



## EMAIL MARKETING: TOP TIPS TO EXPAND YOUR EMAIL DATABASE

**screen  
pages.**

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# Email marketing

Email consistently out performs other marketing activities. In our experience, emails convert at nearly twice the norm, partly because they are sent to regular and satisfied customers. It's also considerably cheaper than many other marketing activities retailers pursue. In this document we will be covering some great ways in which you can increase the size of your email database.



# Top tips to expand your email database

## 1. INCENTIVISE CUSTOMERS TO SIGN UP

Make sure that shoppers can give their email address to you. But, more importantly, give them a good reason! Too many retailers have a simple “sign up” button with no associated benefits. We all need a little incentive to hand over our email address, but we don’t need too much if we feel an affinity with the brand. Try these...

- Offer a discount off their first purchase.
- Explain what they'll get: special offers, private sales, hints and tips, magazine articles, etc.
- Show them what they'll get (see our recent articles, news, reader offers, etc).

Make it straightforward. Resist the temptation to collect lots of demographic & lifestyle information at this stage, it will get in the way of collecting those email addresses.

## 2. Make the email sign-up visible

Make sure the box is in a prominent position on all practicable pages across your website (i.e. in the main navigation or as an overlay). Bear in mind some folk don't read below the fold. You can see in Google Analytics that this is often a huge % of your visitors.

## 3. Use the correct language

“Subscribe” is up there with “register” as an Internet no-no. Remove the words “subscription” and “subscribe”. The term implies a commitment and worse, money. You don't need to call it a “newsletter” by the way, as that could make you sound like an Independent Finance Advisor.

## 4. Recommend a friend

Invite and incentivise your customers to recommend you to their friends and open up their rolodex to you. Happy customers are quite prepared to recommend a brand (and give out a friend's email) if they think it will be of interest to them or they value the service/rate the product.

If there's some kind of incentive as well, this works even better (money off, reward points etc). In fact, the happy customer will be content to pass the reward/benefit on to their friend, expecting no payoff themselves other than the pleasure of giving and sharing a good tip.

The incentive could sensibly be anything up to your average per customer acquisition cost.

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## 5. Ask for email referrals

There are plenty of opportunities to ask happy customers for referrals: in the order confirmation email, a few weeks after purchase, when they sign up for your newsletter, one year after they became a customer ("congratulations!"). Ask as frequently as you can/desire, but be specific in your request because people are often too busy to do all the thinking.

## 6. Collect emails at the point of sale in shops

You have shops? You have footfall. Motivate them to hand over email addresses and/or explain they can buy online too. If they are not quite ready to make a purchase today, but they like you they can be persuaded. After all, as they are local, they might love to know when the new range comes in or the sale starts. Put an exciting/compelling placard at your point of sale / till.

One of the stumbling blocks here may be staff inertia so maybe offer 10p for every email address gained.

## 7. Collect cards & add emails from them

Every time you get a business card, add it to your mailing list. I'd argue it's a "contact me" opt in and if people get upset, they can unsubscribe or ask to be removed. Generally, you've had some kind of productive meeting/conversation with them.

There are many different kinds of contact points for this: business meetings, trade shows, seminars etc. Instruct telephone sales and customer service staff to ask for addresses where appropriate.

Slick operators always add all their work contacts to their email list.

## 8. Tell people about your great online presence

Publish your website and a summary of your proposition in all communication materials (online and off): on bags, flyers, store signs, customer-feedback forms and satisfaction surveys as well as in ads and catalogues.

Add the email sign-up link to everyone's email footer as well.

## 9. Forward the email to a friend

Strictly a variant on above, but under the guise of "forward this crafty/sexy/compelling email offer" to your mates. A frequently employed method would be the "family and friends" or "mates rates" promotion. If the sender likes what's on offer, they will forward.



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## 10. Competitions (email required)

Competitions can generate untold numbers of email subscriptions. However, many of the entrants will do it for the free iPad or the holiday in Antigua rather than your new environmentally friendly skin care product. Having said that, you need to publish and promote the competition which can be as costly as email acquisition itself.

Use this carefully and measure the effectiveness of the follow-on business.

## 11. Swap email lists with your peers

You know where your customers are likely to shop and, because you are an e-commerce professional, you maintain great contacts in the industry, you can easily negotiate and structure co-operative list swaps (for opted-ins) with synergistic propositions.

## 12. Invite people via social media (be active, get them to your site)

Because you have understood how your target customers use social media (if indeed they do), you will be able to establish a presence on the properties that make sense for you & slowly lure them in.

## 13. Offline advertising (catalogues, reader offers, print, posters)

If you are marketing via other traditional channels, make sure to promote the email channel or more broadly, that your customers have a great way of treating themselves via your website.

## 14. Run promotions on or via other sites

Get in the Amazon or the Play.com box. These are online customers and the costs are £30-35 per 1,000 inserts in the box. Many of Screen Pages' clients could do worse than speak to brands like Ocado and Boden who offer such schemes (as well as banners on their website itself).

## 15. List brokers and media planners

If none of the above work, you could always contact a list broker. Some brokers and media planners are up for cost per acquisition fees nowadays(CPA), which means you pay for results. You will need to understand the economics of below.





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## 16. Plan and measure

As any diehard direct marketer will tell you, understanding your customer acquisition costs in the context of a customer's lifetime value will determine the cost-effectiveness of any customer database building exercise. Make sure it's profitable.

Sometimes it's depressing to see how few people understand their customer acquisition costs. If it's £30 and you can get new customers onboard via your email marketing for a lot less than this, you are doing well.

Measurement is of course only possible if you tag your emails so they stand out in Analytics packages.

Here's how the [tagging system works in Google](#) (simple really, so criminal not to use it)

If you are still struggling, here's a convenient URL builder for [email campaign tagging](#).

This is hugely important now because of the introduction of reports showing "assisted conversions" in Google Analytics. You will see how email was also involved at the start, or during the course of a sequence of visits leading up to a purchase. The actual purchase visit may have come via search, but email was involved in getting the order. e.g for every pound credited to email, it might have contributed to another 3 or 4 pounds.

## 17. Email welcome messages

So now you have got someone to hand over their treasured email address. Start loving them immediately with a good looking, warm & compelling welcome email straight away, ideally with some kind of nice promotion, but probably not a blanket introductory discount (as there's a risk of flooding your email list with duplicate extra accounts). If it contains 'good stuff' you increase the chance of someone forwarding it while they're at their most receptive.

# Get in touch

To discuss your ideas for a new e-commerce website or to request a quote/ get further information about Screen Pages visit [www.screenpages.com](http://www.screenpages.com) or contact us below:



## CALL US

+44(0)1932 359160



## VISIT US

4 THE COURTYARD, WISLEY LANE,  
WISLEY, SURREY, GU23 6QL



## EMAIL US

INFO@SCREENPAGES.COM

