business&marketing

10 Easy Ways To Build Your Email Subscriber List

by Megy Karydes

Uploading photos to Instagram or Pinterest can help customers see your store's personality, but if you're building up fans at the expense of building your email list, it's a costly mistake.

Unlike social media platforms, retailers own their email lists. At any given time, those platforms may choose to make your fan base available to you at a cost, or they might shut down. The likelihood of either of those things happening may be slim, but it reminds us that they're owned and managed by other companies.

Email clutter is an issue, but most customers look forward to receiving email updates from retailers when they've opted to receive them. Yet for all the benefits email marketing affords us when it comes to communicating with our customers, the challenge remains *getting* those email addresses in the first place and then *giving recipients a reason* to open your emails. Here are 10 ways to build your email list today:

Get an accountability buddy. It's the new year so start it right and find someone for whom you can be accountable to build your list. Make it a competition and invite a fellow retailer from another part of town. At the end of each week, check in and see how much you've grown your list and what you've done. You'll grow your list faster if someone is encouraging you along the way.

Use social media. Include a link on all of your social media to your subscription page so your fans can opt in. Provide an incentive for them to share their emails. Some platforms (like Facebook) allow you to add this option through a third-party app.

Reconnect with inactive subscribers. Some email service providers can generate a list of recipients who haven't opened your emails. Reach out to them to see if it's your material that's not appealing or if it's hitting their Spam box. You want a clean list and by reaching out to them, you're more likely to impress them by showing your care and they'll be on the lookout for your emails.

To care is to share. Ask current recipients to share your email with one person who might find the information useful. Remember, your e-newsletter shouldn't just be about product or about your shop. Can you include a "things to do this month in {insert your town here}" so customers have a reason to hit the "forward" button to friends? Aim to make one e-newsletter a month "share-worthy" and test its impact.

Blog. Piggybacking off #4, there is no reason to write a blog a new content for an email newsletter. Use your blog post *as* yo Not only will your email newsletter be packed with richer co the blog post can be one of those "share-worthy" emails.

Do an email list exchange. While you never want to sell to another business, offer to send an email from another bu your list (and encourage your customers to sign up for *their* exchange for the same courtesy by the other business. Test a few businesses that complement yours and see if your list worth exploring more of these opportunities.

Business cards. This lowly printed piece has been all but by many retailers and I'm not sure why. Create one with yo information and include a call to action on the card asking subscribe to your emails.

Pitch yourself to a podcast. Podcast hosts are always lo great people to interview. Remind listeners they can sign up emails. The information is often added to the show notes customers can find you long after the podcast airs.

Grab emails at every corner. Ask for emails from atten come to special events, at check-out, on your blog, guest bl table tents throughout your store, you get the point. Consi opportunity to engage with customers as an opportunity t their email address.

Finally, **welcome new subscribers** with an email and opportunity to ask them if they have any friends who might a the email as well. Offer to give both the initial subscriber and *email subscriber* a percentage off their next purchase from yo

Have any great tips on how to grow your email list or h customers to open them? Email me at Megy@KarydesConsul so I can include the best tips in upcoming issues.

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