

LIST BUILDING FIRE

**50 POWERFUL WAYS
To Build Your List To The Thousands**



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Introduction

If you don't yet have an email list, you're missing out. It doesn't matter what you're selling or promoting, a list is an essential marketing tool. It creates an inner circle of perhaps hundreds or thousands of people who understand your business and have an interest in what it does. And it allows you to easily and profitably communicate with this inner circle on a daily basis.

In short, if you don't have a list, you need one. And, if you have a bad, unresponsive list, then you need to begin developing a better one and cultivating the people on your current list.

With that said, building a strong, responsive list is no easy task. If it were, everyone would have one. Fortunately for you, I created this book with people like you in mind: people who know that list building is essential, but who have yet to build a robust, profit-generating list.

In the rest of this book, I will discuss 50 different ways in which you can build a list. My hope is that you will settle on at least a handful of these techniques; and will put them to work immediately. If you can do that, you will see your list grow rapidly in both size and responsiveness.

1. Do Ad Swaps with other people in your industry

If you haven't heard of ad swaps before, the concept is quite intuitive: in exchange for incorporating someone's ad into your mailing, they agree to do the same for you. Typically, this is either done with someone in the same industry or in a related, but non-competing industry.

If done correctly, ad swaps can be both easy and profitable. You can initiate one by first looking for high traffic sites in your niche and in related niches. As you find them, start signing up for their respective newsletters. Monitor the content and decide whether or not it would be a good idea for your idea.

Once you have made the call, contact the list owner and initiate the swap. Let him or her know that you're a subscriber on his/her list; and then tell him/her all about your own list and your proposed idea.

Use this technique every 2-3 weeks and you should see your subscriptions climb rapidly over time.

2. Join Safelists networks

A safelist is a list of email addresses of individuals who have agreed to receive emails from other individuals on the list. By joining safelists, you can gain access to a large group of individuals who may be interested in joining your list.

Of course, as with any other marketing technique, when a particular medium is saturated with ads, the responsiveness to any one of those adds will fall. For this reason, expect your pitches to get relatively small responses.

With that said, if you join enough relevant lists and make your pitches periodically (to avoid the appearance of being a spammer), then you should have no problem picking up quite a few good leads from this strategy.

3. Place an opt-in form on your blog

Another good way to get subscribers is to simply put an opt-in form on your blog. If people like reading your content and find themselves coming back to read more, they may decide to opt-in to your newsletter, too. After all, why not put yourself on a list to get more of the content you're seeking out on a daily basis?

4. Create a Facebook fanpage

If you're a Facebook user, you've no doubt seen countless "fanpages" for various businesses. Virtually all businesses that wish to have a social media presence one. This is a practice you should adopt, too, if you want to develop a social media presence and use it to generate list subscribers.

In short, setting up a Facebook fanpage is not very different from setting up a profile. Just remember to incorporate all of the relevant information about your business on the page, along with links to your list and to various freebies. Also, consider giving people who "like" your fanpage discounts or coupons for various products.

5. Use banner advertising (list some banner networks)

Banner advertising has long been a mainstay of webmasters. While it is difficult for newcomers, it can be very rewarding if you spend the time to 1) create a good banner; and 2) find the right networks.

To get a good banner, consider spending \$50 on Elance.com. Next, place your banner ad in a rotating exchange (and also agree to put the code for other banners on your own site), such as this one: <http://www.nuacco.net/>.

Alternatively, consider one of the following two sites, which simply allow you to purchase a rotating banner slot on various sites: <http://www.adwords.com> or <http://www.adroll.com/>.

6. Create videos

When it comes to enticing people to join your mailing list, another good avenue you can take is to create video content and use it to promote your site. For example, you can create a series of instructional videos for something related to your niche and include them as content that will be available to newsletter subscribers. Furthermore, you can build up the value of this offer further by providing a couple free examples of these videos on YouTube and elsewhere.

7. Host teleseminars/webinars

Seminars are yet another promising way in which you can generate list subscribers. All you have to do is pick a date for a conference call (ideally, in the evening, when people will be free) to discuss your area of expertise. You might find this intimidating at first, but after you do it for a while, it will come naturally.

You can use GoToMeeting or GoToWebinar (<http://www.gotomeeting.com>) to host your teleseminar or webinar.

Of course, before you do the call, you should spend some time to plan out the content. Make sure that you know what you're going to say and how you're going to say it. During the call and at the end of the call, make explicit pitches for people to join your mailing list (and explain how it is even free to start with).

While you might think that hosting teleseminars is the slow path to gaining subscribers, keep in mind that these new subscribers are much more likely to be active than your others. They will feel a personal connection with you—having talked to you (or at least heard your voice) over the phone. This can easily translate into much more sales per person than your average prospect.

8. Use joint ventures

Another great way in which you can generate list subscribers is to setup joint ventures (JVs). A JV involves the creation of a working partnership between two business owners. In your case, you'll be making some sort of exchange related to list building. For instance, you might consider creating a product for which you will share the revenues; and your partner may in turn agree to do all of the relevant list-building activities.

9. Generate opt-ins through affiliate marketing

Affiliate marketing, while often used for direct sales, can also be used as a tool for list-building. That is, you can create a product, cleverly links within that product that suggest that readers sign-up for your list, and then allow affiliates to sell it for a nice commission. They'll make money; and you'll get subscribers.

10. Pay for referrals

Rather than indirectly using affiliate sales to generate subscriptions, you could also consider paying directly for referrals. You can do this by either purchasing leads formally; or by seeking out webmasters who are willing to divert traffic to your site.

Of course, if you wish to do the latter, you will have to setup a transparent system, so that your offer appears believable. In particular, you will have to setup an easy-to-check traffic counter that allows your referrers to check how much traffic you received from them. You will also need to pay an attractive commission on referrals.

11. Add a picture to your landing page

One way in which you can increase the number of subscriptions you get is to increase the your conversion rate. And an old trick for doing this is to make your landing page more personal. For starters, you will need to sign it. And furthermore, you will want to consider including a picture of yourself in the top right corner. Improving the conversion rate from 1% to 2% means you'll receive twice as many subscribers in a given week.

12. Split test landing pages

Another important part of generating subscribers is testing your existing system. If your existing system does a poor job of converting, then it needs to be improved. You can do this by a process call "split testing." This involves sending identical traffic streams (perhaps generated by Google AdWords) to different landing pages. You can then test which landing page generates a higher conversion rate; and can adopt that exclusively for future use.

13. Create a squeeze page

If you don't already have one, it is critical that you build a squeeze page specifically to capture email addresses for your list. A squeeze page is a short salespage with less than one paragraph of copy--or, more than likely, just a few bullet points. After the copy, include your signature and a box for visitors to enter a name and email address. Keep distractions minimal; and attempt to build the strongest case for your newsletter using the few words.

14. Use Google AdWords to generate prospects

As mentioned earlier, one good way to generate prospects for your list is to use Google AdWords: <http://www.adwords.com>. If you're not familiar with AdWords, it is a cost-per-click (CPC) advertising medium. That is, you create a text ad, select relevant keywords for it, and then pay only when someone clicks on your ad. In general, it is considered to be better-targeted and more cost-effective than other sources of traffic generation.

With this said, using Google AdWords to build your list essentially amounts to creating, split testing, and revising campaigns that send traffic to your list's squeeze page.

15. Free ebooks

Often, getting people to join a list is as simple as providing them with the right incentives. If you simply tell people to join the list because the content will be good, they won't know whether or not to trust you. However, if you provide them with a free ebook that they get after signing-up, they'll be much more likely to join.

Now, you might think "Won't they just cancel their subscriptions after joining?" And, in reality, some of them will. But your focus should be to draw people in, expose them to your content, and then attempt to convert them. If you fail to draw them in initially, then you have no hope of achieving your secondary goals.

16. Free reports

Similar to giving away free ebooks, give away free reports. These are often less expensive to produce and can have a similar effect. I personally suggest targeting a specific theme or creating a “how-to” report on a timely topic.

17. Add content to your site

When it comes to generating subscriptions, one of the most important things you can do is to put your subscription form in many places that receive traffic. One way in which you can do this is to add content to your site.

As an example, you could hire a writer using <http://www.elance.com> to produce several dozen articles based around relevant keywords. You could then add those articles to your site with a subscription form either in the margins, in the middle of the content, or in a pop-over.

The more articles you add, the more traffic you will generate, and the more opportunities you will have to generate subscriptions.

18. Keep customer information private

One thing that visitors dread is that you will resell their information to a third party; or will use it to spam. This is why it is important that you include a note below your opt-in form that explains that you will never sell subscriber information—and you will never spam people who join your list. This should help to increase your conversion rates.

19. Reward subscribers unexpectedly

While getting more subscribers from external sources is an important part of keeping your list active and growing, energizing your existing members and giving them a reason to promote you is arguably just as important.

One way in which you can do internal promotion is to reward your subscribers unexpectedly. When they receive some product or service that they weren't expecting to get, they will be pleasantly surprised and will be encouraged to promote your list (if only to help friends get the benefits).

20. Provide high-value products and services

In many cases, the most important thing you can do as a business owner is to provide high-value products and services. That is, whenever you sell your own products in your newsletter or whenever you refer people to affiliate products (or JV partners' products), make sure they are good. If you gain a reputation for promoting anything that makes you money—even if it isn't a good product—you'll quickly lose rapport with your list; and, as a result, you can expect them to stop drawing in new people and making additional purchases.

21. Buy ezine solo ads

Ezines offer a wide variety of different advertising instruments, but most of them amount to taking up a smaller or a larger portion of the total mailing. In the case of an ezine solo ad, you actually purchase the rights to all of the content in a single mailing.

Now, you might be tempted to rush to the closest ezine solo ad broker, buy up a bunch of solo ads, and then send off the first mailer you can draft, but this is definitely not the best approach. And, in fact, most who do it ultimately end up getting almost no traffic.

So, instead of doing this, here's what I suggest: start by finding a copywriter. Since you'll be writing a short solo ad, it won't cost much (in, comparison, say to 15 pages of long copy). Working with your copywriter, come up with a great deal to offer readers; and an accompanying great piece of copy.

Once you have your copy in hand, begin methodically seeking out good ezine matches. Start by subscribing to relevant ezines, and taking notes on the content style. For instance, is it typically loaded with ads? And how frequently does it send solo ads? And finally, is the content typically good?

Answering all of these questions is an important part of selecting your ezines. Once you have done this and have made your choices, either proceed with a purchase (if the option is available) or contact the list owner to see if he/she is willing to allow you to purchase a solo ad.

As a final word, I personally suggest that you run only one ad at a time, wait for the results, and then decide whether to proceed with the next ezine solo ad submission.

22. Cross-promote

If you don't have a lot of resources to sink into expensive forms of advertising, cross-promotion may be your best option. In its most disorganized form, cross-promotion involves finding other webmasters or list owners; and forming an agreement to promote each other's sites to your own visitors.

In addition to these disorganized or informal arrangements, there are also more formal arrangements. For instance, there are banner exchanges, <http://www.neobanners.com/>, which gives you promotion credits whenever you promote someone else (via a banner they add to the system).

In general, cross-promotion provides an inexpensive alternative to other methods of list advertising.

23. Keep your opt-in form above the fold

Getting subscriptions isn't simply a matter of sending thousands of visitors to your site. It involves both traffic generation and conversion strategies. One such strategy is to place your opt-in form above the "fold"—or the line that separates the content that visitors will see when they load the page from the content that they won't see.

Whenever the opt-in form is placed above the fold, visitors are more likely to see it before leaving the page; and are subsequently more likely to use the form to subscribe to your site.

24. Create guest posts

Another strategy for keeping your list active, energized, and interested in spreading the word is to periodically setup guest posts on your newsletter. You can select prominent individuals from your niche or outsiders you have relevant information. Whatever you do, make it interesting and engaging; and it will make your newsletters want to come back for more; and to tell others to do so, too.

25. Do product give-aways with your JV partners

A product give-away is an excellent way to generate attention, improve your relationship with your subscribers, and gain new subscribers. All you have to do is to find someone in your industry who has a number of excellent old products. You can then email this person; and suggest that you do a joint give-away on your respective lists. He/she can give away your products for free; and, in return, you can give away his/her products for free.

If you want to improve the chances of a good outcome, you might consider requiring people to “tell-a-friend” in order to gain access to the product download page. That is, in order to get access to the download link, they must send a form email to a friend to tell them about your mailing list.

26. Word of mouth advertising

While paid advertising and formal cross-promotional methods are an excellent way to boost subscriptions, informal word of mouth advertising is often the lifeblood of both small and large businesses. And fortunately, having many satisfied subscribers who want to tell friends about you is all it takes.

How can you do this? First, make sure your subscribers are happy. Ask yourself what you've done for them lately. Next, 1) subtly suggest that they promote your newsletter; and 2) give them incentives to promote your list.

27. Ask your readers to forward good emails

Every few emails, suggest that your readers forward newsletters that they like to friends. Additionally, make sure that these emails contain links people can use to subscribe to your list. If your readers like the email, and forward it to friends as a result, then you may easily be able to pick up some extra readers without putting in much additional work.

28. Use a 'Thank You' page

Another good way to build subscriber rapport—and this word of mouth advertisement—is to send new subscribers to a “thank you” page. This page should contain free, unadvertised bonuses, such as reports, audio content, and video content. Reaping this unexpected windfall of benefits for simply subscribing will encourage your new subscribers to pay you back via promotion.

29. Add more subscription forms

In general, adding more subscription forms gives site visitors more pathways through which they can find your list and join it. So take some time to work through your site and decide whether you can add new subscription forms. To save time, you might think of adding it in the same place on each page (i.e. on the right margin).

30. Eliminate barriers to signing up

In many cases, we create barriers to subscription. Through complicated forms, poorly-written copy, or misplacement of the sign-up field, we make it harder for people to subscribe. Remember: when it comes to list-building (or any other type of marketing), the “funnel” starts at free. So concentrate on getting all of your visitors to become list members. Once they’re on your list, let them decide whether or not they want to stay, and whether or not they want to buy.

31. Offer free examples

Before someone signs up for a list, they will want to have at least a rough idea of what they’re getting themselves into. That is, they will want to know if they’re signing up to be spammed legally; or whether they’re going to get regular, high-quality, inspiring content that makes a positive contribution to their lives.

One way you can help to remove the doubt that people might have about your list is to give them examples. For instance, you might consider creating a freely accessible archive of all of your past issues. Visitors can then browse this archive to see how frequently you pitch products, how frequently you provide free products, and how good the quality of your list content is.

32. Setup JVs with other list owners

As I mentioned earlier, cross-promotional methods are some of the least expensive ways to promote your business. And while they might take a while to take full effect, they can often generate tremendous results that will massively grow your list.

One particular type of cross-promotion is a cross-list joint venture partnership. This typically involves identifying a number of list owners who might be able to provide some type of joint venture partnership value. Below, I've included some of the possible cross-list JV partnerships you might consider:

i. Product Partnership

Very frequently, two partners will collaborate on the creation of a single product, which they will then promote to their own lists and to others. At first, you might see this as a means to sell products, not grow your list, but think again!

When your partner promotes the product to his or her list, your name and your site will now be associated with him/her. This will immediately endow you with the trust of his/her readers, which is something that could otherwise take you years to gain.

With these types of partnerships, more is almost always good. As long as you have enough time to manage each of your partnerships, adding additional products and promotional events to your calendar will only serve to expand your influence and gain you subscribers.

ii. Promotional Partnership

Instead of collaborating on the creation of a product, you might consider collaborating on the creation of a joint marketing scheme. That is, rather than simply agreeing to cross-promote each other on your own lists, you could agree to promote each other in a more broad sense. This collaboration might involve referring each other to clients and to individuals in the inner circles of your respective businesses.

iii. Specialized Partnerships

Instead of adopting either one of the strategies above, you might consider adopting a more specialized partnership. That is, you might focus on product creation (and, thus, back-end promotion of your own site), while your partner focuses on promotion of the product through his or her list.

This type of partnership arrangement has the potential to provide both profits in the short run; and, in the long run, back-end subscriptions. However, in general, it will be hard to maintain unless you have a JV partner who you can trust and are able to work well with.

33. Allow republishing

Many site owners and list owners see republishing as a process that has the potential to lower the value of their “unique content.” Unfortunately, in perceiving the republishing process this way, they deny themselves the opportunity to grow their influence and to gain additional subscribers.

In particular, republishing allows list owners to spread access to their content, gain influence, and encourage new people to join their list. Furthermore, it is relatively simple to do: whenever you create an article (either in your newsletter or elsewhere), simply include a resource box below (or a header above) that

explicitly allows the content to be republished, provided that it is unaltered and references you.

In addition to simply allowing republishing, you should make proactive attempts to get your articles republished. Seek out relevant sites, and try to get them to consider your content. Of course, you can use the usual sources, such as <http://www.ezinearticles.com> to self-publish your articles in a prominent place. However, a better strategy may involve seeking out high-profile Internet-based magazines and attempting to get your work featured as a feature article.

34. Add testimonials to your squeeze page

When it comes to getting subscribers, it is always a good idea to try to increase your conversion rate. Why? Because it is the quick and easy way to add people to your list at a faster rate without changing your traffic generation strategies at all.

One way in which you can convert at a higher rate is to add testimonials to your salesletter or squeeze page. Of course, the central focus should be the opt-in form; and you should avoid distracting visitors away from it. However, dressing the margins with testimonials or including them after the opt-in form is never a bad idea. It will build rapport with your visitors and encourage them to trust you and your list.

In addition to simply including written testimonials, it might not be a bad idea to include audio or video testimonials. These, of course, are more expensive to produce, but having them on the site will greatly improve the image that visitors will develop of you.

35. Add a "tell-a-friend" form

As mentioned in earlier tips, word of mouth advertising very frequently forms the lifeblood of businesses. It allows old business to expand; and it often brings in higher quality prospects, since a close friend has told them they can trust your business. In short, it is effective method for advertisement.

What you may have noticed, however, is that not many people talk about focusing on a “word of mouth” campaign. One reason for that is that word of mouth is usually initiated by the customers—and, thus, is seen as a massive mode of advertising. The other reason is that many people who talk about advertising are mainly trying to convince you to purchase credits for their particular system of advertising, so the last thing they would want you to do is to focus on creating better products and having your own customers spread the word.

Now with that said, it is important to understand that word of mouth advertising need not be entirely passive. You can, of course, encourage your subscribers to tell friends and to talk about your list on forums.

One way in which you can do this—initiate a word of mouth campaign—is to use a “tell-a-friend” script, such as this one: <http://www.freetellafriend.com/>. This should be available on your website and possibly linked to infrequently in your mailings. It will give your subscribers a quick way to tell their friends about something good or interesting you did.

Furthermore, you might consider more aggressively encouraging them to use the form. For instance, you might hold some type of a massive give-away event, but require subscribers to tell at least one friend about your site in order to gain access to the gifts and bonuses.

36. Make a list that you would join

As mentioned earlier, word of mouth advertising is a powerful and effective medium for generating subscribers; however, it is very difficult to tap it directly, since it requires effort on the part of your subscribers more than it requires effort on your own part.

With that said, you do have a lot of options to increase word of mouth subscriptions. In particular, I would suggest you do this by improving the quality of your list content. You can start by sifting through your archives and asking whether or not you would sign up for your own list if it wasn't yours. Try to be as honest as you can with yourself.

In general, of course, it is difficult to evaluate our own work, and to understand how others might perceive it. For this reason, it is a good idea to look at old archives, so that you can feel a sense of distance and unfamiliarity—and evaluate it from the perspective of an outsider.

Finally, consider comparing your list content with other lists in your niche. Ask yourself the following questions truthfully about both your own list and competing lists:

- i. How frequently does the list advertise?
- ii. How much space do advertisements take up?
- iii. Are there many solo ads?
- iv. Are there high-profile guest writers?
- v. Are there interviews with experts in the industry/niche?
- vi. How frequently does the list give away reports and ebooks?
- vii. How frequently does the list give away audio content and video content?
- viii. How personal does the writing feel?

If you feel you can't answer these items objectively, consider asking a friend for help. As harsh as it may be to hear someone close to you criticize your work, it'll

be worth it in the long run when your subscribership rises dramatically through word of mouth.

37. Create a short e-course

When it comes to build a strong subscriber base, getting new subscribers isn't the only thing you should focus on. Rather, retaining and energizing existing subscribers can be just as important. If they become inactive or leave your list, you'll have to cover that outflow with even more subscribers.

So what can you do? My suggestion is that you introduce new members to your list with a short e-course. That is, rather than simply adding them and then contacting them with the same material you sent to other members, including advertisements and other items that might turn off new subscribers, give them a pre-made course.

Not only will the course make the individuals gain some value from subscribing (and, thus, build rapport), but it will also give them a chance to get to know you and your business better. Through the course, they can learn what you're all about, and it will make them less anxious about buying from you and from following your content.

In short, creating an e-course to buffer new members from the normal flow of advertisements and ad hoc newsletter items can go a long way in build a connection between you and your readers; and ensuring that they won't drop off of the list.

38. Design a good "hook"

When it comes to marketing, hooks are important. This is doubly true for email lists. If there isn't some clear, defining feature or benefit that your list provides that others do not, then you'll be passed over. Why sign up to be bombarded by mediocre content when a visitor can simply leave the page, and search Google for something better?

So spend some time designing a hook. Think about how will you separate yourself from other sites. Will you be the fastest to spot and comment on trends in your niche? Will you provide slow-to-react, but thoughtful and expansive commentary on important happenings in your niche? Or will you be the first to test new products and services and to incorporate reviews of them into your newsletter?

Whatever you do, make sure you can claim to do it better than your competitors. If you truly have important features that separate you from the other list owners in your niche, then your visitors should know about them when they're deciding whether or not to subscribe.

39. Continuously improve your content

Many people approach the maintenance and growth of their business in an ad hoc way: from time to time, they'll decide that it is time to "revamp" everything or to make major changes. However, in many situations, this simply isn't the best policy—especially when it comes to maintaining a list.

Rather, you should consider adopting a more active approach. On a daily basis, think about what you could be changing to improve your content. Solicit feedback from readers; and try to use it constructively. Thinking about and making changes for the better will improve your readership's experience; and will ultimately help you through word of mouth advertising and reduced subscription cancellations.

40. Reduce the amount of ads

If your website is currently inundated with ads, consider cutting away some of the clutter and focusing on what is most important: your opt-in form. While direct sales or pay per click advertising might seem appealing—since it gets you the cash today—most sales are made on the 5, 6, or 7th contact, so step back and think about the longer term.

So, today, start by thinking about how to adjust your site. Get rid of blocks of ads, banners, and other distractions, and replace them with subscription forms, salescopy, and other tools for generating subscribers. In the long run, when you're making sale after sale to the same people, you will be glad you didn't throw everything away for a single click or direct sale.

41. Add a pop-up

Some people believe that pop-up ads have fallen out of fashion. In fact, many browsers come pre-loaded to block certain categories of pop-ups, so many believe that pop-up ads can no longer be effective. However, this belief couldn't be less true. Many sites are using variations on pop-up ads (hover-over or fly-ins) that aren't typically blocked and can do an excellent job of generating subscriptions.

If you haven't yet begun adding pop-ups to your site, consider starting with one page. Take an existing squeeze page, for instance, and replicate it twice. But when you replicate it, add the pop-up to one page. After that, use Google AdWords to send identical streams of traffic to the duplicate squeeze pages. You can then determine whether or not the pop-up is improving your conversion rate.

Additionally, if you determine that it does improve your conversion rate for one page, then you might want to consider repeatedly split testing two different versions of the pop-up, so that you can continuously improve the opt-in rate.

42. Improve your email headers

It is easy to fall into the rut of searching out more subscribers and paying more for new traffic, rather than using existing subscribers better. One way in which you can do this is to begin using better titles. Better email headers will draw more views, re-energize existing list members, and generate more traffic through word of mouth advertising from newly re-energized subscribers.

I suggest using one or more of the following tricks to improve your email headers:

- i. Personalize your headers. Use macros that will automatically insert a reader's name into the email header. Even though this isn't quite as effective as it once was, it can still draw attention by increasing the sense of personalization, and thus, the response rate,
- ii. Avoid spam words. Words like "free" and "secret" and "explosive" may work well as psychological triggers in salesletters, but when it comes to email headers, you should use them more carefully. Not only can the trigger spam filters, but they may also appear to "salesy" to your list.
- iii. Split test different headers. If you plan to send the same sequence out to every new subscriber, you should consider sending out the same email, but with different headers. Test whether certain headers generate a higher conversion rate.

In general, finding ways to boost your email opening rate will tend to help you retain and re-energize subscribers. This will mean that you can generate more

profits with fewer subscribers, rather than aggressively promoting your list, only to ultimately lose those subscribers to an ineffective system for subscriber retention.

43. Retain your subscribers

As mentioned previously, subscriber retention is a critical component of generating and maintaining a strong list. When thinking about your list, you should think less about generating new subscribers, and instead, about generating “net subscribers.” That is, think about the difference between your losses and gains. If you can simply retain an additional 50 subscribers per week, that is no different than gaining an additional 50 subscribers.

So, when designing your follow-up series, keep this in mind. Think not only about generating more traffic, but about retaining your existing subscribers. Give them incentives to stay, remain energetic and engaged, and to promote your list to others. In short, concentrate just as much effort on retaining and energizing subscribers as you do finding new ones.

44. Use viral ebooks

One good way to generate subscribers is to create viral ebooks and to use them to promote your list. There are several ways in which you can do this, but I personally suggest the following approach:

- i. Sketch out an outline for a relevant ebook. Make sure that the content contains ideas that are novel to your work and cannot be found elsewhere.
- ii. Find a writer and a graphic designer on <http://www.elance.com>. Contract them to complete the book for you, according to the outline you've designed.
- iii. Work with both the writer and graphic designer to ensure that the project turns out according to plan.
- iv. Insert links into the viral ebook that point to your list. Don't do this in a way that delegitimizes the book, but instead enhances it. Additionally, include links to free products on your site that are related to the material, so that you can send people to more locations where they are likely to subscribe to your list.
- v. Create rights for the ebook that will ensure that it circulates to the largest possible readership. You can do this by giving the ebook away, and then allowing anyone to give it away for free. You can also consider giving anyone the right to resell it, which will give him or her an even stronger incentive to circulate the book.
- vi. Contact other list owners to attempt to expand the circulation of your viral ebook. Allow them to give it away to their respective lists for free. In

many cases, these list owners will be hungry for free content. And, if it is good, they will snap it up and give it to their subscribers.

In short, your goal should be to create a high quality ebook, to incorporate links to subscription forms throughout the ebook, and to then circulate that ebook to the widest audience possible. The more people see and pass on the ebook, the better. If your venture is successful, it will pay off for years to come in terms of new subscribers and sales.

45. Do audio interviews

Many list owners have found success in integrating their newsletter into their website. That is, on a regular basis, they either use the newsletter to refer to specific items on the website, or they simply use the newsletter to notify subscribers that they have added a new issue to the website.

Using this approach has many advantages. Among those advantages is that you don't have to stick to text all the time. Instead, you can use media that have higher perceived value, such as audio content. If you feel comfortable enough with your voice and your interviewing skills, you can perform interviews with important people in the industry; and you can then incorporate them into your newsletter.

Not only will this generate traffic indirectly—by providing good content and encouraging word of mouth advertising—but it can also be used to drive traffic more directly. You can use archived audio interviews as content to convert visitors into subscribers.

46. Promote your list on forums

Another way in which you can promote your list is to post on forums regularly. You can start by finding a number of forums related to your particular niche. Start at <http://www.big-boards.com/> and browse for related forums. As you go, make a list of the URLs and the primary subject matter of the forum. Also, consider how much traffic and how many subscribers each of these forums has.

Ultimately, your goal should be to select a number of high-traffic, active forums with many subscribers. You will then want to frequent these forums and post on them whenever you get the opportunity. Make an overt attempt to be helpful whenever possible and to demonstrate your expertise.

After you have been a member of the forum for a while, add a signature that promotes your list. In addition to providing the actual link to the subscription form, include a short, 5-10 word pitch that will entice readers to at least consider clicking the link.

Of course, your efforts shouldn't stop there. Once you have the signature in place and have gained a strong reputation, you should continue to cultivate relationships on those forums, to post regularly, and to gain exposure to many forum visitors, so that your signature has more chances to be seen.

47. Give readers referral incentives

As mentioned before, it is vital that you get your own readers involved in the promotional process. If you already have a large list, this is doubly true. Not only will it allow you to bring in new people, but it will allow you to bring in new people who have heard about your list from a friend—and, thus, will be more receptive to it.

Referral incentives can run the gamut from small prizes to simple acknowledgement. For instance, you might consider allowing the person who generates the most referrals to send out a solo ad to your list. Alternatively, you might hold a contest and offer cash prizes to the winners.

Whatever you do to encourage your readers to provide referrals, keep in mind what it is they want most—whether it be cash, advertising space, or products. If you can't offer them what they want or need, then they are unlikely to have an interest in promoting your list.

48. Learn about your audience

One important part about generating new subscriptions is knowing your audience. If you don't know who you're marketing to—that is, the “type” of person who has an interest in your list and business—then you'll have both a hard time finding them and a hard time persuading them that they should join your list.

In short, if you're not familiar with the “typical” buyer or subscriber in your niche, it is time to get to know them better. Seek them out on forums, interact with them on blogs, and do whatever you can to understand them better. In the long run, you'll be glad you took the time to do it.

49. Improve traffic targeting

In the previous tip, we talked about learning about your audience, but doing that is only half of the challenge. Once you have done that, you will have to find effective ways to target them through your advertising campaigns.

Now, with that said, some of the ways in which you can target them are obvious. For instance, you can create a Google AdWords campaign and target keywords that they are searching for. You should start off with these types of campaigns when trying to target your subscribers.

Another approach for targeting your subscribers involves using a survey. For instance, you could use <http://www.surveymonkey.com> to collect data from your current subscribers. You can find out how old they are, how much they earn, what they do as jobs, and what other sites they look at most frequently in your niche. You can also ask them how they found your site originally.

Once you have collected all of this data, you can revise your targeting strategies. For instance, if you find out that forum marketing is more valuable, you can spend more time posting and providing freebies to forum visitors. To the contrary, if you find that AdWords appears to be most effective, then you can increase the daily limits on your campaigns.

50. Make the sign-up form more visible

As a final time for increasing the amount of subscribers you receive—make your sign-up form more visible. While many site owners hide forms at the bottom of a long salespage at the bottom of a menu bar, change your approach to make all of your sign-up forms more visible.

For starters, if any of your sign-up forms are below the fold—that is not visible when the site loads—then reconsider its placement. And, in general, when it comes to deciding whether to make an ad more prominent or to make a form more prominent, choose the form. Make your forms more visible and more accessible; and, as a result, both your sign-ups and your sales will flourish.

Conclusion

In this ebook, we've sifted through a vast array of different strategies you can employ to gain more subscribers; however, throughout this exercise, we have seen some common themes repeated. Your goal, as a list owner, should be to employ both the themes—the big picture—and the individual tips—the tactics—to make your lists grow, retain subscribers, and become energized and willing to buy.

So where can you go from here? Start by putting your list first from now on. Put it first when it comes to visibility. Put it first—even above direct sales—when it comes to promotional efforts. And put it first when it comes to generating high-quality, enticing content.

If you treat your list well, follow the strategies outlined in this, and work hard to retain subscribers, you'll find that having a list and pitching to it will be more profitable than any other venture you have encountered. You will not only improve your chance to make a sale off of any given visitor on your site, but you will give yourself the opportunity to sell to that same visitor again and again.

And with that—I leave you to build a list. So put these tips to work, generate some subscribers, and start making sales!