



ULTIMATE
LIST GROWTH
GUIDE:

31 TACTICS FOR BUILDING YOUR DATABASE



SILVERPOP
An IBM® Company

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ULTIMATE LIST GROWTH GUIDE: 31 TACTICS FOR BUILDING YOUR DATABASE

New customers are the lifeblood of virtually every business. Without them, you're forced to rely on growing revenue solely from existing customers, and it becomes difficult to increase revenue to the levels required to satisfy outside investors or internal stakeholders.

In many cases, an early step in becoming a customer is opting in to receive communications from your business. The opt-in also allows you a valuable opportunity to interact following a purchase, enabling you to build loyalty and stay top of mind.

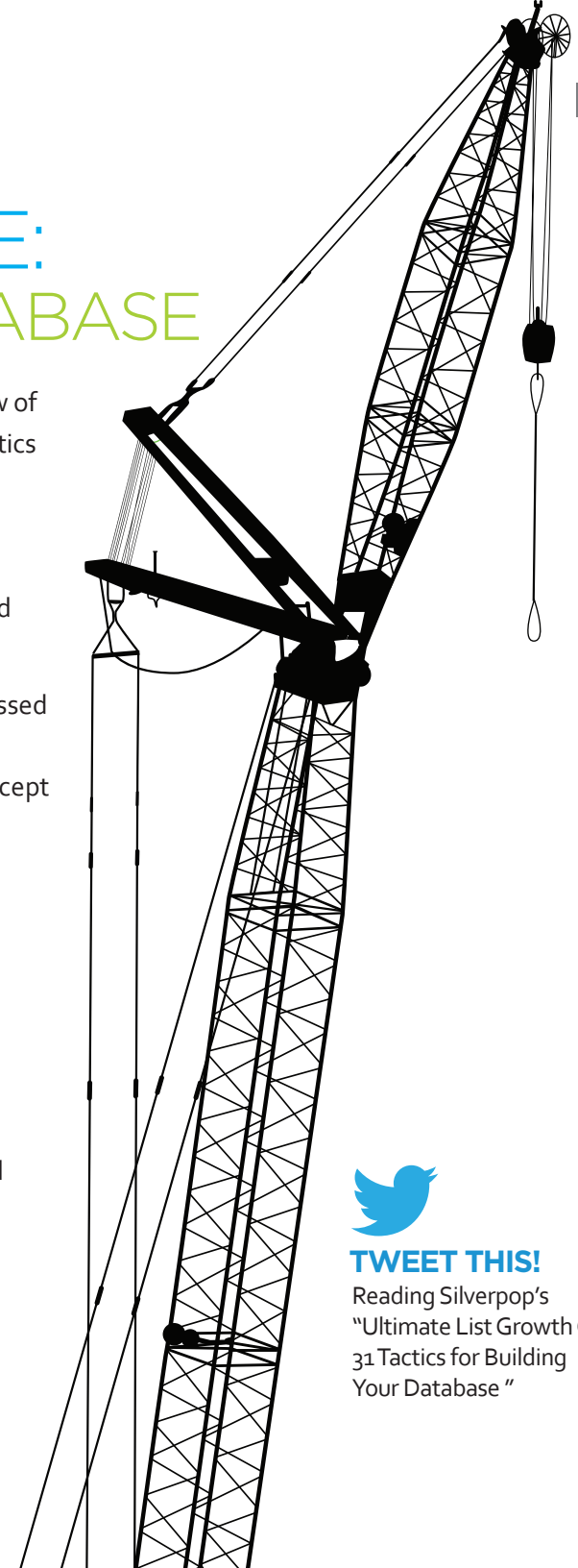
If you market to other businesses and want to grow, you may think you need to find new companies to sell to, but really you need to find new individuals who are open to hearing about your company. Those folks may be working in new companies or be additional contacts within known organizations; both types of new contacts are vital for growth.

If you are a B2C marketer, you'll need to find additional new contacts from existing market segments and also recruit new targets from adjacent demographic spaces.

This guide provides a comprehensive overview of a wide variety of marketing strategies and tactics you can employ to jump-start or expand your list growth initiatives. The principles discussed can be applied to companies that market to other businesses, those that sell directly to end consumers or both.

While there are many growth methods discussed herein, you're really only limited by your marketing creativity. Although not every concept will apply to your business, each idea should provide ideas on how you can expand your database.

Here are 31 list growth strategies and tactics for building your database, organized into five categories to reflect the myriad ways people interact with businesses in today's multichannel world: on your website, on location, via social, and via partners and third parties, plus a bonus section with more list growth ideas. Get ready to go big!



TWEET THIS!

Reading Silverpop's
"Ultimate List Growth Guide:
31 Tactics for Building
Your Database"

ON YOUR WEBSITE

1 Provide easy opt-in opportunities on your home page.

For many marketers, providing an easy opt-in on the company website is a fabulous way to capture new names for your database. Unfortunately, far too many websites don't even provide one way for a new person to come to the website and sign up to receive newsletters or promotional email, and many of those that do make the process challenging.

Usually, the home page opt-in is a general opt-in for a visitor to be included in a regular newsletter

or corporate email list. On your home page you might also have additional offers that direct visitors to specific Web forms to complete before they download specific content.

For this first opt-in, don't think that you need to capture lots of information about your new site visitor. To begin, consider only asking for critical information such as their name (maybe even only first name) and email address. You can use progressive profiling to capture additional information when this visitor comes back for subsequent visits.

2 Consider a pop-over, modal or heavy window.

A modal window (also called pop-over or heavy window) is a user interface design technique, typically used on the home page, in which the regular home page is inoperable until you fill in and submit a floating data capture form or close the window that's covering all or part of the page. When and how the pop-overs work depends on the business rules you set up.

Because it interrupts the user experience, this is an opt-in strategy that usually generates lots

3 Steps to Optimize Your Home Page Opt-In CTA

Don't hide it: Your opt-in should be easy to find and "above the fold" on your website — typically on the highest 600 pixels of your website. For many, this means near the top to the right of your company logo or along the left or right side of your hero image, lead product or content.

Get visual: Instead of just a text link to "Sign Up," "Enroll" or "Get our Newsletter" that directs visitors to another page, consider having a graphic input box iFramed right into your home page.

Think mobile: Make sure your website displays in the best way possible on a mobile device and renders well so that the site, and your opt-in "box," makes it easy for new readers to sign up right from their phones.

of debate and discussion among the marketing and IT staff (and even the executive ranks!). But if you want to get aggressive about increasing the number of opt-ins, this approach must be considered. Numerous tests by Silverpop clients have generated record numbers of new opt-ins.

3 Create a general opt-in page.

In addition to creating an easy opt-in right on your home page (see Tip #1), you'll also want to create a general opt-in page that can be used in social profiles, email signatures and general company offers or advertisements. This should be a separate page on your website with its own associated URL, which will make it easy to include an opt-in option in a project or

campaign without having to ask a teammate to create a special page for you.

On this page, make sure you're selling the visitor on the value of opting in. What will you send to them? How often will you send? How will it benefit them?

4 Create a separate opt-in page for each high-value offer.

Every product and offer doesn't necessarily need a separate opt-in form, but you should create a unique offer page for each piece of long-term, high-value content. If you use behavioral Web tracking on your site, having a unique page for this opt-in will enable you to report on how many page visits you had versus complete Web form submissions.

You can then analyze data on the percentage of form completes or submittals, and adjust the format and copy over time to raise your percentage. This approach will also allow you to easily report on content consumption.

This information could also be used as the entry point for an automated program or for segmenting your audience for future

offers. This page is also very useful for pay-per-click advertising and retargeting offers. Don't forget to capture the lead source and use the Web form functionality to record the source in a hidden field.

5 Use Webinars to build your database.

Webinars are virtual online events, primarily used by B2B marketers to nurture existing contacts and market to new potential customers. Many of the same processes that you use for in-person events (see Tip #7) can be used for Webinars. Carefully build a promotion process to allow you to advertise your Webinars not just on your website but on other sites (see Tip #23) to increase your event visibility.

6 Develop case studies.

We all love to read stories about other firms or individuals and learn how they changed or improved using a product, service, process or other approach. These types of articles are wonderful to syndicate or place on other websites.

As with the guest-posting strategy (see Tip #22), make sure you have a link to an opt-in page on your website embedded within the article or PDF.



ON LOCATION

7 Take advantage of events.

Events are a fantastic way to grow your database. For most B2B marketers, trade shows, conferences and seminars have long been a foundational marketing tactic. For B2C marketers, in-store special events, runway shows and consumer shows are great places to capture new names for your database.

At trade shows and larger conferences, the exhibition management company may provide you with scanning technology to allow you to

scan attendees' badges. Take advantage of this capability if at all possible. If event attendees don't have scanner-friendly badges, then you must have an easy way for your booth staff to capture visitor information.

Using special tablet applications for opt-ins, such as Silverpop's Pop-In iPad app, will allow you to define the specific data fields you want captured for each visitor. After the show, all of the visitor records (including your custom data fields) can be uploaded to your database.

8 Leverage QR codes where it makes sense.

QR codes are another good way to capture additional names for your database since you can print them on just about anything – though that doesn't mean you should (see: buses and billboards). Instead, consider adding QR codes to signs in your store or at your trade show booth, as well as on print collateral, spec sheets, product packaging and promotional items.

List Growth Do's and Don'ts for Events

DON'T be dependent on attendees having business cards. Few visitors remember to bring extra cards to the shows, and visitors to consumer shows are certainly not going to provide a business card for follow-up for a personal interest.

DON'T count on visitors filling out an information sheet. These information sheets create an unnecessary data-entry project that's difficult to complete once you get back to the office, plus the information is also often illegible.

DO consider equipping your event employees with iPads or Android tablets. With the right technology in place, this will allow them to capture additional information about your prospects as they converse with visitors.

DON'T measure show success by raw numbers. Be wary of overemphasizing the importance of how many total business cards have been collected or badges scanned. Many of these visitors will never be prospects for your products or services. All they do is create false expectations for success among your company.

DO stress to your event staff that you're looking for quality over quantity. Then, do yourself a favor and delete visitor records prior to merging them into your main database if the visitor will clearly never be a customer.

Any smartphone user can then scan in the QR code and be directed to an opt-in form. The QR code can link to your general opt-in page or one of your high-value offer opt-in pages. If you're selling consumer products, you can also use QR codes in the installation or setup literature you supply with products to direct new purchasers to an opt-in and product registration page.

9 Ask for email addresses at checkout.

Today's self-checkout kiosks are fully customizable so that you can easily add the ability to ask shoppers to add their email address in order to receive special offers and/or sale notices. If you don't have self-checkout, instruct your staff to ask for email addresses.

You can even launch a contest among the staff to see who can get the most sign-ups. If you employ this strategy, though, take steps to avoid abuse, such as making the contest based on deliverable email addresses only.

A related strategy is to give shoppers the option of having their receipt emailed to them. Consider putting these subscribers into a unique messaging

track that reminds them how they entered your email program and makes it easy to unsubscribe or change their preferences.

10 Use roving employees to recruit in-store visitors.

If you have a bricks-and-mortar location, consider moving beyond a point-of-purchase email capture and inviting shoppers throughout the store to subscribe to your email program.

Simply provide an iPad or other tablet to your employees and use an app like Silverpop's Pop-in to allow visitors to sign up while they browse or as they exit.

11 Promote texting to sign up.

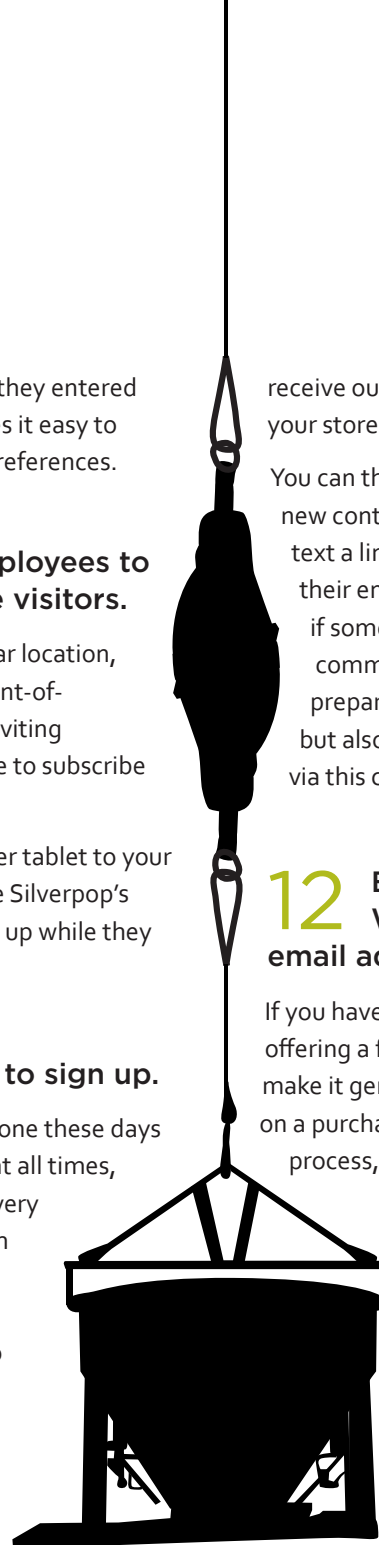
Since just about everyone these days has a mobile device on them at all times, SMS opt-in strategies can be very effective for driving list growth on location. For example, you might advertise something like, "Text SIGNUP to 12345 to

receive our latest offers" on signs in your stores.

You can then continue to market to these new contacts via SMS and/or you can text a link to an opt-in page to capture their email address. Don't be surprised if some registrants actually prefer SMS communications instead of email. Be prepared to continue the conversation, but also take care to not over-communicate via this channel.

12 Exchange your free Wi-Fi connection for email addresses.

If you have a physical location, consider offering a free Wi-Fi connection. You can make it generally open or include a passcode on a purchase receipt. As part of the sign-up process, you can include an opt-in.



VIA SOCIAL

13 Encourage sharing of emails and other content.

Most marketing automation platforms have built-in capabilities that allow email recipients to automatically forward their message to a friend or share the message across their social networks. If you have a marketing automation platform, make sure you're incorporating this capability in your emails. You can even embed sharing capabilities right into your collateral. These work automatically when someone is reading the collateral online and click on the sharing links.

The more your content is shared, the more likely your company will be introduced to people who haven't seen it before – and the more likely you'll add some new faces to your database.

14 Use Facebook forms to drive opt-ins.

The world's most popular social network can also help you grow your email list, so make sure you have an opt-in form on your corporate or brand Facebook page. This form can be created within your marketing automation platform and iFramed into a Facebook tab section. You can define the fields you want to capture and build multiple opt-in pages for multiple offers (newsletter opt-in, white paper download and more).

If you don't have a marketing automation solution, you can build your own opt-in form using Silverpop's complimentary Social Pull form builder for Facebook, which can be accessed

at socialpull.silverpop.com. If you're a B2B company and you don't think your audience is on Facebook, put an opt-in form out there anyway; you'll get a few new names, and every opt-in counts.

15 Tap Twitter to boost list growth.

Hopefully you have branded Twitter accounts for your company and perhaps even a unique Twitter account for each of your major brands. If you tweet about new content or products, make sure that the referenced link directs to a Web page that has an opt-in/sign-up section on that page in order to capture new prospect information before they get your offer.

List Growth Success Story: King Arthur Flour

A leading seller of flours, baking ingredients and culinary equipment, King Arthur Flour is always looking to grow its database of customers while retaining current ones. To that end, it encourages customers to share favorite cooking photos and advice on its social channels. And it includes helpful, educational and engaging content in its emails, such as recipes and cooking tips, in addition to sales promotions.

To further help encourage sharing of this content and expand the reach of its messages, King Arthur uses Silverpop's Share-to-Social feature in its emails. "Share-to-Social enables us to encourage customers to share our recipes on sites such as Facebook, Twitter and StumbleUpon," says Halley Silver, director of online marketing, King Arthur Flour. "Every email we send has a recipe in it, and Share-to-Social makes it easy for them to go viral."

King Arthur Flour's strong content combined with ease of sharing has helped it achieve impressive growth during the last five years, including double-digit percent increases in list size.



Also, in your Twitter bio, you can embed a 1252x626 header. This will allow you to include links to your website, which should include a great opt-in area as described in Tip #3. Plus, you can take advantage of the sidebar area and design your own expanded graphic information area. While the right and left expanded area is not clickable, you can include valuable information about the value of opting in on your website.

Finally, Twitter's recently announced Lead Generation Cards functionality is a fabulous new tool that all marketers should consider leveraging in their ad budget to drive additional list growth.

16 Add an opt-in link to your Pinterest page.

Pinterest is a visual sharing site where users share pictures and "pin" them to their defined boards. Companies should consider creating their own Pinterest boards and actively posting pictures of their products, helping bring new eyes to your website. Each pin can be described as it's added to your board.

Use this opportunity to add a link to an opt-in page in your pin description. Also, make sure you have your main page noted in your Pinterest profile as well. While the Pinterest pin and board following can be a significant benefit for B2C brands, many savvy B2B marketers have also used Pinterest to post quotes, infographics and copies of ad campaigns.

17 Link to gated and ungated content via LinkedIn.

LinkedIn has been described as "Facebook with a suit and tie," and it remains a vital social channel, particularly for B2B companies. If your organization creates content to help nurture individuals that are not ready for a sales resource, make sure you are promoting this content on LinkedIn. It can be promoted on your LinkedIn company page, and employees within the company can then repost this content into their activity feed. Along with a sentence or two about the content, you should include a shortened link that, when clicked, will take visitors to a Web form that asks them to opt-in to receive the content.

Of course, you don't need to put the opt-in form on every piece of content you offer. Links to blog posts or other introductory content can be ungated (no form completion required to access the content) in order to easily start prospect interactions.

Please note that LinkedIn is not exclusively for B2B companies and brands. It can also be used very effectively for B2C brands or corporate entities to post product announcements, videos, style news, how-to guides and more. Again, links to these assets can include an opt-in Web form that the visitor needs to complete to access the content.

18 Encourage employees to spread the word on Google+.

Google+ is another social site where people can do short-form blogging and share interesting content with people in their defined "circles." This is another social network where you'll want to have a brand and/or company presence. Also, you may have employees who are also active on Google+. Reach out to select employees who are active and equip them with links to opt-in pages that they can post on their Google+ account.

On the Google+ pages, you'll be able to post links to articles, blog posts and more. In the "Links" section of the "About" page, make sure you provide a link to allow people to access your opt-in pages described in Step #3.

19 Tap the power of YouTube.

With its video focus, YouTube provides a unique place to get the word out about your products or services. And like the other social networks listed here, you'll want to create a channel for your company and/or your brand. On this brand page, you'll be able to provide a link to allow visitors to opt in to your newsletter or marketing database.

For each video, you'll be able to create a description in the "about" area. Consider including a link to your opt-in page in this area. You can also append a message page at the end of your video that includes the opt-in page address.

VIA PARTNERS AND THIRD PARTIES

20 Expand your horizons with co-op programs.

Creating a joint campaign with a partner, association or a related brand is a wonderful way to tap into a substantial new audience that can be a boon for list growth. However, this method requires careful planning and positioning so this new audience will be receptive to communications from your company or brand, and will not be confused by your subsequent marketing efforts.

Failure to plan and manage this effort in a thoughtful way risks having your follow-on emails be reported as spam, which will impact your sending reputation and impact future email deliverability for other campaigns.

Co-op programs typically involve coming together with another organization to offer a combined solution, a co-branded product offer or a joint commentary white paper. With these programs, you'll need to decide who will do the sending. One

option is for each partner to email the offer to its own list (with the resulting leads shared). Other programs can be sent out by one organization on behalf of the partner; for example, an association can send out the offer, and responses can be sent to the partner.

To be absolutely clear to the new prospects that responded to the co-op offer, you may consider your first email to be another opt-in. Clearly state in this email that they're receiving it because

List Growth Success Story: CAMICO

CAMICO, a leading CPA professional liability insurer, was looking to increase the size of its database. As part of this effort, it partnered with an industry directory that sends out a monthly newsletter and classified ad to its list of 240,000 CPAs. CAMICO ran a classified ad in two of the directory's emails, offering a pack of letter templates in exchange for filling out a premium estimate form.

On the related landing page, CAMICO asked for 32 data points – a much higher number than what's typically considered best practice. But because the offer content was so valuable, its target audience was willing to provide the information, giving CAMICO a complete profile for these contacts.

"The first day we had more than 450 new leads, and by week three our sales pipeline was filled for the entire year," says John Reints, CAMICO's manager of digital communications and CRM. "Doing our homework on

the vendor and having the right 'carrot' – something our audience wanted – was extremely important."

After the success of this initial campaign, CAMICO worked with state CPA societies and associations to run similar initiatives – with similar degrees of success.

When these new contacts are imported into Silverpop Engage, they are dropped into one of six different messaging programs depending on the data they entered, with each program containing content tailored to the individual prospect.

For example, contacts with no prior insurance coverage are put into a nurture program that offers educational content on the importance of a CPA having professional liability insurance.

In the 10 months since it began its list growth initiative, CAMICO has increased its database by more than 3,700 contacts.



they took advantage of the co-op offer, and you're now asking them to continue to receive communications directly from you. Provide another fabulous offer and you'll be on your way to enjoying many new contacts in your database.

21 Equip others with affiliate marketing programs.

Affiliate marketing programs provide a structured way for you to pay others a commission to capture customers for you. These programs enable bloggers, independent website owners and other publishers to advertise or write about you, recommend your products or services, and link to your site to place orders. Based on this referral, you then pay a commission to the referring website or blog owner.

There are a number of affiliate payment management companies that manage the exchange of payment between you and the referring sites. Be selective about choosing affiliates you want to allow into your program. Make sure that their platform and business practices are in alignment with your strategies

and values. While these types of arrangements have typically been found in B2C and small business segments, they might be a valuable source of new customers for other brands or companies too.

22 Consider guest blog posting and other outreach content placement.

In today's vast Web world, there are lots of places where you can place content beyond your own Web and blog properties. Investigate and search for the best places outside your own sites where your potential visitors might visit to consume articles, tips and insight. Then make a plan to get your own content on those sites. At the end of the articles, there's usually room for a brief bio or company description. Within this section, include a link to the opt-in page you created in Tip #3.

23 Participate in third-party event calendars and round-ups.

Much like guest blog posting, getting your events posted on other event roundup calendars is important in expanding your

reach. These sites usually list events that would be of interest to their readers, and you need for all your relevant events to show up in these lists. When readers click on the mentioned event, they should link to your opt-in or event registration page. Make sure you stay on top of these event round-up pages or sites and regularly update the site hosts with your evolving event schedule.

24 Enlist the help of industry analysts or product reviewers.

Seek out influential individuals and incent them to write about your products or services. For consumer product-focused companies, this list may even include celebrities who you pay to promote your products. For some, you may need to pay a fee in order for them to be willing to write about you; others will do it based on your PR efforts (see Tip #26).

Sometimes you may have an article that's solely about your company and/or your products; other times, you may be included in a roundup article where you're featured alongside other companies. Either way, this will generate press for you, which will in turn generate traffic to your website, which should create more opt-ins for your database.

GO BIG: BONUS LIST GROWTH IDEAS

25 Capture more with pay-per-click advertising.

Pay-per-click advertising can be a viable way to grow your list. Because you have limited characters available for your ad copy, make sure you're crisp and to the point with your offer. Make your offer good enough that the visitor will want to take you up on it. Of course, you'll want to establish a budget for pay-per-click advertising and monitor your opt-in to lead conversion funnel to make sure that the investment is paying off.

For B2B marketers, consider offering content such as a buying guide, an industry report, a purchase justification tool or an ROI calculator. For B2C marketers, perhaps you can offer a style guide, a product comparison report or an introductory purchase coupon. Make receipt of these offers contingent upon the visitor completing an opt-in form.

Make sure your landing page is focused on the offer and easy to complete. Again, don't get greedy and ask for too much information on the Web form.

You can also create Google AdWords that allow email newsletter sign-up from within the ad. If you're signed in to Gmail or another Google service, the contact's Gmail address will automatically prepopulate in the ad. This might be fine for

companies that accept gmail.com emails, but some B2B marketers will not accept this as a valid entry in their database. If you're in this camp, then the email sign-up within the Google AdWords ad may not be an optimal fit for you.

26 Get the word out with public relations.

Public relations is all about getting the word out so interested parties will pick up and tell your story. From writing press releases and pitching story ideas to the press to conducting interviews with writers, public relations encompasses a variety of tactics designed to generate buzz and awareness for your products and solutions.

Hiring an outside firm may help you jump-start your public relations efforts because they'll already have relationships with members of the press who will likely want to hear your story. External firms can also provide knowledge on upcoming editorial opportunities where your company story or product will be of interest to the publication or online site.

Make sure the individuals helping you with public relations, whether they're your company employees or outside PR firm talent, are focused on funneling new opportunities to your website,

and in turn to your opt-in page(s), so you can sign up new potential customers.

27 Create an exclusive membership club or group.

Everyone wants to feel like they belong. Exclusive membership clubs or groups allow you to create that sense of belonging within the context of your company, brand, products or services.

If you decide to create a special membership group, you'll need to design and implement a communications strategy for this club that's distinct from your other communications. You may want to consider a forum or environment where members of the club can dialogue with other members. There are many forum platform software programs you can use to jump-start your membership group experience and create the community environment.

Take the time up front to establish the rules of engagement and determine how you'll monitor group discussions. If you build a well-thought-out club or membership group, you'll be creating an environment that fosters the development of brand evangelists who can help grow and expand your marketing database.

28 Conduct contests.

Contests are a wonderful way to inspire your potential audience to act. And sometimes an incentive, no matter how small, can propel new contacts to opt in to your brand's messages.

If you have physical stores, consider integrating Foursquare into your marketing mix. Design a contest where individuals are incented to check in. You can then use location-based marketing technology, such as Silverpop's PlacePunch, to help you manage the contest and determine the winner.

29 Equip your sales and support employees to opt in new contacts.

If you have outside sales reps, inside sales advisors or customer support agents, make sure they are asking individuals if they want to sign up for your messaging. Then give them the mechanism to capture this new name in your database by, for example, entering the person into a CRM system or accessing an internal opt-in page. This internal opt-in page will most

likely have the ability for your employees to enter far more information than a public opt-in page.

In addition, you may want to create a graphic email offer that includes a clickable link to an opt-in page (as referenced in Tip #3). Employees can then add this to their default email signature.



30 Don't forget about employing traditional marketing tactics.

Just because we're so immersed in the digital era, doesn't mean you should forget about actual postal mail (snail mail and print advertising). Both remain viable options that can provide good results. For example, if you send mail catalogs or other company publications, make sure you give recipients the chance to opt in to your email database via a QR code, SMS or website URL. Similarly, if you send bills to your clients, include opt-in offers with the bill enclosure or statement.

Bottom line: Where applicable, include opt-in information in the copy of whatever traditional marketing tactics you employ in order to capture new names in your database.

31 Invite mobile app downloaders to opt in.

The growing adoption of mobile apps means you may be reaching new customers not currently in your database. So, make sure you ask new downloaders for their email address or offer social login registration, through which you can obtain their email address and permission.

As an alternative, you can send push notifications to mobile app downloaders who haven't yet opted in to your email program inviting them to do so, or set up an "offers" section of your app that includes a call to action to join your email program.

Beyond This List: Generate your Own Database Growth Ideas

When it comes to growing your list, you're limited only by your own creativity. The most important strategy is to make sure you implement lots of different tactics, as prospects or potential buyers will respond in different ways and in different places.

The Importance of Permission

For every program or tactic you deploy to help grow your database, make sure that your foundational strategy is built on a base of permission and respect for your customers and prospects. Balance quality versus quantity in your list-growth strategies, and keep these two principals in mind:

Be honest and clear: If your opt-in process is confusing or deceitful, you may grow your list in the short term, but damage your brand reputation and deliverability in the long run. It's far better to be explicit in your opt-in messaging and get fewer registrants, but people who truly want to receive your communications.

Honor your word: Be explicit about what people are opting in to and honor that opt-in by only sending content and offers based on that opt-in. For example, if you ask people to subscribe to your "Mystery Authors" newsletter, don't suddenly start sending nonfiction business book news.

AFTER THE OPT-IN: QUICK TIPS ON BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

So, you've started using the tips in this ebook to grow your list exponentially. Now what? While the topic of increasing engagement could fill a white paper of its own, here are a few starter tips and strategies to help you transform your list-growth momentum into stronger relationships and increased revenue.

Get off to a Great Start in the Golden Window

Don't forget that prospects are most engaged with your brand in the first few days (and perhaps weeks) after they sign up to receive your communications. Treat this as your "golden window" and make sure you're doing everything you can to fuse a great relationship. Should you put this new registrant in a welcome program? Should you onboard them with a select message or website tour?

Take into consideration where they opted in and use this data to tailor your first messages. For instance, when customers opt in during a purchase transaction by providing their email address to a store associate, use your first message to thank them for their purchase and for being a customer. If, on the other hand, they opted in off of a display ad marketing a Webinar, then perhaps you share past Webinar recordings that are related to the one they registered for.

You might also take into consideration their website behavior while they were still an anonymous visitor. For instance, if someone views pages on Caribbean holiday packages on your travel site, don't switch gears and offer trips to Alaska until you learn more about their travel preferences. Take a customer-focused view of what makes the most sense during this time frame.

Establish a Database Retention Strategy

Do everything you can to keep your database members from unsubscribing. You've worked hard to capture these names, and your efforts will go to waste if the person clicks on the unsubscribe or delete button. Here are three tips for minimizing list churn:

1 Offer alternatives to opting out

Many customers just want to change the nature of their relationship with you when they hit the unsubscribe button – they just don't know how. Fortunately, it's easy for you to provide alternative to opting out that reflect this (while still making it easy to unsubscribe).

If you're a Silverpop customer, for example, you'll be able to offer the Snooze option. This feature

allows subscribers the option of suspending communications for a period of time. This will keep them in the list, but "pause" their email subscription for a defined period of time. This capability is particularly helpful if you sell larger-ticket items that aren't considered very often or have cyclical product lifecycles.

You can also consider launching a preference center where you can give customers the option of checking off how frequently they would like to receive communications from you and also allow them to opt in (or out) of different types communications. If you have frequency options, you'll then need to determine what you communicate to your various segments based on the different frequency options.

2 Develop a reactivation strategy

Periodically determine who's inactive in your database. First, you'll have to figure out how you define "inactive" – this will differ from business to business based on length of buying cycle and other factors. Is it someone who hasn't opened an email in three months? Purchased a product in the last six months? Visited your website in the last year? Or some combination of all three?

Once you've determined who your inactives are, develop an automated multi-part reactivation campaign and place those inactive database members in the program. Typically, the reactivation campaign will include special email subject lines and unique offers to attempt to reengage the list members.

If you have their mailing address, consider sending inactive contacts a postcard reminder to reengage. This step can be built right into your inactive campaign. If at the end of the reactivation program you still haven't gotten any engagement, then delete these members from your database.

By focusing your communications on active, engaged members, you'll improve your sending reputation. If you have strong opt-in list growth practices using the techniques described in this paper, you'll be able to offset your database unsubscribes by increasing new opt-ins.

3 Perform a communication audit

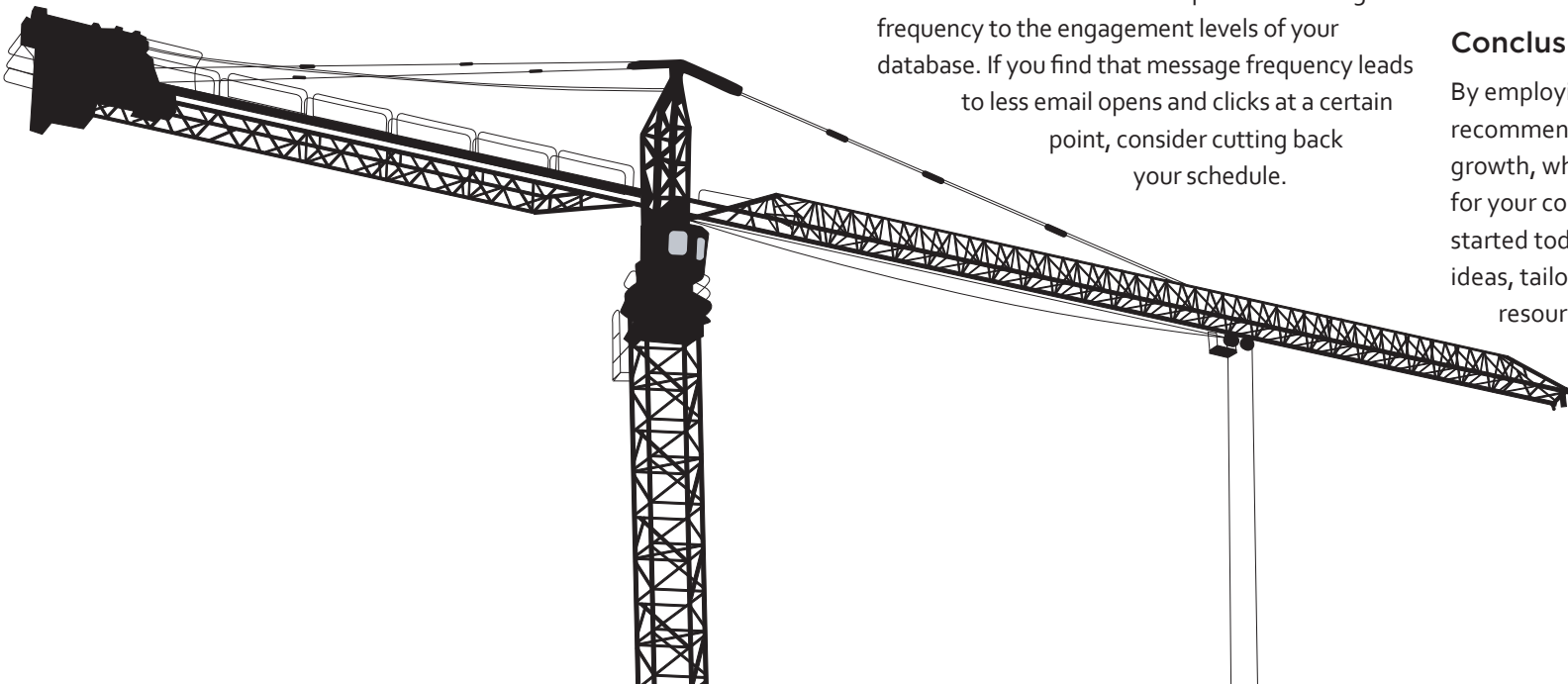
Getting the word out about all you're doing might mean you're overcommunicating to your database members. Do a random communication audit to see how many total messages you're sending to different segments and members of your database. You may find that some individuals are receiving 20 or 30 messages a month from your brand — or even more. Evaluate and compare the message frequency to the engagement levels of your database. If you find that message frequency leads to less email opens and clicks at a certain point, consider cutting back your schedule.

Evaluate Your Way to Continuous Improvement

Periodically take the time to analyze your database to compare your highest-value and most-frequent purchasing customers to their original opt-in source. In order to facilitate this, you'll want to make sure you capture the place or method that the person used to opt in to your marketing database. Some of you may think of this as capturing the originating lead source. This will help you identify which list growth tactics are really paying off, not only in the short term with list growth but also in the long term for revenue growth. Use what you've learned to adapt your marketing budgets to maximize your success.

Conclusion: Get Started Today

By employing some or even a few of these recommendations, you'll enjoy healthy database growth, which can lead to vibrant revenue growth for your company over time. Don't delay! Get started today. Rank each of these list growth ideas, tailor them to your business and assign the resources to make them happen.



Database Growth Planning Worksheet

The best way to put yourself on the right track to growing your digital business is to establish specific goals and develop a comprehensive database growth plan. Use this worksheet to document your goals and plans.

Current Database

Prospect Database Size: _____

Customer Contact Database Size: _____

Current Number of Inactives: _____

An inactive record is defined as: _____

Percentage of "Complete Records": _____

A complete record is defined as: _____

Growth Objectives

Target Date(s): _____

Prospect Database Size: _____

Customer Contact Database Size: _____

Complete Record Percentage: _____

Check all of the growth strategy options you've already deployed:

On Your Website:

- Home Page Opt-In
- Pop-Over, Modal or Heavy Window
- General Opt-In Page
- Additional opt-in pages
- Webinars
- Case Studies

Of the options you've checked, do any of these options need an upgrade or refresh to improve the effectiveness?

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

On Location:

- Events/Trade Shows
- QR Codes

- Ask at Checkout
- Roving Employees In-Store
- Text to Sign Up
- Wi-Fi Connection Offer

Of the options you've checked, do any of these options need an upgrade or refresh to improve the effectiveness?

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

Via Social:

- Email/Content Sharing
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Pinterest
- LinkedIn
- Google+
- YouTube

Of the options you've checked, do any of these options need an upgrade or refresh to improve the effectiveness?

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

Via Partners and Third Parties:

- Co-Op Programs
- Affiliate Marketing Programs
- Guest Blog Posting
- Third-Party Calendars
- Industry Analysts

Of the options you've checked, do any of these options need an upgrade or refresh to improve the effectiveness?

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

More Ideas:

- Pay-per-Click Advertising
- Public Relations
- Membership Group
- Contests
- Sales and Support Employees
- Traditional Marketing
- Mobile App

Of the options you've checked, do any of these options need an upgrade or refresh to improve the effectiveness?

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

Tactic _____ Upgrade _____

Growth Strategy Options

Use the chart below to designate the *new* growth strategy options you want to pursue and help you organize your strategy and priorities.

On Your Website:

Name of Tactic	Potential Impact (High, Medium, Low)	Time Frame (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4)	Priority (1, 2, 3, 4)	Lead Person Responsible	Target Implementation Date	Additional Resources Needed	Growth Option Notes
Home Page Opt-In							
Pop-Over, Modal or Heavy Window							
General Opt-In Page							
Additional opt-in pages							
Webinars							
Case Studies							

On Location:

Name of Tactic	Potential Impact (High, Medium, Low)	Time Frame (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4)	Priority (1, 2, 3, 4)	Lead Person Responsible	Target Implementation Date	Additional Resources Needed	Growth Option Notes
Events/Trade Shows							
QR Codes							
Ask at Checkout							
Roving Employees In-Store							
Text to Sign Up							
Wi-Fi Connection Offer							

Via Social:

Name of Tactic	Potential Impact (High, Medium, Low)	Time Frame (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4)	Priority (1, 2, 3, 4)	Lead Person Responsible	Target Implementation Date	Additional Resources Needed	Growth Option Notes
Email/Content Sharing							
Facebook							
Twitter							
Pinterest							
LinkedIn							
Google+							
YouTube							

Via Partners and Third Parties:

Name of Tactic	Potential Impact (High, Medium, Low)	Time Frame (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4)	Priority (1, 2, 3, 4)	Lead Person Responsible	Target Implementation Date	Additional Resources Needed	Growth Option Notes
Co-Op Programs							
Affiliate Marketing Programs							
Guest Blog Posting							
Third-Party Calendars							
Industry Analysts							

More Ideas:

Name of Tactic	Potential Impact (High, Medium, Low)	Time Frame (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4)	Priority (1, 2, 3, 4)	Lead Person Responsible	Target Implementation Date	Additional Resources Needed	Growth Option Notes
Pay-per-Click Advertising							
Public Relations							
Membership Group							
Contests							
Sales and Support Employees							
Traditional Marketing							
Mobile App							