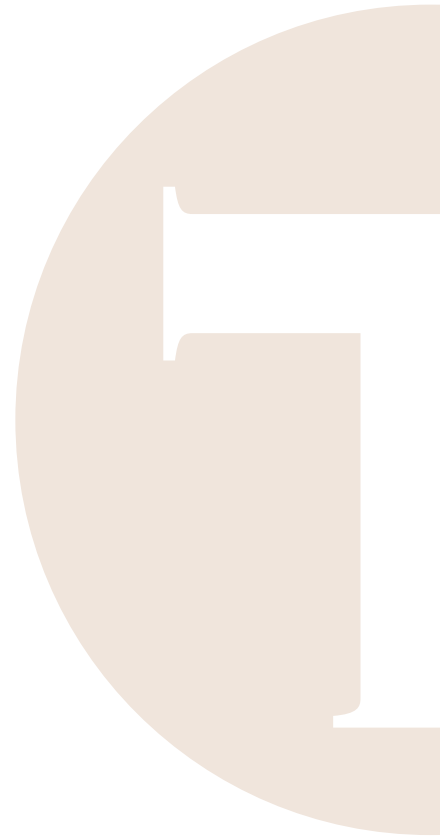


DEVELOPING YOUR E-MAIL  
NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBER LIST

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**S**o you've created a great-looking e-mail newsletter packed full of highly intelligent and insightful articles, but you aren't seeing the results you had hoped for? Chances are your subscriber database could be to blame. Lack of exposure and subscribers will kill even the best written and designed newsletters.

Before you go out and buy an expensive list of e-mails, consider this: for an e-mail newsletter to be successful, it must be opt-in/opt-out. A potential subscriber must request to be on the list and be given instructions on how to unsubscribe. This ensures higher response rates, fewer undeliverable e-mails, time saved on list management, fewer complaints and more importantly no label of being a SPAMMER, which carries legal and ethical liabilities.

So if you can't buy your subscription list, how do you obtain it? Following are a few ideas to help you build your database or grow an existing one.

#### **Develop a Pop-up Subscriber Form on Your Web Site**

The most obvious way to collect interested subscribers to your newsletter is through your own web site. Don't leave it up to chance whether a visitor to your website will get to the subscription screen. Develop a pop-up form that appears right after the home page is downloaded.

#### **Make Your Subscription Form as Simple as Possible**

Should you ask subscribers for their name, address, phone, fax, sex, age, mother's maiden name and favorite ice cream flavor? Perhaps, but do so and you are likely to get fewer subscribers. Keep it simple. Just get their e-mail address; you can find out the other information later. Also making your privacy policy clear and making it easy to unsubscribe to the newsletter will ease visitors' minds and lead to more subscribers.

#### **Submit to E-mail Newsletter Directories**

E-mail newsletter directories, a listing of several newsletters, are a quick and easy way to get your newsletter information in front of a large audience. The key to these directories producing subscribers is the description of your newsletter. It is imperative that you capture the readers' attention with your description since there are more than 300,000 e-mail newsletters. Here's a tip — study other descriptions in the same category as yours before creating your own. Try these sites to get you started: [bestezines.com](http://bestezines.com), [ezinesaction.com](http://ezinesaction.com), [ezinelocator.com](http://ezinelocator.com).

#### **Announce Your Newsletter Through Announcement Lists**

Announcement lists are mailing lists that promote new newsletters on a daily or weekly basis. Most announcement lists will allow you to announce your newsletter including your description and subscription information. Used correctly, announcement links have the potential to bring in 100-700 subscribers in a single week.

#### **Use Your Articles to Promote Your Newsletter**

You can submit your articles to article archives. Submitting articles to these archives can be one of the most lucrative and cost effective forms of promotion for you. Many e-mail newsletter publishers go to article archives looking specifically for quality content to publish in their newsletters. By submitting your content for publication in other newsletters you are given the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge and experience to thousands of brand new potential subscribers.

### **Take Advantage of FREE Ads and Links**

Many newsletter publishers are eager to swap ads or links in their newsletters for ads and links in your newsletter. Use this free way to reach a new audience. Identify and contact newsletters with similar demographics as yours to help keep your database clean and full of potential clients and customers.

### **Offer Subscribers Gifts or Premiums**

Depending on your organization this option is perhaps more feasible for some than others. Many times as with catching fish, the one with the best bait wins. So with a subscription, provide an offer on your products or services. For example, a healthcare organization might offer a free blood pressure screening or retail stores could offer discounts on certain items.

### **Promote Your Newsletter and Subscription Information on all Your Communications**

Your web address and e-mail newsletter subscription information should be as visible and widely available as your phone number. Develop a list of all your corporate communications and advertising and incorporate a “Subscribe to” line on each.

### **Ask for Subscribers**

Every individual your organization comes in contact with is a potential subscriber. Ask everyone who calls your organization if they would like to subscribe. Recruit subscribers at any trade shows, seminars or community activities your organization is involved in. Before leaving a meeting with potential clients, ask if you can sign them up for your newsletter. This will not only build your database, but it allows you to market yourself to them on a consistent basis.

### **Build Your Database from the Inside Out**

Subscribe all your employees and existing clients and ask them to “viral market” it to their family and friends.

### **Distribute Request Forms Throughout Your Organization**

Take advantage of the areas in your organization where the public or your customers have access. Place request cards in lobbies, waiting rooms, conference rooms, cash registers and cafeterias that people can use to subscribe.

A solid database is the first step to creating a successful e-mail newsletter for you. Without it no matter how great the content may be, your newsletter will not generate results. Building a database requires time, maintenance and upkeep. However, the benefits far outweigh the efforts — as your e-mail newsletter becomes the vehicle for continually expanding relationships with your subscribers.