75 WAYS TO GROW YOUR **EMALLIST** FAST by Monica Hemingway

"The money's in the list!"

This ebook is intended to give you helpful tips and ideas for how to quickly increase the number of email subscribers you have. It is not legal advice or guidance on how to run your business. Please see the Legal Information for details.

Introduction



You've decided that you need an email list, chosen your email marketing provider, put an awesome opt-in form on your website, and now you're waiting for people to sign up for your email list. You could be waiting a long time...

Growing your email list usually needs only a few small tweaks to your website, or including a link to your opt-in form wherever people find you (for example, your email signature, social media pages, blog).

But here's the thing – gathering emails needs to be a priority. It can't be a "we'll get to it when we have time" sort of thing.

You have to ask for that email at every opportunity. Not in a pushy or obnoxious way. But you do have to be clear and direct about the fact that you want that email address – and that it will be worth the subscriber's while to give it to you.

You need a well-planned strategy to get your opt-in form or sign-up list in front of as many people as possible. Don't just focus on your website – consider every point of contact you have with customers and prospects as an opportunity to grow your email list.

The one critical point to keep in mind as you gather emails is this: Never send email to someone who has not explicitly given you permission to do so. Don't even add them to your email list.

Obviously, your opt-in form should be prominently displayed in multiple locations on your website. Beyond that, here are 75 ways to grow your email list.

The Starting Point



It seems like you can't go anywhere online these days without being asked for your email address. Ugh. I don't know about you, but I get more than enough spam in my inbox already!

So give people a good reason to subscribe to your email list. Make it worth their while to trust you with that precious piece of information.

How?

By offering a premium piece of content or a valuable resource for free.

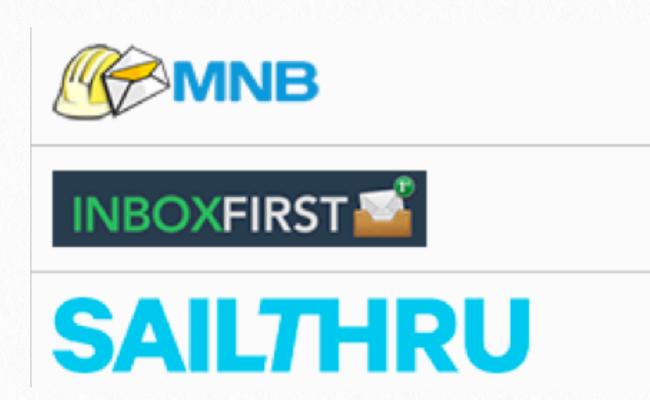
You'll often hear this referred to as a **lead magnet** (it's a "magnet" that attracts leads). It gives people a reason to give you their email address, and allows you to demonstrate what you have to offer. The key here is to focus on what's relevant and valuable to your audience. What will make a difference to them? What do they think is worthwhile?

The higher the price of your product or service, the more robust your lead magnet should be.

Here are some ideas for what you can offer as a lead magnet -

- DeBook, report or white paper
- Membership
- Checklist or "how to"
- Free trial (e.g., of a service or product)
- U Video course
- Loyalty program or VIP access
- Coupons, discounts, special offers
- Free chapter(s) from your book
- Email course (autoresponder series)

Leverage Your Contacts



One of the easiest starting points for gathering subscribers is to leverage your existing contacts.

We all have business and personal contacts who could benefit from our offerings. Yet we rarely think to explicitly offer our products or services to them.

Perhaps we worry about negatively affecting the relationship.

Maybe we think that they'll reach out to us when they're ready.

Whatever the reason, we need to get over that fear and start getting our existing contacts onto our email subscriber list!



Ask in person



Check your database

Did you know that over half of all people who are asked directly will say "yes"? So get on the phone or set up a meeting with friends, business associates, customers, partners, and anyone else who could benefit from receiving emails from you.

Go through your rolodex (does anyone still have those?), address book or contact list. You probably know far more people than you think.

Ask them to sign up for your emails (do NOT just download them from your contact list and add them to your email database!).

You can send individual emails, Facebook messages, texts, In-Mail through LinkedIn, etc. asking them to join your list. Make it appealing by offering your lead magnet.

3.

Consider current clients Your clients or customers have given you implied consent to contact them through email but it's best to still ask them first (that is, get explicit consent).

Don't go back further than 6 month or there will likely be higher spam complaints; they either won't remember working with you or may no longer care about whatever it was that made them a customer in the first place.

Ask friends and family

These are the people who are likely to be your biggest fans, even when no one else has heard of you. Look to them to kick start your list growth by adding them to your list (ask first!) and then explicitly asking them to share your emails by forwarding them to their friends. You'll be surprised at how quickly you can grow a list of subscribers who feel a personal connection to you.

5.

Referrals

6.

Send postcards to customers

Ask your customers to refer you to their friends, family and business contacts. Consider giving them something of value in exchange, such as a discount or extra services.

You may have a street address for some of your customers, but not an email address. Send them a postcard highlighting the benefits of subscribing to your list and encouraging them to sign up. Be sure to include the URL.

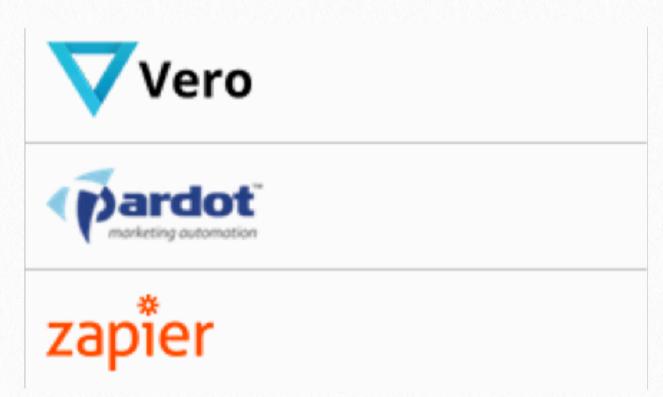
7.

Partner with a complementary business

Are there other local, high-quality businesses that target a similar market segment, perhaps with a different product or service?

Suggest to them that they promote your email series or newsletter to their audience, and you do the same with your subscribers. But first, be sure that the other company's newsletter or email promotions will be of value to your subscribers.

Online Resources



If you're using email marketing, you probably have a website or a blog (if not, set one up ASAP - a website is the hub of all your online marketing efforts).

Many of the tactics in this chapter focus on things you can do on your own website to encourage readers to subscribe. The most obvious is to include an opt-in form on your website, preferably in at least one prominent location.

But there are also actions you can take that don't involve your own online "properties" - things like using your business emails, other people's blogs, podcasts and online forums. You can even use online classified ads. The more different approaches you take online to encourage people to subscribe to your email list, the more success you'll have.

But be careful - don't spread yourself too thin. Choose the 4 or 5 methods that you think will work best for you. Focus on activities that you can maintain over time and will enjoy. Consistency is key.

You want viewers to see that sign-up form / opt-in box on every page – often in multiple places on a page.

There are many places to put that form and while you probably don't want to put an opt-in box in every single location, at least consider a few of these:

- Place multiple signup forms on your website
- Top of sidebar

End of each article or post

- G 'About' page
- **Footer**
- A bar across the top of your site (Hello bar or Viper bar)
- Feature box (large box/image at the top of each page)
- Pop-up box

Where you place an opt-in box depends on the layout and content of your website, your audience, and your goals.

For example, if your website is an online store, you'll probably want to place an opt-in form at the top of the sidebar, on your 'About Us' page, and in the footer. You don't want to detract from the primary purpose of the site, which is to sell products.

If you're a service provider trying to get more clients, then a feature box could work well.

And if your website has lots of articles (perhaps some how-to articles or a blog), then you should place an opt-in form at the end of each article or blog post.

Pop-up boxes generally convert well. However, they're very much "in your face" and a lot of website visitors find them annoying. But if the primary purpose of your website is to generate leads or email subscribers, then it's worth considering.

Let people know what they'll get if they remain subscribed Simply asking someone to stay on your email list will get you nowhere – they want to know what's in it for them. So make it worthwhile for them to stay subscribed after they've received your lead magnet.

Offer special benefits for subscribers only and display these benefits prominently on your website or sign-up form:

- Tips and how-to's
- Access to special offers
- Advance notice of special events
- Entry into a regular prize drawing
- A free gift on their birthday
- Free resources or e-books that address an important problem for customers

10.

Let subscribers know what to expect Tell them how often they'll hear from you (daily? weekly? monthly?) and what type of content you'll be sending them (for example, newsletter, announcements, product information). Consider asking subscribers how often they'd like to hear from you, or giving them the option to receive emails on their preferred schedule.

11.

Make your sign-up link easy to remember Keep it simple and memorable. Direct subscribers to <u>www.YourCompany.com/subscribe</u> and they'll be able to easily find your online opt-in page.

Keep the opt-in form short

It's tempting to ask for all sorts of information that will allow you to tailor your email messages. Don't do it! You can gather that information later. Only ask for the information you **really** need - their email address. You could also ask for their first name but be aware that many people won't give you their real name, thus limiting the usefulness of that information.

Tip: For best opt-in form best practices see this article.

Create a "reasons to sign up" page

Ask subscribers why they enjoy getting your emails and then put their responses on a website page. You can ask people to respond to you through email, or you can drive them to a free online survey form, like Survey Monkey. If they agree, use their name and a headshot to add credibility.

14.

Offer a content upgrade

A content upgrade is a piece of bonus content to go along with the topic of a particular blog post or article. Usually, it expands on what's in the article. The goal of using a content upgrade is to capture the email address of people who are interested in that topic so you can (1) grow your email list and (2) better target your emails.

Look at your analytics to identify the most popular pages or posts on your website. Offer a content upgrade on those pages.

It doesn't have to be fancy or a major piece of content (like your lead magnet) but it should be useful and actionable.

Add a sign-up offer to account transaction pages and emails If you offer products or services online, use that opportunity to collect emails. When a customer buys from you online, they may not sign up for your email list. Take the time to remind them about it when you contact them about their account or purchase. For example:

- Confirmation emails
- Shipping notices
- Payment reminders
- Account registration and/or renewal reminders



Include an "ask" on any online forms

17.

Test your CTA

You can ask people to subscribe through any online forms on your website, such as a registration form, request for information, request for a quote or estimate, etc. Simply include a checkbox (**not** pre-checked) beside some text asking them to sign up for your newsletter, updates, etc. Make sure to let them know the benefits of doing so.

You never know which call to action (CTA) will result in the most click-throughs, subscriptions, purchases, etc. So test them.

Try two different variations of the same opt-in form/page in which you've changed only one aspect of the form, such as the button color, description, CTA, or placement. A subtle change can make a big difference. Try "Sign me up" versus "Subscribe". "Count me in" versus "Send it to me". You get the idea.

Put it in your email signature

Most email signatures are boring - name, address, phone number, email. Maybe a tagline.

But it's a prime piece of real estate that is viewed by every person who receives a business email from you. So why not use it to your advantage?

Include a line inviting people to join your email list and add a hyperlink to make it easy for them.

Tip: Use <u>WiseStamp</u> to easily create a customized signature block.



Use "Send to a Friend" Put a clear call to action (CTA) link on your website and in all of your emails asking readers to share the email with their friends. This is especially effective if you offer an incentive to the referrer (for example, they'll be entered in a special prize drawing).

Tip: For legal reasons, don't ask people to forward your emails to a friend if you operate in Canada or have email subscribers there. You'll find more details <u>here</u>.



Leverage your email newsletter

It may seem silly to put a sign-up link in your email newsletter. After all, if someone's already subscribed to your email list, why would they need that link?

But if someone has received your email from a friend (see the tip above) then they may want to subscribe. Make it easy for them with a clearly visible "Subscribe here" link.

Promote your email archive

Some people want to see what they'll get before they decide to subscribe to your email list. Give them what they want by including links to old issues of your newsletter or email content. Many ESPs allow you to archive past emails.

Prominently display a link to that archive where people are likely to see it, such as

on your website,

blog posts,

Social media profiles,

below your opt-in form(s), and/or

D at the bottom of your emails.

22.

Add social share buttons to your email

This makes it easy for people to share your emails on their social networks. Try placing them at the bottom of your email and making them large enough (and bright enough) to be easily visible. Don't forget to add a call to action (e.g., "Share this email")!



Collect emails with an online survey

Make the survey something fun (like "What kind of tree are you?"), interesting or useful (for example, "Find out what kind of entrepreneur you are") and related to your work or services. Require an email so you can send the survey result to participants (and don't forget to make it clear that they'll also get your regular emails).

Post the survey on social media for everyone to see.



Run a giveaway on your website

Be sure to offer something that your ideal customer would like and is related to the product or services you provide. You don't want to get a whole bunch of people signing up just for the prize, but they have no interest in ever buying your services or product. The only requirement is that people provide their email address to be entered in the contest.

Tip: Use a tool like <u>KingSumo Giveaways</u> (for WordPress websites) to encourage participants to share your contest - the more they share, the more entries they get.



Guest blog

This one's easier said than done, but if you're able to guest post on another (hopefully popular) blog, ask if you can include a link to your opt-in form in your bio or in the body of the post. Many blog owners will be OK with a mention in your bio as long as your emails are valuable to their audience.



Comment on blogs

Comment on blog posts in your area of expertise. Don't just randomly comment on stuff - you must add value to the conversation for it to be worthwhile doing. The goal is to offer enough interesting and insightful commentary that readers will click through to your website or blog to learn more about you. And that's where they'll be presented with your opt-in form!

Join the conversation on forums Similar to commenting on blog posts, try joining in the discussion on relevant forums. Answer questions, offer advice, be helpful. You're not trying to "sell" anything in a forum, but you're establishing your expertise in a way that will encourage people to visit your website to learn more - and to subscribe to your email list.



Use online classified ads

This can be especially effective if you offer a give-away of some sort with each subscription. Try listing your give-away and newsletter subscription of free sites like Craigslist. Always target your local area when you do that and make the ad crystal clear in terms of what you're offering and who it's right (and wrong!) for.



Optimize all online listings



Use images

Make sure that you include a link to your opt-in form and describe the benefits on all of your online directory or other listings. Think about Yelp, Angie's List, Yellow Pages, etc.

Add text to an image on your website or blog, to your social media cover image, etc. giving the URL of your sign-up page and/or mentioning your email list.

Tip: Canva has templates for all common sizes of images, as well as photos for only \$1 each.



Podcasts & interviews

32.

Online payment forms

Mention your email list on every episode of your podcast or when you're a guest on someone else's podcast or interview. Let people know about the kinds of topics you cover and why they should sign up.

Give customers the option to join your email list when they pay online (you are collecting payments online, right?). Add a 'subscribe to our newsletter' checkbox on your invoices, especially if you send them electronically.

Make it clear what they're opting in for and why it's a good idea (e.g., a discount on their next purchase).



Offer "email only" specials

Offer discounts and special offers that are only available to subscribers. Clearly let others know what they're missing out on!

Offline Resources



While most people focus on online tactics to collect email addresses, there are just as many (if not more) ways to gather emails that don't involve websites, social media, or other internet-based methods.

So get out from behind your computer and start networking, talking with customers, giving presentations, and thinking outside the confines of the internet.



Buy a mailing list

There are many sources where you can buy a mailing list (for example, homeowners within a specific area, members of a professional association, users of a specific product or service). Once you have those addresses, send a postcard or letter to them to introduce yourself and offer them a reason to sign up for your email list.

Do NOT buy an <u>email</u> list! These people haven't opted in to your email marketing so sending emails to them is a violation of the CAN-SPAM Act in the USA; there are similar legal restrictions in Canada and Europe. Plus, the people on that purchased email list are highly unlikely to ever read your emails.

For example, add an opt-in offer and the landing page URL to:

Invoices

Add a sign-up invitation on all print materials

Receipts

	Catal	oas
-	ouru	ege .

Product literature / brochures / flyers

Bags

I

Product packaging and packing slips

Estimates

Print ads

Point-of-purchase displays

Customer surveys and/or feedback forms

Use the back of your business card

Most business cards are blank on the back. Use the space to show links to important social media accounts **and** your email list.

Tip: Use a QR code so people can scan it to be automatically taken to your sign-up form.



Use take-away cards

Print up cards (postcard size works well) describing your list, the benefits, and how to sign up. Pass them out at every opportunity, such as when visiting customers, quoting a job, or at a public event.

38.

Use a paper sign-up sheet at all events

If you'll be at an event where you'll have access to a large number of people, create a special sign-up form and put it somewhere highly visible. Be sure to make it clear that signing up is optional and spell out exactly what they're signing up for.

For example, you could collect names and emails at:

- Trade show booths
- Speaking engagements
- U Workshops
- Networking events
- Store sales
- Community events



During event registration

40.

Attend an event



Host an event

If you'll be holding an event, include a opt-in box (maybe a check box) on the registration form allowing people to sign up for your list when they register. Don't make it mandatory but do make it visible.

Collect emails at an event that you attend (e.g., presentation, networking, community events, store sales). As always, be sure to ask their permission before adding them to your email list.

You don't need to wait for someone else to put on an event that you can piggyback on - host your own event instead. And collect email addresses from everyone who attends.

For example, you could hold a:

Iunch & learn session

- show of local talent
- neighborhood get together
- preview of your new products



Sponsor an event

OK, so you're not ready to host an event yourself. How about being a sponsor of an event that someone else is hosting? As part of that sponsorship, you can either collect email addresses from attendees yourself, or ask the host to provide you with the emails from people who attend (with their permission, of course).

Promote your list at all public speaking events "Public speaking" can mean a lot of things besides a formal, stand-up presentation in front of an audience. Any time you're talking about what you do, giving advice, or explaining something related to your business, that's "public speaking".

Use it as an opportunity to mention your email newsletter. This is especially effective if you're giving advice - the person's already interested in what you have to say and will probably be grateful to get more helpful information from you via email.

And if you're doing a formal presentation, don't forget to mention your emails during your presentation and list the sign-up URL in any handouts. Put it on your slides and let people know what resources they'll get by signing up.

Consider having a drawing in which people can enter to win something during your presentation. For example, pass around a bag with chocolates and ask everyone to take one (if they'd like to), drop in card, and then they're entered for a prize drawing.

Draw one or more winners throughout your presentation and at the end. It'll keep people listening and the winners will be excited to be recognized.



Mention your newsletter and sign-up URL (briefly) on your voicemail. People may not sign up after hearing it, but it will increase awareness.

Invite subscriptions in your voicemail

Promote your newsletter/email list in all publications If you write for a trade or consumer publication, a blog, or another newsletter, be sure to include a link to your newsletter or email sign-up form in the article (if you can), byline, and/or author bio. A reader who likes your writing will often want to hear more from you.

46.

Start a loyalty program

Offer special deals for loyal (repeat) customers, such as a discount after a certain number of purchases or dollars spent. Instead of simply handing customers a card to punch with each purchase, ask for their email address so you can send them details on the offer(s) and credit them with a purchase even if they don't have their card with them. You can even offer an extra "hole punch" for giving you their email address.

47.

Start a birthday club



Convert direct mail to email

Ask for customers' email addresses so you can send them something special on their birthday.

Send a direct mail offer that can only be redeemed if the recipient signs up online. Include the opt-in form URL in the mailing. You can send this to existing customers for whom you don't have an email address and/or buy a mailing list (again, never buy an <u>email list!</u>).



Ask during sales or service calls

Don't be shy. After you've built good rapport with a prospect or customer, ask for their email address. Make sure they understand what you'll be sending them and why it'll be helpful for them.

50.

Use your sales materials



Use special offers or coupons

52.

Offer an incentive to your employees

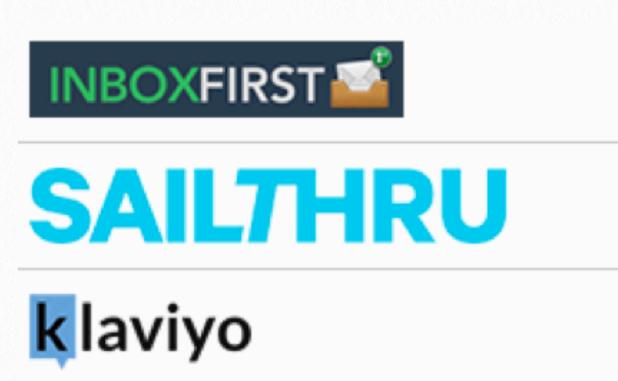
In all of your brochures, flyers, pamphlets, etc., ask readers to sign up for your newsletter and explain why they should. Keep it short but meaningful. Use a shortened or easy version of the opt-in form URL.

Tip: Use bit.ly to shorten the URL or the Pretty Links plugin for opt-in forms hosted on a WordPress site.

When someone redeems a coupon or a special offer, ask for their email address. Just don't make it a condition of receiving the discount or offer - you'll only end up annoying your customers.

For example, offer a prize to the employee who collects the most email addresses during the month. Be sure that you teach them how to do it right first! Be especially careful about what they can and cannot say or offer to get a customer's email address.

Use Social Media



Such a large percentage of customers and potential customers are on social media that it makes sense to use it to grow your email list.

The most common place to ask people to sign up for your email list is on Facebook, but other social media channels can also work well. Consider LinkedIn, Google+, Twitter, and even newer ones like Periscope. The key with social media, as with email marketing, is to be consistent. A little bit here and there won't help you.

So pick one or two channels to focus on and get to work!

Add a sign-up form to your Facebook page

54.

Leverage your Facebook page cover Facebook seems to be everywhere these days, and they've made it easier than ever for you to use it to gather email addresses. You can add a "Sign Up" tab directly to your Facebook page (not your personal profile) that's linked to a sign-up form that adds subscribers to your list.

Your Facebook page cover photo is a piece of prime real estate that's often under used. Update it to include a call to action (CTA) in the image itself (for example, "Get XYZ delivered right to your inbox. Join our email list below!").

Tip: Use <u>Canva</u> to create professional-looking cover images in minutes using their excellent design templates. There are templates for all the common social media platforms.

55.

Buy a Facebook ad

Use Facebook ads to drive people to your lead magnet and deliver it in the first welcome email (for example, 50% off their first purchase, a free 30-minute consultation, a video showing how to use your product).

Be sure to target your ad carefully so it attracts your ideal customers but not those who will never end up buying from you.



Share on your Facebook page Every now and then, share a post on your Facebook page about all the great things that your email subscribers get. Invite people to join your list.

Join a LinkedIn group

<u>58.</u>

Publish articles on LinkedIn

59.

Join a Google+ community

60.

Tweet it



Host a Tweet Chat

When appropriate, let group members know about your email list. But be careful about the rules around promotion for each group - groups have different rules and some groups will kick you out for "promotion."

LinkedIn has a publishing platform that's a good spot to post original articles or republish posts from your blog. Be sure to include a link to your email opt-in form in the summary or author bio at the end.

Share your latest content (for example, from your email series or blog) and ask people to join your list.

Bonus: Google+ activity helps with search engine results.

Offer your lead magnet on your Twitter account and do it multiple times per day once a week. You don't want to do it every day but since tweets have a very short lifespan, tweeting several times a day will ensure that more people see it.

A tweet chat boosts engagement, attracts new followers, and gives you a chance to offer your lead magnet.

Use Vine

63.

Use Periscope



Use Foursquare



Use YouTube

66.

Leverage your social media bios

Vine allows you to create 6-second videos. Create one describing the benefits of your email list and embed it on your blog.

If you're active on Periscope, mention your email list in very live streaming video and be sure to include a link to your signup form on your page.

If you're a local business with a physical location, share a link to your sign-up form on your Foursquare page.

Create a YouTube channel for your business in which you share interesting videos (for example, about how to use your products, new ideas, customer spotlights). Invite viewers to join your email list in every video.

Every social media account includes a section for you to describe you and/or your business. Include a link to your website in your bio. Or, if your goal is to grow your email list, include a link to your sign-up form instead.

Announce new content

68.

Sample your content on Pinterest

69.

Run a Facebook sweepstakes

70.

Offer a coupon on Facebook Announce new email subscriber-only content on social media when you publish it – and include a link to let people sign up. If you're sending emails that truly add value and are of interest to your audience, you'll generate interest and new subscribers this way.

Create a board and pin your email newsletter when it comes out. Use an image from the email or take a screen shot. You can also post videos. Make sure it links to your sign-up form.

Before you do this, be very careful to make sure you fully understand and follow Facebook's rules - or they'll shut you down.

This can work well for just about any kind of business. Announce the coupon on your Facebook page and include instructions on how to get it - make sure those instructions include signing up through your opt-in form.

Bricks & Mortar or Retail







If you have a physical location from which you sell your products or services, then this chapter is for you.

Many of the other tools and tactics described in this book will work well for you, but there are some additional things you can do that only work for businesses like yours.



Put a sign-up form by the cash register or front desk. Make sure it's highly visible and prominently located so they can't miss it.

Ask at check-out

72.

Use a fishbowl

Place a fishbowl (or other large, clear bowl) on the counter, preferably near the cash register so people will see it when they check out. Give customers an incentive to drop their business card in the bowl to join your email list (for example, offer a weekly drawing for a free meal at your restaurant or a discounted item from your new product line).



Use a sidewalk sign or sandwich board

Use it to tell passersby about all of the great information, discounts and news they'll find by signing up for your emails AND give them instructions on how to do that! Keep it short and to the point so they'll quickly understand it as they walk by. Make the URL of the sign-up form short and memorable so they can easily remember it.



Participate in Small Business Saturday Make sure to ask people to join your email list when they come in to shop.

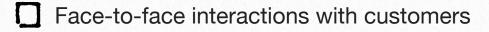


Make it part of the job to ask

Make it part of every employee's job (including yours!) to routinely invite customers to receive your newsletter, get special promotions, or be notified of private sales and events. If in doubt, just ask!

Here are some situations you may not have thought of in which you can ask for that email address:

Answering an inbound call from customers or prospects



Giving a quote

Discussing something via email

Talking about a product or comparing products that a customer is interested in

Conclusion

These are just some of the ways you can get in front of potential subscribers and encourage them to sign up for your email list. Think outside the box – where do you come in contact with customers? How can you provide value to them with your emails?

If you send helpful and valuable emails on a regular basis and use every chance to promote your newsletter, you'll grow your list quickly. Over time, those subscribers will become your biggest fans and a huge source of repeat business and referrals. The phrase "the money's in the list" couldn't be more true! Want to learn more? Check out my website:

www.MonicaHemingway.com

Using the Internet to Grow Your Business

And don't forget to join my exclusive Facebook group where business owners, coaches and consultants, and entrepreneurs discuss the ins and outs of making email marketing work for them.

JOIN HERE