

How to Boost Your Sales Leads with Email Marketing

Email marketing is not dead, despite the growth of social media.

Email marketing has an average return on investment of \$42 for every \$1 you spend. That's good. *Really* good.

On average, people receive over 100 emails daily just for work. With that much clutter in their inboxes, standing out is essential if you want your emails to be noticed and read.

This publication offers four strategies to enhance your email marketing:

1. Build your email subscriber list
2. Build trust and familiarity with your audience
3. Write compelling subject lines
4. Send emails to customers at the right frequency

Build Your Email Subscriber List

One of the keys to using email marketing effectively is to have a robust list of recipients—people who have opted into receiving emails from you. Here are some easy ways to add more leads to your list:

- Create a pop-up on your website and/or a simple landing page that invites people to join your list.
- Post about your list on social media and point people to your website to sign up.
- If you're a brick-and-mortar business, hang up a sign with a QR code that directs people to your list's landing page.

Build Trust and Familiarity with Your Audience

When someone joins your email list, they're raising their hand to say, "I'm interested!" While you don't want to waste this



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opportunity, you also shouldn't skip straight to selling. They don't know or trust you yet. It takes time to build trust.

Start slowly. Send a welcome email that simply expresses your appreciation for their interest, sets expectations for how often they'll hear from you and what kind of content you'll be sending, and includes a link to a valuable resource or coupon. Invite them to follow you on your most active social media channels, and don't forget to tell them how they can opt out.

Regarding content, remember: People don't want newsletters from businesses. They want answers to their questions, solutions to their problems, coupons and discounts, and/or entertainment or inspiration. Here are some ideas for emails that offer real value and are much more likely to be opened and help you retain subscribers.

- Share a short testimonial or two from customers you've helped recently, and remind readers how you can help them, too.
- Brainstorm a list of common problems your customers experience (as they relate to what you sell). Choose one of those problems and write an email with a simple bullet-point plan to help them solve it.
- Think about your ideal customer and their to-do list. Now, suggest one quick thing they can do this week—related to what you offer—that helps them shave time off one of their tasks or more.
- Write about the "why" behind your business. Don't be afraid to share your personal story! Remember: People do business with brands they know, like, and trust.

Write Compelling Subject Lines

A subject line can make or break your email marketing strategy. After all, it doesn't matter how helpful, valuable, or entertaining your emails are if people don't open them. But writing a compelling subject line is deceptively tricky. It's part art, part science. Here are some tips:

- Limit your subject lines to no more than 50 characters.
- Use a recipient's first name in the subject line. Many email platforms like Hubspot, SurveyMonkey, and others provide an option to do this easily. However, don't go overboard and use a recipient's name several times in an email. You can use their name twice, but that's all. Otherwise, your message can come off as pushy.
- Stay away from [language that may trigger spam filters](#).
- Avoid all caps and multiple exclamation points.
- Use numbers (like "5 tips for checking off your to-do list more quickly").
- Pose a question related to the content of the email.
- When appropriate, include a call to action: "register," "join," "shop," etc.

As you experiment with subject lines, keep an eye on open rates to see what works best for your industry and audience. You can also do [A/B testing](#) in real time to determine what approaches resonate the most. Check the help documentation for your email service provider to see if it offers A/B testing. You can also make a list of subject lines that catch your attention and use them as inspiration for your own.

Pro tip: Personalize your sender address. People are likelier to open an email from "Sam at ABC Company" than just "ABC Company."

Send Emails to Customers at the Right Frequency

How often should you email your subscribers? More often than you might think.

Business owners may shy away from email marketing because they don't want to be pushy or "sales-y." But here's what email marketing research tells us: More emails equal more sales. Of course, the exact number you should send depends on subscriber preferences and the value of your email.

If you email your list only when you want people to buy something from you, they may opt out faster. But if your email strategy includes a good mix of "give" and "ask," they'll likely be okay hearing from you more frequently.

As with most marketing, testing is the best way to learn your audience's preferences. Spend an hour this week refining your email strategy.

- If you email your list whenever you have time, commit to being more predictable, even if that means sending quarterly updates.
- Bump up your frequency: quarterly to monthly, monthly to bi-monthly, or bi-monthly to weekly. If you're an e-commerce brand, try twice a week and see what happens.
- Don't send emails just because you're "supposed to." Every email should have a purpose. And that purpose should be to serve your audience well.
- If you have the technology, allow your subscribers to determine how often they want to hear from you. One way to do this is to offer a poll for people when they sign up. There's nothing wrong with asking this question when people subscribe.
- Make sure your "unsubscribe" link is easy to find and use. The quickest way to be reported as spam is to give your readers no option but to report you.

Other Marketing Resources to Help You

Leveraging email marketing to grow your business is one strategy you can use. Here are some others

- The [Master Your Marketing](#) workshop will teach you how to grow your business with a digital marketing plan. In this live marketing workshop, you'll learn the following:
 - How to talk about what you offer so that your ideal customers pay attention.
 - Why your website isn't working—and how to fix it.
 - How to establish yourself as the go-to expert in your industry.
 - The secret to turning prospects into paying customers.



- The self-guided [Website Mini-Masterclass](#) teaches you how to make tangible changes to your website to boost your revenue.
- In the book [Five Social Media Mistakes Your Business Should Avoid](#), you'll learn about these mistakes that most businesses make that destroy engagement and sales. You'll learn actionable steps to give your social media a makeover and increase social engagement and sales.
- Sign up for the newsletter [Traction](#) to get easy-to-implement, actionable marketing tips delivered to your inbox.
- In the [Bricks-to-Clicks Marketing Podcast](#), you'll learn practical marketing tips to bring in more customers and revenue. In 15 minutes or less, episodes cover the top five social media mistakes, five principles for building a thriving community, the blueprint for social media success, and the one thing to do to grow your business, nonprofit, or personal brand.
- Bricks-to-Clicks also offers [One-on-One Coaching](#) to improve your marketing.

Visit brickstoclicks.extension.msstate.edu to access these resources, or email james.barnes@msstate.edu.

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5 Social Media
Marketing Mistakes Book

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