posts. Give them something to do next that will give you their contact information.
7. Don't clutter your sidebar—Don't overload with widgets, links, categories, etc. This can cause it to work against you. Make sure your signup form is at the top of your sidebar.
8. Make sure your sidebar has these four things—email signup form, search bar, ads (if you have them) and popular posts.
9. Use pop-ups—People are so used to seeing these now that they simply type in their name and email address without giving it a second thought. Some people, however, are annoyed by pop ups. This is where knowing your target market helps. If you have a market that you feel will be annoyed, then don't use them.
10. Include more than one signup form—Not everyone reads every part of your posts. If you just put your sign up form in one place only, they might miss it. If you have it in several places, however, you increase the chance that they will see it and be able to sign up on your list.
11. Offer your readers an incentive to sign up—People love to get things for free. Giving them free videos, reports, ebooks, or even free gifts of

some sort is a great reason for them to sign up. Make sure your incentive is relevant and provides value for the person subscribing.

12. Make testimonials available—If someone is debating whether or not to sign up and they see others like what you have to offer, they're more likely to give you a try. Testimonials can be a strong influence. Be prepared, however, people may leave negative comments. If they do, use these as a chance to learn how to make your business better.
13. Go half-and-half—Give them half of a post with valuable content and have them sign up to get the second half. It's kind of like a cliff-hanger in post form. Cut it off right at a point where they have to know what the next thing you have to say is.
14. Offer credentials—This will stress that the information you have to offer them will be of value to them. It gives you a sense of professionalism.
15. Craft your welcome message—While this may not truly be a tip to getting someone's email address, it certainly is a tip to keeping them on your list. Your welcome email is their first correspondence with you. Make it something that will make them glad they registered.
16. Encourage your readers to ask questions—When someone reads your post, if you encourage them to ask you questions, you can have them give their name and email for the answer.

17. Give them a “teaser” question—Make it something they feel they need to know the answer to. Promise to answer it in the first email.
18. Give them content that only subscribers can get—Make it something valuable, and they’ll want to sign up.
19. List interesting topics that will be in your upcoming newsletter—Make them interesting enough for them to want to read it.
20. Make sure to utilize your cards—Your business cards are a valuable list building tool. Make sure to include all your contact information including your URL. This will give them the chance to see your content and signup for your email list.
21. Networking and referrals—From time to time, send out a “thank you” email to your current list members. Thank them for being a part of your list, and ask them for referrals.
22. Offer a gift for referrals—You could offer a free ebook to people that refer a certain amount of referrals. Another option is to give them a discount when that number of referrals is given.
23. Add “Opt-in” boxes—These can be on your blog or website and give your readers a chance to opt-in.
24. Give them the ability to “unsubscribe”—This will help to insure that those who are getting your emails are those that want them.

25. Don't sell—People are more responsive if you serve instead. When you serve them, they're more likely to give you their business.
26. Remember your "About" page—Google Analytics show that the about page is one of the most popular pages on any site. When they read about you, give them the chance to sign up for your email contact list.
27. Don't spam people—Make sure you only send your email to those who want it.
28. Use the "double opt in" process—Have them sign up, and your auto responder sends them an email to confirm their subscription to your email list.
29. Create a hook—You want to hook them. You can do it through enticing information, or through a free gift that is valuable enough for you to sell, but you're giving it away. Anything that draws them to you.
30. List information/products in addition to your free gift—Try to find information or products you feel your target market will be most interested in and provide information about them in addition to the free gift.
31. Have a squeeze page—Make it a page dedicated to signing up and your free gift.

32. Create a newsletter—If you don't have one yet, start one.  
Newsletters are a great way to stay in touch with your customers and give them updated information.
33. Let them get to know you on a “trial” basis—When you first meet someone, pushing the sell can hurt you. Push a newsletter instead, and let the person get to know you a little at a time. If they try you and like you, they'll buy from you in the future.
34. Contact professional trade organizations—Some trade organizations will give you their membership list for free and some charge a small fee. Once you get the list, you can contact them with a direct email and offer them your free newsletter.
35. Share the wealth—If you have subscribers and you find another great newsletter you think they'd enjoy, recommend it. They'll appreciate you for it, and the company you referred will feel obligated to recommend you to others.
36. Include newsletter info in presentations—When you give presentations, don't just tell them your newsletter/email information. Make it part of your PowerPoint presentation. Put it up on the screen along with your company name and your URL.
37. Press releases—Write a good quality, no cost guide that people who visit your site can download. Then write a press release about the guide

and send it to trade publications. Give them the choice to sign up for your email list when they download.

38. Make it easy for them—You want to make it as easy for people to join your subscriber list as possible. Be sure to include things in your online communications such as Join My List link and/or share it with your social network.
39. Get contacts on-the-go—You always want to be prepared to meet new contacts to sign up. If you have an iPhone or iPod Touch, there's an app that will let you can collect contacts anywhere.
40. Have a staff competition—Give a prize for the staff member who collects the most email addresses from customers.
41. Promote your email campaign in print—Use direct mail, brochures, or business cards that encourage customers to sign up online. .
42. Use your email signature—In your email signature you can include a your Join My List link. These hyperlinks make it easy for the subscriber.
43. Have a prize drawing—These can be simple. The point is to have a prize drawing once-in-a-while for people who join your list. One simple way is to put a container near your register so they can drop business cards. Offer a prize and announce the winner in an email.

44. Join forces with other businesses—Have another business featured as a guest writer in your newsletter, and have them feature you. When write, give people the information about how to join your list.
45. Use an email marketing service—People tend to be more willing to register because they know they can unsubscribe safely.
46. Use social media—Put your sign-up form on your Facebook business page and encourage fans to sign up.
47. Learn your market—Know what tactics work for them. If you try something and they don't respond to it or you get negative feedback, stop it.
48. Have a visible privacy policy—This will help you to build trust. People are hesitant to sign up if they feel their information is going to be shared with others.
49. Request Customer Information—Keep sign up list at your checkout counter so people can register.
50. Stay organized—Building a contact list requires organization. If you don't have a spread sheet, you probably should create one. It will make it easier for you to keep track of your customers.

51. Be honest, persuasive, and clear—Subscribers will want to know what they will be getting by joining your list. Be honest and clear about it, and persuade them to join.
52. Don't bury them—Send them a regular newsletter and occasional emails with updates and promotions. Don't bury them in unnecessary email or they'll unsubscribe from your list or spam you.
53. Give them a sample newsletter—Have a link on your site that they can visit to see a sample of your newsletter so they will know what they will be getting before they sign up.
54. Archive past newsletters—Put these past newsletters on your website and make them available. This will also increase organic search traffic.
55. Link to other websites—Offering your customers links to other sites or newsletters you feel they will enjoy will be appreciated.
56. Joint ventures—You can join a JV with other newsletter publishers and mention each other's publications.
57. Write an ebook—This will give you credibility as an author, and it's something you can give away as a sign up bonus.
58. Conduct a webinar—Make it one your viewers have to register for. Ask for permission to send them future email mailings.

59. 17. Mention your newsletter during your webinar and provide a subscription link. This will give those who haven't opted-in an additional chance to do so.
60. "Tell-A-Friend" buttons—Add a link or a button on your newsletter or website so your subscribers can be able to easily invite a few friends.
61. Allow for reprints—You can allow others to use your newsletter as long as you make sure to specify that the content and/or links aren't modified. You'll also want to make sure it contains your bio box and it isn't altered in any way.
62. Place a "subscribe" button on the newsletter—You're probably wondering why you should do this if they've subscribed already. Sometimes friends will forward your newsletter to their friends. By adding a subscribe button or a link you're giving their friends who enjoy it a chance to subscribe.
63. Optimize for rankings in search engines—Use keywords effectively so your newsletter will show up in search results.
64. Make it "newsy"—Do something like have subscribers complete a controversial survey. Take the results of the survey, turn them into a story, and let the world know about it. You'll get free exposure.
65. Use customer satisfaction surveys—When they are completed, ask for permission to post their results in newsletters and/or promotions.

66. Don't guess about effectiveness—Actually track how effective your methods of advertising. There are services available to help you. Keep what works and discard the rest.
67. Pre-recorded audio messages—You can enhance your squeeze page with a pre-recorded audio message that tells all your visitors why they should subscribe.
68. Squeeze page videos—You can also add a video message that will allow potential subscribers to both see and hear you
69. Start a free blog—You can use services that are easy to use. Blogs are yet another way to communicate with your visitors and helps with email list building.
70. Put your newsletter subscription form on your blog—Make sure you put the form on every page of your blog so those who read it can subscribe.
71. Blogs and emails work together—You can remind your subscribers when your next blog posting comes out so they won't miss it.
72. Use a list-building service—Services like GetSubscribers are responsible co-registration services that can help you increase subscriptions.

73. Advertise your newsletter in other newsletters or ezines—You can find several services online to help you find newsletters that can help you reach your target viewer market.
74. Industry directories/websites—Use these for the promotion of your newsletter/emails.
75. Sponsor contests that are offered by others—By sponsoring other people’s contests, you can gain exposure without having to give anything else away.
76. Write articles—You can write articles many different “article” sites online. You’ll want to be sure to add a bio box. In the box, put the link that leads to your site or your email address.
77. Start conversations online—Go to discussion boards or forums to talk to people. You can even visit chat sites like Yahoo. Answer their questions and let them know how they can subscribe.
78. Use credit card receipts—You can place an “opt-in” link on the credit card receipt of your customers so they’ll have it with their purchases.
79. Invoices—Include a message to sign-up on all your invoices
80. Attend conventions and/or trade shows—If you network at these events, you can get a large number of new subscribers.

81. Give away forms to sign-up—When you speak to people or hold seminars, hand out these forms to promote your newsletter.
82. Trade show lead generation forms—You can include newsletter subscriptions in them. Ask each booth visitor for if you can send them your newsletter.
83. Advertise email promotions—You can put these promotions on things like shipping containers, cards for direct mailing or packing slips that all have links advertised they can use to get to your site.
84. VIP status—Allow your customers either VIP status or some type of loyalty program membership when they sign up for the list.
85. Let your employees help—Ask them to include things in their email signature. This can be something like “subscribe to the (your company) email/newsletter.”
86. Call center customer service/sales—They can ask customers and prospects and take their information if they’d like to receive newsletters or promotional emails.
87. Direct mail, print adds or catalogs—You can print and use these to encourage email subscriptions.

88. Send postcards to all of your customers that offer them a special if they sign up for the email newsletter—This works great for offline businesses with physical mailing lists.
89. Review your offline advertising—Find creative ways to insert opportunities for people to subscribe.
90. Traffic—Find more ways to increase traffic to your site. The more people that visit your site, the more people you can sign up.
91. Collect email at every contact point—This can be done with both customers and potential customers. This way you know they won't miss the chance to sign up.
92. Be proactive—Email lists won't build themselves. You have to take an active role in building it. Sure you can offer them the chance and think, "If they want it, they'll subscribe." That's one step. What if you put that offer in the wrong place? They may never see it. That's why you have to review your strategies and try new things. You never stop working to find new, creative strategies for building your list.
93. Don't promote for the sake of promoting—If you're going to promote another business in your newsletter or email, make sure they're a quality business. Also make sure they will be offering your customers something of value. The businesses you promote should compliment what you do.

You may get opportunities from many businesses wanting you to promote them and promising to promote you. Check out the companies to make sure they're a trustworthy business. Nothing can hurt you worse than recommending a business that gives poor quality/services to your customers.

94. Consider making your free gift in print format—People are busy. They can't skim audio or video gifts. With a written format, such as an ebook, they can skim it, highlight it, write on it, etc. This lets them get a lot more value from it.

95. Personalize your emails—You'll have your subscriber's names, so use them. You can also get other target market information from your contacts such as location or age. This helps you add bits of information in your emails that make them feel personal. It makes it easier to form relationships with these people. It also makes them feel like they know you well enough to share your information with their friends.

Another value of getting the information is so you can adjust your benefits/promotions accordingly. You don't need to mention the "snow shovel" you have for sale in Southern CA. By having their location, you know what to promote and where to do it.

96. Let them know how they'll benefit from signing up—People want to know what they're going to be getting. Their main thought is, "How will this benefit me?"

97. Ask yourself, “If it were me, why SHOULD I subscribe”—This can be powerful. Read your material and think, “Do I think this is valuable enough to register for myself?” If it’s something you wouldn’t register for, why do you think others will?
98. Put yourself in their place in each email—Ask yourself, “Why shouldn’t I hit the delete button?” Make it good enough that they will want to save and share.
99. Pay attention to unsuccessful sends—These can happen for a number of reasons such as: the server may be busy, the recipient’s box may be full, they may have given you an invalid email address, or you may have entered it incorrectly. After all, it’s very common for people to accidentally type .con instead of .com.

If the email was returned due to a busy server, you’ll want to try to send the message again later so they won’t miss your email. If it was an invalid email, you’ll want to delete them. If you’ve entered the wrong information, then you’ll want to correct it immediately and send the email again.

100. Utilize traditional marketing tools—You can use things such as brochures, articles, whitepapers, etc that highlight your business. In each one, of course, give your email information and the opportunity to subscribe.

There you have it—100 tips to building your list. This probably seems like a lot of information to you. The good thing is, that with that many tips, surely you'll be able to find a few that work for you. You obviously know you want to build a successful email campaign, or you wouldn't be looking for tips to do it. The next step is to DO something. That's the only way you're going to build a successful email campaign. These tips are useless if you never put them into use.

Consider this list like a giant box of chocolates. They're all "good stuff." Some you'll like better than others. Look over it and try a few. If you don't like the results you get, toss them. The ones that are good, however, devour. Go after them full force. Give it everything you've got, and you can build a successful list.

## Chapter 4: Keeping Your Contacts

You've made it over the first hump. You've gotten them to subscribe to your email mailing list. Now, comes the hard part...keeping them on your mailing list. You need to keep them happy so they will want to stay on your list. When subscribers first sign up, they get all excited about it. They'll always read your welcome email. Don't forget this. Your welcome email is the most important email you'll ever send them, so craft it well. Make them excited about what's coming next.

If you wait to worry about subscriber engagement until you start losing subscribers, it's too late. You need to worry about it from the start. You want them to stay engaged from the time they start as a subscriber and stay that way.

You need to maintain your email list well so you can be sure it's most effective. You can do this by:

- Segmenting your list—You don't want to just send everything you have to everyone on your list. As your list grows, segment it into certain categories. Know what your subscriber's interests are and you'll only send them what they want to read. You can create smaller, targeted emails instead of throwing all your information in one. If you throw it all into one, many people will start reading, find

it uninteresting, and never make it to the part that's meant for them.

One great way to do this is to have several categories and let your subscriber choose the list they want to belong to. For example: If you're a clothing retailer, you might want to have mailings targeted at specific apparel, like men's, children's, women's clothing. You could also have "plus size" clothing as an option if you carry it. Travel agents can separate by types of vacations like tropical getaways, cruises, ski trips, etc. This way, you're giving each subscriber what they want, and they'll be happier about receiving your mailings.

- Keep it an up-to-date list—Obviously, as previously listed, you'll want to get rid of any email addresses that aren't valid. If you received a bounce notice from a customer on your list, and you feel you have the address correct, you can always check with the customer individually. Their email address may have changed. If it has, and they want to continue to be on your contact list, then you can add the new address. Keeping your list up-to-date helps keep it a quality list.

A low-quality list may have a direct impact on the success of your emails. They may never be read or may be sent to spam. If you have a high-quality, up-to-date list, however, it can have a direct impact on the growth of your business.

- Keep them engaged—Many people feel that if the people on your contact list don't open their emails from you for a long period of time you could cut them from your list. I feel if they wanted to unsubscribe, they would have. One way to know for sure that your contacts are interested in what you have to say is to keep them engaged. Ask them questions. Ask them if they have questions they would like to ask you.
- Realize that relationships are important—You should try many different methods to build relationships with your customers. Obviously, quality service is going to be one way, but personalization goes a long way too. Take the time to personally respond to any comments you receive. This not only lets you know they're interested in what you have to say, it helps build a relationship with your contacts. It is often the difference between whether or not they stay a contact or they become a customer.

One really good way to build relationships is to recognize their birthdays. It's simple to do if you ask for their date of birth when they register for your list. You simply post them on whatever calendar program you use that reminds you of important dates, and you're automatically reminded. Send them an e-card with a free gift or a discount. They feel like they're important to you. By building a relationship with your contacts, you will be building trust in you and your business.

- Get your subscribers to interact with you—Ask for questions or feedback. Send a brief email survey. Ask them for questions you'd like to know the answers to from them. Interacting with them will make them feel like they are part of your family.

You may be in a business with people who don't have a lot to do during the day, such as the elderly. They will really appreciate the interaction. They'll answer your questions and give you comments on a regular basis if you ask for them. These people are usually the ones who will complete surveys for you too, because they have more time on their hands. It's also because they like to feel needed and appreciated. Letting them know you appreciate them can go a long way.

- Connect outside of email—Interacting with your contacts through email is great, but connecting with them outside of email is even better. This can be gold for a business. Connect with them in social circles and on social networks. Add them as friends on your Facebook, and put them in your communities on Google+. Follow them on Twitter. The more connections you have with your contacts, the more they'll remember you. When they're looking for what you have to offer, they won't forget you. Social network interaction offers potential for increasing your reach. The key, however, is to create genuine customer relationships. You want those that go beyond the links you make. It's the same with email contacts. It's up to you to see to it that it goes beyond the email.

The chance for a real relationship begins the minute they receive an email from you in their inbox.

- Continue to give your email readers quality content—Content is the number one reason you'll keep a contact. It isn't because the email is from you and you're so special. (Well, if your contact is your mother, she'll read every word because you're so special, but others...not so much.) They stay your contact and read your material because they like what you're offering them. They want to feel your emails are valuable enough that they want to keep looking for more. They also want them to be valuable enough to share with their friends.
- Know your audience—Of course you know your target market. You know exactly what type of customers you have and how to reach them. Do you know your audience though? That can be totally different. You might know you're selling farm equipment, for example. Are you selling it to older farmers who didn't graduate from high school? It can make a big difference in your emails. No, you don't want to talk down to them, but you do want to use words and examples they can understand. Using dollar words are useless, for example, on someone who was forced to quit school early to help support their family. Know who you're writing to. It will help what you're writing be more effective and more appreciated.

- Remember your promise—You promised them something when they signed up. You told them what you'd send them and you implied that it would be of value to them. Don't stray from that promise. Trust is important. If a customer loses trust in you, you'll lose their business.
- Your email is not the center of your contact's universe—They're busy, and they have much more important things to do than read your email messages. Back in the "old" days, you had to come home from work, sit down at your desk, wait for the dial-up connection to complete and sign in to your account before you could read a single email. It was part of your day. Emails were fewer then, and you took the time to read them carefully.

Today, with technology at our finger tips, we do everything on-the-go. You tap the screen, glance at the email, scan it, and make the decision whether to read it or tap your screen again and send it to the trash. Since your email isn't the most important things in their lives, you have to give them a reason to want to read it. Make them take time in their busy schedule to read and enjoy the valuable information you give them. After you do that a few times, they'll look forward to it. If you never do it, then they'll unsubscribe and go on with the more important things in their lives.

## Conclusion

Email is the primary method of communication for most small businesses. Since it is equally important to consumers, it makes it a great way to promote and build your business. Email can be used to keep you on your customer's and potential customer's minds. Growing that all-important email contact list, however, can be a slow process. The more efficiently you do it, the less painful it will be and the more effective that list will be.

No matter how you look at it, there just aren't any shortcuts to building a large, quality list of subscribers. There's no magic lamp to rub, or wand to wave. It has to be something that is crafted. It takes hard work and discipline on your part to create a quality contact list. I often wondered why Darrin Stevens (Bewitched) didn't let his wife twitch her nose on his behalf. After all, he was in marketing. She could have made his career soar. I guess, when it comes down to it, however, it's about feeling good about yourself. It's about doing something you can take pride in. When you've crafted a good list of quality subscribers that you know will enjoy and appreciate what you have to offer, you own it! It's something you can take pride in.

Building a quality email connection list isn't exactly rocket science. There are two main reasons why people fail when it comes to creating their list:

1. Dedication—They start out with gusto and work on building the list. Over time, they get bored with it. They begin slacking off a bit. When they start to slack off in one area, like building the list, they begin to slack off in other areas, like preparing the content. Poor quality content KILLS! Before they know it, their entire email marketing campaign has crashed. They have a low-quality list of unsatisfied subscribers that probably won't be on the list much longer.
2. Failure to prepare—It's important that you plan your marketing before you begin to collect email addresses. Too often, businesses start out just collecting email addresses with no real plan of action as to how to use them. You should have your email structure, templates and processes prepared before you get the first name on your list.

You want to have your welcome message ready, because you want to welcome them within the first 24 hours. You want to use it to set their expectations for future emails you plan to send them, so it takes time to craft just the right one. A poorly crafted, rush job welcome letter that's full of typographical errors or poor-quality writing may make them add you to spam instead of adding you to their address book. This will give you a high unsubscribe rate before you ever get started.

Realize that while building a list that can stand the test of time may be ideal, it isn't realistic. Lists change frequently. People move, businesses

go out of business, people's needs change, or they simply don't like what you have to offer them. Whatever the reason is, they change. You need to prepare in advance for these changes, and constantly find ways to keep your list up-to-date.

It's not just about getting names on that list. It's more about getting people to engage with your business through email. Thinking of it this way as you begin to build your list will produce much better results than starting the process by looking at it as simply "building a list." They need to be able to reply to you, so it's important that when you plan your email campaign, you design it so they can. You need to keep up a two-way dialog with your contacts whenever possible to keep them engaged and enthusiastic about your email.

Too often, people approach the list building process as simply a tactic without ever thinking of what's going to happen after they have the subscriber. They think, "Oh, this isn't so hard." True enough. It's not difficult to just get names on your list. It does take effort, however, to build that quality list and to keep those subscribers happy. When you design your email campaign, it's kind of like having a party. You prepare for it, people come to the party, you invite people in, and they look around and decide if this is a place they want to return to. If you prepare properly, develop a quality list, and then follow it up with quality information, you will have a successful email campaign.