

## Email Marketing Secrets:

How To Use Email To Promote Your Business, Boost Your Traffic And Skyrocket Your Sales



Your step-by-step guide to success  
from Email Marketing Solutions,  
creators of iMailer.

<http://www.emailtools.co.uk/iMailer>



## Introduction

Email marketing is critical to the success of your business.

It doesn't matter if your business is online or off. Once you know the secret of using email marketing, it's like having the power to create cash on demand.

Marketing by email will save you money, drive traffic to your website, build customer loyalty, increase brand awareness, create sales, and increase your profits.

In this course, you will learn valuable tips and tricks to help ensure the success of your email marketing campaigns. Just by reading this guide, you're already one step ahead of the competition!

I wish you every success,

Dr Russell Potter

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## **Why market by email?**

### **1. Email Is Popular**

Email is consistently rated as the most popular and most used application on the internet. Indeed, some people only use email and do not browse the internet at all!

Email is the preferred primary means of business communication (ahead of telephone and postal mail).

42% of business users check their business email while on holiday.  
53% of business users check their email six or more times during the working day.  
34% of internet users check their email continuously throughout the day.  
96% of internet users' main reason for being online is email.

There are over 450 million email boxes worldwide, with the number rapidly increasing.

Email marketing will become a \$9.4 billion business by 2006.  
(Source: Forrester Research, and Jupiter Communications)

### **2. Save Time and Money**

No printing, no postage, no mail house charges.

Traditional direct mail costs between £1 and £3 per recipient and can take over a month to complete. With email, the cost can be reduced to pennies per recipient and completed in hours.

It takes far less time to create and send an email compared to a traditional direct mail campaign.

Overall, the return on investment of opt-in email is 40 times greater than direct mail.

62 percent of people who received permission-based emails opened them in 2001.  
(Source: IMT)

### **3. Increased Sales**

It's not unusual for email campaigns to get 5%-15% (or even 50%!) response rates.

The response rate of opt-in email is 50 times greater than banner ads and 5 times greater than direct mail.

82 percent of all purchasers who bought something via the internet in 2001 did so as a result of an email offer. (Source: DoubleClick)

#### **4. Instant Results**

Minutes after sending out your email campaign you can start seeing responses and orders. And you can time your campaigns to arrive on the best day of the week or month for maximum response.

Instead of waiting weeks for responses and test results, you'll have them in hours.

80% of responses to an email campaign will occur within 3 days (traditional direct mail takes weeks).

#### **5. Measurable Results**

Email campaigns are fully trackable, with up to the minute statistics. You can easily test which message generates the best response and alter your campaign accordingly.

#### **6. Quick To Create**

You could knock out an email in an hour or two as opposed to weeks in the "offline" world.

In addition, you can even make money from your newsletter itself by selling ad space or by using a paid subscription model. See "Making Money From Your Newsletter" later.

#### **7. Personalisation and Targeting**

Email allows your message to be personalised. Instead of "Dear Customer" you can address the recipient as "Dear Rachel" and send offers targeted to their preferences.

### **Is It For You?**

**All** websites need to offer an opt-in newsletter.

Having invested all that time and effort getting visitors to your website, if you don't capture email addresses once they are there, you could lose them for good. In fact, if you account for the fact that email is the most popular application on the internet, marketing by email is probably even more important than your website!

If you are serious about your online business, you can not afford to miss out on the benefits of email marketing. Start collecting those email addresses today!

By offering quality information in your field of expertise, you educate your customers and prospects while building your credibility. By keeping in the minds of your customers, your sales will increase dramatically - your newsletter is a great place to announce new products and services.

Even if you do not think you will want to market by email, start collecting customer email addresses anyway. You can thank us later :-)

## **The Most Important Lesson On Internet Marketing You Will Ever Read**

It is almost insulting to say that marketing is about two fundamental things - attracting the customer to your business, and keeping the customer attracted to your business once you have them.

The internet provides unparalleled power to do both of these. Maintaining a customer relationship via the internet is both effective and cost effective - provided you do it right. This power also comes with its risks - it is incredibly easy to do the wrong thing and destroy a customer relationship forever.

While no reputable business person would even consider sending unsolicited bulk email (spam) to people they don't even know, it is worth mentioning here that spamming can result in severe damage to your reputation, and can result in your connection to the internet being severed. Doing so is a breach of the Acceptable Use Policy of almost all ISPs, as well as being a breach of the Internet Industry Association Code of Practice.

When you move to internet marketing from a traditional marketing background, the first thing you need to do is "unlearn what you have learned". You need to be able to forget everything you know about customers and their response to marketing approaches, because the internet is a new medium, with attributes vastly differing to traditional marketing methods. If you think of electronic mail as "just like postal mail", or "just like a telephone call", you will be setting yourself up for a costly and spectacular failure.

On the internet, your customers will expect to have complete control of their online experience - and if you even look like you're not going to give it to them, it's easy for them to find another vendor. Quite literally, the more control you give to your customers and your prospects, the longer you will keep them.

Think of it this way - would you rather have your customers complaining when they do get your promotional material, or when they don't get your promotional material? The difference between these is how much control you give to your customers.

If you send any kind of bulk email to customers who haven't asked for it, you can expect to lose 33% of them right off the bat - that's how much customers hate to receive unsolicited bulk email. On the other hand, if you give them a genuine, up-front choice, you can expect 90% of them to request the material.

Taking this approach also gives you a significant competitive advantage. Suppose you assume that your customer wants your promotional material, and send it to them without asking. Now suppose your competitor has asked that customer if they want to receive their marketing material, and the customer has actively responded "Yes". Whose message do you think the customer will open first? Whose do you think is more likely to be deleted without being read? Psychologically, people will treat the same thing very differently if they know they have asked for it.

### **Your email list should be "opt-in" only.**

Opt-in (permission) email marketing is where recipients have chosen to receive email from a sender. ie. they have given you permission to contact them.

You may also come across "double opt-in". This is where the user signs up for your messages and then receives an email asking them to confirm their interest by responding to that email. If they do not respond, they are not added to the list. Although this sounds great in theory, you can lose up to 60% of your subscribers by using this method of sign-up!

Opt-out email marketing is where recipients are automatically added to a mailing list unless they have specifically requested not to be added (ie. they have opted-out). Although your list will probably be larger, your response rate will be significantly lower.

To illustrate, let's study a few web forms.

#### **Example 1** - No option on the form, automatic subscription

When a customer encounters this form they may not realise you intend to send email promotions. There are many possible uses for requesting an email address on a form - from allowing for order confirmation and status messages to tracking individual customers. In this case, the customer receives promotional material they're not expecting. Right at this point, you have lost 33% of them, forever, with no way of getting them back. Even sending them free products won't help you, because as far as they are concerned, you have already taken something from them that's far more valuable - their privacy, and their control of their online experience.

Some vendors like to use this method and put "opt-out" instructions in the email. This has several flaws. Firstly, the damage is already done - this isn't going to get the customer back. Secondly, doing this assumes that the customer will actually read the message that they already know they don't want. Thirdly, with modern email programmes it's easier to filter out a vendor in the email software after this happens than it is to follow any remove instructions in an unsolicited bulk email.

#### **Example 2** - No option, no mailing list

For vendors that don't send bulk mail to their customers, it seems at first that you could simply avoid the issue on your forms. Unfortunately this may mean the customer has to dig through your site to find a privacy policy, and if the customer can't find one, or doesn't have the time to look, it may be easier for them to find

another vendor. In fact, they may already have your competitor's web page open in another window - comparison shopping is notoriously easy on the internet .

It's best to clearly state your intentions. If you are only going to use the email address for order confirmation, something like "We will use this address for order confirmation and status information only" would be suitable.

**Example 3** - A check box, defaulted to "Yes"

(1) please add me to the mailing list, or

(2) please don't add me to the mailing list.

While you might think you're offering the customer a choice, many customers take offence at this. It looks like the vendor has decided on making the choice for the customer, and many consumers actually stop the order process at this point. Remember, your competitor's web site may quite literally be in the next window, and if it looks like they are giving the customer more control than you are, they are the ones who will get the business.

A second problem with this approach is you can't tell for sure if the customer left the box defaulted because they made the choice, or because they didn't notice the option. Missing a field is common for even the most experienced of internet buyers, and if they miss your check box, telling them they left the option checked when they complain (assuming they actually complain and don't just filter you) will not get you the customer back. In fact, telling the customer that they failed to uncheck the option is like calling them an idiot, and is more likely to further entrench their ill will towards your business.

**Example 4** - A check box, defaulted to "No"

While this option offers the customer a genuine choice, it suffers from one of the drawbacks of the check box defaulted to "Yes". The customer might miss the box, and then you could be missing out on an important communication opportunity.

**Example 5** - A check box, no default, option of "Yes" or "No"

Total customer control. This is the best choice if users can sign up when ordering your products.

**Example 6** - A specific newsletter sign-up form

If users are signing up for your newsletter directly using a specific newsletter sign up form you do not need check boxes. You should place a sign-up form on your homepage and on sub-pages of your website.

The subscription process can be fully automated using this technique – it's the simplest option for building an opt-in subscriber base without much effort.

**Always make your customers feel in control.**

A customer who is in control will be more comfortable doing business with you, and is far more likely to actually say "Yes" to your mailings. In fact, when given a choice like this, empirical evidence shows that around 90% of people answer "yes" to all announcements.

People who do answer "yes" are almost guaranteed to become repeat customers, and that's good news by any standards.

Links:

Coalition Against Unsolicited Bulk Email (Australia)

<http://www.caube.org.au>

Coalition Against Unsolicited Commercial Email (USA)

<http://www.cauce.org>

Coalition Against Unsolicited Commercial Email (Europe)

<http://www.euro.cauce.org>

## **Top Email Mistakes**

1. Not adding a greeting or salutation
2. Not adding a signature file
3. Using html only
4. Sending large attachments
5. Not including previous messages
6. Expecting an immediate reply
7. Replying to the wrong person
8. Not using a spell checker
9. Using capitals - SHOUTING
10. Using CC: rather than BCC:
11. Marking the email as "urgent" when it is not
12. Not using http:// in url links

## **10 Steps To Success**

### **1. Target your list**

Your email marketing campaign is only as good as your list. An opt-in house list will outperform any other list every time.

Always get permission to add the recipient's email address to your list. Permission can be obtained via your website, or from direct mail or telesales requests.

### **2. Personalise the message**

Personalisation sells!

Personalising messages with the recipients email address and name will increase your response rate significantly.

### **3. Use a good subject line**

Your subject line determines whether your message gets opened or deleted. If your message is not opened, your marketing message is not seen.

### **4. Summarise the sales pitch**

People decide whether to read a message within the first few seconds of opening their email. Tell them what the email is about within the first paragraph. Don't try to make them read long copy just to find out – they won't bother!

State the benefits of your offer early on in your message.

### **5. Test**

Test your headline. Test your offer. Test your pricing. Test your landing page. Test everything!

### **6. Make it easy to read**

Use simple text and short paragraphs. If sending text emails, use a fixed-width font and less than 65 characters per line. If html email, use a single column of text, avoid italics, and avoid underlining (unless it's a link).

### **7. Make it easy to respond to**

Always have a call to action ("click here") in your message.

Recipients should be able to contact you easily. Always use a real email address in the "From" field, and in the body of your message.

Make it easy to unsubscribe. If someone asks to be removed from your list, remove them immediately - if they don't want to receive your messages any longer, let them go!

### **8. Use a killer sig file**

A signature file is free promotion for your business – don't miss a great opportunity to promote your brand.

### **9. Track your success**

How will you know what is working best if you don't track the results?

Track replies, click-throughs, orders, and unsubscribes.

### **10. Follow up**

Don't think of your message as a one-off – it takes time to build a relationship and establish trust. You MUST follow up with your prospects or you're throwing away money. It can take 5 or more contacts to make a sale, but the recipient may well become a life-long customer.

## **Your Publishing Strategy**

Before you start a campaign, you should answer the following questions:

1. What are your goals?

Some common goals for newsletter publishers:

- branding and awareness
- customer acquisition
- customer retention
- new sales
- repeat sales
- customer feedback
- networking and making contacts
- expressing your own views and opinions
- repeat website visits

2. Do you have the resources?

- time
- tracking capability
- copywriting skills
- who will process subscribe/unsubscribe requests?
- how will you deal with undeliverable email?

3. Are you ready for a successful campaign?

- can you cope with a large number of queries?
- can you fulfil the orders?
- are your staff aware of your campaign?
- do you need to get extra staff in to help?

If direct sales revenue is your primary goal, pick a topic that will attract an audience that will be interested in your products. If you sell pots and pans, for example, you might offer a newsletter about cooking.

If advertising revenue is your primary goal, you need to attract a target audience that will entice advertisers to place their ads in your newsletter. For example, if you wanted to attract pharmaceutical company sponsorship/advertising, you could create a medical newsletter for health professionals.

Once you have determined your goals, you should plan a publishing strategy that will enable you to achieve them. Your newsletter's topic, frequency, and size should all be decided with your goals in mind.

The most common email marketing strategy is a 2-step approach. This is where you send an email containing information of interest to the recipient, with links to your online sales letter. ie. your aim is to get the recipient to click through to your online sales letter which contains more information about your offer.

The other option is to send your complete sales letter in the email, with direct links to an online order form.

As a general rule, the 2-step strategy works best.

## **Creating Content**

What content will you provide, who will produce it, and where will you find it?

Articles form the most popular type of newsletter content - usually in the form of news, tips, how-to information, or reviews.

One of the decisions you have to make is who is going to write the content for your newsletter. Are you going to do it yourself? Hire a freelance writer? Or use syndicated content?

The easiest (and cheapest) option is to do it yourself. Try to write about something that you know about and enjoy – your enthusiasm will come across in your newsletter and stimulate interest in the reader.

If you find yourself struggling for content, there are a number of resources which will provide free content for your newsletter in return for promotion of the author (in the form of their signature file or "resource box").

You'll find some of the best sources for free articles here:

<http://www.web-source.net>  
<http://www.ideamarketers.com>  
<http://ezinearticles.com>

Or you could do a search for "free content" or "free articles" on your favourite search engine - you'll have plenty to choose from.

The key to keeping your subscribers is by offering timely, quality content. Users come to your site and subscribe to your newsletter for information, not to buy something. By having great content, you establish credibility & trust while giving you the opportunity to present your sales message.

## **Your Welcome Message**

When subscribers receive your welcome message, it is important to:

- remind them that they signed up
- state the benefits of your newsletter
- include your contact information
- include clear unsubscribe instructions
- encourage forwarding / telling friends and colleagues
- cross-promote any other newsletters you have

You should send all welcome messages within 24 hours of subscription requests.

## **Formatting Your Messages**

### **Text messages:**

A poorly formatted text email message looks like this:

Thank you for requesting  
information about our services. The staff  
at XYZ Company  
would like to thank all our  
customers...

There are two reasons why email messages may turn out looking like this.

1. Line length.

When composing email, most people just type without using a hard carriage return. If it looks fine when you're done, your email program probably automatically wraps the words.

2. Proportional character fonts

There are fixed-pitch fonts (Courier) and proportional spaced fonts (Verdana). With fixed-pitch fonts, all characters in a paragraph line up directly above each other. With proportional-spaced fonts, CAPS, space bars and other keystrokes are wider, so each line becomes a different length.

By using fixed-pitch fonts (Courier), and a hard carriage return at the end of each line at 60-65 characters, you can avoid the formatting problem shown above.

### **From: field**

More than 40 percent of emails are deleted before being opened because the recipient does not know the sender. In the "From" field, put your name or your company name, whichever is more recognisable.

If you are sending regular email messages to recipients, keep your "From" field consistent. And don't use a free email account!

### **Subject line:**

Your subject line determines whether your message gets opened or deleted. If your message is not opened, your marketing message is not seen.

Your subject line should grab attention, be enticing, appeal to your target audience, and avoid looking like spam. Keep it short (up to 30 characters can be displayed in most email programmes), and don't try to pretend your message is about something else.

Avoid common spam filters:

"free" and "money" in the subject line may be deleted automatically (the recipients network may filter emails by these criteria to reduce spam)

Avoid looking like spam:

Don't use !!!, \$\$\$, ALL CAPS

### **To: field**

Use a persons own email address in the "To" field.

People are more likely to read a message that is specifically addressed to them and has their email address in the "To" field. (This is the first step in personalising your message to increase your response rate.)

Note: Manually addressing each email will take up hours of your time. Automatic email addressing to each individual is just one of the many reasons for using a list hosting company rather than doing it yourself.

### **Body text:**

When subscribers receive your message, the first part of the message that they see is one of the most important areas. People decide whether to read a message within the first few seconds of opening their email...

1. Always address the recipient by their name.
2. Include your website url in the first few lines of your message. Not only will this increase brand awareness and click-throughs, it reminds the recipient who the email is from.

Always tell the recipient what to do next by using a call to action ("click here", "call this number", "reply to this email", etc).

Always use the full url, including http:// - this makes your link clickable.

Avoid using a fullstop immediately after links - most email programmes will incorporate it into the link which will result in an error message when the recipient clicks it.

Quick tips:

- limit your line length to 60 characters to prevent word wrap
- place links 2-3 times in your email
- limit the use of capitals (SHOUTING)
- limit the use of punctuation (?!!! will annoy recipients)
- write as if you are speaking to them
- keep the offer clear
- only use one offer/promotion per email
- use P.S. and repeat the call to action
- have clear, easy unsubscribe instructions
- use a signature file

In most cases, short length is best.

## **Attachments**

Try to avoid attachments unless the recipient is expecting them:

- they increase download time
- there is a risk of virus transmission
- they may be automatically filtered out

In addition, many users will not open an attachment (due to the associated risks) and will delete your message without reading it.

## **General Points**

Try to keep your message size under 24Kb (larger messages may be converted to attachments by some older email programmes).

Create a template for your newsletter. Not only will this save you time (you just cut and paste your content into your template before you send your message), your readers will appreciate a familiar format for each issue.

When you have composed your message, **always** do a spell check and proof-read the message before sending. Read it aloud or print it out. Ask a colleague to check it too.

Remember, do **not** try to close a sale in your email. Your goal is to elicit a response (click-through, telephone call, store visit, etc.). Personalising your messages is one of the most powerful things you can do to achieve this.

Create specific landing pages for each offer.

## **Text v HTML**

Email messages can be sent as plain text, as html, or as both (multi-part). Whether to send text or html email can only be determined by testing. As with most things in life, there are advantages and disadvantages to each format. The majority of email programmes can read html, although there are some caveats when sending html messages to AOL users.

Always use plain text if you are new to email marketing. As your experience grows and you become more confident, try sending an html message. Make sure you test your response rate though!

### **Advantages of html email:**

- visually appealing (you can include colour, pictures, styled fonts, etc)
- better control over link appearance ("click here" instead of "http://www.yoursite.com/offerx.htm")
- you can track the number of emails opened
- seamless click-through to your site (if your html email is similar to your site)
- better response rate

### **Disadvantages of html email:**

- not viewable in all email programmes
- larger file size (longer download time)
- broken images if read offline
- modem will try to dial up an internet connection if read offline
- html may become garbled when forwarded
- AOL users are unable to view html unless using version 6 or higher
- most experienced net users prefer plain text messages

Note: If you are sending messages to corporate networks, use text only and avoid html (many corporate IT managers block html emails).

### **How to compose html email**

One of the best ways to compose html email is to use a specific web design programme. Of these, Dreamweaver and FrontPage are the most popular.

However, in order to be viewed as intended, html needs to be interpreted correctly by the email programme. To do this, your html email header must tell the email programme that the message is html, not text.

Text header:

```
"Content-Type:text/plain; charset=us-ascii"
```

Html header:

```
"MIME-Version 1.0 Content-Type:text/html; charset=us-ascii"
```

Some email programmes will do this automatically when composing html email (Outlook Express, Outlook, etc), others may not.

Alternatively, you could send your html message as a file attachment. However, there is an associated security risk with file attachments and the number of recipients opening your attached message will be significantly lower.

If the recipient's email programme can not view html, it is important to prevent them from seeing just the raw html code. By including a comment field, these recipients will see a text message instead.

```
<!-- Hi. Your text message for users of non-html email clients would go here. You should include details of how to subscribe to the text version, and how to unsubscribe from the html version. Remember to include your url and contact details here too. -->
```

Note: if you compose your html email in Outlook Express, do **not** use the Preview pane to view your message prior to sending - your html may become garbled. To view your message, send yourself a test copy via email.

### **Sending Messages to AOL Users**

AOL does not use a standard email programme and does not fully support HTML unless the recipient is using AOL v6 (or a later version). As such, you can use font tags and bold tags but **not** table tags or any structural tags.

Links for AOL must be formatted as HTML to be clickable. Even if you are sending out a text message, if you want AOL links to be clickable, you must format your link text like this:

```
<a href="http://www.yourdomain.com">Link Text Here</a>
```

A popular method is to have a regular link first and then a line that says:

```
AOL users <a href="http://www.yourdomain.com">click here</a>.
```

## Tips for html messaging

- keep the design clean and simple
- use a single column of text
- use no more than 3 graphics
- keep the file size small (less than 24Kb)
- keep main links above the fold
- fit your promotion in the viewable window
- use colour
- use short urls with a call to action
- make all graphics clickable
- emphasise with bold
- avoid *italics* (harder to read)
- avoid underlining (looks like a link)
- use 2-3 sentence paragraphs
- use bullet points or asterisks to emphasise benefits
- place your link 2-3 times throughout the message
- use comment fields for text-only email viewers
- setting your html table width to 600 pixels allows your message to fit in the recipients viewing pane without requiring horizontal scrolling

## Promotion Using Email Signature Files

You brand your stationery, your business cards, and your web site, so what about your emails?

Email has become the main tool of communication for the modern business, yet many businesses fail to use signature files. Every message is then a missed opportunity to reinforce your brand.

A signature file (or "sig") is the text you insert at the end of all your emails which identifies you, your company, and your products and services.

At a minimum, it should contain:

- your company name
- your contact details
- your website address
- marketing tag line

Signature files should be a maximum 6 lines of information.

Example of a text signature file:

-----  
Dr Russell Potter  
Email Marketing Solutions  
[solutions@emailtools.co.uk](mailto:solutions@emailtools.co.uk)  
<http://www.emailtools.co.uk>

Hassle-free Email List Management and Email Delivery  
-----

Html example:

<a href="http://www.emailtools.co.uk">www.emailtools.co.uk</a>
Dr Russell Potter Email Marketing Solutions  Email: <a href="mailto:solutions@emailtools.co.uk">solutions@emailtools.co.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.emailtools.co.uk">http://www.emailtools.co.uk</a>  Affordable Mailing List Management and Email Delivery
<a href="#">Click here</a> for Email Marketing Secrets!

Signature files are an important way of building brand recognition. Just think how many times your company gets exposure if you include these details in all your emails!

Text signatures are also commonly used when posting to newsgroups and bulletin boards. Since signatures appear at the end of your message, they are usually seen as an acceptable form of promotion without being considered spam. You can even alter your signature to suit the discussion topic.

In addition to providing contact information and establishing your credentials, signatures can also be used as a marketing or sales tool. Using signature files to promote your business is a great way to advertise your products and services for free!

A signature is one of the most powerful marketing and communication tools available to businesses. Make sure you use one.

## List Management and Email Delivery

Once you have determined your goals, your publishing strategy, your newsletter content and design, it's time to consider how you are going to manage your list and deliver your messages.

### DIY v List Hosting

List hosting is where the management of your email list is handled by another company. In addition to handling all subscribe/unsubscribe requests and bounced mail processing, these companies will also handle the delivery of your email message to your subscriber list.

In this way, your subscriber list is kept up-to-date automatically, without any effort on your part, and email delivery does not involve using your ISPs mail servers.

If you have more time than money, you may consider a do-it-yourself approach to list management and message sending - you would manually add and remove subscribers from your list, process bounced mail yourself, and use a standard email programme to send your messages (Outlook, Outlook Express, Eudora, etc).

However, I highly recommend that you use a list hosting service, even if your list is small (the majority of newsletter publishers use a list hosting service). By automating as much as possible from the start you'll save hours of your time and countless headaches.

There are a number of disadvantages and potential pitfalls for DIY enthusiasts...

By using software on your own PC, you will be sending large numbers of email messages through your internet service provider (ISP).

Many ISP's do not allow the sending of email to multiple recipients (to prevent spam) and will automatically delete the messages from their server. The cut-off number used by some ISP's can be set as low as 15 recipients!

If you use the To: or CC: (carbon copy) fields for sending the same message to multiple recipients, ALL your recipients see ALL the other recipients email addresses. In addition, replies and bounced mail will be sent to ALL recipients on your list. This is one of the fastest ways to annoy and lose customers/subscribers.

(BCC: - blind carbon copy - is the only way to hide multiple recipients in a standard email programme.)

If you use To:, CC:, or BCC: to send multiple emails, should you get disconnected from your internet connection, or if your computer crashes during mailing, you will not know who has received your message and who has not. This leaves you two options: resend (some users will get duplicates), or don't resend (some users will not receive your message).

Do you have plenty of patience? Once you get above 100 subscribers, manual subscribe and unsubscribe processing becomes a real chore and takes up more and more of your time.

If you have a large list, should a user be unknown (invalid email address), returned mail will consume bandwidth and tie up your mail server.

And last, but by no means least, you must remember to regularly back up your list and keep your virus scan software up to date - your customers will not thank you if you infect their computer with a virus!

## **Benefits Of Outsourcing**

### 1. Hassle-free

- no software or hardware to install
- professional support

### 2. Save time

- hassle-free list management
- subscribe/unsubscribe request handling
- bounced email handling
- automation

### 3. Save money

- no training costs
- no software or hardware investment

### 4. Dedicated Mail Servers

- no dependence on your ISP
- greater message delivery capacity
- advanced features and services

### 5. Support

- professional support

## **Email Tracking**

It is important to track response rates for each email campaign. By tracking, you can tell which headlines, offers or promotions pulled the best response.

Users can respond by replying to emails, clicking on links embedded in the emails, or by unsubscribing.

## **Tracking Replies**

You can use a different "From" address for each campaign to track responses/enquiries – all replies will be sent to a specific return email address.

You can also specify particular contact addresses in the body of your messages. By using various mailto: links, you will know which message or offer recipients are replying to.

Mailto: links are links within your body text that, when clicked on, open a new message in the recipients email programme. You can specify the return email address, subject lines &/or body text for these replies.

Specifying the Reply-To field:

mailto:feedback@yoursite.com  
mailto:feedback2@yoursite.com

Specifying the Subject line:

mailto:feedback@yoursite.com?subject=golf1  
mailto:feedback@yoursite.com?subject=golf2

Specifying the Body:

mailto:feedback@yoursite.com?body=information

Specifying the Subject line and Body:

mailto:feedback@yoursite.com?subject=golf1&body=information

Note: the above examples would be clickable in text emails. For html emails you would place the specified text in a "link" field.

### **Tracking click-throughs**

There are a number of ways to track click-through responses.

A) Create a specific landing page for each link

http://www.yoursite.com/01.html  
http://www.yoursite.com/02.html

B) Use specific link click-through tracking software

http://www.yoursite.com/trackingscript.pl?01  
http:// www.yoursite.com/trackingscript.pl?02

C) Use site statistic (log analysis) software

http://www.yoursite.com/?01  
http:// www.yoursite.com/?02

## **Tracking read messages**

This is only possible if you are sending html email.

By embedding an image in the html email, when each message is opened, it pulls the image from your server. The image could be your logo or an invisible single pixel. Again, you will need to use log analysis software to track the number of times an image is called (ie. the number of messages opened).

## **Tracking unsubscribes**

This is one of the most overlooked aspects of campaign tracking. You must monitor the number of people that unsubscribe after each campaign. If the number is greater than usual (you'll always get *some* unsubscribes), try to find out the reason. The commonest reasons why users unsubscribe are:

1. Irrelevant or poor content
2. They are receiving too much email
3. Their circumstances have changed

## **Best Time To Send**

Good days...

If you are targeting business users, the best time to send your message is mid-week. Business users are usually busy on Mondays; on Fridays, they want to go home.

If you are sending to consumers, Saturdays and Sundays may be better. Consumers usually access the internet from home, mostly at weekends.

Bad months...

As a general rule, poor months to send your campaigns are December-January, June-July (many people are on holiday).

In addition to selecting the best time to send your message, you must also consider the frequency of your mailings. Don't overdo it – it's quality, not quantity, that keeps your messages welcome.

## **Your Website**

Although the specifics of web design are beyond the scope of this course, any guide on email marketing would be incomplete without some mention about your website's design.

The two most important functions of your website are:

1. Email capture (lead generation)
2. Making a sale (revenue generation)

Your primary goal should be to capture email addresses for follow up. Your websites other function should be to close the sale.

Before going into more detail, however, you should first read the following basic information about domain names, hosting, and general design tips.

### **Choosing A Domain Name**

Your domain name is your unique online address (url). It is *essential* that you have your own domain name:

- it looks professional
- it is how your customers will know how to find you
- you are not tied to your ISP (internet service provider) or hosting company should you outgrow their service.
- you can retain your email address, regardless of the ISP or hosting company that you are using

Your domain name should be short & memorable.

For example, [www.hmd.com](http://www.hmd.com) is better than [www.hansenmacormackdavidson.com](http://www.hansenmacormackdavidson.com)

It can contain keywords which will entice users to click through to your website (some search engines also give a higher ranking for urls that contain keywords).

For example, [www.thegolfshop.com](http://www.thegolfshop.com) & [www.golfsupplies.com](http://www.golfsupplies.com) both have keywords in the url. In addition to telling the user exactly what the website is about (before they even visit!), users are more likely to click when compared to [www.someunknowncompanyname.com](http://www.someunknowncompanyname.com) or [www.zzz.com/store.htm](http://www.zzz.com/store.htm) .

Most generic words have already been registered, but you can still come up with a good name.

Once you have come up with a suitable domain name, you then need to consider what ending(s) to get (ie. .com, .net, etc.).

To protect your brand & to prevent competitors buying the same name with an alternative ending, you should try to get all 3 top level domains: .com, .net, & .org. (.org is meant to be for non-profit organisations)

In addition to protecting your brand, an added reason for owning a .com ending is that if users type in your domain without an ending, the internet explorer browser will automatically search for that domain with a .com ending. So if you own the .com, they will end up at your site anyway.

However, if your target market is only in the UK, you should buy a .co.uk domain as your first choice. Two reasons:

1. UK users are more likely to do business with a .co.uk website
2. Most UK search engines and directories require (or at least prefer) .co.uk domains to others.

Once you have decided on a name, appropriate endings, & checked that they are available, you should purchase the domains as soon as possible. Most domain registrars (companies that register domain names on your behalf) have a search facility to check for availability prior to purchase. Your web host or ISP may also provide this service.

There are literally hundreds of places online to buy a domain name. However, caution is advised:

- Some unscrupulous registrars monitor the search queries for good domains & then buy them themselves.
- The longevity of some registrars may not be guaranteed. If the registrar goes bust, you could have major problems getting your domain transferred back to you (if at all!).

It is also an advantage if you can change the IPS tag (the registrar controlling the domain) & DNS (domain name setting) yourself, since you will then have a lot more control over your domain.

### **Is your website up? – Choosing a hosting company**

Hosting companies have a permanent connection to the internet. They will host your website on their servers so that your site is accessible to internet users.

Choosing the right host for your website is critical.

Do not fall into the trap of choosing the cheapest hosting company. And never use a free host! A free hosting url looks unprofessional – if your customers think that all you can afford is free hosting, your credibility will be nil & they will never buy from you.

The uptime of cheap & free hosts is also extremely variable.

Reliability is of paramount importance.

It doesn't really matter how great your website is if it's not available. Your number one priority is uptime. *If your site is unavailable, you won't make a penny.*

This is one of the main reasons to outsource your hosting requirements – let them do what they do best, & you can get on with marketing your website. You shouldn't be worrying about your site's availability when there are so many other, more important things you could be doing.

There is a great uptime checking service which I strongly recommend. You'll find it at: <http://www.netwhistle.com> . Once you sign up, their software automatically checks the availability of your website & will notify you by email if they discover a problem. This service is worth every penny - or dollar, since it's based in the US ;)

If your website is mission critical, there are a few hosting companies that guarantee uptime with a Service Level Agreement. Worth considering, but they do charge accordingly.

Other key features a web host should offer:

- daily data backup
- good connectivity (fast downloads)
- 24 hour tech support
- visitor statistic logging
- cgi-bin (for running perl scripts)
- basic email services
- SSL (secure hosting for online transactions)
- up-to-date security (hacker prevention)

When choosing a web hosting company, remember to consider your future needs, not just what you need today.

### **Good Web Design**

You have about 5 seconds in which to make an impression before the visitor decides to stay on your site or move on to another site. Your site must download quickly, be pleasing on the eye, & immediately inform the visitor of the sites purpose. Use simple words & short paragraphs (of about 3 lines each).

Before you even start designing your site, however, you should answer the following questions:

- what are your goals? – sales, leads, branding, customer feedback, cost savings, customer support, etc.
- how will you measure your success? – revenue generation, cost savings, etc.
- will your site be search engine ready?
- who is your target market?
- where will your content come from?
- who will update & maintain the site?
- have you selected a reliable web host?
- will you be processing orders online?
- what is your long-term plan?

### **Good web design tips:**

#### **Simple navigation**

All pages should have a link to your home page & a link to your contact information. In addition, you should have text links on all pages so that visitors do not have to use their browsers back button. Navigation links are normally placed at the top or left-hand side of each page.

#### **Consistent design**

All pages should have a similar look & feel to them. This reassures visitors, while reinforcing your brand. By having consistent navigation throughout the site, users will feel in control & more at ease. Keep logos in the same place on each page & use the same graphic on different pages.

### **Quick page download**

Despite the advent of broadband, many users still use a dial-up modem to access the internet. Any page over 50Kb size will feel like an eternity to users on a 26Kb connection & they will probably surf elsewhere. You can reduce the page size by keeping graphics to a minimum & by compressing any graphics you use. Also specify the height & width of the graphic files to reduce download time. Lots of javascript will also slow page load times.

### **Clarity of purpose**

Is it clear to the visitor exactly what your site is about? Do you have an easy to follow sales process? Have you built credibility? Have you given the benefits of your product or service? Have you asked for the order? Is it clear how to order? Is it easy to order?

### **Accessibility**

In addition to creating a site that is accessible to the disabled (an increasingly important issue on the net), your site benefits in other ways. By catering for the disabled, your site also becomes more search engine friendly (which will improve your search engine ranking). Graphics should have alternate text, links should be underlined, text colour should be in high contrast to the background colour, & text links should be on all pages.

### **Search engine readiness**

This is discussed in a separate guide, but at a minimum, all pages should have a title, meta description, meta keywords, body keywords, image alt tags, & text links on the pages. Note: None of the search engines can index Flash content, and only Google indexes PDF files.

### **Opt-in feature**

If you don't get visitors interacting with your site, you could lose them for good. All sites MUST have an opt-in email option in order to capture email addresses of visitors.

### **Freebies**

Free gifts, free reports, free give-aways, etc are great ways to get visitors to your site & generate leads. If you do offer something for free, however, you should always qualify the recipients – are they really potential customers or are they just looking for freebies? Ask for their email address or get them to fill out a questionnaire before they can get their free whatever. This should reduce the number of poor prospects, while giving you useful information to use for future sales or follow-ups.

### **Search facility**

If you have more than 50 pages on your site, a site search facility can be very useful. Not only will your users be more likely to find what they are looking for, they are more likely to return.

So, you have done all of that, what now?

Test your site!

You must proof read your site & test how it works. Even one spelling mistake can lose you your credibility. Does it read well? Does it give the intended impression? Will it achieve your goals?

Note that just 5 users testing your site will find 90% of your problems - ask 5 people you know to test your site!

There are many different browsers in use, so you should ensure that your design works in the most common browsers (Internet Explorer v4 up & Netscape Navigator v4 up).

You should also check that none of your links are broken. NetMechanic is an online tool that will check your links & html code for errors (first 5 website pages are free). <http://netmechanic.com>

## **Stop losing visitors!**

### **Do you have an error page?**

If a visitor follows a link to a page that does not exist on your site, do you have a branded 404 (error) page to help them? If not, this is one of the fastest ways to lose potential customers.

Simply set up a .htaccess file (Unix servers) that redirects to a generic error page or your home page. Add the following line to the file:

```
ErrorDocument 404 /index.html
```

Upload this .htaccess file to your root directory. That's it!

Ask your web hosting company if you need help with this.

Note: if you are hosting on a Windows NT server, you will need to implement a redirect script. You'll find one at <http://www.hotscripts.com>

### **Is your site found without the WWW?**

If you type in <http://yoursite.com>, do you end up at your site? Or do you get a "page not found" 404 error?

Call your hosting company & tell them. It'll take them all of 5 minutes to set up a redirect of <http://yoursite.com> to <http://www.yoursite.com> (they should not charge you for this).

### **Are you capturing email addresses?**

Do you spot a recurring theme?

Email capture should be the primary goal of your website.

## **Make your landing page sell**

For each campaign, when the recipient clicks on a link, you should have a specific landing page for your offer. The landing page is where you close the sale or gather further information. By implementing the following tips for your landing page, you will close a greater number of sales.

### **Use copy that sells**

- delete unnecessary words
- keep sentences short & simple
- use paragraphs of 3 sentences each
- one idea per paragraph
- use sub-headings & bullet points
- use hype!
- do not use all capitals
- use testimonials (2-3 per page)
- no spelling errors
- describe benefits, not features
- use "you" & "your" instead of "my", "we", or "our"
- ask for the order
- offer a guarantee

Your headline is a crucial factor in your online sales letter – it can make or break your conversion rate. Try to offer a benefit to the visitor, use power words, & stimulate enough curiosity to make them read the sales letter.

### **Ask for the order**

Always ask for the order - it will double your sales!

### **Use Power Words**

amazing, fantastic, free, love, great, discover, proven, how to, guarantee, save, money, you

### **Words to avoid**

Buy, lose, death, hate, loss, worry, contract, wrong, failure

### **Offer a foolproof guarantee**

Make the guarantee a condition of sale.

"no risk" "100% unconditional" "risk free"

Note: You are legally obliged to offer a 30 day money-back guarantee on any product sold to consumers (European Directive).

### **Have an easy to follow order process**

Explain the order process in basic terms – eliminate uncertainty.

Remove distractions - remove unnecessary links.

Don't have banners or other ads on order pages.

### **Accept credit cards online**

Accepting credit cards online gives credibility to your business. Not accepting credit cards online can lose you over half your sales!

Use a secure server for order processing.  
Confirm orders by email.

### **Keep testing!**

Test the headline. Test the offer. Test the price.

### **And if you can't make the sale...**

Ask for their feedback.

If offering a survey, make sure you have a clearly visible privacy policy.

Notes:

The average conversion ratio on the internet is 0.2% (ie. only 2 in 1000 visitors will make a purchase).

By implementing the tips found in this guide, you should be able to generate a much higher conversion rate. A recent survey by Forrester Research showed that email campaigns generated an average click-through rate of ~10%, with a conversion rate of 2.5%.

You will need an internet merchant account to take credit cards online (this is not the same as a normal merchant account). You should apply for this from your bank or from an online payment processor (WorldPay, NetBanx, etc). By using an online payment processor, the credit cards are processed in real time.

Alternatively, use an internet merchant bureau account. This is where the payment processor handles online credit card transactions for you, without the need for you to have an internet merchant account yourself. This is often the best way when starting out & you do not have a trading history. (WorldPay, iBill, ClickBank, PayPal)

Avoid credit card fraud by looking out for the following signs:

- the shipping address is different from billing address
- the purchaser is using a free email address (Yahoo, Hotmail)
- the purchaser has given an invalid email address (you should send a confirmation email before shipping goods)

You can also use IP lookup to check the country of origin of the sale. If the users IP address shows that they are in a different country to the billing address, be wary.

If you are unsure, phone them - you did ask for their phone number didn't you?

Note: I highly recommend WorldPay. They are secure, reliable, and provide excellent support. Their website address is: <http://www.worldpay.com>

If you are selling digital products (ebooks, reports, software downloads, etc), then I recommend ClickBank - it has an in-built affiliate programme that you can use to help sell your products too!

Click here to learn more:

<http://www.emailtools.co.uk/clickbank>

## **Building Your List - Promoting Your Website And Newsletter**

It is crucial that you place a newsletter subscription form on your home page. Your home page is the first thing that most of your visitors will see - don't waste a great opportunity.

In addition, you should also place your subscription form, or a link to your form, on sub-pages of your site.

Although it is tempting to ask for as much information as possible (age, sex, postcode, etc), don't ask for information that you don't really need - fewer people will sign up if you ask for too much personal information. If you get their email address, you can always ask them for personal details later.

### **Offline promotion**

Your domain name should be everywhere!

- letterheads
- invoices
- compliment slips
- business cards
- screensavers
- Yellow Pages

Do **all** your staff know your website address? Make sure they do!

If you place an ad in a newspaper or magazine, feature your url prominently.

Do your staff speak to customers on the telephone? Ask your customers if they would like to receive your email newsletter.

### **Promoting to newsgroups and bulletin boards**

Newsgroups and bulletin boards are read by *millions* of internet users every day. They can generate extremely targeted traffic to your site.

Promotion to newsgroups is free, but you must be careful not to spam. People that use newsgroups tend to be more experienced internet users and as such are quick to flame if you post a blatant ad (ie. they will send you nasty messages).

To find a relevant newsgroup, simply do a search on your area of business using a newsgroup reader (Outlook Express comes with a newsgroup reader). You can then set it up to receive posts.

Alternatively, go to the groups on Google (<http://groups.google.com>) and do a search for your topic. When viewing the search results, note which newsgroups contain the majority of relevant posts.

Before posting, monitor the group for a few days to see what is (and what is not) acceptable.

Never do multiple cross-postings (posting the same message to different groups) or you will find receive more flames than your in-box will be able to cope with. (Note: if you do receive a flame, delete it. Never respond!)

Similar to marketing by email, use short sentences and paragraphs, and use a signature file when posting.

### **Submit your site to the search engines**

You have probably invested considerable time and resources in developing your website. If your site can't be found, however, you are not getting the maximum benefit from your online presence.

It is essential that your site is listed in the major search engines. A good ranking will bring lots of targeted visitors to your website.

See our guide, "Search Engine Secrets - How to get a top ranking", for tips and tricks to getting listed on Yahoo and the major search engines.

### **Advertising in other newsletters**

Advertising in email newsletters (ezines) can result in highly targeted ads that produce results at low cost. They are a great way to reach potential customers.

Advantages:

- cost-effective
- good response rates
- free advertising (forwarding of emails)
- extended advertising (if emails are archived)

Disadvantages:

- you must select the right ezine

Before running your ad, subscribe to the ezine. Look at its quality, the signup method, privacy policy, and unsubscribe options. Look at whether the ads are by the same advertiser or whether they are from different advertisers in each issue.

You also need to find out what the rates and runtime for each ad would be, in addition to the total number of subscribers to that ezine. Remember that more subscribers does not necessarily mean more responses – a small list that is targeted will outperform an untargeted larger list.

To find suitable ezines in which to advertise, search the ezine directories for ezines that reach your target audience. Two of the better websites to use when searching for an appropriate ezine:

<http://www.ezinesearch.com>  
<http://www.liszt.com>

The key to successful ezine advertising is in evaluating and selecting the right ezine for your target audience (and writing killer copy for your ad).

Important note: To maximise your return on investment, the landing page for your ad MUST capture the visitors email address. Make sure you place your subscription box on this page.

### **Announce Your Ezine**

There are a few places that will announce your ezine to their subscribers.

<http://scout.cs.wisc.edu>  
<http://www.new-list.com>  
<http://listserv.classroom.com/archives/new-list.html>

### **Submit To Ezine Review Sites**

<http://www.list-a-day.com>  
<http://www.bestezines.com>  
<http://www.ibiznewsletters.com>

### **Submit To Ezine Directories**

<http://www.sparklist.net>  
<http://www.communitystart.com>  
<http://www.ezine-universe.com>  
<http://www.dolist.net>  
<http://www.ezinesearch.com>  
<http://www.webscoutlists.com>

It is worth the time submitting to these sites, since they can refer highly-targeted subscribers for years to come.

When writing your newsletters description, write it in third person so that it looks like editorial rather than advertising.

### **Distribute Your Articles**

Another method of generating free traffic to your site, is to let other webmasters and newsletter owners publish your articles for free. By using a signature file promoting your website and newsletter at the foot of each article, you get free exposure.

Submit your articles to the following sites:

<http://www.web-source.net/articlesub.htm>  
<http://www.ideamarketers.com>  
<http://list-resources.com>  
<http://ezinearticles.com>

Note: If you are struggling for content for your own newsletter/ezine, you will find articles which you can republish (for free) at these sites too.

## **Banner Advertising**

Banner ads are generally not cost-effective. They have an average click-through rate of less than 0.5%!

As well as a poor response rate, many internet users use software to block banner ads completely.

Banner ads do increase brand awareness - you may want to try using them if awareness is your goal.

To create an effective banner, the banner should have the following elements:

- high contrast, bright colours, easy to read
- animation to draw the eye
- call to action – "Click Here"
- attention-grabbing headline
- simple, concise message
- a reason to click on it – describe a benefit, use the word FREE
- a specific landing page appropriate to that banners message
- small size (the smaller the size, the faster it downloads, the greater the views)
- use alt text for those with images switched off

To maximise your return on investment, you should *always* negotiate the price of advertising online. Design various banners, test each one, & track the results – use the one that pulls the most sales.

Go to where your target audience is rather than advertising on general portal sites.

Locate niche sites - your click-through ratio will be higher & your visitors will be more qualified. This translates into increased sales.

Ask where will your banner be shown - top of the page placements will generate far more responses than placement at the bottom of the page.

Work out which is more economical – the cost of advertising per 1000 impressions, per 1000 click-throughs, or sponsorship for a set time period.

Banner ad rates vary from £10 to £40 per 1000 impressions. You should question anything higher than this.

Your banner can be html or flash, or an image (gif, jpeg).

Test your ads. Which one gets the most click-throughs? Which one pulls the most leads or sales?

Do not be fooled by site owners that say they get millions of hits. A site's popularity is the number of unique visitors, *not* hits. If a page has multiple graphics, that page can generate multiple hits each time it is viewed (ie. a single visitor can generate lots of hits).

If you are considering sponsorship of a site, you should find out the number of page impressions that are generated each month for the area you wish to sponsor. A site's home page could get thousands of page impressions, but the area you are interested in could get very few. Ask the site owner!

Don't use banner exchanges (where you show banners on your site in return for other sites showing yours) – they don't work. In most cases, your banner is only shown once for every two banners you display. The only winners are the ones running the exchange network.

## **Press Releases**

The media (both on and offline) can be a great place to gain exposure for your business. Consider creating a press release for your product or service.

- Make sure the information is newsworthy.
- Make sure your subject line is effective.
- Avoid hype and technical terms.
- Deal with the facts.
- Write in third person.
- Provide as much contact information as possible.
- Make it as easy as possible for the journalists to do their jobs.

Sites which can help with copywriting and distribution:

<http://www.pressreleasenetwork.com>

<http://www.prnewswire.com>

<http://www.pressbox.co.uk>

## **Making Money From Your Newsletter**

**Your own products and services** - your newsletter is a great way to promote your own products and services. By offering quality content in your field of expertise, you educate your customers and prospects while building your credibility, leading to increased sales.

**Advertising** – selling ad space in your newsletter is one of the most popular sources of generating revenue.

**Affiliate Programmes** - commissions from affiliate programmes can be used as an alternative (or in addition) to paid advertising.

**Subscription Fees** – most newsletters are free, but paid-subscription newsletters are gaining in popularity as web users realise that quality content costs money.

**Joint Ventures** – doing joint ventures with other companies can be a very profitable way of making money. By endorsing a product in your newsletter, you can make money from your list without ever needing your own product or service.

**Selling your newsletter** - it is not recommended that you create a newsletter with the purpose of selling/renting your subscribers email addresses to a third party. However, you can create your newsletter with a view to selling it (as a complete package) to a large company that wants to enter your target market quickly.

## **The Hidden Power Of Autoresponders**

Autoresponders are essential tools that should form an integral part of your online marketing efforts. They allow you to deliver information to your customers within seconds, 24 hours a day - without any effort on your part.

Autoresponders are emails that are automatically sent to anyone that sends a request to the autoresponder email address. The recipient receives a pre-written message as a response.

Some basic uses:

- receipt verification
- FAQs
- free articles
- sales letter
- price list
- order confirmation
- company information

But the true power of autoresponders lies in the follow up. Imagine being able to send multiple, sequential messages, individually personalised, without lifting a finger! Well, now you can...

Advanced autoresponders can send a sequence of personalised emails in response to a request. You simply set your follow up messages to be sent at predetermined intervals.

For example, your first message goes out immediately, your next message could go out 2 days later, your third message 7 days after that, etc, etc. – automatically.

[Note: iMailer (our advanced email marketing system) has this capability built in.]

### **The fastest way to increase your profits is to follow up with potential customers!**

People that contact you are extremely hot prospects. They have already expressed an interest in your product or service. If you don't follow up their enquiry, you are throwing away money!

The more times a potential customer is exposed to your sales message, the more likely they are to make a purchase. Indeed, research shows that people may need to receive a sales message up to 7 times before deciding to buy.

By placing your marketing message in your autoresponder sequence, customers can request information at any time of the day and have it delivered to their email inbox instantly. Not only does this save you hours of manually responding to each request for information, but the autoresponder will follow up with your hot prospect automatically!

Once you have set up your message sequence, simply relax on the beach and watch your profits roll in. :)

Example uses:

Offer a free course in your area of expertise eg. 7 day training courses by email.

Create "green" newsletters to build credibility and reinforce branding - a "green" newsletter is one in which the content is not time-sensitive (ie. it does not go out of date) eg. golfing tips.

Send a series of sales letters to your customers. For example, if a customer has bought a months supply of goods, you could send them an email a month later to remind them that they may soon be needing more (and that they can buy them from you again, of course).

The possibilities are endless!

## **Final Thoughts**

Email is ideal for brand reinforcement, product testing, promotional offers and customer surveys. Your message should be compelling, relevant, timely and valuable. Above all, it should be targeted and personalised.

**Email marketing is critical to your success online** - I can't stress this enough!

Although a website is an excellent tool for online marketing, without email capture, it is far less effective...

Email truly is the "killer application" of the internet.

Can you think of any other way to reach someone on the other side of the world in seconds, 24 hours a day? For pennies? Nothing in marketing has ever come close to the power of email.

## **Ideas To Help Your Business**

Permission email marketing is a very profitable way to build your business, gain exposure, and improve customer loyalty.

The iMailer email marketing system provides everything your business needs to save time, generate leads, build customer relationships, and increase your sales.

iMailer is an opt-in email list management and email delivery solution that automates just about everything:

- creating your customer signup form
- demographic data capture
- managing subscribe/unsubscribe requests
- message personalisation
- email delivery
- database filtering
- follow-up messaging
- response tracking
- data back-up

Ways you can use iMailer in your business:

1. Generate opt-in email lists
2. Send newsletters to your customers
3. Announce events, seminars, conferences
4. Send promotional offers and sales letters
5. Introduce new products and services
6. Send press releases
7. After-sales support
8. Send a training series

Use iMailer to send personalised emails to hundreds or thousands of people with just a click. There's no software or hardware to install, and iMailer is so easy to use you'll wonder how you ever managed without it!

To learn more about iMailer and how it can help your business, click here:

**<http://www.emailtools.co.uk/iMailer>**

## **Appendix I:**

### **Email Checklist – Read This Before You Hit Send!**

#### **General:**

What is your goal?  
Is the list opt-in only?  
Are your staff aware of the campaign?  
How are you tracking responses?  
Is this the best time to send the offer?

#### **From address:**

Is the From email address valid?  
Will recipients recognise who the email is from?  
Where will email replies be sent?

#### **Subject line:**

Does the subject line capture interest?  
Is it short?  
Is it personalised?  
Does it look like spam?  
Does it avoid the common spam filters?

#### **Message body:**

Is there a greeting?  
Is the greeting personalised?  
Is your offer clear within the first few paragraphs?  
Are the paragraphs short and easy to read?  
Have you done a spell check?  
Did you format lines with hard returns at 60 characters?  
Do you have a single, clear offer?  
Have you placed links 2-3 times within the message?  
Do all links work – are they clickable?  
Do the tracking links work?  
Is there a call to action?  
Is there a PS?  
Is there a signature file?  
Are there clear, easy unsubscribe instructions?  
Is there an automatic one-click unsubscribe option?

## **Appendix II:**

### **Anti-Spam Software - Stop Spam In It's Tracks!**

Tired of getting junk email from unknown sources?

Worried about getting an email virus?

Relax. The solution to managing your email is here!

#### **Now you can analyse and filter your mail as it arrives...**

Introducing MailWasher, the easiest way to check and manage your emails **before** you download them.

Discover the safe way to stop unwanted emails and viruses before they get to your computer. This software is essential in stopping spam reaching your inbox. It's so easy to set up and use that you'll be managing your email like a pro in seconds!

See who the email is from, the subject, the attachment...choose to keep it...or delete it straight off the server! You can even bounce back unwanted emails so it looks as if your email address is not valid.

I can't overstate how much this programme is an absolute lifesaver in time and aggravation. Never download an unwanted message again!

Download link: <http://www.emailtools.co.uk/mailwasher>

File size: 1.5Mb

Runs on Win95 / 98 / Me / NT4 / 2000

## **Appendix III:**

### **Opt-In Email List Providers**

<http://www.postmasterdirect.com>

<http://www.yesmail.com>

<http://www.edirect.com>

Renting email addresses from third parties can provide a quick route to targeted recipients. But it can become expensive very quickly. These list providers handle the delivery of your message to their list, rather than disclosing the addresses to the you.

If you do go down this route, your goal should be to build your own opt-in email list by capturing email addresses - by offering a free report, free trial, free ebook, etc - rather than trying to make a direct sale. In this way, you obtain permission to send your marketing messages to them in future.

Note: You may come across email addresses for sale, but I do not recommend purchasing these lists - why would any reputable publisher/company spend time and effort building a list of targeted opt-in email addresses, just to sell them to someone else?

**Under no circumstances** should you ever purchase a CD of millions of email addresses - these emails have been harvested and you will be spamming if you contact anyone on these lists.

## About the Author

Dr Russell Potter has been successfully promoting websites since 1996. An accomplished internet marketing consultant, he is currently CEO of Email Marketing Solutions, specialists in opt-in email list management and email delivery solutions.

To visit Email Marketing Solutions online, click here:

<http://www.emailtools.co.uk>

Note: Email Marketing Solutions is not an email list rental service. We do not rent or sell email addresses or contact information collected by our customers.

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