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How to Run an Email Marketing Campaign

One of the least expensive, yet effective ways for local businesses to reach their target audience is through email marketing. When compared to radio, TV, and print advertising, the cost for sending out emails is very minimal.

Not only that, but email marketing is quick and easy.

The only things you need to send an email is a computer and an internet connection. With a few short clicks, your entire targeted email list will receive your message.

Sounds easy, right? Well for many small business owners, email itself is still a mystery. However, they are struggling to figure out just how they should be using this powerful tool to grow their sales and profits.

Here are some tips to help you run an effective email marketing campaign:

1. **Build a List** – Building a list of email subscribers is the most important step in the process. However, it can be a huge hurdle for some small business owners. One way to build a list of email subscribers is to simply ask your current customers to sign up to your email list.

You can also put an email opt-in form on your website to capture your visitors’ email addresses. Imagine how much you can increase sales by capturing their email addresses so you can follow-up with them.

The key in getting someone to leave their email address is to offer them something in exchange for it – such as a coupon offer or even a free report related to your industry that they would find useful.

Think you’ll have to be stuck at your computer sending out emails? You won’t because there are many different email autoresponder systems out there that you can use to make the bulk emailing process extremely fast and simple. Aweber, Constant Contact, and iContact are some good ones – just to name a few.

- 2. Decide on an Objective for Your Email Campaign** – What is your overall goal for sending out emails to your list? First, determine “who” your target audience is and then decide “what” you want to relay to them via email.

Do you want to send promotions and coupons to drive repeat business? Do you want to notify them about new products and services to increase sales? Do you want to send them useful tips related to your industry to help build your trust and credibility?

Or maybe you want to do all of this. The important thing is that you take some time to really think about your objectives and prepare the content well ahead of time in order for your campaigns to run smoothly. Be sure to write your emails in a professional manner with strong sales copy that will convert your readers into customers.

- 3. Send Emails Consistently, but Don’t Overdo It** – Once you have started to build a list and decided on an objective for your email marketing campaign, it’s time to build a strong, on-going relationship with your list.

This is crucial to getting repeat sales and referrals. Building a relationship with your email list usually involves sending out occasional promotions as well as providing them with valuable information in regards to your industry – such as tips or advice. There has to be a fine balance because if you hit your list with constant promotions, they could become annoyed and opt-out.

How to Advertise on Craigslist

Millions of people use Craigslist to find local information including services, items for sale, job listings, and more. It is free to post on Craigslist for most businesses; making it a goldmine for attracting local consumers. However, you have to be careful that your listing is posted properly to get the best results.

Posting on Craigslist can be confusing at times, but when done right, it could be a huge factor in generating more business. Just like any other type of advertising, it is best to create a strategy before you start posting on Craigslist.

Creating an account is just the first step. It's what you do after creating the account that matters.

Here are some tips to help you create Craigslist ads that get attention:

1. **Make Sure Your Headline Draws in Your Target Market** – The easiest way to do this is to use keywords that your local consumers would type into the search engines to find your type of product or service. Craigslist ads are optimized and can show up in the search engines when people search for your type of business using the search engines. It is also a good idea to use these keywords in the body of your ad to get even more exposure.
2. **Use an Image in Your Ad so it Stands Out** – Although images are not required, it has been proven that Craigslist ads that have images (or the ad is created as an image itself) get a higher response. It is hard to capture the attention of your target market with the typical text ads. Image ads create more excitement as well as give a visual aid to your marketing message.
3. **Post Your Ad in the Right Section** – Posting your ad in the wrong section will be a complete waste of your time. So be sure to carefully research the categories within Craigslist to choose the one that best fits your type of business. Ask yourself which category your target audience would go to first to find your type of product or service. Then, post your ad in that category for ultimate exposure.

4. **Post Consistently** – Don’t post one ad and expect a miracle. The fact is that there are a lot of ads on Craigslist so one posting probably won’t do very much. Instead, implement a plan to post consistently – every day or every other day. This way, you will stay on top of your competitors who are aggressively marketing their businesses using Craigslist.

5. **Follow the Craigslist Terms of Service** – Craigslist has rules in place to prevent spamming and over-posting by advertisers. For instance, never post the exact same ad within 48hrs. Otherwise, your ad will probably get flagged. Familiarize yourself with all of their terms to avoid having your ads removed.

Posting in Craigslist can bring a lot of targeted local traffic to your local business so it should not be ignored. Since your local consumers are there looking for your type of product or service, it only makes sense that your business is there to capture their attention.

How to Write Articles for More Exposure

Content is king when it comes to online visibility for your company. High-quality articles and blog posts that contain the proper keywords for your type of product or service can provide great exposure for your business.

Most consumers search online for local products and services before they visit or call a local business. However, if your business does not come up when consumers are searching, you are missing out on a massive amount of potential sales.

Therefore, if you are a local business owner who is trying to write and submit articles to increase online exposure, you are definitely on the right track. You’re probably years ahead of some of your closest competitors who have yet to write one piece of valuable content to publish on the web.

Although you may be ahead of the game, there is a right way and a wrong way to write articles. As a busy business owner, the last thing you want to do is spend a lot of time writing articles that won’t bring more exposure to your business.

Here are some tips on writing articles that will generate more traffic to your website as well as help increase customers, sales, and profits:

1. **Perform Proper Keyword Research** – “Keywords” are the words or phrases that consumers type into the search engines when looking for a local product or service. Therefore, local businesses must do keyword research to see what people are typing into the search engines before deciding which keywords to incorporate into their articles.
2. **Write Articles with Proper Keyword Structure** – When writing your articles, it is important to consider two major factors: Keyword Proximity and Keyword Density. Keyword proximity refers to “where” they keywords are added. For instance, it’s best to have the main keywords at the beginning of the title instead of the end. Keyword density refers to “how

often” the keyword is mentioned in the article. Your keyword phrase should make up at least 5%-10% of the article in order to be effective.

- 3. Include Geographic Terms** – When writing your articles, be sure to include the city and state of your target market so your article will come up in the results when consumers type in that term along with the city and state. This way, you will optimize your articles to capture the attention of those local consumers who are searching for your type of product or service.
- 4. Post Your Articles on Your Site as well as Article Directories** – When you post articles to article directories, you are getting links back to your website, which is powerful for ranking your website higher. When posting articles to directories and portals, be sure to mention your town in your article resource box in order to optimize them for local searches.

The easier it is for your business to be found in local search results, the more customers you can bring into your business using the internet. Articles help build local search awareness and will help give you the edge over your competitors who are not creating consistent high-quality content to publish on the web. Great content means better local search engine traffic for your business.

How to Claim Your Local Directory Listings

Building a strong internet presence for your local business is probably on your radar these days due to the explosive increase in internet usage over the past several years. It is more important now than ever that your local consumers can find your products and services online.

There are several search engines and directories online that come up when consumers search for your type of product or service. However, the problem is that these tools simply scrape your information from various sources in an attempt to provide a listing for your business. Most of the time, these business listings contain incorrect or incomplete information, which defeats the whole purpose.

Therefore it is extremely important that your business takes control of its online presence by claiming your listings. If not, you risk having inaccurate and incomplete information on your pages. Not only that, but unclaimed listings have a very hard time ranking higher in the search results.

On the other hand, complete, claimed, and optimized listings come up higher in the search results – generating more leads, customers, and sales.

Any business can fix this problem simply by claiming and verifying their listings. You may be asking “how can I claim my listings”? Depending on the sites, there should be a link on your business pages that prompt you to claim the listings if you haven’t done so already.

Usually, if your listing has been claimed, you will see “Owner-Verified” or “This listing has been claimed” or something to that nature on your listing pages. If it hasn’t, the verbiage will prompt you to claim the listing. Click on this button and go through the process to fully claim your listing.

For instance:

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- On Yahoo Local, click on "Edit Business Details" and then "Edit as Business Owner" to claim or edit your listing.
- On Bing Local, click on "Change your business listing" to claim or edit using your listing.
- On Yelp, the words "Provided by business" will show up next to your business name if it has been claimed. If not, click on "Edit Business Info" to claim it.

For the most part, the other directory listing websites will follow this same format.

Optimizing your listings involve completing as much information as you can on them. This includes adding photos, hours of operation, and even videos to your listing. This also gives you a chance to correct any inaccurate information on your pages, which could be counter-productive in your efforts to be seen online.

It's time for your business to take control of your local online presence. The first step is claiming and optimizing your business listing pages so you can start drawing in your local market on auto-pilot.

Yes, I want to claim my listings online everywhere people in my area are looking for me.

Click Here: [List My Business](#)

How the New Google+ Local Will Impact Your Business

Recently, Google made another substantial change to their services; Google Places merged with Google+ creating the new Google+ Local pages. In case you are not aware, Google+ is one of the newest, and fastest-growing Social Media Networking site ever. The fact that it is owned by Google explains its popularity and now they’re forcing local businesses to jump on board by moving all Google Places business listings over to Google+ Local pages.

If you’ve seen the new Google+ Local pages, you’ve probably noticed that they are more user-friendly and dynamic. Interacting with your customers and prospects is much easier than with Google Places pages. More importantly, this is now where your Google business page will be located, so it’s crucial that you learn about it and optimize your page for full exposure.

Any business that does not have a Google+ account will now need to create one if they want their local business listings to be seen in local search results. In fact, if you’ve never done anything with your local business listing pages, now is the time to do so if you want any chance of grabbing the attention of your target market.

While you may have to spend some time learning about this new platform, this change can actually work in the favor of your local business by providing you with even more exposure. Google+ Local is livelier, more social, and makes it a lot easier for people to discover and share local information than the former Google Places.

Here are a few other things you should know about the new Google+ Local Pages:

- All Prior Google Places Pages have been Replaced with Google+ Local Pages
- These Pages Have a Strong Focus on “Social Media”
- The Pages Can Rank at the Top of Search Engines
- Customer Reviews are Now Rated Using the Zagat 30-Point Scoring System
- Consumers Will be Required to have a Google+ Account in Order to Submit Customer Reviews
- These Pages will be Available in Maps and Mobile

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These are just a few of the many changes coming our way with the new Google+ Local pages. Now, every day searchers and socializers have a way to find and share local businesses of interest right within Google.

Many businesses today are struggling to make ends meet and are looking for ways to increase sales. Due to the fact that many internet users go online to search for local products and services, having a strong online presence is no longer an option if you want to generate more customers and sales. Google+ Local is an exciting new way to help you reach your local target audience easier and faster.

How to Build and Manage Online Customer Reviews

As most local small businesses are quickly finding out, online customer reviews are extremely important in generating more sales and profits. This is due to the explosive growth of the internet in the past several years.

Approximately 70% of local consumers go online to search for local businesses that offer products and services that they need. This includes vehicles, food, auto repair, beauty services, and much more. While they're searching, they also want to know how good your product or service is. One way they find answers is by reading your customer reviews.

If your business has bad consumer reviews, you are missing out on potential business because most people will skip over your listing. Whether the reviews are true or not doesn't matter because studies show that most Internet users trust the customer reviews they read online.

So it is crucial that small businesses that target local consumers have a strong online presence that includes good customer reviews. However, many businesses are lost when it comes to getting and managing their online customer reviews.

Here are some tips that will help:

1. **Ask Your Customers for Reviews** – Many businesses overlook the easiest way to get customer reviews, which is simply asking your customers to go online and write reviews about your business. Your happy customers won't have a problem doing so.
2. **Email Your Customer List for Reviews** – If you have your customers' email addresses, you can simply send them an email asking them to leave a review about your product or service. You can send them to your local business listing pages where they can leave reviews.

3. **Make Sure Business Listings are Claimed and Optimized** – In order to provide more visibility for your business, make sure that your local listings such as Google Places/Google+ Local, Yahoo Local, Bing Local, and other local directory listings are claimed and optimized. Getting customer reviews on these sites will also help your rankings.
4. **Focus on Customer Service** – If your business treats its customers right, many of them will naturally go online to tell the world how happy they are with you. Providing reliable, friendly service goes a long way in helping you build a positive image for your business.
5. **Stay on Top of What is Being Said About Your Business** – You should proactively perform internet searches to see what is being said about your business. If you don't know what's being said, you have no chance of correcting the negative content.
6. **Don't Ignore Negative Reviews** – Ignoring bad reviews can be detrimental to your business because it sends a negative message to your prospects. Instead, you should publicly respond to those reviews to show that you do care. This can quickly turn that negative review into a positive situation.
7. **Continuously Grow Your Number of Positive Customer Reviews** – Getting a few good reviews is a good start. But don't stop at getting two or three; the more, the better. Consumers tend to lean towards those businesses that have many reviews. Think about this; if your business has 75 awesome reviews and your main competitor has 5 awesome reviews, you will likely win when it comes to which one consumers will decide to do business with.

How to Build and Manage Your Brand with Social Media

Want to really catapult your small business brand onto the global scene? Social Media is the answer. Tapping into the massive Social Media audience has proven to be a very cost-effective, yet extremely powerful method for helping many small businesses connect with their local consumers.

Social Media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, YouTube, and others have provided a strong foundation for companies to build relationships, increase brand awareness, and create a loyal following online.

All of this ultimately leads to more leads, customers, sales, and profits.

Where does your target audience already spend time online? This is exactly where you need to spend your time; building a presence and engaging in conversations with them.

While building your Social Media presence may seem like a daunting task due to the amount of time and dedication it takes, it should not be ignored. If you are serious about generating more awareness about your business online, there's no better way than utilizing Social Media.

One of best uses of Social Media is the ability to easily monitor, maintain, and build your business's reputation online. For instance, once you establish a Social Media presence, your happy customers will have a place to let the world know what they think of your products and services.

But it doesn't stop there; your unhappy customers will also have a place to air their concerns, which could potentially become a problem. However, being able to address these concerns through your Social Media platforms is better than not addressing them at all.

Social Media has grown to new levels where any negative reviews, comments, or any other negative buzz can kill your reputation online. The problem is that most businesses are not even aware of what is being said about them online; and if they are, some of them are not addressing these issues, which is even more damaging to your reputation.

It's better to respond to these situations rather than ignore them because it shows your prospects and customers that you care, which is powerful in

building a loyal following. You may be asking “How do I choose the right Social Networks for my business?”

This is a very good question. Some social networks work for some businesses better than others. It all depends on the type of product or service you offer and which social networks contain the most people who may be interested in that product or service.

That’s your answer; join those networks. Choose the ones that make the most sense for your audience. Everyone has heard of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and the new and extremely popular Google+. So it may not be a bad idea to start with those and expand from there. Don’t limit yourself to only these networks as there are many others out there that may be a good fit for your business as well.

Social Media is one of the most powerful branding tools for your business. If you don’t stay in contact with your prospects and customers on a regular basis, they will forget about you; out of sight, out of mind. Social Media can help you stay right in front of them as you build a long-lasting, social bond.

How to Get and Keep Facebook Fans

If your local business has already taken the step to setup a Facebook Business page, you are more than likely miles ahead of some of your competitors. As you probably know, Facebook is the largest Social Media networking site online today with nearly 1 BILLION users.

In order to really connect with your local customers and prospects, you should put yourself right in front of them. How many of them do you think use Facebook?

If you are struggling to generate more fans to your Facebook page – or if you are failing to keep the interest of the fans you already have – there are some things you can do to ramp things up. However, these measures do take some time, dedication, and consistency in order to be effective. Otherwise, it will simply be a waste of your time.

Ways to Get New Facebook Fans

- Keep your page interesting by asking your current fans to comment, share, and “Like” your posts
- Ask your current customers to become your Facebook fan
- All of your marketing materials, including TV ads, Radio ads, and Print ads should ask the world to join your Facebook page
- Ask your current fans to suggest your page to their friends and family
- Put links to your Facebook page on your website and ask visitors to “Like” your page
- Advertise your page with Facebook Advertising

Ways to Keep Your Existing Facebook Fans

- Create conversations on your fan page to keep them engaged
- Respond to your fans and remain active on your page – post often
- Run contests and encourage fans to join the fun
- Interact with your fans on their own pages
- Reward your fans with exclusive promotions – just for being a fan

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These are just a few ideas on how you can expand and maintain your Facebook reach. Time and money shouldn't stop your business from succeeding on Facebook.

All it takes is some creativity and consistency to build a strong, loyal social following. Are you having success in some offline aspects of your local business? Bring them to Facebook to see even greater returns.

As you can see, there are a lot of different ways to get Facebook fans and there are some fun ways to keep them. However, you must be willing to put in the amount of time and dedication it takes to build your social following. One you do, your efforts should be rewarded with an increase in customers, sales, and profits.

How to Get and Keep Twitter Followers

Does your local business already have a Twitter page? Congratulations! You're way ahead of many of your competitors who have yet to realize the true power in online marketing. Twitter is the 2nd largest online Social Media networking site; right behind Facebook.

Therefore, small businesses are starting to realize that Twitter isn't just for the big corporations anymore; any business can utilize Twitter to increase awareness, prospects, and sales.

Here are some ways your business can generate more Twitter followers and keep them around:

1. **Let Everyone Know that You're on Twitter** – All of your marketing materials should let the world know that you are on Twitter and you should ask them to follow you. This includes putting signs inside of your store or business establishment doing the same.
2. **Follow Others** – One way to increase visibility to your business is by following other users. You can follow your business contacts, your professional associations, your staff, your customers, and even your prospects.
3. **Link to Your Other Accounts** – Be sure to link Twitter with your other Social Media accounts such as Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc. In addition, place a link to Twitter on your website and ask others to follow you.
4. **Consider “Quality” vs. “Quantity”** – As a business owner, it is more important to get targeted followers than a bunch of random followers. Due to the fact that your goal is to get the attention of local consumers, your focus should be to build followers in your area. Also, it's important to target people who are interested in what you have to offer. Your activities must include a nice mixture of drawing in quality followers as well as a good number of them.
5. **Use Interesting, Relevant Content** – What is it that your target audience would be interested in hearing about? Now, give it to them on a regular basis and experience a nice growth in followers. Since Twitter only allows so

many characters for messages, you can also use the space to send them to external links, such as your website/blog, videos, surveys, etc.

6. **Get Feedback from Customers and Followers** – Tell your customers to go on Twitter to let you know what they think about your products or services. Also ask your audience specific questions via Twitter to keep them engaged and interested in what you have to say.
7. **Address Customer Service Issues** – Be sure to send Tweets to address any negative feedback and let your audience know what you are doing about it.
8. **Keep Your Followers Informed** – Tweet your customers about special promotions and other events that they would be interested in knowing about.

How To Get More YouTube Viewers

YouTube is one of the largest online video sharing websites in the world. With more than 800 million unique visitors each month, YouTube cannot be ignored by local businesses who want to get in front of their target audiences.

Did you know that approximately 79% of the U.S. population spends an average of 30 hours per month on the internet? During that time, each web user views approximately 3,123 web pages – including video web pages.

Does your local business have some YouTube videos online? If so, congratulations! This means that you truly understand the power of online digital media and its ability to generate more customers, sales, and profits to your local business.

Many of your local consumers go online first before visiting a local establishment. They pay close attention to what comes up on the first page of the search engines when searching for your type of product or service online.

This is powerful because YouTube videos rank very high in the search engines if they are properly optimized. This means more eyes will hit your videos, which ultimately means more traffic to your website and more foot-traffic through your doors.

By taking the proper measures to distribute online videos, your business is on the right track when it comes to new-age marketing. However, you may be struggling to get people to actually view your videos, which is the whole point. Although it may be frustrating, it’s really not that difficult to do.

Here are some tips on driving more traffic to your videos:

1. Add keyword-related tags, descriptions, and titles to your video to help it come up when consumers search for terms related to your business.
2. Be sure to add links to your videos to your website, and Social Media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+ Local, and LinkedIn.

3. Share your videos whenever possible and ask your followers to rate them and share them with their family and friends as well.
4. Continuously add new videos to keep your audience engaged – you can provide helpful tips related to your industry, product or services, demonstrations, or even video commercials; the possibilities are endless.
5. Create compelling and interesting videos to really grab the attention of your target audience.
6. Keep your videos short because long, drawn out videos tend to make visitors leave while shorter videos that get your point across quickly are more enjoyable.

Implementing these measures should increase the number of views to your YouTube videos.