



**“Help!”**

*“I need to create my first email!  
How do I start with Email  
Marketing?”*



**Y**ou want to do email marketing. But you are faced with a lot of difficult tasks ahead. Perhaps these are the questions that you are asking:

*“We don’t have a list of emails with us!”*

*“How should we create our email?” How should it look? What should be its design?”*

*“What should we write in the email?”*

*“What should we write in the subsequent emails?”*

**W**e understand these pains. We answer them every single day. You are not alone in facing these problems. Big companies, to news websites to small and medium enterprises who have recently started their websites - all of them face these questions.

Let’s tackle the most difficult part - building an email list. This is not a short term activity this is what is termed as “lifestyle” change. You must have heard dieticians and doctors use the word “lifestyle change” when they suggest that we radically alter our eating / exercising habits and make healthy living a constant endeavor. Similarly building an email list needs constant work and a change in approach.

Here is what we suggest you do:

# BUILDING AN EMAIL LIST

## *a. Subscription forms on Website*

- Have prominent “subscribe to email” links on every page of your website.
- Give reason why they will benefit from the email. Example “receive special deals via email” or “latest news in your inbox” or “view hottest trends”.
- Show them a sample email. Send them a welcome email without fail.
- Show your emails as archives on your website, this builds trust and lets people know what kind of content they will be receiving.

*“Give reason why they will benefit from the email”*

## *b. Other Websites*

- There are various websites that have registered readers. These websites have taken permission from the readers to send them interesting content. If your target audience is similar to the readers of such websites then you should consider keeping aside some budget to send your newsletter to such audience.
- Make sure you have good content for people to click the email like something free that they can instantly download. It can be a coupon, or a code or a contest or simple a whitepaper.

- When they visit your website make sure you ask them for their email in a form before you give them the free stuff. This way slowly you will build your database of emails.

### *c. Business Contacts*

- During the course of your interactions in your business you have been sending emails to hundreds of your business partners, associates, vendors, clients etc. Create a one off conscious campaign to invite them to your email newsletters. Please do not include them automatically as that amounts to spamming. Please obtain their approval.
- Make sure your signature in your emails also has a tagline that invites users to register with your website - for a reason

### *d. Social Media*

- If you use Facebook you should consider having a subscription form on it. From time to time post links on your various social media sites asking people to sign-up for your newsletter.

### *e. Offline Tactics*

- If you have offline stores / shops consider asking every customer to fill out a form with their short details. Keep the form short and simple so that walk-in customers will not be daunted. Give something in return, like a lucky draw.
- If you participate in exhibitions this could be a good way to build your database.

### *f. Customer Interaction*

- Every inbound and outbound call that your support team makes, make sure that they have a script which will help them get the email address of your prospective customers.
- In every invoice, receipt, and email that you send out, include a link to your newsletter sign up.

### *g. Refer a friend*

- Incentivize people to refer their friends. You can hold a lucky draw for all the referrers and announce it every week or give some similar incentive.
- Give special stuff, in the form of gifts, discounts to people on your email list. Reserve some special promotions for this channel.

In short every activity that you do, you must think of how you can get the details of your prospective customers. However, make sure that you respect your customer's privacy and obtain permission to send them emails.

*“Incentivize people to give refer their friends”*

# BUILDING A TEMPLATE

## *a. Objective of the Email*

### Readership

- If you are news or a blog website then you might want your readers to just keep updated of the latest news. Your readers are possibly interested in your website and your topic of discussion but rather than coming to the website regularly they might want a quick scan of interesting articles. If they wish, they can click to read more.

### Click through

- If you not a blog or a news site then the only other reason you would want people to read your emails is to find information that is interesting enough for them to click and come to your website.
- With this view in mind, what would you want to send in the newsletter/email so that readers will click and come to your website? Do you want to see more “styles” of say some fashion? Or to check out latest prices? Or to buy something? Please think through the objective of your newsletter.

*“Objective of your email is to get clicks!”*

## *b. Build a template*

The answers to these questions should help you come to an overall design template:

- How many different types of emails will you need?

- ✓ General news
- ✓ Special offer
- ✓ Some other email focused on a specific topic

We recommend that you start with one type of email and send out a couple of campaigns. You will have a better idea of what you want to communicate after you see some response.

- How many sections do you want to have in your newsletter?
  - ✓ Header with the logo and navigation
  - ✓ Footer with company information
  - ✓ Links to social media and small updates from social media
  - ✓ Main section with your main offer
  - ✓ Will you need other sections about your product / service / community or news?
  - ✓ Contest / deals section with short information of past winners for additional impact.
  - ✓ A section on user interaction. We recommend that you add a section where some of your users can reply to the email asking a question, or requesting for information. When users reply the domain in most email clients becomes a trusted one and gets added to the safe senders list. This might just help in building trust with ISPs about your domain.
- How often will you send the emails?
  - ✓ Do you have content to send email every day? Will such content be relevant and engaging? Unless you are news website or a popular blog we recommend that you avoid reader fatigue and not send a daily email.
  - ✓ Depending on your answers for the above two questions you should have an idea of how often you can send the email. Monthly or fortnightly email will need planning for the content ahead for each of the sections
  - ✓ For weekly or bi-weekly emails you should have ready content on your website that you can quickly plug into your emails.

- The actual design of the email
  - ✓ This might just be the easiest part of email marketing. While we can talk a lot about how wide the email should be and what should be the ratio of text and images, how to code the HTML in and email etc., we suggest you follow a very simple rule - **just to get you started.**
  - ✓ Look for readymade templates on the Internet. There are a lot of free templates available for quick download. Use them. You can quickly change the look by replacing with your own logo.
  - ✓ Avoid analysis paralysis. Start small. Start with something workable. Make sure the overall colors and logo fit well with the email. This might be an “easy” way out but it works. And it will help you get your first email out.

*“Look for readymade templates on the Internet.”*

## EMAIL CONTENT

**W**riting content for your website, for newsletters, for whitepapers and for various marketing collateral is a big task. It is also perhaps the most neglected one. Someone needs to be spending time and effort on writing, editing, and publishing.

*“Do you have an editor for your website?”*

In the same way that the store managers of a shop in a mall take efforts in making it look pretty and nice, the editors of a website help keep the content fresh and meaningful. It's a pity that there are very few companies that have a designated post of an “editor” for their websites.

Here are some of the points that will help you get started on the content for your newsletters.

### *a. Website*

- Gather all the information on the various sections in your websites. Decide which content will go on which section of the newsletter. Keep in mind the objective of your email and give snappy content with a read more / buy now / links so that readers find the email interesting and click through to visit your website.
- If you have a website that has too much content, consider creating two or three emails focused on some special topics. Say Tuesdays for electronic gadgets, and Wednesdays for Books etc.

## *b. Marketing Collaterals*

- Gather all your marketing collaterals. You may have prepared documents about your product, service or proposition. You may have given it out to your vendors or partners. Information may be available in presentations. Gather that. This method is perhaps more relevant to Business-to-Business companies.
- Once you have the content with you it will be far easier make selections from it for your email.

## *c. Hire Writers & Bloggers*

- If your website is content heavy, which means you need to write a lot about a certain topic, consider asking other bloggers to write guest posts or articles. Hire writers if needed.
- If your product just needs detailing, for example, if you have a few hundred tours on your website, consider hiring a professional writer to write the content for each of your tours. If you have books, or other interesting articles that you sell on your website, consider getting a writer to feature at least one book or product in your blog every week which can be added in your email.

## *d. Look Elsewhere*

- You don't need to stick to just your product or service to write content. You can write about happenings in your industry, or in the lives of your employees. Do you have something interesting that you can share with your readers? Did you just have a blood donation camp? You could post some stories about it or share your team's comments about it. Did someone go for a trek? You can include a photo about it.
- No doubt this needs more "courage" and readiness, but well all our lives are on social media anyways. You might want to include some of the best one-liners from your twitter feed if nothing else!

**T**his document is just a pointer to get you started on thinking about creating your emails.

Your first email will always be difficult. Once the emails are gone, you can't call them back. We know you will have butterflies in your stomach when you hit the "send" button for the first time. But it's worth it.

When you see readers clicking multiple times on your emails, when you measure the amount of time your newsletter readers spend on your website and compare it with other visitors you will know how valuable your email audience is.



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