

List Building - Mark Thompson

Introduction

I am currently in the process of writing a book with some friends..(a real book with pages not bytes!) One of the chapters I produced was about list building. This is the first draft of the chapter, I hope it will give you an over view of list building debunked.

There are 3 types of people in the world,

Those that have a mailing list
Those that want a mailing list
Those that have no desire to have a mailing list

This Chapter is aimed primarily at those of you that come under 2 and 3 above, because if you are already in category 1 you know how just how valuable a mailing list is.

First off lets tackle those of you who say you don't want to have a mailing list. I am prepared to bet you a nice big chocolate cake that the reason you have no desire to build a list is because of the emails you receive on a daily basis.

Let me tell you something now...

You Do Not Need To Promote To A Mailing List Like 95% of Marketers If You Don't Want To

The biggest mistake of my Internet marketing career was not building a list sooner and the reason for that was that I didn't want to subject people to endless promotional emails.

I eventually got it into my thick skull that I could create a list and use it on my terms.

I don't send out masses of email, maybe 1 or 2 a month at most, I very very rarely promote anything in my emails and yet I still make a nice income from email marketing. In this chapter I'll show you how you can be an ethical marketer and still make money.

First off lets dispel some myths.

List Building Myths

Of all the areas of Internet marketing I believe that none has so much rubbish talked about it as List Building and Email Marketing.

How many time have you heard or read someone saying "The Money is In The List" I can tell you now it's not, if, anything , the money is in the relationship you build with your list and the value /help you provide to your subscribers.

Another big myth is that you should build a big list. Once again this is wrong and causes lots of people to start their list building targeting the completely wrong type of subscriber.

I regularly find people with list of 500 -1000 out selling people with list of 10,000 – 20,000 whenever I check the results of affiliate competitions.

The reason for this is simple the smaller list is far more responsive and has been built properly. The list owner won't be sending out promotional emails all the time and what he does send out will be valuable and informative.

He will have made the effort to know what his subscribers want and also made the effort to tell his subscribers all about his life and business.

In short he will have built a relationship with his list.

Free Lists Vs Buyers Lists

If you spend time in any of the mainstream Internet Marketing Forums you'll soon hear someone tell someone else how to build a big list in 30 days or less, in fact if you are unlucky you might even have bought a product that tells you to do this,

The post or report will say something like:

Give away a free report in exchange for a subscription

Take your subscribers and do some Ad swaps (ad swaps are where you send lets say 200 people to a free report by someone else and they will send 200 people to sign up for your free report)

Rinse and repeat.

There are some very basic flaws in this way of thinking.

Firstly how do you know that someone who downloads a free report actually has the means of paying for any of your products?

Secondly how do you know that you have a valid email address?

Thirdly where is the logic in swapping your subscribers who haven't bought anything with someone else's subscribers who haven't bought anything?

Finally every person on your list costs you money if you have 9999 people on your list it will probably cost you \$50 a month to maintain that list. If you have 10,001 people it is going to cost you \$130 a month.

People on your list who can't or won't buy anything are costing you money.

Now lets compare building a list of freebie seekers to building a list of people who have bought something

If you build your list by selling a product or report for \$5 -\$9 or even 99 cents you know 3 things about your subscribers.

1. They aren't afraid to buy online
2. They have the ability to buy online
3. They have a genuine email address (Many systems like Digireresults will add the payment email address to your subscribers list automatically)

Give me 500 buyers over 5000 prospects any day!

The lesson here is simple try to build your list from buyers from the very beginning and don't worry about the size of you list the response rate of you list is much more important.

Later In this chapter I'll give you some ideas about how to create a list containing a selection of prospects and buyers from the start.

Just Build A List – Wrong!

A few weeks ago while reading through a public forum I saw a post from a well known marketer who told someone to stop messing about and start building a list immediately.

That has got to be one of the worst pieces of advice I've seen given to anyone since the Captain of the Titanic said, "Full Speed Ahead...what's the worse that could happen"

So lets for a moment say that the guy took the advice and put up a squeeze page added an autoresponder box and offered a free report on making money with videos.

Lets say he got very lucky and 100 people signed up for the list today.... What now? He's got 100 people eager to learn more about video marketing, they have never been so eager to learn, they want to learn NOW! Tomorrow or next week they might have decided that Facebook marketing is the thing for them.

So by the time that our list-building friend has got his product ready they aren't interested.

So what should he have done?

He should have had a plan for the next 3 or 4 months. And he should have had products ready to go.

I am currently completing a product that I'll be selling for \$7 quite soon, but I also have 4 other related products planned and 3 larger more expensive related products ready to be sold if people are interested. On top of that I'll add the offer of 1 to 1 coaching.

I have a plan ... I have a sales funnel

Building Your Sales Funnel

A sales funnel is a simple sales method where prospects enter at the top of the Funnel and as they travel down it they get higher value offers. It need not be an

instantaneous process and I find it is usually better if it takes place over weeks or months.

As I mentioned earlier my preferred method of list building is selling high value reports and video series cheaply. I am more than happy to sell a report for \$7 that others will sell at \$67 or \$97.

Once I have made a sale the buyer is now in my sales funnel, I'll usually send them a free bonus report a few days later . Over the coming weeks and months I'll introduce them to my higher cost products and maybe give them special offers or related offer on download pages and thank you pages.

I never email my buyers list promoting anything directly, my preferred method is to create a blog post with lots of information about a topic and maybe a video where I show a solution to an issue.

This way I avoid what 90% of people despise ...constant emails selling the next big thing.

As a rule I only ever promote products I have created myself or that people I know very well have created, these are usually members of my forum or people who have bought my product creation course.

Never promote any products you haven't seen or tried.

Stick to that simple rules and you'll avoid a lot of problems.

For that very reason alone I refuse to promote any product launches, sure \$97, \$497 or \$997 might be a nice bit of commission but why risk alienating a responsive list over a product that might be good or might just as easily be bad.

It really isn't worth the risk, if you find a product that looks like it's a great fit for your list but haven't tried it, don't be tempted to promote it until you check it out.

If necessary, ask for a review copy

I often get subscribers email me and recommend good products that I should check out it would be the easiest thing in the world to recommend some of them, bit it only takes 1 bad product to ruin your reputation.

Getting Started With List Building

You now have your plan and you know you want a list of buyers, rather than a list of freebie seekers. You are probably wondering how are you going to get started?

When I started list building I went from 0 subscribers to around 8000 in a week. Of that 500 were buyers and 7500 were people who got a free report.

Just over a year later that list has over 4000 buyers and around 4000 prospects (the politically correct word for freebie seekers)

So how did I do it, simple....

Step 1 was to create a report, in my case it was about article marketing as I knew a lot of people were interested in it and I had over 1,000,000 views on EzineArticles so I had a lot of information to pass on.

When I finished the report I emailed 5 Internet marketers who I knew had good sized lists, I made them 2 offers.

Offer 1 was that I would brand all the affiliate links in the e-book with their links and then allow them to give the book away for free.

Many people would have stopped at this but I wanted a buyers list, so I took it one step further.

Offer 2 was that their subscribers who downloaded the report could sell it and get 100% commission (\$17) if they wanted it

I told them that the offer was only open to 2 marketers and I needed a response in 24 hours.... I got 2 positive responses in under 2 hours.

I call this the Win, Win, Win method

The marketer wins as they get to give away a free report, make affiliate sales and enhance their reputation.

The subscriber wins because they get a good quality report for free and can then promote it in forums and on blogs and earn some money.

I win as I get subscribers and both prospects and buyers.

The report took me less than a day to write and has probably been responsible for a large amount of my income over the past year.

This method works for 1 simple reason, many marketers are very busy and know that if they give value to their list they'll make more money in the long time. By saving them time by giving them a good product to give away they are more than happy to do it.

You could probably even do this method by offering to write blog posts for marketers in exchange for a link to your free report on one of their download pages.

Segmenting Your Lists

You should at the very minimum have 2 email lists, One for your prospects, those that haven't bought anything from you and one for the subscribers who have bought from you.

The easiest way to do this is by using a proper Autoresponder company like Aweber.

With Aweber you can set a rule that if anyone appears on your buyers list then they get removed from a prospects list if they are on it.

I really can't stress how important this aspect of list building is .

Over time if someone has been on a prospect list for 6 months to a year it's pretty sure that they aren't going to buy anything from you, they might not even be opening your emails.

If that happens you really should do 1 of 2 things get them to unsubscribe or unsubscribe them yourself after all they are costing you money as you are paying for that place on the list.

My preferred method of dealing with people like this is simple I'll email the list with a really amazing offer. For example they can have access to one of my \$67 or \$97 products for \$1 for 7 days or they can buy an older product for \$5.

Anyone who doesn't open the email will get 2 more emails over the coming 3 or 4 days then if they still haven't opened it they'll be unsubscribed.

If they do open the email I'll keep them on the list for a bit longer even if they haven't bought anything and the next month I'll try them with a different offer.

Before I do a new product launch I like to add potential buyers to a pre-launch list. I'll email all my buyers and prospects with details of my new product and I'll tell them that they can get on a prelaunch list where they'll get a special low prelaunch price.

So for example my next product will sell for \$19.95 I'll allow the people who are on the prelaunch list to get it for \$5 BUT the price will increase by 5 cents after every 3 sales.

This ensures that people are waiting for the launch and it will generate a buzz when I launch it.

I'll still email people on my list who haven't added themselves to the prelaunch list but by that time the price will be \$19.95, I usually find that they are the first on the prelaunch list the next time I do a launch!

This type of segmenting and offers keep people waiting for your emails and ensure good open rates.

Autoresponders

I mentioned using professional Autoresponders in the last section. Personally I always use Aweber or iContact, If I have a choice it will always be Aweber as they have some really great features that make segmenting and managing a list much more simple.

No matter which Autoresponder Company you go for **DO NOT** be tempted to use a free Autoresponder or your own server to deliver your emails you'll almost certainly end up having your domain blacklisted.

The reason why Icontact and Aweber are relatively expensive is that they employ teams of people to ensure your emails get delivered and that the don't get blocked by spam filters.

I find they are worth every cent you pay them.

Conclusion

List building can be very profitable and can add a lot to the profitability of your Internet Marketing efforts.

You don't need to use email marketing like everyone else. Provide good information and value and people will still buy from you when you have something good to offer.

Start off by looking at all the emails that you get each day, which ones do you open and which ones do you ignore. What makes you unsubscribe from email lists? What types of emails do you hate?

I guarantee that you aren't alone... market to other people how you would like to be marketed to and you won't go far wrong.

Where possible it's important to focus on buyers, if you have a lot of prospects then you should be spending time turning those prospects into buyers. The easiest way to do this is by segmenting your lists properly. Ensure that you have separate lists for buyers and prospects and send the relevant emails to them.

Look after your buyers, they are paying for your lifestyle..or they will do if you communicate with them properly.

Finally List building is a good effective and profitable way to spend your time, 1 email can earn you thousands of dollars , how much time would you spend on a blog to achieve that?

Avoid my big mistake and start planning your listbuilding now!

Resources

[AutoResponder Madness](#) – create emails that sell

If you decide that ARM is for you please forward your transaction details to me via the support desk and I will arrange a 1 hour free consultation with you.

Support

<http://beyondcommission.zendesk.com/>

