



How to Build a List of Responsive and Loyal Email Subscribers

BONUS LESSON 1

7 Steps to Creating an Email Marketing Strategy

Once you've figured out why you want to have an email marketing program and what you intend to accomplish with it (i.e. build brand awareness, make direct sales, etc.) then creating a strategy to achieve those aims is the next most important function in every email marketing campaign.

What is a campaign?

A campaign is directly marketing to the subscribers on your list to entice them to take some kind of action; what is seen as the email marketing message that you actually send out with your intended purpose in mind. But there are any number of things that go on *behind* the scenes before and after you send that message.

If you want to have a productive campaign it is critical that you have a written strategy for each campaign you send.

1. Define Your Goal — Is your goal to get more people to follow you on Twitter, or to get more people to visit your website, or to get a certain number of people to sign up for a class or program or to get more people to buy xyz product? Each campaign will have its own goal. And it

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can be a number goal, as in having x number of people sign up for your teleclass, or it can be a monetary goal, as in selling x dollar amount of your product or service offering.

For example: when I offered this ecourse for sale, I set a goal (and wrote it down) for the number of people that I wanted to buy it. I met that goal and exceeded it by 2. It was a reasonable goal for what I know about the behavior of my list, the time of year, how many have bought something similar from me in the past, but also just a stretch to make it interesting and more of a challenge. These are the kinds of things you'll want to take into consideration, too, when defining your own marketing goals.

2. Determine Your Content – The type of content you create will depend entirely on the goal you want to meet. Regardless of your goal, however, the content must still be valuable, engaging, and useful to your target audience, to *your* subscribers.

3. Design Layout — Choose the layout — the look — of your campaign keeping in mind the brand for your business. You'll need to decide on whether you'll send out a “pretty” email using HTML or you may choose to keep it simple and simply send out a TEXT email. There are pros and cons of doing each and we'll be discussing that more in a future lesson. For now, if in doubt, I suggest that you use the HTML format, but make it look like a text email. This way you can still take advantage of the analytics you're going to want to track with each campaign.

4. Determine Frequency — Decide how often you'll send out messages and when. Whatever you choose it should remain relatively consistent. The more consistent you are the more positively your audience will respond. We'll be talking a lot about consistency and when to email your subscribers in a future lesson.

5. Determine Monetization — If your goal is to send out a weekly newsletter then you should also figure out a way to monetize your newsletter via advertisements or product recommendations within the newsletter, or through offering your own services. If the goal is to promote a product that you will earn money from, then you've already got monetization covered.

NOTE: Remember, email marketing is all about marketing with the ultimate goal of making sales from your emails. One way or another. Either directly or indirectly. So you must not be squeamish about selling something or else, there's no point in wasting your or your subscriber's time with your email messages.

6. Quantify Success — When you're creating the goal for each of your campaigns you should be very specific about that goal so that you know what constitutes success. For example: you

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want to sell 10 units of a certain product, or you want 12 people to sign up for a discovery session with you. You either meet those numbers or you don't.

7. Evaluate — Choose specific times in which to evaluate your progress so that if something is not working the way you intended (i.e. You did not meet your goal) it can be tweaked so that you can improve with the next mailing.

Perhaps you wanted to sell 10 units of a certain product but you only sold 6. Later, in another email marketing the same product, you may want to tweak your subject line to see if that makes a difference, or change the price, or change the copy or something else. Whatever tweaks you make, however, *do not change more than one thing at a time*. If you want to try a different price, change just the price, but don't change the subject line too. Otherwise, you won't have an accurate measure of what improved or changed because you won't know which factor made the difference, either for better or worse.

Implementing this email strategy is a must whether you've already built your list or whether you are just starting out. Getting in to the strategy habit right from the get-go will pay off handsomely down the road.

Defining Email Marketing Tactics From Your Strategy

What you've just created is your overall email marketing strategy. And you'll likely only need to tweak the numbers in your strategy as you go forward with each successive campaign.

Tactics, on the other hand, are those steps you'll need to take to reach your goals. The strategy is the what, but the tactics are the how. Once you've written out your strategy now it's imperative that you write down the *how* in very clear step-by-step instructions to yourself.

Here's an example for you:

Campaign Strategy: Build my Facebook Page Subscribers

Goal: Add 100 "likes" per week to my Facebook business page

Tactic: Add Facebook links to all outgoing emails

Tactic: Ask email list subscribers to "like" my FB page

Tactic: Post an update on Facebook 3 times a day

Tactic: Add Facebook links to my blog posts

Tactic: Ask my Google+ connections to like my page on Facebook

Tactic: Blog about my Facebook page once a week

Tactic: Create a Landing tab that offers a freebie for "likes"

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As you can see, tactics are actionable, *specific* steps to take to implement your strategy and meet your goals. If you write it out specifically as we did in the example above, you'll be more likely to succeed at reaching your goal.

Email Marketing By the Numbers

Later on in this course you're going to hear me talk a lot about testing and I'll be using words like metrics and analytics, but for now I think it's important that we take a *quick look* at how that all works. I mean, after all, how do you know if all your work is paying off if you are not tracking and paying attention?

There are some numbers that matter more than others. Let's look at some numbers to focus on and then some ways to improve them.

Open Rate — This tells you how many times your email was opened. This is an important number because it can tell you something about your subject line and how it affects the recipients behavior.

If you're not getting a good enough open rate, try sending the same mailing again with a different subject line, or try sending it at a different time of day or another day of the week. When and what affects open rates for you will depend on your demographics but testing out various subject lines and times will likely find improvement.

Just know that your open rate may not be a truly accurate number. Some people will open your email more than once and some people may view it but not actually open it.

Click Through Rate — The email marketing provider you choose to use must have analytics built right in. The analytics part of the program will automatically activate and track any clicks on any links you put in your message so that you can look at the reports to see those who opened it, how many clicked through on the links in your email and how many sales you made. This is one reason you should not have a lot of different links going to different places in one email. You want your subscribers to focus on the one thing you want them to do.

If you're getting a good open rate, but a low click-thru rate there are often issues with the way the email is worded or the location of the links you want them to click. Double check your call to action and ensure that you're sending the right email to the right segment — for instance, if you've not segmented out buyers from potential buyers you might be trying to sell something to those who've already bought it.

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Bounce Rate — It's important to check your bounce rate because this will let you know if you're attracting the right audience to start with. If you have a high bounce rate something may be afoot either with your email marketing provider, or with your sign up process attracting the wrong audience. It could also mean that you are attracting an unusual number of people who are signing up with fake information or fake email addresses. (There are ways to ensure this doesn't happen which we will be discussing later.)

Complaints — It's important to check this too, which is available to see via your email marketing provider analytics. If you are getting a lot of complaints it's important to take a look at your opt-in process and double check how many emails you're sending. If you don't send them regularly enough they might have forgotten they signed up, if you send them too often you may be irritating your subscriber base.

Unsubscribe Rate — This is an important metric to look at because it can tell you whether or not people are just signing up to get your freebie, then unsubscribing. If this is the case, your freebie probably isn't focused tightly enough on your ideal market. In addition, if a lot of people unsubscribed after a controversial email, take a look at that email and see how it could have been changed. Of course, you may have *wanted* non-responders to unsubscribe, in that case, you were successful.

People unsubscribing from your list is not always a bad thing. You can continue to qualify people after they've signed up for your information by providing laser-targeted content designed only for your target audience. People who realize they're not in that audience will unsubscribe and that is perfectly okay.

Sharing Rates — You can look at the number of people who forwarded your email and shared it with others. This is a very important metric because once you get your subscribers to spread the word about you you're on a roll! That means you should post more content that resulted in a high share rate. If you have a low share rate, check your Call to Action. Are you *asking* them to share?

Sales — Of course, the actual sales you make is ultimately the only metric you need to know. If you hit your goal, you can be pretty sure that every other metric is hitting on high numbers too. However, you've got to get there first. And it may take awhile before your list starts responding by pulling out their credit cards. Until that time happens, you must track your metrics and tweak accordingly.

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By checking these metrics you can improve your email marketing campaigns exponentially. Once you get the hang of these metrics you can start looking into more complex metrics, A/B testing and split testing, for example, which can be even more exciting.

Action Assignment:

- ▶ Think about and write down your overall email marketing strategy.

Don't worry about tactics right now unless you have a specific campaign you're getting ready to send.