

M LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

The Marketing Guide for Local Business Owners

August 2015

***5 Tips for
Building a
Valuable
Mailing
List***

Best Practices
for Point-Of-Sale
Email Address
Collection

**Direct Mail
Marketing is
Not Dead**

**How to Use Video
Marketing to Grow
Your Small Business**

***Traffic Boost:
8 Simple Keys
for Organically
Increasing Inbound
Site Traffic***

***How to Deal with
Negative Business
Publicity***

**HOW TO USE
PROMOTIONAL ITEMS
TO EFFECTIVELY
MARKET YOUR
BUSINESS**

**Infographic:
LinkedIn Guide**

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LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

Welcome!

We thank you for taking the time to read our magazine. We hope you find this month's issue full of interesting articles, and more importantly, that you are able to immediately apply some of our tips, and that they help you grow your business.

This month, you'll find a good variety of articles covering many topics that are important to business owners including direct mail, video marketing and dealing with negative publicity.

New versions of our popular Marketing Calendar and Infographic are also included.

If you're not already receiving this magazine regularly, we suggest you add your email to our subscriber list. We have some exciting articles already in the works for the upcoming issues. Don't miss out!

If you like the magazine, and know other local business owners that could benefit from receiving our magazine each month, please do us (and them) a favor by forwarding a copy to them.

We welcome any comments or questions you might have, as well as the opportunity to explain how we've been able to help businesses just like yours.

Until Next Month!

David Akers
President / CEO
LMS Solutions, Inc.

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A Little About Us

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LMS Solutions was developed to give businesses of all sizes the ability to leverage the same cutting-edge marketing platforms that the Fortune 500 organizations use, at extremely affordable rates.

We offer an extensive catalog of cutting-edge Local Online, Mobile, Social, Pay-Per-Click, Video, Web and Direct Marketing Media Programs. Whether you're a small business, large business or an ad agency, our programs can help you find greater success.

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Marketing Calendar

Plan your marketing messages around these upcoming holidays and proclamations.

August

Children's Eye Health and Safety Month

Family Fun Month

Foot Health Month

Happiness Happens Month

Medic Alert Month

National Golf Month

National Immunization Awareness Month

National Runaway Prevention Month

Psoriasis Awareness Month

Water Quality Month

Be Kind to Humankind Week - August 25-31

Elvis Week - August 8-16

International Assistance Dog Week - August 2-8

International Bat Night(s) - August 29-30

International Clown Week - August 1-7

World Breastfeeding Week - August 1-7

1st - National Minority Donor Awareness Day

1st - Spider-Man Day

2nd - Friendship Day

3rd Watermelon Day

4th - National Chocolate Chip Cookie Day

6th - National Night Out

7th - International Beer Day

8th - International Cat Day

10th - International Biodiesel Day

10th - National S'mores Day

12th - Vinyl Record Day

13th - International Lefthander's Day

14th - Worldwide Art Day

15th - International Homeless Animals Day

18th - Serendipity Day

21st - National Hug Your Boss Day

21st - Senior Citizen's Day

22nd - Eat a Peach Day

23rd - Go Topless Day

25th National Banana Split Day

26th - Women's Equality Day

28th - Daffodil Day

29th - Chop Suey Day

30th - Frankenstein Day

31st - Eat Outside Day

September

National Guide Dog Month

Hispanic Heritage Month

Baby Safety Month

Little League Month

Self Improvement Month

Better Breakfast Month

International Square Dancing Month

Sep 7 - Labor Day (U.S.)

Sep 11 - Patriot Day (U.S.)

Sep 16 - Mexican Independence Day (Mexico)

4th - Hug Your Boss Day

5th - Cheese Pizza Day

5th - International Bacon Day

6th - Read A Book Day

9th - Teddy Bear Day

10th - TV Dinner Day

11th - Stand Up To Cancer Day

12th - Video Games Day

12th - Chocolate Milkshake Day

13th - Grandparent's Day

13th - Hug Your Hound Day

15th - LGBT Center Awareness Day

18th - Cheeseburger Day

19th - Talk Like A Pirate Day

19th - Big Whopper Liar Day

19th - Puppy Mill Awareness Day

20th - Wife Appreciation Day

21st - World's Alzheimer's Day

21st - International Day of Peace

22nd - Hobbit Day

22nd - Ice Cream Cone Day

23rd - Autumnal Equinox

25th - Comic Book Day

26th - Pancake Day

26th - Family Health and Fitness Day

28th - Good Neighbor Day

29th - Coffee Day

29th - VFW Day

30th - Chewing Gum Day



Direct Mail Marketing is Not Dead - Important Benefits of This Tried and True Marketing Strategy

The death of direct mail marketing has been predicted for decades now, but businesses should not start planning the funeral just yet. Despite the dire warnings, direct mail marketing is still alive and kicking, and business owners everywhere are using this tried and true method to boost their sales, build their brands and shore up their bottom lines.

Here are some of the biggest benefits of direct mail

marketing. If you have not yet launched your own direct mail campaign, it may be time to give this time-tested strategy a try.

#1. Direct Mail is Special

The members of your target audience probably get dozens, if not hundreds, of emails every single day. If you rely on email alone, it is easy for your carefully crafted message to get lost in the shuffle. Those same people probably get only a few

pieces of mail each day, so your message is much more likely to make it through.

#2. Direct Mail is Easy to Personalize

With just a few clicks, you can personalize every piece of direct mail you send with the name of the recipient. That simple act of personalization turns what could have been a generic marketing message into a highly personal communication.

#3. You Can Pinpoint Your Audience and Target Your Message

The huge amount of demographic data available today makes it easier than ever to target your marketing to the nth degree. If you want to target vegan pet owners, you can. You can also tailor your messages to Alaskans who love to hunt, or Great Lakes residents with a penchant for fishing. That kind of targeting can substantially reduce the cost per response and make your marketing messages much more effective.

#4. Direct Mail is Versatile

Direct mail is one of the most versatile forms of advertising on the planet. From a tiny postcard to a huge glossy brochure, you can tailor your mailings to the needs of your audience and your own budget.

#5. Direct Mail is Familiar

Everyone loves getting mail. The format is familiar, the product is tangible and the message is easy to understand. Even people who consider email a hassle and banner ads annoying may enjoy the unique nature of a direct mail campaign.

#6. It is Easy to Create a Direct Mail Campaign

If you know how to write ad copy (or are able to hire someone who can), you can create a direct mail marketing campaign. All it takes is some imagination, some innovative design ideas and some postage.

#7. Direct Mail Marketing Results Are Easy to Measure

The process for measuring email response rates can seem like an arcane science. Sometimes you feel like you need an advanced degree in mathematics just to figure out how many people opened your email or clicked the link you provided. The results of direct mail marketing is much easier to measure, and much more concrete.

#8. Direct Mail is a Great Adjunct to Other Advertising Methods

Direct mail is the perfect complement to virtually every other form of advertising. You can send out a coupon and use it to drive traffic to your website. You can mail postcards to invite shoppers to your grand opening. No matter how you combine it, direct mail marketing is a great way to support your other

marketing efforts.

#9. Direct Mail is a Cost-Effective Form of Advertising

Post Offices have become increasingly dependent on bulk and direct mail to build its business, and that is good news for marketers. Businesses can take advantage of special mass mail rates that make direct mail marketing surprisingly affordable.

#10. Direct Mail Marketing Has a Long Track Record of Success

Direct mail campaigns were building brands and wooing customers when the Internet was still in its infancy. Despite the predictions to the contrary, direct mail has been going strong in the 21st century, and that track record of success is likely to continue.

If you have been using direct mail to grow your business, you already know how powerful the format can be. If you have never considered direct mail before, you might want to add it to your stable of go-to marketing methods. It is far too early to write a eulogy for direct mail marketing; this tried and true marketing strategy may just outlast its newfangled rivals.

Subscribe



5 Tips for Building a Valuable Mailing List

A large, quality mailing list is often one of the most valuable assets that any small business can have. It takes a lot of time and effort to build such a list, but the rewards make it very much worthwhile.

There is no substitute for building an engaged audience for your email marketing campaign whereby you achieve a situation where your subscribers actually look forward to hearing from you.

1 - Ask for Less

It's no secret that the average Internet user is short on patience and has a very low attention span, particularly once they see that you are trying to sell something. No one is going to want to fill out a long-winded form just to sign up to your mailing list.

Instead, you should initially ask only for the email address and the name of the subscriber so that you can address your emails in a more personal manner. Don't ask for any additional

information, unless it is essential to do so.

2 - Ask Everywhere

While you should never attempt to pressurize your target audience into signing up to your email newsletters, it is important to integrate email into every area of your digital marketing strategy. Provide a clear and convenient signup form on your blog and website as well as on any other online portals you use, such as social networks or public forums. Don't forget to seek out subscribers offline as

well, at events such as trade fairs or business meetings.

3 - Offer Value

Being surrounded by advertising everywhere they look, no one wants to voluntarily sign up just to have yet more promotional content flood their inboxes. You'll need to make every effort to offer an outstanding value proposition that makes potential subscribers stop and think and decide that they want to hear from you on a regular basis. Whether it's a special offer targeted towards new subscribers or excellent content that either helps or inspires your readers, a clear value proposition is a must.

4 - Integrate Sharing

Social media is one of the core elements of any digital marketing strategy and, as such, you should integrate social features into your email newsletters. Just as you should do with your blog or website content, make sure to include social sharing and forwarding buttons in your email newsletters. Any decent email marketing service should provide this feature for you, and you'll be able to

track shares and forwarding to garner essential insights into the performance of your campaign.

5 - Provide Options

If your business has a fairly broad reach, you'll need to segment your target audience so that the right content gets to the right people. After all, sending irrelevant content will quickly lead to people unsubscribing. For this reason, you may want to have multiple email newsletter campaigns, in which case you can provide a list of options, accompanied by checkboxes, when people sign up for the first time. These options will allow your visitors to choose what sort of content they want.

Building a quality mailing list is only a part of the battle when it comes to succeeding with email marketing, but it is the most important step of all. However, in order to hold on to your subscribers, you'll need to strive to provide excellent content in the form of exclusive promotions as well as interesting and engaging material that is not solely promotional in nature.

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How to Deal with Negative Business Publicity



It is often said that there is no such thing as bad publicity, but that's not true. While negative publicity still focuses attention on a company, it can destroy reputation and badly affect sales or production. Negative publicity is almost always unintentional; a company does something it thinks is good, and winds up getting a bad reaction. So how can you deal with the negative effects?

The most important thing is to know what people are saying about your company. You can't deal with the bad publicity if you don't hear it. There are programs and services, such as Alerti, which monitor social media channels and keep track of every place your company is mentioned. Whether you use such a service or have your marketing staff do it manually, it is vital to put monitoring in place.

When you spot bad publicity, don't panic.

The worst thing you can do is post a response without considering the situation. Take a deep breath and research the issue. The situation may appear hopeless, but there are ways to turn things around and deal with negative publicity.

The first thing to do is find the source of the problem, and determine exactly why your audience is upset. Some example sources of bad publicity are:

- An honest mistake by someone in your company
- Bad customer service
- Incorrect handling of a customer's complaint
- An advertising campaign that unexpectedly sends the wrong message
- Illegal activities performed by company staff
- A deliberate attack by competitors, in an attempt to gain market share

Once the source has been identified, it is critical to take positive, decisive action. A swift response based on a robust strategy can save your company's reputation before too much damage is done. Going beyond the required (or expected) level of service can even turn a negative situation into a positive customer experience.

Before anything else, your company must admit and acknowledge the situation. Trying to hide problems just makes them worse, so put your hand up and accept the blame. This immediately gains trust among your customers, and will encourage vocal support from loyal, long-term clients.

Next, publicly explain what happened. This step requires senior management involvement, as it must be achieved through a company statement that describes the situation. Do not try to justify anything; that almost always sounds like you're

making excuses, so stick to outlining the facts and the problem.

Finally, take decisive action to resolve the issue. If you can do this both tactfully and with good humor, the results can be even better. However, be wary of using too much humor. This can imply that you do not take the problem seriously, even though it is significant to your customers. In especially bad cases, make sure your legal team is aware of the issue and seek their help in phrasing responses and determining how to move forward.

However you deal with negative publicity, never forget your loyal, satisfied customers. Their continued support is an essential part of any response. People who do not know your company are more likely to trust an individual's opinion than an official company response, so nurture existing clients' positive opinion and use it to rebuff the negative publicity.

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Traffic Boost: 8 Simple Keys for Organically Increasing Inbound Site Traffic



From small-time blogs to e-commerce powerhouses, dismal traffic figures plague countless sites across the web. While issues like high bounce rates and poor conversions certainly contribute to low sales and disappointing overall results, minimal traffic has a much greater impact, effectively limiting a site's earning potential.

Advertising and expensive marketing campaigns

provide some relief for web entrepreneurs and small businesses, but these initiatives can seriously tax tight budgets and rarely provide long-lasting results.

Fortunately, there are plenty of organic options available that produce fantastic results without the weighty price tag.

The following eight keys explore some of the most popular ways site owners

can generate traffic without splurging on pricy marketing techniques.

1. Targeting the Right Social Media Platforms

The premise of social media networks sounds like a dream opportunity for web marketers. Simply throw up a few tweets with links to newly-published content and watch the visitors roll in, right? Unfortunately, things

aren't quite that simple, with networks like Twitter and Facebook regularly demonstrating click-through rates lower than 5%. Ouch.

Instead of wasting time courting visitors on Twitter or Facebook, web marketers should turn their attention to networks like Pinterest, where participants are actively seeking out content to share and discover.

StumbleUpon is another great resource for generating traffic. Rather than neglecting the bigger networks outright, they should be used to build real communities that build brand value, not spammed with ineffective links.

2. Building Clout through Guest Posting

Web optimization experts recommend keeping visitors

engaged with a constant stream of new content, but many publishers struggle to keep up with the demand.

Savvy web entrepreneurs can fill this gap by partnering with webmasters to create guest posts. Posts from established experts hold undeniable appeal for bloggers looking for content, while authors benefit from increased traffic and brand clout.

This mutually-beneficial relationship not only generates short term growth, but many successful partnerships offer limitless potential over the long haul.

3. Creating Interesting Videos

In spite of the mountain of evidence confirming videos outperform all other forms of content, many web publishers stick exclusively to textual

posts. Blog posts and articles certainly have their place, but videos better capture the attention of web users browsing aimlessly.

YouTube alone drives the most traffic of any social media site, which should motivate any web publisher to begin making high-quality videos.

4. Interacting with Visitors

Slapping up a blog post doesn't take much time, but many website owners think their job ends when they hit publish. Instead, it's vitally important to interact with those who take the time to read the post and leave feedback or comments.

Authors who interact with their commenters build brand loyalty and help drive future visits. It's a simple tactic, but the results it generates are undeniable.



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5. Collaborating with Industry Influencers

Established influencers within a particular industry already possess large followings and powerful sites that foster vibrant discussions.

Establishing a relationship with these influencers and collaborating with these individuals can represent real growth opportunities for smaller businesses.

Starting a relationship is as simple as leaving comments on the influencer's posts, tweeting relevant information their direction, and engaging in their digital conversations.

It's important to take a thoughtful approach, however, building the relationship organically with time. Rushing to build a relationship comes across pushy at best, so it's essential to act genuinely.

6. Linking Back to Older Content

Google's ever-evolving search algorithms have largely rewritten the rules for search engine optimization in the past few years, but SEO remains as important as ever.

Including links to older articles within new blog posts is a simple white hat tip that

helps solidify a site's search ranking, while simultaneously increasing conversation rates.

Over time, this strategy draws in more visitors and increases the time these individuals spend browsing.

7. Contributing to Well-Known Publications

Interacting with influencers builds credibility for web publishers, but becoming a recognizable expert offers even more benefits. Contributing to well-known publications serves as a simple way to increase brand recognition and provide real value to web users.

These contributions serve two purposes, funneling traffic back to the author's own site and growing the brand's footprint.

8. Focusing on a Winning Strategy

Optimization gurus and marketing strategists abound online, and many web publishers feel overwhelmed by all of the suggestions, advice, and ideas encountered in a single day.

Instead of trying to implement every idea into a winning marketing strategy, it's important for webmasters to focus their attention on a growth plan that works.

Analytics information provides a fantastic snapshot of current traffic sources, visitor behavior, and other helpful metrics. Using this data, publishers should pinpoint a few techniques that complement these patterns and invest their time accordingly.

Unfortunately, there is no magic formula for generating sustainable traffic growth for a website. Nevertheless, plenty of avenues offer potential traffic sources for webmasters to consider.

Much like a snowball growing ever larger as it rolls down a hill, traffic numbers often increase exponentially before exploding. Rather than becoming discouraged by relatively low numbers in the short term, publishers should keep their heads down and work diligently to generate better figures.

Over the long haul, this approach proves undeniably effective.



How to Use Video Marketing to Grow Your Small Business

Marketing with videos is an inexpensive way of reaching large audiences, making it ideal for small business owners. You can use video clips to demonstrate how to use your products, explain the benefits of dealing with your business and allow satisfied customers to tell their story. Content marketing is now one of the most effective ways of reaching new customers, and using videos can give your business an edge over the competition.

Studies indicate that consumers are influenced to buy after watching instructional videos, so this is a great place to start. For example, a video of you explaining how to use a kitchen gadget your business produces could give people the confidence to place an order. If you offer

a service rather than manufacturing or selling products there are still opportunities to produce instructional videos to promote your business. A landscaper could produce a video offering tips for preparing gardens for winter.

These tips will help you to market your business using video content:

1) Keep it simple.

A video doesn't have to be a Hollywood movie to be effective for marketing. A digital SLR camera is great for recording a promotional video, but a modern smartphone can also produce good results. Make sure the main subject is well lit before recording, as low

lighting can make a video look dull and grainy. Position yourself close to the camera if you're going to speak, so that the microphone picks up your voice clearly.

2) Keep it short.

The constant demand for attention means consumers don't have time to watch long videos. A promotional video should be less than a minute long. You may think you have lots of interesting things to say about your business, but don't assume potential customers will give you their time. Grab the viewer's attention in the first 10 seconds and you'll increase the chance they'll continue watching to the end.

3) Have a story to tell.

One of the most effective ways to get customers to engage with your business is to tell a story. What's different about your business, and how did you get to where you are today? Small businesses can't compete with large corporations when it comes to advertising and marketing budgets, but you have an edge if you can create a personal connection. Many consumers are keen to support local businesses and new ventures, so use this angle if it applies. An example of a good story for video marketing would be to explain how your father started the business and that you are carrying on the family tradition.

4) Share your video across platforms.

Youtube is an obvious place to publish a video to promote your business, but you can reach a much larger audience by posting and sharing it more widely. Displaying a video on your company website can help with SEO as well as give you an extra opportunity to get your message across. Uploading a video to your Facebook page and promoting it using Twitter

will increase the number of views. Posting and promoting your videos using social media means they may go viral and reach thousands of viewers.

5) End with a call to action.

All marketing messages should include a call to action, and your promotional videos may be wasted if you don't follow this rule. Fading to black at the end is a missed opportunity to invite customers to contact you. You can either ask visitors to contact you to find out more as part of the video message or fade to a website address and written message at the end. Videos can also include discount codes or other promotions to encourage further engagement from the viewer.

6) Have a goal and track results.

Using videos to market your small business may only cost a few dollars in financial terms, but there will also be a cost in your time. It's important to know what you want to achieve with video marketing and to track your results. Your goal may simply be to drive more visitors to your website, and you can measure this easily using analytics tools. If you're using videos to promote a sales campaign you can measure the results by use of coupon codes. Tracking the results of your video marketing means you can understand what works well and refine your approach.

Developments in technology like the rise of smartphones and tablet computers mean most people can watch videos on the move, so it's a great time to use this medium for marketing. If your videos are interesting and engaging viewers may share them with other people using social networks, and you can quickly reach a large audience.

a specific product or service from you? Do you want to educate them about the benefits of your goods or services, or do you simply want to thank them for their past business?

What type of objects make effective promotional items?

The ideal promotional item is one that will remain on someone's office desk or person for a significant period.

You want your company logo to be seen every day so that you are the first business a person thinks of when they need a solution to a particular problem.

Common promotional items, but no less effective for

being so, are branded pens, calendars and mouse pads. These have the advantage of being used or looked at every working day and less chance of ending up in the trash.

There are also less conventional promotional items that may have more of an impact for being less common, and these include tote bags, T-shirts and hats. Wearable promotional items have the potential to reach a far wider audience as they do not remain in any one place.

Be creative with packaging

Once you have decided on the type of promotional item you want to send out, you need to consider the packaging. In some respects, the packaging

is more important than the promotional item, because it is the first thing your recipient will see.

If using a box to mail the promotional item, then ensure the box features your brand image and utilizes your brand colors. You could also make your mailing more personal by including a handwritten note with your signature.

Whatever type of promotional product you choose for your business marketing campaigns, there is one rule to remember: always include your brand image or logo so that you will be uppermost in the minds of your recipients and thereby effectively market your business.

Is Your Website Mobile Friendly?

Over 50% of all online searches are now performed on a mobile device.

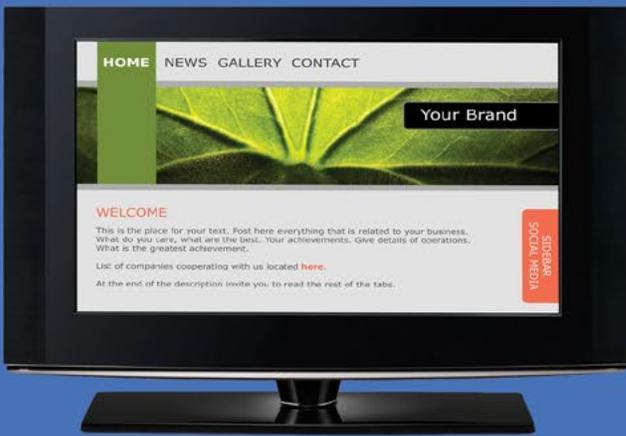


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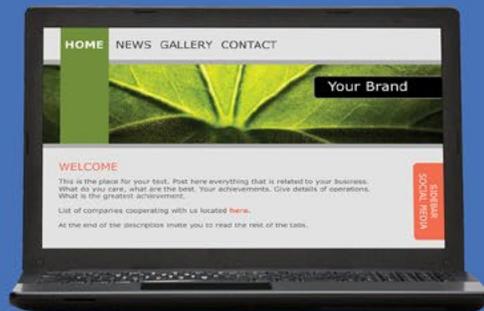
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Best Practices for Point-Of-Sale Email Address Collection

Email marketing plays a key role for many retailers and businesses, which is why many merchants try to collect customer emails during the sales and checkout process.

While it's very useful- not to mention profitable- for you to advertise to established customers via email, you also need to know the best practices for point-of-sale email address collection. One of the benefits of following these best practices is complying with CAN-SPAM laws and not being tagged as a spammer.

Use marketing notification

If you are going to use a point-of-sale email address collection system for marketing purposes, you must notify your customers that their email accounts are going to receive marketing content. Otherwise, the customers that receive your marketing emails may become unhappy, and possibly unhappy enough to not return to your store or to mark your content as spam.

Also, there are regulations in place that require customers to know exactly what content they are signing up for, and whether that emailed content includes marketing messages in addition to sales receipts.

Add an opt-in link

When it comes to email address collection, it is typically best practice to use those addresses for transactional purposes only, such as when sending the customer a copy of a sales receipt. However, once your customers receive a copy of their receipt, you can include a link to sign up for promotional/marketing emails. In this way, you don't lose out on the chance to market.

Another strategy you can use is to include a check box for your customers to click while they are verifying their email address for the purpose of receiving an electronic receipt. This way, customers can easily opt into your email list without having to wait for a confirmation email. Apple currently uses this practice with their mobile point-of-sale systems.

Provide an opt-out option

Customers should be given the choice to opt-out of your emails after receiving promotional content from you. Opt-out links should be clearly introduced and noted in every promotional email you send. Opt-in requests should also be honored promptly; ideally, the maximum amount of time to wait before fulfilling an unsubscribe request is 10 days.

Ensure email accuracy

When inputting their emails via your point-of-sale system, your customers should have the option of checking the accuracy of those addresses. This is important because incorrect addresses that result in bounced emails will eventually result in your internet service provider, or ISP, being placed on a spam list. Many email providers may also start automatically forwarding your emails to their spam folders.

Another way to help resolve the issue of incorrect email addresses is to use a service (e.g., Experian) that scans every email address as it is added and fixes domain name typos automatically. Such services also help you remain in compliance with CAN-SPAM and California's policies regarding marketing and solicitation emails.

Verify subscriber age

Some states and provinces have laws regarding how old someone must be to receive marketing content. Due to these stipulations, it is best to include questions about customer age and/or date of birth in your email opt-in forms regardless of which state or province your business is

located in. Another option is to check the age of the customer when he or she is paying via debit or credit card.

It goes without saying that you should always check the age of your customers before collecting their email addresses if you sell alcohol, tobacco or adult items; these products are age-regulated in every state.

Keep emails private

Every email address in your mailing list should be treated as private property. Do not sell or give away any email addresses on your list to other marketers, bloggers or businesses. In fact, many customers hesitate to sign up to email lists because they suspect that their contact information will be given

away to other companies. By assuring your customers (preferably in writing) that you do not participate in those practices, you will be more likely to convince people to opt-in to your email list.

Audit your system

No matter what kind of email collection system you have, there should always be an auditing system in place. Having an auditing system helps ensure that employees and contractors are properly trained in the processes of email collection. Having an auditing system also helps ensure that current email addresses are valid and that you are not experiencing too many bounce backs. Most auditing systems can be programmed to send you

regular opt-in and bounce back reports directly to your email account.

Summary

The collection of email addresses for the purpose of email marketing can be successfully completed during the point-of-sale process if certain checks and safeguards are in put into practice. Most importantly, you customers should be aware of what they are signing up for when they provide their email address. You should also ensure that added email addresses are free of typos or other errors that result in a high bounce back rate. Finally, do not sell or otherwise share your customers' emails with other parties.

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News You Should Know

Facebook Launches Live Streaming

Facebook just got into the business of live streaming video, but it is currently only available for famous people.

The social network added the feature to Facebook Mentions, the app which was launched in July 2014, which celebrities such as actors, athletes and musicians use to engage with their fans.

The new feature is called Live, and will show up in your News Feed if a celebrity you follow decides to live stream. You will also receive a notification about the broadcast if you have recently interacted with a celebrity's posts. You will have the ability to like, comment on or share the video while viewing a stream.

Facebook users will be able to like, comment and share live streams from inside their News Feeds.

Thousands of celebrities with verified accounts use Facebook Mentions everyday, according to Vadim Lavrusik, Product Manager for Facebook Mentions.

Google Announces More Changes to Google+

As certain as death and taxes, Google+ continues to undergo regular changes.

The latest change is the separation of Google+ and YouTube accounts.

In the coming weeks, YouTube will not require a Google+ profile when you upload, comment, or create a channel. In addition, Google+ Photos are being replaced with Google Photos.

A recent study published by Eric Enge at Stone Temple Consulting (4/15) revealed that only 1% of the 2.2 billion Google users actively on Google+.

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