

EMAIL MARKETING POWER

49 Email Marketing Secrets That Will Jump-Start Your Business
& Produce Dramatic Results

By Jason G. Miles

Also by Jason G. Miles:

Pinterest Power

Instagram Power

Price It Like Picasso

Craft Business Power

Liberty Jane Media

Email Marketing Power

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By Jason G. Miles

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About the Author

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In 2008, he co-founded Liberty Jane Clothing and manages the marketing, writing, branding, and social strategy. The company dominates its small niche. Customers have downloaded over 300,000 digital guidebooks in the last three years from Liberty Jane's primary e-commerce site.

Jason is also an accomplished writer. He co-authored *Pinterest Power*, an Amazon bestselling book. He co-authored and published *Craft Business Power*, an Amazon #1 bestselling book. His other books include *Instagram Power* and *Price It Like Picasso*.

Jason serves as the Vice President of Advancement (marketing, development, and human resources) at Northwest University in the Seattle area. He teaches at the university's School of Business Management as an adjunct professor. He holds a graduate degree in Business Administration, as well as undergraduate degrees in both Organizational Management and Biblical Studies.

About Liberty Jane Clothing

Launched in 2008 with an emphasis on making custom patterned outfits for dolls, Liberty Jane is known for using top quality fabrics, creating trendy designs, and giving customers the chance to own something rare and beautiful. The company is also known for holding auctions that surpass 'normal' and escalate to ultra-premium prices. Liberty Jane brand doll clothes sell for as much as \$300.

Liberty Jane Clothing started as an eBay store, achieving PowerSeller status within only a few months. Today, Liberty Jane is a fast-growing small business focused on delivering exceptional designs for the doll market as well as educational programs and tools for sewing enthusiasts and craft business owners.

In 2009, the company began selling patterns as PDF files. With over 1.5 million patterns downloaded from <http://www.pixiefaire.com> the site has become the #1 online source for doll clothes patterns. Working with over 70 independent designers, the site frequently publishes new patterns in support of many doll types and design traditions. You can learn more about Liberty Jane Clothing at the following online locations:

www.libertyjaneclimbing.com

<http://www.youtube.com/libertyjaneclimbing>

<https://www.facebook.com/LibertyJaneClimbing>

<http://pinterest.com/cinnamonmiles/>

<http://instagram.com/libertyjaneclimbing>

Table Of Contents

FOREWORD

WHAT ARE THOSE TWO SKILLS?

HOW DO YOU MASTER THEM?

WHO DO YOU LEARN FROM?

HOW EXACTLY DO YOU ACHIEVE INTERNET RICHES VIA EMAIL?

WHAT DOES INTERNET RICHES MEAN, EXACTLY?

CHAPTER ONE: UNMATCHED MARKETING POWER

FROM 125 TO 25,000

CAN YOU MAKE \$2,000 IN TEN MINUTES?

CAN YOU BECOME AN AMAZON #1 BESTSELLER TODAY?

CHAPTER TWO: WHAT SETH GODIN SAYS

SECRET #1 – STRANGERS TO FRIENDS

SECRET #2 – THE AGORA MODEL

SECRET #3 – THAT FAMOUS EMAIL MARKETING QUOTE

SECRET #4 – USE THE LAW OF ATTRACTION

SECRET #5 – BE THE OPPOSITE OF A SPAMMER

SECRET #6 – LET YOUR LIST SPEAK

SECRET #7 – FOCUS ON THEIR INTERESTS, NOT YOUR PRODUCTS

SECRET #8 – DON'T ABUSE THE POWER

CHAPTER THREE: SELLING VIA EMAIL

SECRET #9 – THE MAGICAL MOTIVATING SEQUENCE

SECRET #10 – CREATE BUZZ

SECRET #11 – USE THE PRODUCT LAUNCH TACTIC

SECRET #12 – THE LAUNCH LIST

SECRET #13 – EMOTIONAL TRIGGER: SCARCITY

SECRET #14 – EMOTIONAL TRIGGER: CURIOSITY

CHAPTER FOUR: BRIBES

SECRET #15 – A POWERFUL ETHICAL BRIBE

SECRET #16 – GO FOR VIRAL SHARING

SECRET #17 – USE CREATIVE OFFER IDEAS

SECRET #18 – FREEMIUM SOLUTIONS ARE BETTER THAN FREE INFORMATION

SECRET #19 – PUT THE PREMIUM IN FREEMIUM

SECRET #20 – PROMOTE YOUR FREE SOLUTION

SECRET #21 – GIVE AWAY YOUR FREE SOLUTION

SECRET #22 – BRAND YOUR FREE SOLUTION EFFECTIVELY

CHAPTER FIVE: CROSS-SUBSIDY MARKETING

SECRET #23 – STRATEGIC CROSS-SUBSIDIES

CHAPTER SIX: STYLE POINTS

SECRET #24 – USE A FRIENDLY, INFORMAL TONE

SECRET #25 – USE THE NEWSLETTER FORMAT

SECRET #26 – ALSO USE THE SIMPLE TEXT FORMAT

SECRET #27 – ALWAYS USE HTML FORMATTING

SECRET #28 – MAILCHIMP A GOOD BEGINNING PROVIDER

SECRET #29 – EASY READING FOR SKIMMERS

SECRET #30 – LEVERAGE EVERY PART

SECRET #31 – WRITE INTERESTING STORIES, HUMOR, OR SAGE ADVICE

SECRET #32 – CREATE WIN-WIN SCENARIOS

CHAPTER SEVEN: FIGURING OUT FREQUENCY

SECRET #33 – TEST THE FREQUENCY

SECRET #34 – TRACK YOUR SLOTS

SECRET #35 – OPTIMIZE YOUR SLOTS

SECRET #36 – SELLING VERSUS BONDING

SECRET #37 – USE THE 80-10-5-5 METHOD

SECRET #38 – MONITOR THE OPT-OUTS

CHAPTER EIGHT: STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE OPEN AND CLICK-THROUGH RATES

SECRET #39 – MAKING FRIENDS WITH MOBILE

SECRET #40 – MASTER OPEN RATES

SECRET #41 – RESPONSIVE IS BETTER THAN BIG

SECRET #42 – CREATE YOUR OWN HELL WEEK

SECRET #43 – LEVERAGE THE AUTO-RESPONDER SYSTEM

SECRET #44 – CLICK-THROUGH RATES

CHAPTER NINE: SOCIAL MEDIA INTEGRATION

SECRET #45 – GETTING SIGN-UPS VIA FACEBOOK

OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA OPTIONS

CONCLUSION: MORE RESOURCES

SECRET #46 – BOB & CRAIG

SECRET #47 – MAILCHIMP RESOURCES

SECRET #48 – THE CAUTIONARY SECRET

SECRET #49 – READ ANOTHER GREAT BOOK

GET TWO FREE GIFTS TODAY

Foreword

Effective email marketing is the result of learning two basic skills; if you master them, you'll achieve Internet success. If you're like me — and you read that sentence again carefully — it begs a whole set of questions, such as:

1. What are the two skills?
2. How do you master them?
3. Who do you learn them from?
4. How exactly do you “achieve Internet success” via email?
5. What does “Internet success” mean, exactly? Is it an amount?

Let's look at each question to see if we can nail down the exact ways email marketing can help you grow your small business.

What Are Those Two Skills?

The two skills needed for successful email marketing are name acquisition and content management. Name acquisition simply refers to strategies for acquiring more email addresses. Content management means producing emails that get opened, get read, and get your prospects and customers to take action.

How Do You Master Them?

Let me answer this question with a story. When I was in high school, I wanted to learn to play the guitar. As it happened, I had a friend, Norman, who also wanted to play

the guitar. We started our journey at the same time — I believe it was the fall of our sophomore year.

I went to the local music store and signed up for lessons with a guy that I knew who was a really awesome rock guitar player. I went every Wednesday to the music shop for a 30-minute lesson. My mom bought me a very inexpensive classical guitar, and I was on my way.

My friend Norman and his parents searched across Northern California and discovered that a student of the famous Christopher Parkening gave lessons to beginners in San Francisco, which was over two hours away. If you're not familiar, Christopher Parkening is such a brilliant guitarist that Andrés Segovia, the most important guitarist in recent history, - said, "Christopher Parkening is a great artist—he is one of the most brilliant guitarists in the world."

Norman went for lessons every Saturday (as I recall). His parents would drive him to San Francisco for his lesson. He also got a good quality classical guitar.

Imagine the shock on my face when a few months later, it was announced that Norman would provide some of the music for our school's Medieval Concert & Banquet Fundraiser. What? Norman? He just started taking lessons. And based on the fact that I could only play three chords and didn't really know any songs yet, how could he possibly pull that off?

As you might guess, Norman took the stage and wowed everyone. His classical guitar style was really impressive. If I hadn't known that he just started taking lessons a few months earlier, I would have said that he had been playing for years. Of course, taking lessons from a genius means you have to show up prepared, having practiced hard. It means truly committing to listen and learn. It means intensity of focus.

So what's my point? Simply this: you can get serious and become a master very quickly, or you can take the easy way at every step and become marginal at best. It's your choice. Mastery of any skill comes down to learning the techniques and practicing in a very focused way.

Who Do You Learn From?

I'll teach you all the lessons I know in this book. Then in the conclusion, I'll recommend several other people you ought to begin learning from immediately. You might wonder, *Jason, who did you learn from?* That's a fair question. Most people will tell you that Gary Halbert was one of the most gifted copywriters to come along in recent history. One of his students was Craig Garber. Gary said of Craig, "He's the best guy I know if you want to hire a real copywriter." I've been honored to learn from Craig for several years now and consider myself one of his students. If Halbert is Segovia, then Garber is Parkening, and then I'm that unknown dude in San Francisco who taught Norman. You get to be Norman.

How Exactly Do You Achieve Internet Riches via Email?

The email marketing methods that I teach focus on creating effective calls to action that help you achieve business results in a win-win fashion. That can include:

1. Selling tons of your products
2. Successfully launching new products with breakthrough success
3. Leveraging your list to expand your social media presence
4. Leveraging your list to expand your influence

What Does Internet Riches Mean, Exactly?

Every business is different, but doubling your revenue every year for several years in a row has got to be a measure of success that most people would appreciate. If you're a "solopreneur" working at home, then simply replacing your corporate income is a good starting place. If you're a business, then doubling your revenue year-over-year probably sounds pretty good, right? How many years in a row would you need to double your revenue before you felt like you had made "Internet riches"?

At our small company, Liberty Jane Clothing, we've doubled our revenue (or more) each year for the last three years, and this year we're on track to potentially do it again. Email marketing has played a big part in that success story.

So keep reading, learn the secrets found within this book, apply them in a very focused way to your business, and see if your results are similar to ours. Your mileage may vary of course, but you might be surprised at the success you'll find.

Chapter One: Unmatched Marketing Power

In September of 2009, we had 125 names on our email list and we were desperate to grow sales for our small home-based business. We weren't exactly sure how to make that happen. We started to look into email marketing as a way to grow sales and tried to learn everything we could.

From 125 to 25,000

Fast forward three and a half years later, and we have over 25,000 names on our primary email list and several thousand more on secondary lists. We add between 500 and 1,000 new prospects each month with no sign of slowing down. This change from 125 to over 25,000 has revolutionized our business results. In January of 2013, we added 2,395 new subscribers to our email list alone. Needless to say, we are huge fans of email marketing.

Editors Note: As of June 2016 we have over 75,000 names on our list(s).

This book is an explanation of the specific strategies and approaches we've used to accomplish these results, as well as lessons and insights we've collected over the last few years. We certainly don't consider ourselves experts at email marketing, but we've learned a lot and want to share it with you.

You may wonder whether our revenue results have really been impacted by this successful email marketing work. Here are our recent results: Three years ago our total

sales tripled, meaning they grew by over 300% in that year. The next year, they doubled, meaning they grew by over 200%. Last year, they doubled again. And as I write this, total sales are on track to more than double, and possibly even triple this year. We've gone from a small home-based business to a thriving six-figure business, stretching to achieve a million dollars in annual sales, which we think will happen next year or possibly the year after. So we're a tiny little business, but we've figured out how to get the momentum going — the kind of momentum that many small home-based businesses don't ever achieve. Email marketing has played a huge part in that success.

But you don't have to take our word for it. In the spring of 2013, we were honored to receive an award and special recognition from Constant Contact, one of the largest email service providers online. Constant Contact's "All-Star" award is for successful email marketing work and is given to a few companies each year. These are generally small businesses that demonstrate exceptional skill in their email marketing efforts. They awarded us the prize for a technical category — "The Best Use of Their Facebook Integration Tool" (we'll talk about that strategy in Chapter Nine).

I share all of this about our company for one reason — to reassure you that I'm not just a "marketing expert" who doesn't actually walk the walk. Nor am I a marketing expert who works at a big company and has learned my lessons on someone else's dime. We are practitioners of email marketing and students of the topic. Our business results hang in the balance.

Can You Make \$2,000 in Ten Minutes?

Let me ask you a question: If you had to make \$2,000 in the next ten minutes because your life depended on it, could you do it? Most email marketers would answer,

“Yes.” Some with very large email lists would say, “I could make \$20,000 in ten minutes.” A very few elite email marketers would say, “I could make \$200,000 in ten minutes.” There are very few marketing methods in existence that can provide you with that type of marketing power.

Can You Become an Amazon #1 Bestseller Today?

Let me ask you another question: If you published a book today, are you 100% confident that you could make it an Amazon #1 bestseller? If you have a reasonably good email list, then the answer is that you can. This isn't science fiction; I'll describe how we did this in Chapter Six with our self-published book *Craft Business Power* — and I'll show you how you can do it, too. As I mentioned previously, there are very few marketing methods that will allow you this much power.

If you grow an email list and learn to become an effective email marketer, you'll add a ton of marketing power to your current business efforts. The tools are free, the process is simple to learn, and the results are undeniable. For the remaining chapters in this book, we'll document the “secrets” and explain the process by which you can become an all-star email marketer.

Chapter Two: What Seth Godin Says

Author and marketing guru Seth Godin says that permission marketing — the type of marketing you'll be doing with an email campaign — is all about turning strangers into friends and friends into customers. Seth should know, since he blogs every day and you can sign up to receive his blog posts via email. So he emails his subscribers every day.

Secret #1 – Strangers to Friends

Due to the virtual and, at times, impersonal nature of email, it can be easy to forget that you're using the medium to build relationships with your prospects and customers. And what's something that's essential in any relationship? Trust. Becoming a trusted sender is key in creating a successful email marketing plan that allows you to turn strangers into friends. Before you can market your products or services via email, you need to make sure your audience will receive your messages favorably by building trust and confidence.

Secret #2 – The Agora Model

Your email messages will be facing some stiff competition for attention in your subscribers' inboxes. Among the dozens of emails that most people receive on a daily basis, you want your e-newsletter to be one of the messages that is opened first. And that's most likely to happen if you're a trusted sender. Research shows that the average email user has around 16 trusted sources from whom they automatically open and read messages. One of the basic approaches to email marketing, the Agora (aka Organic)

Model, takes this statistic into account and helps marketers get on the fast track toward becoming a trusted sender.

The Agora model is named after the pioneering firm Agora Publishing, a company that has cultivated a “house list” of over a quarter of a million email subscribers. The approach uses a proven method to attract prospects and foster organic growth for marketers’ email lists. The Agora model is summarized as follows:

1. Drive traffic to your webpage from across your Internet marketing channels. Your Internet marketing channels might include blogs, social media, paid ads, etc.
2. On the webpage where you send the traffic, you should have one simple goal: to get people to sign up for your newsletter via an opt-in email form that is prominently featured on that page.
3. To entice your visitors to actually opt in and sign up for your newsletter, offer them a free gift. The gift is delivered digitally as part of the welcome or confirmation email that they will automatically receive.
4. Once they are on your email list, market your products or services to them over time using compelling emails.

This marketing model takes advantage of whatever traffic-generating methods are at your disposal to start to develop your own house email list. Many marketers use an incentive to encourage prospects to sign up. Often referred to as an ethical bribe, this free downloadable product should be something that appeals to your target audience. We’ll explore this tactic further in Chapter Four.

Secret #3 – That Famous Email Marketing Quote

The whole point of the Agora Model is to create a venue for people to opt in for your email messaging, helping you to grow a prime list of interested prospects to advertise to, send promotions to, and ultimately generate revenue from. Of course, during the opt-in process, you'll need to be clear about what people are signing up for and deliver on that commitment. By doing that, you'll be well on your way toward building a mutually beneficial relationship with your subscribers.

Ask most Direct Response Marketing (DRM) experts and they'll tell you the same thing over and over — “the money is in the list.” By that they mean, if you have a big, responsive, loyal list of prospects and customers, then you can easily make money. Your goal is to grow a huge list. How huge? Every business is different. For some people, having a list of 1,000 names would be amazing. For others, having a list of 100,000 is inadequate. You have to decide what is realistic for your niche or industry and start building toward that goal.

Secret #4 – Use the Law of Attraction

So your goal is simple: Encourage more people to sign up for your newsletter. Put your opt-in where fans and customers are already active, whether that's on your website, a social media site, or somewhere else. Then write emails that your prospects and fans will want to share with their peers. As you grow your list, you'll find that people are attracted to you more and more as you refine and focus these simple yet powerful steps.

Of course, trust is a huge issue these days. Make sure to tell readers what to expect in terms of content and frequency from your email or newsletter (perhaps in a follow-up “thank you for subscribing” email) and don't abuse that agreement.

Secret #5 – Be the Opposite of a Spammer

Using an email list for a purpose other than what you've originally stated is actually against the law under the CAN-SPAM Act and can result in hefty fines. Other things to avoid include deceptive subject lines (ones that don't accurately reflect the content of the message), advertisements that are not clearly identified as such, not including a physical postal address, and either not including or not honoring an opt-out request.

Make it your goal to be the opposite of a spammer — no, not a remmaps(spammer spelled backwards). Try to be a servant and friend who only deliver email messages that are so helpful to your prospects that they would say you are working for them. So that if the federal government asked them, “Is this guy a spammer?” they would say, “No, he's the most helpful email marketer I've ever come into contact with — please don't shut him down.” Work for them; serve them, and you'll be rewarded.

Secret #6 – Let Your List Speak

Any email marketing campaign will naturally be highly focused on content, and it is important to carefully craft any email presentation that will be going out to your list. But it's also important to keep in mind that any type of communication is a two-way street. Email newsletters may seem one-sided, but giving subscribers an outlet to communicate with you will only serve to cement your relationship.

It may be intimidating to open up your company or reputation to the possibility to negative feedback, but the potential to help you refine your content for maximum

effectiveness — as well to increase your rapport with readers — outweighs the drawbacks. There are multiple strategies to gain valuable customer feedback, such as:

- Surveys (where you ask people their opinion)
- Polls
- Simply mentioning that if people hit “reply,” you’ll personally read their messages

Part of encouraging feedback involves giving some thought to what goes in the from line of your message. Whether you choose to use a personal name or company name, you want to foster familiarity and credibility, choosing the name that will be the most recognizable to readers. When members of your email list have the option to reply and know that an actual person will be reading it, the knowledge that they have a voice in your business will give them extra confidence in your brand. If you implement any changes or features suggested by readers, mention them in future newsletters to further validate the relationship.

Secret #7 – Focus on Their Interests, Not Your Products

A study on email marketing completed by DoubleClick found that subscribers’ “likeliness to respond to permission-based email was most increased by content based on specified interests (72%), while 68% cited relevance. Recipients clearly desire to state their preferences.” Giving members of your email list opportunities to state their preferences is a smart marketing move that creates a domino effect: When your readers give you feedback, you’re able to provide targeted content that boosts reader engagement, which helps recipients get into the habit of opening your messages because you offer interesting and relevant information, which in turn makes you — you guessed it — a trusted sender.

So take advantage of this two-way communication method; you obviously want to offer quality content in your emails, but if you're not also gathering information about what your subscribers think and want, you're missing out on a valuable line of shared communication directly with your readers. So if you want to know what your customers want out of their subscriptions, or how to make your newsletter more effective, simply ask them. Everyone likes a good listener; you can be that in your email campaign by providing your subscribers with opportunities for feedback.

Secret #8 – Don't Abuse the Power

Once you have established a level of trust and confidence with your readers, you need to carefully cultivate that relationship and make sure to avoid actions that might threaten it. Having access to someone's inbox gives you entrance into a piece of their personal life, and that privilege comes with responsibility.

Even though your relationship with your subscribers is not likely to be an in-person one, some of the same pointers for success apply. Make sure to include a permission reminder within each message – something to the effect that they're receiving your emails because they signed up for them, along with an easy way to unsubscribe. Once you commit to connecting with members of your list via email, be consistent with how often you send out newsletters or other communications (more on this topic in Chapter Eight). It's polite and helps subscribers keep your brand or message top of mind.

Following are a few things to avoid that can erode the trust and confidence that marketers work so hard to build:

1. Irrelevant Content

2. **Bad Writing:** either content-wise or presentation-wise. Make sure to spell-check and proofread each message. This is a representation of you and/or your brand and it needs to be professional.
3. **Too Much Information:** the equivalent of someone “talking your ear off” on the phone. Don’t make readers hesitant to open your emails by overwhelming them with content.
4. **Broken Links**

Becoming a trusted sender enables you to form a bond with your subscribers, a relationship that extends beyond just selling that, if maintained, attracts their confidence and support and makes your messages welcome.

Chapter Three: Selling via Email

One of the most advantageous aspects of building an email list — and what makes it well worth your while — is that it becomes a permanent part of your business assets. Unlike other marketing resources, for instance social media, which is constantly changing and shifting according new trends, an email list is completely under your control. Any effort put into building your list contributes to an invaluable resource that, if maintained, will serve you for years to come, because email doesn't appear to be going anywhere any time soon. In fact, *New York Times* bestselling author and marketer extraordinaire Chris Brogan calls your inbox “the hottest social network out there.”

Why is that? Once you become a trusted source of information to members of your email list, you automatically have an audience that is highly likely to be interested in what you have to say when you get down to some serious marketing — namely, sales and product launches. Email newsletters are a great way to prime prospects and customers to purchase your product or service, contribute to your cause, or any other marketing goal you may have in mind. Part of the reason for this is email's adaptability to what marketers call the “motivating sequence.”

Secret #9 – The Magical Motivating Sequence

Author Bob Bly talks about the “motivating sequence” as a proven way to generate sales. It consists of five steps that ideally lead to a prospect completing a desired action, such as making a purchase. The sequence progresses as follows:

1. **Attention:** Your newsletter or other email communication should immediately attract the notice and interest of your readers. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, such as with an engaging subject line or opening “hook,” or with compelling imagery, especially if your message is product-focused.
2. **Problem:** If you present your company, product, or service as able to address or solve a specific problem, this gives readers a persuasive reason to buy into your message. It’s not about your product; it’s about their problems.
3. **Solution:** As an extension of the second step, specifically position your company or product as uniquely able to meet that need. Can you explain how your product will quickly and simply help them solve their problem? Do it.
4. **Proof:** How is what you’re offering better? Outline special features or show how you stack up against competitors. Use testimonials or stories to drive home the point.
5. **Call to Action:** Now that you’ve primed your readers to solve their frustrating problem, it’s time to ask them to take action and buy. More on this later.

Secret #10 – Create Buzz

Emails are especially well-suited for giving subscribers a “sneak peek” of your new product, menu, service, or whatever it is that you’re promoting. Any approach that makes your readers feel like VIPs or industry insiders is going to help build buzz.

Including an element of teasing in your emails can be highly effective. Appeal to readers' curiosity to heighten the anticipation, whether that's through your copywriting or perhaps through exciting product photography.

Secret #11 – Use the Product Launch Tactic

Now that you've got your pre-launch buzz going about your new product, it's time to use your newsletter to announce your new product or service. Though customers won't respond well to excessive messaging, email can be part of an effective online product launch and a good foundation with which to build interest. It may be tempting to think that the more messages you send out, the better the response will be, but that approach will likely be more harmful than helpful. If you leverage all of your available resources for a multi-platform launch — tying in social media sites, blogs and videos, your business or personal website, and other outlets — you can saturate the venues your prospects and customers are visiting for better exposure.

Before you even embark on your product-launching journey, you can use the connection you have with subscribers through your newsletter to gauge interest in a new product or service and find out what your customers need and want. By including surveys, Q&As, and other feedback outlets, you can utilize your newsletter as a form of market research that is extremely focused, because you're getting feedback from the people who are most likely to be your best customers.

Secret #12 – The Launch List

Consider providing a separate opt-in for people to express interest in learning more about your new product, something along the lines of "I want to learn more!" or

“Let me know when this goes live.” This is simple to do. In an email, you ask your entire “house list” if they are interested and tell them to respond by signing up for more information on a new opt-in list, which you include in the message. Then you’ll automatically have a sub-list of prospects who you know are interested in your product launch, and at whom you can direct your most targeted marketing. This list can be used for a short time, just in relation to launching your product, and then you can simply stop using it after the product is launched.

Along with the tactics mentioned above, you can leverage your messages as a pre-selling tool to build anticipation for the launch. For instance, consider writing a series of articles in the weeks leading up to the launch that cover topics related to your product or service. If you make your content easy to share, your most supportive subscribers and customers — your own “brand ambassadors,” so to speak — can spread the word in their own social networks and help escalate the excitement.

Secret #13 – Emotional Trigger: Scarcity

Another effective strategy to employ as your launch date approaches is to present a limited time or limited quantity introductory offer, such as a promotional discount or product sample. Create a sense of urgency and give your readers a compelling reason to take advantage of your offer while it lasts. Using scarcity as a sales tactic is a powerful motivator. Do it ethically, and figure out ways that make sense, so people don’t feel manipulated. But do it.

Secret #14 – Emotional Trigger: Curiosity

The marketing power of a sneak peek is pretty huge. Sometimes people buy your products just to see what it is all about. People are very curious by nature. You can use the power of curiosity to both attract new prospects and help existing customers get excited about your product.

If you employ some strategic planning and few smart marketing moves leading up to your launch, auction, or sale announcement, then you'll likely reap the benefits of a robust response.

Chapter Four: Bribes

While you should probably think twice about bribing your spouse, kids, or boss to do something for you, it's okay to bribe your subscribers. Really. Email marketers often employ what's called an "ethical bribe" to attract more people to sign up for their newsletters, and you can do the same thing to grow your own email list.

Secret #15 – A Powerful Ethical Bribe

Technically, all the Agora model entails is offering a free downloadable item as an incentive to sign up for your email list. It needs to be something that will appeal to your target market. But as a marketer, you can get creative with this and offer things that are very attractive as a premium free item in exchange for a prospect's email address.

We mentioned this tactic in Chapter Two in our discussion of the Agora/Organic Model's approach to email marketing. As a tried-and-true technique that is highly likely to give you more exposure and boost your number of subscriptions, an ethical bribe combines smart marketing with the drawing power of "free" to capitalize on people's desire for a bargain.

Secret #16 – Go for Viral Sharing

It seems like virality has become the holy grail of Internet marketing. "Going viral" has become synonymous with publicity, fame, success, wealth, and other related ideas that millions of YouTube video creators and bloggers dream of achieving. But for our purposes, we're going to take a quick look at viral sharing. Connecting some sort of

freebie to your newsletter opt-in has the potential to draw in more subscribers than you might think, especially when you offer an item for free that many people (and their friends) might want.

When a prospect decides to download your free offer and thereby join your list of subscribers, you potentially have access to that person's whole social network as additional prospects. How does that work? Well, free items (as well as discounts and other special offers) have enormous appeal.

According to Bob Bly, the author of more than 75 books, including *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Direct Marketing*, shared a study in his "What's Working in Email Marketing Today?" webinar that states that about 81% of people will pass on emails that contain special offers to their friends and other people who are part of their network. So make sure your sign-up offer is easy to share via email and social media, perhaps with a built-in message from the sender such as: "I just got [this awesome free thing] when I signed up for [your name or company's] newsletter" that links back to your sign-up form.

Secret #17 – Use Creative Offer Ideas

Be creative when coming up with your own free offer. Really your only limit is that it needs to be digital/downloadable. However, do make sure that your offer is closely related to your product or service, so you're actually attracting interested prospects, rather than just people looking for a handout. You're the one who's going to know best what types of items will be appealing to your prospects or in your industry, but here are a few ideas to get you thinking.

- E-book (or even an excerpt from an upcoming book to “whet their whistles” to purchase it later)
- Infographic
- Software or service trial
- Video
- Webinar
- Podcast
- Interview with an expert or “celebrity” in your field (could be audio, video, or written)
- Digital product (an example of something you’re actually selling online), like in the case of Liberty Jane Clothing offering two free digital patterns
- Entrance into a sweepstakes or giveaway contest (that way you can offer a single, more valuable product to the winner rather than multiple copies of something to each subscriber, though this option likely won’t be as attractive to as many people). This could be, for example, you offering do a one-hour consult for free once a month, by picking a name off of your email list.
- Ticket to an event

Secret #18 – Freemium Solutions Are Better Than Free Information

Entrepreneurship expert Evan Carmichael suggests that you can leverage your ethical bribe as more than just a giveaway (as powerful as that is) to position your offer as a solution to a problem. We mentioned this in Chapter Two as a key part of the motivating sequence. To do this, he suggests identifying a problem or common question

in your target market and providing a product that addresses it, using keywords that prospects might use when searching for a solution.

Some examples might be a tutorial or checklist that walks subscribers through how to complete a task, an industry-related guide or compilation of expert tips presented as a short PDF, or a virtual “rolodex” of recommended resources. Whatever the item, it should have a high-perceived value (high enough that prospects would be willing to pay for it) so that giving it away for free seems like a highly attractive offer.

When your ethical bribe is both high quality as well as practical or useful for your target market, this approach helps to avoid the problem of people signing up just to get the freebie, and then immediately opting out of your newsletter. It’s okay to share some industry secrets and solutions because, as an expert in your field, what you’re offering now should only be a small sample of the wealth of information you’re ready to share — and that subscribers can look forward to receiving through your future email communications.

Secret #19 – Put the Premium in Freemium

Of course, offering a free solution makes the next step in the sales cycle very easy. Simply position a second tier product as the next-level upgrade. Present this paid version as the logical next step that offers more benefits. This is the "premium" in the "freemium" concept. The trick is finding the balance between fully satisfying consumers’ needs with the free version (which is a mistake that will lead to no sales), and not frustrating them in the process. If you offer a free solution that doesn't go far enough toward solving the customer’s problem, then they might feel you haven't helped them

and they'll move on to someone else. The goal is simple: You want to maximize the number of people who will move on to your premium service or product.

Secret #20 – Promote Your Free Solution

After you've chosen what you're going to use for your sign-up incentive, it's time to promote it, maximizing your exposure and number of sign-ups. Here are a few ideas on how and where you can advertise your offer:

- **With a targeted, self-explanatory domain name:** Having a domain that is related to your item and that is easy to read (rather than long and convoluted like many URLs) will be easier to find online, as well as easier to advertise. You can even set it up to automatically link to the opt-in page on your main website.
- **In-person:** When mingling at networking events or in other appropriate situations, simply mention your offer in conversation. This is where having a simple and specific domain name that people can easily write down will come in handy. Also consider printing the URL and a brief description of the item on the back of your business card.
- **As a “signature”:** Many online communication methods allow you to include a “signature” at the bottom of your message. Emails, forums, blog comments, and other venues often have a place where you can enter a URL that links to your offer, which will be tastefully included whenever you use these outlets.
- **In your social media profiles:** Instead of using your main website address in your profile, try using your new domain instead, which (as mentioned earlier) can forward visitors to your main site anyways.

- In the obvious place: At the risk of eliciting a “no, duh” response, don’t forget to advertise your free offer in a prominent spot on your primary website. Try using a floating or pop-up style ad for extra attention.

Secret #21 – Give Away Your Free Solution

Another powerful way to build your list quickly is to offer your free gift to other marketers as a way for them to serve their customers and prospects. If they send a message to their house list that drives traffic to your opt-in page as a way to get the free item, then you’ve just benefited enormously from their help. You’ll get many names added to your list quickly.

Don’t think they’ll go for it? Then offer two methods that are win-win. First, offer to reciprocate and promote their free item to your list. Second, just give them the free digital item directly and let them send it out to their list. You won’t get the opt-in boost to your own list, but all of the prospects that receive the information will be exposed to you and your message.

Secret #22 – Brand Your Free Solution Effectively

Assume that people are going to share your ethical bribe with other people — consider it free advertising. To take advantage of this free viral advertising, ensure that your ethical bribe is well branded. Make sure that as a digital document or product, it does a very good job of selling you and your services or products. Don’t make it a sales job that will frustrate the recipients, but do include all the key information about your business that people will need to know in order to find you and follow you. You can even have a message that says, “Did you receive this e-book (or whatever the item is) from a

friend? Then don't forget to sign up for more great information from us at [insert website address].”

Bottom line, the more you sell your free ethical bribe, the more you build your email list and your ability to sell product or services to qualified prospects.

Chapter Five: Cross-Subsidy Marketing

There is an economic concept known as a "cross-subsidy" — have you heard of it? According to *Barron's Accounting Dictionary*, it is "the improper assignment of costs among objects such that certain objects are overcosted while other cost objects are undercosted."

I know, it sounds like accounting gibberish, but let me explain it simply: If you have a good collection of digital products, then one of the most simple email marketing tactics you can use to sell new products is giving away one thing for free (a digital item) in exchange for people buying another thing (your new product).

In simple email marketing terms, you offer buyers something for free if they'll buy your new product. And the beautiful part is that if the thing you offer them for free costs you nothing (because it is a digitally delivered item, but has a high perceived value), then the selling is easy and the customer is happy to buy.

Secret #23 – Strategic Cross-Subsidies

Creating a strategic cross-subsidy sounds complex, but it's not. It's very simple. Here is an example that explains how it works.

We launched the paperback version of *Craft Business Power* several months after the e-book version. We got it all ready to sell and we placed it on Amazon. No one knew about it and it languished with few sales. It was somewhere in the 550,000th place in terms of Amazon bestsellers, which means it was totally unpopular. So we included a

special offer in our weekly newsletter that we send to our house list of roughly 26,000 people. The special offer said something like this:

Free Patterns Coupon – Limited Time Offer: *We are excited to announce the launch of our bestselling e-book Craft Business Power as a real paperback book. Many of you have asked about it and we're thrilled that it is now available on Amazon as a 'real' product. As a special gift, if you buy it this weekend and forward your receipt to [our support email address], Cammie will issue you a coupon good for \$12.00 of free patterns from [our website]. Help us make it a bestseller and snag your coupon today. [link to book on Amazon]*

See what we did there? We offered \$12 worth of our digitally downloadable patterns for people who would buy our book on Amazon. We also used a “limited time offer” approach that made people want to act quickly. Because what we gave away was digital, it cost us nothing other than the time it took our support person, Cammie, to fulfill the coupon requests. This cross-subsidy made buying our book on Amazon a no-brainer and it leveraged our email list effectively with a win-win solution.

The result? Many people took us up on this offer and our paperback book jumped from #550,000 to number #1,900 in all books over the course of the weekend. That is an incredible jump. That one simple email with the cross-subsidy approach made our new paperback book a bestseller in the Web Marketing category. It has remained a top seller ever since.

Chapter Six: Style Points

Let's talk about the writing process. Don't worry — you don't have to be Ernest Hemingway to create extremely effective email newsletters and other messages. This chapter will help get you on track quickly and easily. But before we get down to specifics, let's take a quick look at your basic approach to writing email communications.

Secret #24 – Use a Friendly, Informal Tone

You may be tired of hearing it by now, but it's worth repeating: your goal is to develop a trusted relationship with your subscribers. And it helps if the tone of your emails is friendly and conversational. Your e-newsletters really shouldn't come across as one-sided — you don't want to alienate your readers; you want to engage them and make them feel valued. So your tone doesn't have to be formal, dry, and void of personality to still come across as professional.

On the other hand, don't fall prey the temptation to go to the other extreme and overdo it on the personality, making your email communications all about you. If you've ever read this type of "Me-Newsletter," you know it can be, well, if not annoying, then at least not very helpful. Chances are, your readers don't really want to hear all about you, unless you happen to be a very well known leader in your industry. Instead, think of your newsletter as a mini-magazine that has a specific topic written for a specific audience.

It's likely that many of your subscribers have signed up for your newsletter because they like you and want to learn from you, or at least they like what they've seen

of you and/or your work online. For that reason, a more personal, “insider” approach is often effective. Overall, opt for a normal, conversational tone and a friendly, engaging style for maximum readership. When you write in first person (I, me, my) about things you actually care about, that enthusiasm and emotion will come through and make for an interesting read, keeping subscribers opening those emails.

Secret #25 – Use the Newsletter Format

In a newsletter format, you’ll use templates to create a nice-looking newsletter. This is great for businesses. Email providers generally have lots of templates to choose from for creating your newsletter format. Then after you’ve created it once, you can simply duplicate the first newsletter, modify the content, and send out the second newsletter. So the process is a bit of work to set up, but becomes easy after the first newsletter is done.

Secret #26 – Also Use the Simple Text Format

When using a simple text format, you’ll send an email that looks just like a regular email message. You simply format it with an introductory greeting, such as “Dear newsletter subscribers,” and then proceed with a few brief paragraphs of text.

Secret #27 – Always Use HTML Formatting

Email providers allow you to send simple text emails without any HTML formatting. That is a mistake. The reason you want to always use HTML formatting, even if you’re sending a simple text email, is so that you can monitor results, such as click-through rates.

Both formats have their uses. Plain text emails have a personal, written-out feel, like a normal email you might get from a family member or friend. It may be more appropriate if imagery is not important with your particular topic or if your product is not a very visual one. A text-based newsletter may also be more appealing to an audience comprised mainly of information seekers — people who just want a straightforward presentation without any bells and whistles.

HTML, on the other hand, is well suited for branding and visual representation, and is commonly used by businesses. If you're looking for the best of both worlds, a third option is text in an HTML shell. This format looks like plain text, but acts like HTML and can be tracked like HTML, allowing for decorative fonts and graphics.

Secret #28 – MailChimp a Good Beginning Provider

This e-book isn't about the technical aspects of using an email service provider, but you do need to find a company to use for your email marketing efforts. We've tried several, and if you're just starting out, then we recommend MailChimp. It has a huge selection of educational tools available as downloadable PDFs and does a good job of making things simple.

The great part about MailChimp is that its services are totally free up to your first 2,000 subscribers, so it's a good option if you're just starting out. No, we aren't an affiliate for them or anything like that — we are giving you an honest recommendation based on our experience. We have our large house list managed by Constant Contact, and our smaller lists for various purposes on MailChimp. We think MailChimp is better for new email marketers.

Secret #29 – Easy Reading for Skimmers

It's important to keep in mind that reading online or on a digital device is different than reading, say, a book or a magazine. When you're planning the layout and presentation of your e-newsletter, you'll want your message to be easy to read and your most important points to be immediately visible. Most people, especially those who spend a lot of time browsing and reading on the Internet, have become accustomed to "surfing and scanning" – quickly skimming through text to see if they can find what they want. If they can't find it quickly and easily, they're likely to move on to something else. You don't want that to happen with your newsletter. So read on for some tips and features you can implement to give your presentations as much impact as possible.

- **Lists and Bullets:** These and other similar features can help visually separate information for easy reading, as well as make important points stand out.
- **Headings and Subheadings:** Short, informative descriptions of the different points or topics in your newsletter will make it immediately clear what's in your message and help readers find information quickly and easily.
- **Concise Paragraphs:** Making your paragraphs short and sweet will increase the likelihood that readers will stick with your message all the way through (no one likes the endless clicking/scrolling and eyestrain that go along with long emails).
- **Links:** Instead of lengthening your newsletter to fit in more information, try linking to pages on your website or other resources. If you find it necessary to write a long newsletter, you could even include a "read more" link to the complete version of the message.

- **One Idea:** Readers won't be motivated to engage with your message if it's all over the place. Try to focus each newsletter on one central idea. You don't have to fit everything you have to say in one email; put aside some ideas for future newsletters.

Above all, simplify as much as you can. Your newsletter is competing for your reader's short attention span among dozens of other emails, so keep it informative and engaging, but to the point.

Secret #30 – Leverage Every Part

Emails are made up of more than just the body of the email. Every individual part, no matter how small — from the subject and from lines to the title and first sentence — play a part in how subscribers receive and react to your message. Let's break down the anatomy of an email and look at some effective strategies:

1. *Subject Line.* This is what most people will look at first. What it says will likely determine whether someone will even open your email. So how do you come up with a killer subject line?
 - Keep it short: under 40 characters
 - Follow the 4 U's: hit each one of the following four characteristics for a strong subject line — urgent, unique, ultra-specific, and useful
 - Use trigger words: “free” and other selling words can be highly effective, but can also increase spam filtering, so use at your own risk
2. *From Line.* We've discussed this briefly already in another chapter, but to reinforce, the from line should be clear, not confusing — you don't want readers not opening your messages because they don't recognize who it's from. Use whatever name

is most familiar and recognizable, whether that's your personal or business name. And like the subject line, keep it short.

3. *Headline/Title.* Similar to the subject line but inside the email, your headline should immediately grab the attention of your readers and make them want to read the rest of the newsletter. Is there a compelling point or takeaway you want to communicate? A special offer or promotion? Like any good newspaper journalist, you should give some time and thought to create a captivating headline.

4. *Lead-In Sentence.* We can take a few pointers from newspapers here, too. Your first sentence (or in journalism, the "hook") may be the most important part of your newsletter. It can make or break the rest of the message. If readers don't like or can't relate to what you have to say right off, they may just delete your message. So as a kind of extension of the headline, you want to simultaneously catch readers' attention and motivate them to read on.

5. *Margins.* This part of the email doesn't involve writing, but is still important. Appropriately sized margins help an email not feel cluttered or crowded (or, alternatively, too empty). Especially if you're using sidebars, photos, or other additional design elements, make sure everything is spaced out evenly so the eye can travel easily from one part to another.

6. *Opt-Out.* Don't forget the all-important option to unsubscribe. Not only is it a legal requirement, but also it gives you the opportunity to find out why people are opting out. If you have the capability, include a form or other tool for people to say why they're unsubscribing. Their answers may help you avoid losing other members of your list in the future.

Secret #31 – Write Interesting Stories, Humor, or Sage Advice

If you're at a loss for how to fill your newsletter, try looking at it from a different perspective. Make your email more interesting by including either a story, a funny anecdote, or an interesting business concept that is presented uniquely. The story can be personal, and ideally it will have a business-related or other helpful lesson.

Things that might be obvious to you as a professional in your industry, or that you take for granted, might be revelations to your readers — you likely already have a wealth of content right at your fingertips by simply drawing from your own experiences. Remember, most of your readers are novices compared to you, so use that to your advantage to bridge the gap to capture their interest in learning more. A focus on educating (in an interesting way, of course) about your product or service rather than hard selling makes you more accessible and garners more business in the long run.

Still stumped? Sit down and brainstorm all of the questions you can think of that people might have about your business. What have customers, prospects, colleagues, friends, and relatives asked about in the past? What do people want to know the most? And how can you offer an insider's perspective? The answers to these types of questions will help you fill your newsletters. Make sure to keep a list saved somewhere to keep track of ideas for future reference.

If you want to do a more frequent newsletter, maybe a daily or weekly, you can give yourself a break by supplementing your own writing with outside information. You can link to helpful articles and resources, or share snippets of helpful information that you've run across in the body of your email. Another option is to republish articles with permission, making sure to give credit where credit is due.

Secret #32 – Create Win-Win Scenarios

The best type of marketing creates win-win scenarios that leave everyone feeling very happy with the outcome. Your job as a marketer is to figure out how to create those win-win situations. Let's look at an example that has allowed us here at Liberty Jane to become Amazon #1 best-selling authors.

When we released *Craft Business Power* as an e-book on Amazon, we deployed several strategies that we learned from Guy Kawasaki. One of those strategies was that we signed up for the Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) Select program as we set up our e-book up on the Amazon KDP site. It's free and it allows you to list your book as a free item for five days every 90 days. Why would you do that? Because making an already good e-book free for a limited time allows it to skyrocket up the free kindle e-books charts and gain lots of exposure.

But we took this concept a step further, using our email marketing skills to create a win-win for all involved. Here is how we did it.

To effectively serve our subscribers and leverage the strength of our list, we sent a simple email to them the day before the new e-book went live. The email went to our Liberty Jane Partners list of roughly 1,250 people (not a huge list by any stretch of the imagination). The email said something like this:

Dear Craft Business Partners,

*We are working hard to find ways to help you grow your business and we're excited about our new e-book, *Craft Business Power*, which is being launched tomorrow on Amazon. We wrote it for you. And the best part is — it will be free for the first 24 hours. Please do us a huge favor and pick up a free copy, tell your friends, and*

if you like it, leave a great review. We hope you enjoy it; we are here for you. Here is the link...

What happened? The volume of free downloads generated by this simple email skyrocketed it to #123 in all free Kindle e-books. That is a big achievement that allowed literally thousands of people to be exposed to our e-book. It was #1 in many of the free categories, including E-commerce and Web Marketing.

The momentum we created with this email helped carry the book up the charts. Then, buyers' favorable reviews encouraged other people to pick up a copy. After the first day, the book reverted back to \$2.99, its normal price. The buzz and social sharing that occurred on the first day created lots of buying on the second day. The book jumped to #1 in the "normal" (i.e. "paid") E-commerce and Web Marketing categories. We became legitimate Amazon #1 bestselling authors in these categories simply by serving our customers and prospects well. Everyone was happy and our brand was extended in new and exciting ways.

Chapter Seven: Figuring Out Frequency

By now, you're probably realizing that creating and maintaining an email list is a commitment, not only in continually building your list, but also in keeping up a consistent schedule in sending out your newsletter. But, as with any new venture, you may be wondering just exactly what you're in for. Well, that's kind of up to you and what you think will be received most positively by your subscribers.

Secret #33 – Test the Frequency

Your mailing schedule could be daily, weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, or something else, but choosing how frequently you're going to send out your email communications is another important part of building trust with your readers. While it's ultimately up to you to decide with what frequency you need to email your subscribers, in this chapter we'll look at a few different strategies and options.

Although email is a great marketing tool to reach prospects and customers, don't abuse your subscribers' trust by: 1) not providing useful content, or 2) overwhelming them with too many messages. It may seem obvious, but a good rule of thumb is "only send if you have something to say." Readers are letting you into their inboxes because they expect interesting and helpful content. If you can't deliver what your subscribers are signed up to receive, perhaps it's time to reconsider your mailing frequency. If, for example, you can't curate enough unique content to fill a weekly newsletter, switch to a monthly. In any case, once you commit to a regular schedule, stick to it — your readers will appreciate it.

If you call your newsletter the “Hourly Updates from Warren,” then people should expect an email every hour. Fair enough. If you’re Warren Buffett, you’ll probably get millions of people happily signing up. But most of us don’t have that kind of brand power.

But how do you know what your readers will tolerate as to the frequency with which they receive emails? One way to find out is to run some tests. You can test for frequency and even time of day to find the most effective practices for your email campaigns.

How do you know what works? By studying your email metrics (such as open rates, opt-out rates, and click-through rates, which we’ll discuss in the next chapter), you’ll have some clue as to how your subscribers react to different sending frequencies. If you send a message each day for five days with good open rates, and no one opts-out, then obviously your list is telling you they approve of the new frequency. Your target market might love receiving a short daily email filled with helpful tips. You never know unless you take your mailing schedule for a test run.

Secret #34 – Track Your Slots

Don’t worry; no gambling involved here. The idea of slotting your emails comes from marketing expert Bob Bly (whose wisdom we’ve drawn from before) and involves connecting frequency with revenue to gain a new perspective on how often you send out your email communications. Any email marketer has a limited number of “slots,” or opportunities, to send out emails. Once you figure out what your own subscribers will tolerate as to frequency, you will be able to determine how many slots you have. For example, if you send out a monthly newsletter with occasional other marketing

communications, your maximum number of email opportunities might be twice a week, or 104 per year. If your list will accept a daily email, then you have roughly 365 slots per year.

Secret #35 – Optimize Your Slots

Now let's take this a step further. Let's say you are currently sending a newsletter every Friday, and the typical result is \$200 in sales. Over the course of a year, that's \$10,400 per year from your email marketing efforts.

But if you test your frequency and find that your list will accept another message on Wednesday, maybe written in a plain text style, then you've doubled your number of slots. If you can maintain the average of \$200 per email, then your revenue will jump to \$20,800 per year. This change in your results will be magnified further if your list grows over the course of the year. It will also be magnified further as you determine how to increase your revenue per email from \$200 to a higher amount.

Secret #36 – Selling Versus Bonding

Your sales-specific emails (often called "blasts") may need their own frequency — you don't want to spoil your relationship with subscribers by making them feel like you're constantly trying to sell them something. Online marketing consultant Andrew Palmer offers this advice:

There is a point of sending too much, yes, but it varies based on the niche, the relationship, and the content of the dedicated mailings. If the offer is relevant to the list and can be seen as helpful, and a good relationship exists already with the subscribers, then you can be more aggressive. But if the e-newsletter is monthly,

the relationship is not as strong, so sending a solo sales e-mail every day is out. Even once a week might be a bit too aggressive. Twice a month is more reasonable.

If you want to increase your number of strictly sales emails, you'll have to also increase your number of non-sales emails (usually newsletters) to make the ratio proportionate. So work to consider how to weave your messages together over the course of the year.

Secret #37 – Use the 80-10-5-5 Method

Consider using this type of content ratio to mix things up and keep your list happy:

- 80% helpful teaching that positions you as an expert and gently offers a product for sale at the end of the message — maybe via the Ps. This should be a soft sell at the end of a helpful email message.
- 10% pure sales messages that ask pointedly for a fast-acting response. This might be in combination with a new product launch. If done well, people will consider it a win-win.
- 5% that are simply personal or humorous and allow people to bond with you.
- 5% that give your list an opportunity to speak via polls, surveys, or related feedback methods.

Secret #38 – Monitor the Opt-Outs

You should always keep an eye on your number of opt-outs. People vote with their feet, and if they walk out and leave, you know you've got a problem.

If you want to increase your frequency but start to get complaints from subscribers, you could also try alternating your marketing messages with “editorial” emails — messages that have useful content (perhaps your professional opinion or advice), but are related to your product or service and could ultimately lead to a sale.

Achieving the delicate balance of content and frequency will look different for everyone, depending on your industry or niche, target market, and more. Try implementing some tests along with the tips in this chapter to find the optimal schedule for you and your customers.

Chapter Eight: Strategies for Effective Open and Click-Through Rates

Open rates and click-through rates are just marketing jargon for terms that help you figure out whether your email campaign is reaching its maximum potential. Most email providers offer analytics tools that help you monitor these two statistics, which simply track how many people open your messages and what parts of the email (that include clickable links) people click on.

Secret #39 – Making Friends with Mobile

A basic concept to keep in mind when considering how to give your messages the best exposure is how subscribers are going to be reading them — and, increasingly, that's via mobile phone and other mobile devices, such as tablets. Not having an email template that is mobile-friendly could cause you to lose many of your valued readers, or at least discourage subscribers from engaging with your messages.

A study by ReturnPath revealed that, year-over-year (March 2011 to March 2012), email opens on mobile devices grew by 82.4% and are on track to surpass both desktop and web mail views by midyear. That's huge. The study also indicated that 63% of Americans and 41% of Europeans would either automatically close or just delete an email that's not optimized for mobile devices. So if you're going to keep up with your readers and their preferences, you need to jump on the mobile bandwagon, because that's the way email marketing is heading, and quickly.

Secret #40 – Master Open Rates

Open rates are not the ultimate indicator of the success of your email campaign, but it's good to keep an eye on them, as they can potentially help you tailor your content and presentation to be more effective. Open rates are tracked by a small invisible image that is part of every email, and that is downloaded whenever a reader opens up a message. However, keep in mind that this tracking method isn't 100% accurate because some email programs automatically block images, and some users choose not to let images display.

Typical open rates vary according to industry, but generally fall somewhere between 17% and 28%. That may seem low, but keep in mind that you do have a margin of error and that "bounces" (which we'll get to in a minute) are normal and expected. Plus, it should be your goal to constantly beat your own open rate record by experimenting with new and better approaches to your subject line, content, send time, etc. Following are a few components to consider when forming your own strategies for gaining optimal open rates:

- **Subject Line:** Are you communicating what's inside the email in a compelling way? The subject line is the first thing that subscribers see and is key in their decision to open your message or not.
- **Targeted Content:** Look at what types of content are getting high open rates and tailor your messaging fit your readers' needs and interests.
- **Follow-Through:** Are you delivering on what you committed to provide for subscribers in the first place? Your content should be purposeful, useful, and focused.

- **Engagement:** Determine who your inactive subscribers are (those who haven't opened an email in several months) and create a re-engagement campaign especially for them, or eliminate them from your list.

While it might be nice to think that everyone who receives your emails will be happy to see them in their inbox and read them enthusiastically, it's important to keep a realistic view of what kind of reception your email campaign is getting from subscribers. One way to do this is to periodically check your bounce and unsubscribe rates. Bounces are emails that don't reach their intended recipients — this could be due to an inactive address, typo, or glitch. Also, try not to be too discouraged when readers unsubscribe from your mailing list. A low and steady unsubscription rate is perfectly normal and provides you with good motivation for constantly working to build your email list. However, be aware that a spike in your number of unsubscribers could indicate an ineffective change in content or frequency.

Secret #41 – Responsive Is Better Than Big

Because you're paying an email service provider, such as MailChimp or Constant Contact, based on the number of email accounts you have on your list, it's better to have a smaller list of responsive people than a large list of unresponsive people. For example, if you have 100,000 names on your list but your open rate is only 10% on average, then you're really only engaging with 10,000 people while paying to maintain a much larger list. If you only have 50,000 names but have an average open rate of 20%, then you're achieving the same result. You're only engaging with 10,000 people, but you're paying your email service provider for maintaining a list of 50,000 names instead of 10,000. So aim for high-quality, responsive list members.

Secret #42 – Create Your Own Hell Week

One way to keep your list smaller and more responsive is to put new list subscribers through what Bob Bly calls “The Gauntlet.” How do you do that? Think of it as similar to “Hell Week” at the Marine Corps boot camp. The goal of Hell Week is to get recruits to drop out if they aren’t totally dedicated.

You can create this same type of situation very easily by setting up a series of automatically delivered messages, called an auto-responder series, that is delivered daily for the first week that the new person is on your list. These messages should be very well written and very encouraging. The messages might be structured like this:

- Day One: Welcome Email. This message welcomes them to your newsletter list and lets them know that for the next week, you’ll be sending them a series of “special notes” explaining more about you and providing an orientation to your company.
- Day Two: This special note might include the founding story of your company.
- Day Three: This special note might include information about your primary product or service.
- Day Four: This special note might include information about your team and your unique qualifications.
- Day Five: This special note might include a note about your mission, vision, and values.
- Day Six: This special note might include a message about your annual sales and special offers, so people know when you put items on sale and how you approach discounts.

- Day Seven: This special note might include a surprise reward or coupon as a “prize” for sticking it out and surviving Hell Week, although you wouldn’t describe it that way. Nor would you ever describe these messages negatively to your email list participants. In other words, don’t call this “Hell Week” to your list participants — that would be dumb. You just do it, and the result is very natural.

What’s the result?

The result of this is simple. People who don’t want to know that much about you and aren’t that interested will opt-out. That’s the goal. You want people to opt-out of your list.

Then you’ll be left with people who are truly interested, and truly willing to receive a lot of emails from you and open them. And if they open the email on day seven, then they’ll realize that sometimes your emails contain special coupons or promotions — and, in turn, that reinforces the idea that they should open your emails when they receive them.

This will keep your list small and responsive. And having your email list small and responsive will keep costs down and open rates high. It will help you immensely.

Secret #43 – Leverage the Auto-Responder System

Creating your Hell Week is an example of using an auto-responder effectively. An auto-responder series is a tool that almost all email service providers have available. Your use of those automatically delivered messages is totally up to you. The beauty is that you write the messages one time, and they are automatically sent to new list subscribers on a set schedule. Some email service providers cap the number you can send, but many don’t. Whatever they let you set up, you should consider using.

Secret #44 - Click-Through Rates

Click-through reports are another tool that can help you to create messages that are even more customized and targeted. Why is that? As we mentioned briefly at the beginning of this chapter, they give you the unique ability to see what parts of your emails that include links resonate the most with your readers. Another benefit is that if you link to social media sites or sharing options, you get a glimpse into which sites your messages are being shared to, as well as which sites your readers are the most active on. These clues can help you expand your distribution and refine your social media marketing strategies.

Also, if you're concerned about the length of your newsletter (especially for those reading on a mobile device), send a shortened version and link to a complete web version of the message on your website. This is convenient for those who want to bookmark it or read it later, and is also helpful for sharing purposes.

Don't be too worried about including too many links in your messages. You can link to your website or blog, social media outlets, related resources or articles (your own or someone else's), videos, or any online content you think might interest your readers. In fact, studies have shown that multiple links placed throughout an email can increase click-through rates dramatically.

Chapter Nine: Social Media Integration

Leveraging social media to grow your email list is a wise thing to do. Some social media platforms are better than others for this activity. The best social media platform for getting lots of new email addresses is Facebook.

Secret #45 - Getting Sign-Ups via Facebook

We didn't write this to be a technical book, but since we won the Constant Contact All-Star award for Facebook integration, we figured we'd share the steps involved. Each of these steps is simple to do, and if you're not familiar with them, you can simply Google it. It's really a very simple process that anyone can repeat if you're a Constant Contact customer. I'd imagine this would work for other email marketing service providers as well if they have a Facebook integration tool. The steps involved are:

1. Set up your Facebook fan page.
2. Create a tab and install the Constant Contact "Join My Mailing List" tool.
3. Set up your fan page so that new visitors (who aren't fans) land on the "Join My Mailing List" tab as the default first page.
4. Place a nice image on that page offering your ethical bribe along with the "Join My Mailing List" box where visitors can enter their email addresses.
5. Just above the email box, type a message that says something like, "Be sure to like my page and sign up for my newsletter to receive [insert title of free gift]."
6. Advertise your fan page on Facebook. Remember, no visitors will go to your email opt-in tab as the default first page, so this is the first thing they'll see.

7. Spend as much on advertising as you want, realizing that you're not only getting more Facebook fans, but you're also getting many of them to join your mailing list.

This is the strategy we used in January to add 2,395 new names to our mailing list. You can do it, too.

Other Social Media Options

Of course, on each social media platform, you should include a written statement in your "about you" section that says something about having a free gift for everyone who joins your mailing list.

YouTube will allow you to have a clickable link in your description of new videos — be sure to add a link to your sign-up form. Most email service providers have a specific URL that they will give to you that you can use in these types of situations. So you include that URL in your description and people who click on it are taken directly to your email sign-up form.

Pinterest is a great place to have a collection of images, videos, and even a slideshare slide presentation about your free gift. Promote your free gift aggressively. Let it do the heavy lifting for you.

Always remember that social media platforms are just one more traffic option in the Agora Model — another way to drive traffic to your sign-up form. Take the time to consider how you can get traffic from each social media platform.

Conclusion: More Resources

Your learning should truly just be getting started. I hope this simple book has given you some fresh ideas related to becoming a powerful email marketer. Now you can begin to explore more options in various ways. Let me mention a few:

Secret #46 – Bob & Craig

There are two email marketers that I have followed for several years, and I frankly never get tired of opening their emails. To me, that's a good sign that they're good at what they do. The first is Bob Bly, at www.bobbly.com. I've quoted him frequently in this book and he's a great person to learn from. The second is Craig Garber, at www.kingofcopy.com. Craig is the copywriter I mentioned in the introduction, and is truly an insightful writer.

Secret #47 – MailChimp Resources

Even if you don't decide to go with MailChimp as your email service provider, you should visit their resource section and look at all their free materials. They have email related e-books for many different industries. Maybe yours is one of them.

Secret #48 – The Cautionary Secret

My final secret is a caution. Don't fall for the slick Internet marketers who are trying to sell email marketing systems for outrageously expensive prices. The most I've ever paid for any information on this topic is \$39 for Bob Bly's e-book, and it was worth it. But I wouldn't spend more than that — you just don't need to.

Secret #49 – Read Another Great Book

As you've figured out, this book is about email marketing strategy, not about the detailed steps of conducting email-marketing campaigns. But I highly recommend that you learn more about email marketing details. You'll want to get a copy of *Email Marketing Rules* by Chad White. Chad is a real professional email marketer, not a bootstrapping entrepreneur like me. So you should get his book and continue your education on this valuable topic.

Get Two Free Gifts Today

How could I possibly end this book without giving you a chance to join my mailing list? If you'd like to get updates from me about my writing and receive some great bonuses, then you're in luck. I've got two great e-books waiting for you as my free gift. The first is *Marketing on Pinterest* and the second is *Marketing on Instagram with Visual Product Launches*. Both e-books are yours for free when you sign up for my mailing list. Simply provide your email address and you'll receive the free e-books as part of the welcome email. You can sign up here: <http://eepurl.com/h6Sc6>, or at <http://www.marketingonpinterest.com> or <http://www.instagrampower.com>.

All the best on your email marketing efforts!

Jason Miles