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LIST BUILDING WITH JOHN

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How to Build Your Very Own Mailing List Fast!

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1. Why Build a Mailing List?

Of all the tasks that you as an Internet marketer can engage in, list building is the most vital and essential. Your mailing list will become the foundation of your business. If you do not have a list, you will not have an online business. It is that important. Of course, you can make sales without a list, but you will not have a business.

Virtually all Internet gurus understand that list building is one of the most important aspects of running a successful online business. Almost all the experts in the field of Internet marketing place this activity at the top on their daily "to do" list. It should never be regarded as a secondary task or one that can be put off until later. Savvy and well-established online marketers all agree that it is a vital part of their success.

Illegal Mailings

The 2003 Can Spam Act made it illegal to mail marketing materials in bulk to recipients who have not previously given their e-mail addresses, as well as their permission to receive such correspondence. Penalties for failing to adhere to this regulation are very steep. Quite simply, it is the law, and no legitimate Internet marketer should ignore it or try to find a way to circumvent it in order to cut corners. If you do this, you may wind up with substantial fines. You could even experience the death of your business if you choose to spam people who have not willingly given you their e-mail addresses. While it is true that you may only receive one fine for spamming an individual, if you send hundreds of e-mails that fall under the

category of spam, you may be paying off fines for a long time. For this reason, you should consider your opt-in list your bread and butter, rather than resorting to those tactics.

In fact, you were probably not involved in Internet marketing for very long until you heard the phrase “the money is in the list.” This statement is accurate, as building an online business is dependent upon establishing a base of loyal customers. These subscribers should obviously be those who are interested in the niche in which you are operating. It is not difficult to understand why having an active mailing list is essential to your success.

You may have heard other marketers state that the most expensive part of running a business is obtaining new clients. There is definitely some truth in this statement, as finding individuals who are interested in buying your products or services is often challenging, time-consuming and expensive. For this reason, the last thing you want is to put forth this type of effort and expense, Especially if you sell each customer only one moderately priced item and then never hear from them again. If you build a strong mailing list, however, you can sell products and services to the same individuals over and over. Of course, you will need to communicate with them regularly in order to build a relationship of trust with each subscriber. But when you build this trust, they will be much more apt to purchase high ticket items from you in the future.

For instance, if you are selling a specific item that costs approximately \$497, it can be quite challenging to get brand-new customers to spend that kind of money on a product being offered by a merchant with whom they are not yet familiar. This is because they are unsure of whether or not the products and services you are selling provide true quality and value.

2. The Basics of List Building For Newbies

Picture a subscriber who has been on your mailing list for a few years, and has purchased five or six moderately priced products—within a price range of \$10-\$20— from you over that period of time. Due to the fact that those products were inexpensive, it was easier for customers to take a gamble and spend their money. Those small ticket items not only provided a trickle of income for you, they also showed your subscribers that the products you sell are high quality, and that you are a trustworthy merchant.

Now, when you approach those same customers with the aforementioned \$497 item, they will be much more likely to believe that what you are offering them is indeed a high quality product. However, if they were unhappy with what they purchased previously, it goes without saying that they will be highly unlikely to return and make another purchase of any kind, much less a more expensive one.

If you are new to the world of Internet marketing, It is important for you to understand that building and maintaining an e-mail list is the most important aspect on which to focus your time and attention.

This type of mailing list offers a legitimate way to create passive income. Once you have established your list, you can begin sending promotional materials and receive an instant return on your investment. People may order your products and services while you are out

shopping, sleeping, or otherwise occupied with your daily activities. You can sell your own product, or you can choose to promote the products of others, which as you may know is called affiliate marketing.

When subscribers opt in to your list, provided you have your autoresponder set up correctly, they will receive a series of marketing e-mails at regular intervals that you have previously placed on a specific schedule. You can send just a few e-mails over a period of several weeks, or you can opt to send your subscribers hundreds of e-mails over the course of the entire year. The options you have when doing business this way are virtually unlimited. Once you add an email address to the sequence of your autoresponder, it will remain there permanently. Therefore, you can market various products to the same person over and over for many years.

3. Selecting Your Autoresponder Email Provider

Your initial step should be to acquire an account with an autoresponder provider. As you know, an autoresponder gives you the ability to store your subscribers' e-mail addresses and market them regularly with advertisements about the services or goods you are promoting. There are numerous providers from which you can choose, some of which offer their services for free and others who charge a fee. Most experts suggest obtaining the service from a paid provider, as free providers often shut down without advance notice. In that case, you could lose your list, or at least the record of what you have sent to them, and all your hard work in building a relationship with them. Paid providers are typically more reliable as well, and offer

better delivery rates and extras such as open stats and click through records. Two of the most well-known providers are Get Response and Aweber. The one you select is purely a matter of personal preference, as they both have pros and cons with which they are associated. There are other alternatives as well, but Aweber and Get Response are two top providers who are established in the field. When you have chosen a provider, you then simply sign up and open an account.

Because providers occasionally change their services and websites, it is best to carefully follow the current instructions of the provider when setting up your account. Top providers in the field typically offer videos and other explanatory aides on their sites, as well as high quality customer service. Therefore, you need not have any worries about getting your account established correctly.

4. Subscriber Incentives

To encourage subscribers to opt in to your mailing list, it is necessary to offer them some sort of incentive. This is usually in the form of a freebie, which will persuade the individual to enter his or her information in return for the item you are offering at no cost. This can be a product such as a short course, a video, or an e-book or report. You may even choose something as simple as a free subscription to your newsletter, provided the latter is full of meaningful information that the subscriber will value. Do not fall into the trap of thinking that just because you are offering something for free, it can be a lackluster product. Individuals are often quite

protective about providing their e-mail addresses, so your incentive will have to be something that is very appealing to your prospective customers. It is important to have a thorough understanding of this, as the days are gone when people will immediately offer their e-mail information just because they hear the word “free.”

The incentive you choose must be of good quality for two reasons: it must encourage your subscribers to want to join your list initially, and it must be satisfactory enough so that they will not turn around and immediately unsubscribe.

For this reason, it should be something that covers a topic or subject in which you know they are interested. It must be easy to use or read and have a specific appeal to your customers.

In other words, your job does not stop with convincing them to accept the freebie and supply their information. They must also be satisfied with it once it is acquired. Otherwise, as previously mentioned, they will simply unsubscribe.

5. Choosing a Product

Your incentive can either be a product you have sourced, such as a resell rights report or a PLR report, or it can be something you have created yourself. The most important thing to remember is that it must look unique. Even if it is a product that you got from another source, it must still have a significant amount of originality. This is to ensure that your customers believe you are the only merchant from whom this particular freebie can be obtained. If people know that hundreds of other individuals are offering the same incentive, you will lose a large percentage of your subscribers to other Internet marketers. The more unique something

appears, the greater its appeal will be to your prospective subscribers.

The topic is also essential, as this is what will ultimately encourage your customers to pursue your incentive. You need to make every effort to find out what the customers in your niche are looking for and the types of problems they are attempting to solve. If you can uncover these facts and offer such information at no cost, you will have taken a major step toward building a quality e-mail list.

This may lead you to wonder how you discover what your prospective customers really want to know. This is not as difficult as it may seem if you know where to look.

Clickbank

One Of the best places to start is with the Clickbank Marketplace. Simply visit <http://www.clickbank.com> and click on the "Marketplace" tab. Once you have done this, simply choose the niche for which you are searching and browse through the various products that are already being offered in this particular category. Take special note of those that are the most popular and proceed to create a product on the same or similar subjects. Of course, you cannot completely copy another person's product, but there is nothing wrong with creating something similar from the ideas that you get at the Marketplace.

For example, if your niche is Internet marketing, and the top seller on the ClickBank Marketplace for that particular category is using "Twitter to Market a Product or Service" then create your own product that is similar. Based on the information you found in the ClickBank Marketplace, you have assurance that consumers are interested in this particular type of

information. This makes your freebie highly attractive to prospective clients.

Forums

Another ideal place to obtain product ideas is Internet forums. Of course, there is a vast array of such websites from which to choose, which may make it a bit confusing when you are trying to find the ones that will help you the most. The best way to find the forums that will be most beneficial is to Google “your niche + forum”. Your search should return the primary forums that are related to your product or niche.

Pay close attention to the subjects in the forum and try to identify the primary topics the visitors are discussing. When you are on the forum live, take notice of which topics come up most frequently and try to build your product around one of these subjects. Any topic that comes up continuously indicates that there is a demand for more knowledge or information about that subject.

Also be aware of the problems people have and the questions they are asking. Again, if a certain question is being asked by multiple individuals, this is a hot topic, and one in which many people are interested. If it appears that no one is able to provide the answer and you think you may be able to do so, definitely develop your freebie product around that subject. It should not take long once you get started to see what the top concerns and issues are in your genre or niche.

Be Consistent

When you have selected a product to offer as your freebie, stick with it, rather than jumping from one incentive to another. If you apply yourself, it should not take a substantial length of time to choose a freebie product. Devote a few hours to research, decide whether you will be creating your product independently or sourcing it from another location, and make your offer. It is never wise to procrastinate regarding this activity.

6. Building Your Squeeze Page

A squeeze page is a basic website that contains one easy to navigate page. It should be designed in such a way that it clearly explains the incentive that you are offering for free. Obviously, it must also feature an opt in box, where those who are interested in the offer can provide their name and e-mail address.

Squeeze pages vary consistently regarding their design and appearance. For example, some feature plain text and a simple opt in box, while others use colorful graphics. Many use bullet point format, as this is an excellent way to clearly outline what your customers will be receiving from you. It is never a good idea when customers become confused, and bullet points are a good way to clearly and concisely explain what you are offering.

Your Squeeze Page Should Have Several Features:

- Headline

The headline should simply indicate the primary information your subscribers will learn from

your incentive product, and how they will benefit from the information provided. For instance, a good example of a headline is “Discover the Untapped Power of Adswaps and Build Your List Overnight.”

- Bullet points

As previously mentioned, bullet points outline the features and benefits of your product in a little more detail than one or two simple statements. You should try to use a minimum of five bullet points, but they should be kept short and to the point. Eliminate information that would be considered “fluff” and stick to the most important facts about your incentive and how it will benefit your prospective subscribers.

- Opt-in Box

Obviously, your opt-in box is the area where your customers will enter their information and add themselves to your list. You can ask for the person's name and e-mail, or simply his or her e-mail address alone. However, it is always wise to try to get the individual's first name at least, and perhaps the last name as well, as this will allow you to personalize your future mailings.

Many squeeze-page templates are available on the Internet for free, and you can just fill in the blanks with your information. If you feel you can't make one up yourself, have one made for you. You can find people on places like Elance who will design one for you, or find someone on Fiverr who will make one for you for \$5.

Placement of Your Opt-In Form

The last step involved in the creation of your squeeze page is the placement of your opt-in form. To complete this task, go to your autoresponder provider account and click on “Web Forms” at the top of the page. Then click on ‘Create a New Web Form’ and follow the instructions on the screen.

Keep the Following in Mind:

1. If at all possible, make sure your opt in box has a first name field and an e-mail address field. Some individuals are under the impression that asking for a person's e-mail only will increase the rate at which people subscribe, but as previously mentioned, the drawback is that you will not be able to personalize the e-mails you send by adding your customers' names to the correspondence.
2. Make sure you redesign the ‘Submit’ button to make it more appealing to your customers such as “Proceed To Download Page” or “Get Instant Access Now”.
3. If at all possible, always use an eye catching submit button and colors that coordinate well with the over all design of your squeeze page.
4. Always be sure to add a privacy statement to your page.

7. Driving Traffic to Your Squeeze Page

Once your page is up and running and you are ready to accept new customers and begin

building your list, you must give thought to driving traffic to the site. Obviously, if no one realizes what you are offering, you will never be able to effectively build your list. Generating traffic is not as difficult as you may think, and the following are some tips that will help you to accomplish this goal.

Investing in Advertising

Those who choose Internet marketing as their livelihood are typically individuals who are confident and self-assured. They understand that in order to be a success in this field, a considerable investment of their time and energy is necessary. If this describes you, then you will likely enjoy a lucrative income at some point from your hard work. One of the most important things you can do is to familiarize yourself with the service and products that are in high demand in your niche market.

Also understand, however, that you will eventually need to invest at least some money into your future as an Internet entrepreneur. One area where you will need to make such an investment is in advertising. Fortunately, you will see a fast return if you spend your advertising money wisely.

Concerning the subject of Internet marketing and advertising, you should understand that there are various advertising methods, both free methods and those for which a monetary investment is necessary. However, whether or not it is paid advertising or cost-free advertising, your primary concern should be with whether or not the technique you select is effective. Some forms of advertising require only the investment of your time, but there are fees involved with others. Regardless of which one you choose, advertising is something to which you should give thought on a daily basis.

Paid Advertising

To achieve success as an Internet marketer, you must drive traffic to your site. Because the Internet is a worldwide marketplace where millions of websites exist, you must come up with a way to make sure your target market can find you.

It is essential to understand that when individuals are looking for a certain product or service, most of them begin their search by typing specific key words into a major search engine such as Google. As you are probably aware, the search engine will then try to find relevant sites that will contain information or list the products in which the websurfer is interested. Your goal is obviously to be the page that customers land on when they conduct their search.

The Pay Per Click–PPC–advertising method is one way to ensure that you get traffic to your site. You should always allocate a certain amount of your advertising budget for PPC. The amount you spend on this method can be set at a predetermined amount with each search engine. It is important to set this limit as high as you can, and then increase it as your profits increase.

Another highly effective paid advertising method is to run ads in E-zines that are related to the services and products in your niche. This way, thousands of individuals who regularly subscribe to E-zines will see your advertisement.

Most subscribers in this category read each of the E-zines to which they subscribe, and therefore, your advertisements are ensured of high visibility with customers who are interested in the types of products you offer. Overall, this is a very cost effective way to advertise.

You can choose to place your ads in E-zines to which a high number of people subscribe for less than \$30 per mailing. The primary advantage is that you will be advertising directly to your target market.

Adswaps and Solo Ads

Solo ads are one of the best forms of paid advertising, and they are a perfect place to invest your money if you find this avenue affordable. A solo ad is simply paying another individual for permission to e-mail his or her list with an offer for the goods or services you are promoting. Such ads cost approximately \$50-\$100, and for that price you are typically guaranteed a specific number of clicks. This means that an instant surge of traffic will be generated to your squeeze page in a short length of time, and you will often see your first subscribers signing up within moments of your solo ad being sent.

If such advertising methods are financially out of reach, ad swaps are a good option that you can pursue instead. With an ad swap, all you need to do is locate another marketer with an e-mail list and agreed to promote that person's squeeze page if he or she will agree to do the same for you.

Obviously, you will need to have a small list yourself, or this arrangement will not work. Also, marketers want to do adswaps with others who have a list that is similar in size to their own. Otherwise, it is not very appealing to another marketer to swap with a smaller list.. If you do not yet have a list, consider purchasing even one solo ad so that you can acquire a few hundred subscribers. You should have a list of at least 200 names before you approach other marketers. When this is accomplished, you are now ready to conduct adswaps.

Free Advertising Alternatives

If you are not budgeted to purchase advertising, you have options that are free of charge. However, even though free advertising does not cost any money, you will need to invest your time in order to see a return on your efforts. Many Internet marketers are short both on money and time, but it is important for you to understand that advertising requires an investment of one or the other.

You may be pleased to discover that certain free advertising techniques are sometimes even more effective than those for which you must invest money. There are many that will not only advertise your product or service, but will also assist you with list building and raise your credibility in the eyes of your niche market.

Writing articles and e-books to submit to article directories is the first, and one of the most

popular, free advertising methods. Articles that you submit to e-zine publishers or website owners to download and use for free should be a minimum of 400 words for an article, and about 12 pages for an e-book. When you register with an e-zine service, pay attention to the terms of service and their instructions. All articles must comply with their rules in order to be accepted and published.

When you submit an e-book or a single article, it is important to remember to include a resource box at the end of the content that includes a link to your website, as well as your name. If you plan to write e-books, make sure that the link to your website is placed on each page of the book. Both articles and e-books should have attention grabbing titles and the text should contain an appropriate number of relevant key words. Pay attention to the e-zine's rules on keyword density, as well.

Another free advertising method is to join forums and leave comments, and post on blogs that are dedicated to the subjects that are relevant to the services and products you provide. However, you must understand that posting and leaving comments requires an investment of your time. Plan to spend at least one hour each day and aim to post on a minimum of four blogs or forums during that time. Be sure your url or link accompanies your signature, wherever it is allowed. In forums where it is not allowed, you can invite people to send you a PM—private message—for more information.

When you dedicate this amount of time to such activity you are essentially investing in your

future. Just remember to include your signature tag at the bottom of every comment or post you make, followed by a link to your website. If you do this, it will accomplish three very important tasks:

1. It will advertise your product or service
2. It will help you build your list and establish your credibility in your niche
3. It will raise your PageRank with the primary search engines.

You should also consider link exchanges with other Internet marketers who promote similar or complementary services and products. This can be a highly effective way to gain new customers and build your list. However, do not conduct a link exchange with someone whose product is exactly the same as yours, as this will be of little or no help.

The link exchange partners you select should have a Page Rank that is higher than yours, or at least the same. There are several ways to find other marketers with whom you can conduct a link exchange. You can search for them on the Internet and find them yourself, or you can go to actual link exchange sites where you can meet other marketers who are interested in exchanging links.

Give Away Events

Internet marketers are by nature innovative individuals, and this is never more true than where advertising is concerned. Savvy Internet marketers usually disregard the traditional

advertising policies of bricks and mortar retailers, in lieu of searching for more effective and less costly ways to reach their prospective subscribers.

The Internet as a whole, has revolutionized the way that consumers purchase goods and services. Shoppers no longer have to fight traffic and crowds and wear themselves out searching for the items in which they are interested. Many consumers actually shop exclusively online, and have disregarded traditional avenues of shopping entirely.

You will be pleased to discover that many new marketing techniques that would fail miserably if traditional bricks and mortar establishments attempted to use them, can be highly beneficial to your online business. Topping this list is an advertising method that is referred to as a "Joint Venture Give Away Event", or simply a "Give Away Event."

It would probably be difficult for you to imagine a group of conventional stores getting together to offer free items to each other's customers. It is not very likely that one large department store will decide to form a partnership with another large department store and allow their products to be given away for free. This is something that is just not practical in the traditional retail world, but in the arena of Internet marketing, it can be very beneficial to your business.

When first introduced to the field of online marketing, this advertising method was typically only utilized between the months of October and December. This was obviously because that season is when those who participate in holiday shopping make most of their purchases.

However, when you observe how such events are currently being used, you will notice that

there is no limit now with regard to the time of year during which they are held.

The concept behind this marketing method is that there are very few "one-dimensional shoppers." Those who shop on the Internet typically have families whose interests range far beyond the interests of the primary shopper. Additionally, shoppers themselves are usually interested in more than one kind of product. Just because someone's main shopping objectives may be to find quality vitamins and herbal supplements, does not mean that that person may not also be interested in purchasing a ski vacation, or buying a set of gardening tools for his or her spouse. This is why give away events that offer a variety of products can assist you in building your list. Even if a particular give away event is offering mostly products for the Internet Marketing business or "make money online" niche, there are enough different products within that niche to attract many people to opt-in for the gifts.

How Joint Give Aways Work

A joint venture give away is almost always limited to a specific number of participants., sometimes called partners or sponsors. Each one offers a freebie gift which is usually digital and can be downloaded from the merchant's site. Such freebies are a variety of special reports or e-books, videos and even software that offer value to the consumer. Once the give away event is organized, each partner sends the list of other marketers' freebies to the

members of his e-mailing list.

Every partner advertises the free gifts offered by themselves as well as every other member of the joint venture give away, and therefore each and every partner in the give away has the opportunity to build his or her list. The objective behind such events is to see if additional interest in new products or services can be uncovered.

Currently, Internet marketers will find that joint venture give aways are being conducted virtually throughout the entire year. Marketers are realizing the value of these events, and therefore are utilizing them at every opportunity in order to build their lists and acquire new customers.

This may lead you to wonder how you can get involved in such ventures and how you can make them successful. Participating in such events is not as difficult as you may think. One simple way to find several events of this type is to simply conduct a Google search using the words "joint venture give away." However, it is important to select the type of event you participate in with care.

Keep in mind that you will be required to promote the give away event to everyone on your list, and when they sign up for the event, they will be offered gifts from all the merchants involved. Therefore, it is essential to ensure that the offers going out to your subscribers will not be objectionable in any way. Make sure to find out what the other participants will be providing as their freebies. Although highly unlikely, if a customer finds a certain offer offensive, you may end up losing credibility with that subscriber.

If you want to be very sure that this type of event is successful, you can also create your own joint venture give away. This is not a difficult task, although it will require a certain amount of time and effort on your part. It entails seeking out each participant individually and inviting

them to join the giveaway. In doing so, you can limit the number of partners and have more control over the outcome. Unless you are technically inclined and can do it yourself, it will require an investment of money to have the event set up with a script that allows partners to sign up and display their gifts, and customers to sign up with their opt-in information, which will be added to your and your partners' mailing lists.

It is always essential to choose the participants wisely. For example, if you promote Internet Marketing how-to e-books, you should choose several participants who sell similar items within that niche. You should also add participants who sell products and services that are complementary to the niche. For example, people who opt-in for information on making money online or working from home may be interested in self-improvement and time-management products as well. Adding these products will attract more people and help you build your list. Making your give away event as versatile as possible is always in your best interest.

8. Summary

List building is absolutely essential if you are dedicated to the growth of your Internet marketing business. The tips and suggestions offered here will give you a good foundation of knowledge on which to build. Always remember that creating an e-mail list does not only result in a handful of sales, but also provides a customer base to whom you can send repeat offers. This will ensure that you acquire at least a certain percentage of customers who will purchase from you again in the future. It will also help you build trust with a core of clients who will one day feel comfortable enough to begin buying higher ticket items from you because they trust you as a reputable merchant. Don't forget to offer a freebie or incentive in order to acquire new subscribers, and always make sure that the products and services you offer provide value to your customer base. Focus on list building and watch your business grow as it speeds down the road to success.



