



How to grow your business with email marketing



How will email marketing help me?

Running a business is practically a 24/7 job. And while wearing many hats may suit you, you've probably felt like there's never enough hours in the day to do it all.

As a result, it's common for marketing to be put on the backburner. You're already juggling so many things, how could you possibly add another thing to your list?

With email marketing, promoting your business, building an audience, and connecting with customers becomes a whole lot easier.

What will I learn in this guide?

In this guide, we will walk you through everything you need to know to get started with email marketing.

First, we'll help you build a strong foundation for email marketing success. We'll help you set goals, understand your audience, and understand what to look for in an email marketing service provider.

Second, we'll help you understand the lingo. You will learn how to start building your email list from the ground up using tools like sign up forms and landing pages.

Next, we'll show you how to create emails. We'll walk you through the different types of emails you may want to send, how to design emails that fit with your brand look and feel, and, of course, we'll share some writing tips to help you send awesome content your subscribers will love.

And finally, we'll share how to evaluate simple subscriber and message analytics to help you improve your email marketing

We hope this guide gives you the foundation you need to build your email list, connect with your audience, and grow your business.

Let's get started!

The first steps

Ask yourself: what do you hope to achieve with email marketing?

While your goals may change over time, understanding the purpose of your emails and setting measurable and attainable goals can give you focus and clarity when just starting out.

Setting goals

Set goals with numeric values, a due date, and a general idea of how you plan on meeting that number.

A good goal for new email marketers is focused around subscriber growth. In this case your goal might look like the following: *I plan to collect 1,000 email subscribers over the next 12 months by leveraging lead magnets that deliver value to my audience.*

This gives you a clear target to work toward. It can even provide guidance for executing tactics that'll help you achieve your end goal.

Understand your audience

As you plan your tactics, consider your target audience.

The key to communicating with your target audience is understanding their pain points, and how your offering solves a problem for them.

Email marketing is all about making connections with your audience. If you can provide them value and give subscribers content they love, they'll be more likely to eventually make a purchase or engage with your content further.

Understanding your ideal customers will help you determine the best ways to connect and communicate with them.

Side note: Want to see how other small businesses use email marketing? Unlock the insights in AWeber's [2020 Small Business Email Marketing Report](#).

The top 3 things to look for in an email service provider.

Before you kick off your email marketing plan, be sure to research and choose a reputable email service provider (ESP) that goes above and beyond in these 3 areas.

- 1 Top-notch deliverability.** No one wants their emails to go to the spam folder, right? That's why choosing an ESP with a reputation for excellent deliverability is key. We'll get into this more later.
- 2 A team that has your back.** Having access to an amazing customer solutions team can make all the difference when you need a helpful nudge in the right direction, no matter when you're working on your project.
- 3 The features you need to achieve real growth, at the right price.** Try a tool that lets you truly test the waters for no cost. Make sure you have all the solutions you need, like access to template builders, email automations, unlimited account users, and integrations with the tools you use everyday.

Building your email list from the ground up

I know email marketing is important, but I have no idea where to start.

That's why we're here! In this section, we'll guide you through the 3 most important things you need to look for in an email marketing platform, how to begin collecting subscriber information, and how to quickly build your email list.

How do I collect subscriber information?

Let's start by talking about sign up forms and landing pages.

A sign up form is where your website visitors will submit their email address to begin receiving your emails. Typically, it lives in the header or sidebar of a website page, or as a pop up box that displays over a website.

A landing page is a single webpage that drives visitors to take one, specific action. It intentionally limits where visitors can navigate, because it is built with a very specific purpose in mind: to get people to take an action, like subscribing to your email list or buying your product or service. Landing pages always include a sign up form.

While sign up forms and landing pages ultimately accomplish the same end goal — to collect subscriber information such as email addresses, names, interests, location, and more — which suits your needs better depends on your unique goals.

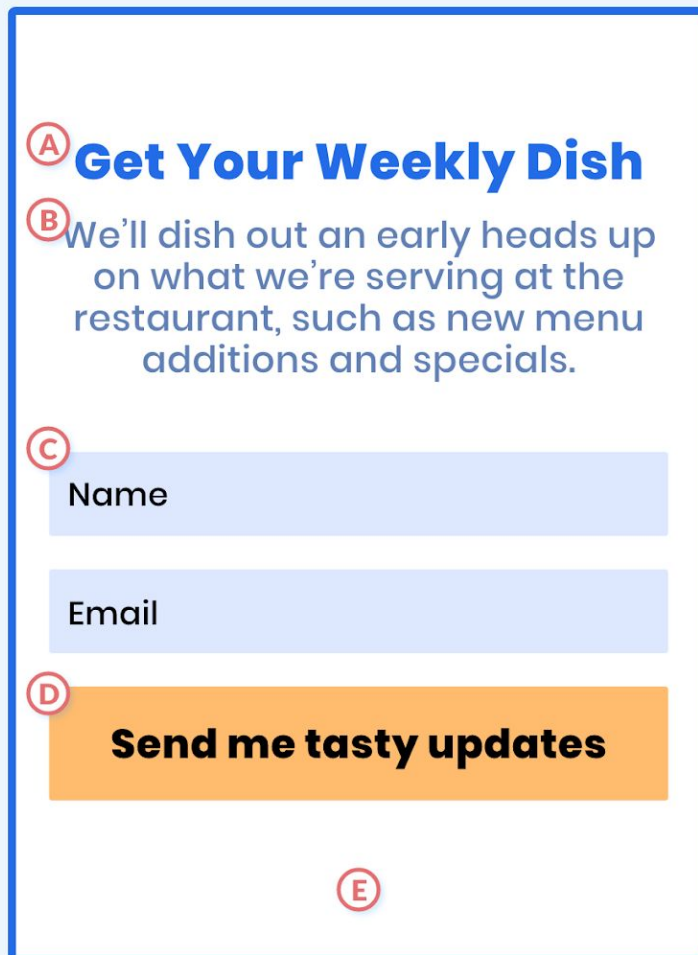
For instance, if you want to drive blog readers to sign up for your newsletter, a sign up form on the side bar may be more useful than a separate landing page that readers have to navigate to. On the other hand, you may want to use a landing page if you're driving people to register for an event.

Both sign up forms and landing pages are a powerful part of the marketing funnel. But when deciding which to use, evaluate your goals and your overall marketing strategy.

What do sign up forms and landing pages look like?

Every sign up form and landing page includes a few crucial elements. Take a look at the images below for a peak at what an excellent sign up form and landing page looks like.

Anatomy of a sign up form



A **Get Your Weekly Dish**

B We'll dish out an early heads up on what we're serving at the restaurant, such as new menu additions and specials.

C Name

Email

D **Send me tasty updates**

E

A A captivating headline that draws visitors' attention to the form.

B A brief message that explains the purpose of your emails and the benefit to readers for signing up. If you offer an incentive to sign up — or a lead magnet — mention it here and explain how it will solve a problem or answer a question they have. This is where you will set expectations for subscribers by explaining how often they will receive emails and what exactly they will receive.

C Form fields that collect the information you need to know about a subscriber. You can customize the information you collect, but you at least always need subscribers' names and emails.

D A clear call-to-action (CTA) to sign up for your emails.

E Design can make a big impact on sign ups for your list. Consider keeping sign up form design consistent with the rest of your website, but incorporate attention-grabbing colors and design.

Anatomy of a landing page

The diagram illustrates the anatomy of a landing page, divided into three main sections: the top header, the main content area, and the footer.

- Header Section:**
 - A:** H1 Headline
 - B:** Description copy – Aenean lacinia bibendum nulla sed consectetur. Cras mattis consectetur purus sit amet fermentum. Fusce dapibus, tellus ac cursus commodo, tortor mauris condimentum
 - F:** Logo
 - D:** Form title
 - C:** Submit CTA
- Main Content Section:**
 - E:** Testimonials headline
 - E:** Section description
 - E:** Testimonial 1: Nullam id dolor id nibh ultricies vehicula ut id elit. Praesent commodo cursus magna, vel scelerisque nisl consectetur et.
 - E:** Testimonial 2: Maecenas sed diam eget risus varius blandit sit amet non magna. Vestibulum id ligula porta felis euismod semper. Vivamus sagittis
 - E:** Testimonial 3: Cras justo odio, dapibus ac facilisis in, egestas eget quam. Etiam porta sem malesuada magna mollis euismod. Maecenas
 - E:** Follow up text / lead into section CTA
 - E:** Call to Action
- Footer Section:**
 - G:** Footer & footer copy
 - G:** Social media buttons (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube)

- A** An intriguing headline that encourages people to sign up
- B** Descriptive copy that explains who you are and what you're offering. Answer questions like:
 1. How often should subscribers expect emails?
 2. What type of information will they receive?
 3. How will they benefit from the information?
- C** One clear call-to-action
- D** A sign-up form to capture subscriber information
- E** Social proof — such as testimonials or customer quotes — shows evidence that your email subscribers or customers are satisfied. Don't have testimonials? No problem! Instead, you could use a video or copy that gives more benefits of completing the form.
- F** Consistent branding and design — such as your business fonts, colors, and logo — visually tell a story to your subscribers.
- G** [Optional] Social media buttons to encourage subscribers to find out more about you and engage with you further.

4 ways to get people to sign up for your list

Now that you have a place to collect subscriber information, it's time to focus on how to drive people to sign up.

- 1 Offer incentives — or lead magnets.** A lead magnet is something you give people when they sign up for your email list. It can be anything — a free gift, a discount, an ebook, exclusive videos — as long as it's something your audience will want.

- 2 Social media.** Tap into your social following on social media platforms, like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and more, by encouraging them to subscribe to your emails. Add a sign up form on facebook, pin a tweet with a link to your newsletter on Twitter, or include a link to a landing page on Instagram. The possibilities are endless.
- 3 Run a contest.** Feature a valuable prize and host a contest that requires an email address upon submission. Be sure to promote it on your website and social media.
- 4 Use a third-party integration.** Connect the tools you use everyday — like ecommerce integrations, membership clubs and more — with your ESP to easily and seamlessly grow your list.

Side note: Need some lead magnet inspiration? [Check out these 22 brilliant lead magnets](#) that will inspire you to grow your email list right now.

Create your own sign up forms and landing page without coding or technical skills — for free.

AWeber Free gives you all the tools you need to get started.

AWeber's email marketing platform includes unlimited landing pages with every plan — no technical skills required! Just drag and drop images, text, buttons, videos, and forms into one of our professionally designed landing page templates. Plus, you'll also get unlimited emails, email automation, sign up forms, and email analytics.

Join AWeber Free today!

Creating awesome emails and newsletters

You told your subscribers what to expect from your emails — now's the time to deliver the goods. The content in your emails is the first step to establishing a connection with customers and prospects, so it's important to carefully craft your message.

The 4 types of emails

There are four main types of emails you will use in your email marketing:

- 1 Confirmation Message.** The purpose of this message is to confirm that new subscribers would like to receive your emails. It is automatically sent to those who sign up for your email list.
- 2 Welcome Email.** As the first email your subscribers will receive from you, be sure to welcome them to your list and thank them for joining. If you offered an incentive in your sign up form, this is when you should deliver on your promise. Welcome emails get four times higher open rates and five times higher click-through rates than other emails
- 3 Broadcast.** A broadcast is a one-time message that is delivered to your subscribers at a scheduled date and time. You might want to use a broadcast to inform subscribers about an upcoming sale or event, or to send newsletters or blog updates.
- 4 Campaigns.** An email campaign is an automated email series that lets you send the right message to the right person at the right time. You can set up a sequence of emails to be sent automatically on a schedule of your choosing to keep readers engaged.

What do I write in my emails?

The one question you need to answer in your emails

Before you begin writing your emails, consider the value you bring to your subscribers. With any content your audience will read or watch, they will always ask, “What’s in it for me?”

Providing value is the key to success with email marketing. Every email should give your subscribers value — whether it comes in the form of a discount, a personal story, advice, or a blog post.

And remember, your subscribers are people. Write your emails as if you’re writing to one person, not a stadium full of faces you can’t see.

If you can provide value consistently, and speak in a way that resonates with your audience, you’ll create loyal subscribers who are eager for your emails.

The copywriting formula that will help you kick writer’s block for good

Knowing what to write in your emails is hard — especially when you’re just starting out.

Thankfully, there are proven copywriting formulas that seasoned copywriting professionals use time and time again to deliver fantastic content to their audiences. And, one in particular is super easy to remember: **P.A.S. Problem. Agitate. Solution.**

P.A.S. is a great way to show your audience you understand their pain points and empathize. It’s a great way to start selling your products and services.

Let’s take a look at an example.

Running a business is practically a 24/7 job. And while wearing many hats may suit you, you’ve probably felt like there’s never enough hours in the day to do it all.

As a result, it’s common for marketing to be put on the backburner. You’re already juggling so many things, how could you possibly add another thing to your list?

With email marketing, promoting your business, building an audience, and connecting with customers becomes a whole lot easier.

Look familiar? That's right, this is the intro to this guide, which follows the P.A.S. formula exactly.

Side note: Need some more writing guidance? Check out our [What to Write in Your Emails Guide](#) to unlock 45+ email templates that will help you kick writer's block for good.

Designing emails

Great content is key to creating an effective email, but it cannot stand alone if the presentation is unappealing. Not only are visuals processed 60,000 times faster than text, they also have the ability to influence a person's emotions and behavior.

Plus, designed, branded emails provide instant brand recognition among your audience as brand consistency across your marketing assets communicates a lot about your business. Branded templates also stand out in the inbox, which means more subscribers will engage and click-through to your landing page or site.

Email marketing design checklist

- ☐ Use a color scheme that's consistent with your branding, yet easy on the eyes of readers.
- ☐ Avoid a layout with more than one column — multiple columns can make your email appear cluttered and difficult to read on mobile devices — could represent 77% of your readers.
- ☐ Break up chunks of text with visual images. Readers prefer short pieces of information.
- ☐ Feature the most important content at the top of your email. Consumers want the ability to quickly scan an email and pick out the information that's interesting to them — providing visual hierarchy of content will make this possible.

Want to send beautiful emails at the click of a button?

AWeber Smart Designer will do the work for you. Simply insert your website or social media URL and watch the Smart Designer work its magic.

Try AWeber Smart Designer!

Email Automation 101

Email automation lets you connect with subscribers at every stage of their buyer journey — from sign up, to customer, to loyal advocate.

Earlier we talked about “Campaigns.” In AWeber, Campaigns allow you to deliver targeted email sequences automatically. In other words, Campaigns let you send the right content to the right people at the right time.

Single series automation is the simplest way to use email automation. Think of this as a sequence, where a new subscriber joins your list and is automatically sent an email, followed by a second email at a predetermined time delay, and a third email, and so on.

You can trigger a single series Campaign when someone signs up on your sign up form or landing page. This type of automation is great to use when you want to run new subscribers through a welcome series. A welcome series is a great way to set the stage for a strong relationship with your subscribers before trying to sell your products or services.

You can also send automated Campaigns to segmented portions of your list. Segmentation is the process of breaking up subscribers on your email list into smaller groups based on their actions — such as email opens and clicks — interests, locations, and more. Segmentation lets you better target your audience and send relevant messages.

Side note: We have pre-built campaigns that you can use right away, ready in your AWeber account. [Get a sneak peak at four of the templates here.](#)

Measuring email performance

The success of your email marketing relies on analyzing the results of your email sends, and adjusting course as needed so you can optimize your future marketing efforts.

When you're just getting started, you can learn a lot from 4 simple metrics: open rates, click-through rates, bounces and complaints.

Here's what you need to know about each metric and how you can use them to improve your email marketing.

Email opens

Open rates tell you how many subscribers opened your email. Your open rates can reveal various insights, such as the strength of your subject lines and the best times to send an email to your subscribers.

Aim for high open rates by:

- **Setting clear expectations.** Be clear about the content and benefits subscribers will get from your emails (e.g. helpful tips, news, coupons), and deliver on that promise. If they signed up for those reasons, they'll be more likely to open your emails to get what they want.
- **Writing compelling subject lines.** The subject line is the first part of your email subscribers will see, so make sure it's engaging. Consider using personalization, such as the subscriber's first name, to add a personal touch to your emails and make them stand out in a crowded inbox.

Email click-throughs

Click-through rates show you how many times a person clicked a link in your email. This can shed light on what type of content is popular among your subscribers and what they're less interested in.

To keep click-through rates high, you should eliminate underperforming content while featuring popular content.

Bounce rates

If your bounce rate is abnormally high compared to other emails you've sent in the past, your emails may not be reaching your subscribers' inboxes.

While many factors can influence email deliverability, it's commonly caused by a high number of spam complaints. The more subscribers mark your messages as spam, the greater the likelihood that an internet service provider (e.g. Gmail, Yahoo, Outlook) may place future messages in junk folders.

Spam rates should be below 0.1%. To maintain a high deliverability, it's important that you send your audience valuable content.

Complaints

If you notice a higher-than-usual complaint rate, it's important to take a look at the underlying reasons. Higher complaints likely mean it's affecting your deliverability, so it's important to find the root cause and adjust.

What is email deliverability?

In the previous section, we talked about how higher complaint rates could affect your email deliverability. Email deliverability is the term used to explain an ESP's ability to get your emails to your subscribers' inboxes.

Engaging with a reputable ESP with strong email deliverability is a great first step to make sure you avoid the spam folder, but there are several best practices that will help you improve your deliverability as well.

- **Use confirmed opt-in when collecting subscribers.** The only way to be sure that your subscribers requested to be on your list is to use the confirmed opt-in feature.
- **Set expectations in your sign up form or landing page.** Deliver what you said you would. If you promised weekly emails, and you send more frequently, your subscribers may become frustrated that they didn't sign up for that high frequency.
- **Make it easy for subscribers to unsubscribe.** If subscribers find that they no longer want to receive your emails, make it easy for them to unsubscribe. It's better to

have a smaller list of engaged subscribers than a larger list of unengaged subscribers.

- **Conduct regular list maintenance.** Launch a re-engagement campaign to reinvigorate subscribers that have stopped engaging with your messages. If you can't get them to re-engage with your content, it may be time to remove inactive subscribers.

Side note: Want to know more about email deliverability?
[Read our 6-step plan to escape the spam folder.](#)

Are you ready to kick-start your email marketing?

Email marketing is a powerfully simple way to promote your brand and build relationships with your audience.

Sign up for AWeber today — for FREE! No credit card required.

Already an AWeber customer? [Log in now](#) to start growing your business

About AWeber

For over 20 years, AWeber has been a market leader helping over 1,000,000 entrepreneurs and small businesses accelerate their growth through powerfully-simple email marketing tools.

Ready to get started? [Get Started with AWeber Free today!](#)