



Episode 17: 9 Ways to Grow your Email List

E17: 9 WAYS TO GROW YOUR EMAIL LIST

00:00 Announcer: Welcome to the Neon Noise Podcast. Your home for learning ways to attract more traffic to your website, generate more leads, convert more leads into customers and build stronger relationships with your customers. And now, your hosts, Justin Johnson and Ken Franzen.

00:17 Justin Johnson: Hey everybody, welcome to the Neon Noise Podcast where we decode marketing and sales topics to help you attract more visitors, generate more leads and ultimately close more customers. I am Justin and with me today is my co-host, Ken. Ken, how are you doing my friend?

00:36 Ken Franzen: I am doing well today, Justin. How about yourself?

00:39 Justin Johnson: Not too bad. Thank you for asking. I thought that today a good topic would be for growing your email list. An email list is one of the most important, if not the most important, tools that you have in your marketing tool box. And also, it's just one of those tools that is something that is under-utilized by quite a few folks. I don't know if that's something that you see yourself, but a lot of people just are not using their email lists as effective as they could be. One of the biggest issues that businesses have is just finding more email subscribers, wouldn't you say, Ken?

01:26 Ken Franzen: Oh yeah, no that's definitely a challenge whenever I bring up... The conversation comes up where would you invest the most? What areas? I always go, "Email, email."

01:39 Justin Johnson: Yeah.

01:39 Ken Franzen: "Build your email list, grow your email list, send emails, do everything you can." And the struggle they have is, that's fantastic.

01:46 Justin Johnson: How do I do it?

01:49 Ken Franzen: Let's buy some emails. And anyone with a credit card can go buy an email. But that's not what we're talking about here.



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01:55 Justin Johnson: Right.

01:56 Ken Franzen: We want to build lists of individuals that want to hear from the businesses, right?

02:03 Justin Johnson: Sure. Yep.

02:05 Ken Franzen: That means they opt in to the offers or subscribe to receive email updates.

02:16 Justin Johnson: Yep.

02:17 Ken Franzen: That's where we're gonna to get the best conversion rates, that's where we're gonna have that...

02:23 Justin Johnson: Most engagement.

02:25 Ken Franzen: Start building that relationship, the engagement. Absolutely. It's where the magic happens.

02:30 Justin Johnson: Awesome. Alright, so how do we grow that email list? I think that that's the main question that we get asked so often. So let's dive in, go through some simple tactics that are easy to employ, that you can employ to grow that list. First things first, the most basic routes to go and I think that a lot of people probably cover this but there's definitely some opportunity there is just having an email sign up form on your website. Go through and create a simple, single email sign up form on your website that just makes sure, asks the visitors if they want to enter an email address and receive messages from you. You can make the offer as simple as, "Receive email updates and tips from your company," to "Sign up for new blogs the moment that they are published."

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03:22 Justin Johnson: I think that a lot of people they just don't do this. If you've got a form that's converting on your website, this is another big one, if you have a form that's converting on your website, put a checkbox at the bottom of it that has, it is already checked off for receive email updates and tips from my company so that you can continue to reach out and nurture those individuals and send them your offers.

03:44 Ken Franzen: Yeah, there's definitely, this is the most simplistic in... You could do a couple of forms. That's a great add-in there about the checkbox. I like that option especially with a well-converting form. But definitely include even in the footer and the sidebar, right in the middle of your homepage. Make your homepage opt in. It's just a simple email sign up, subscribe. Another thing that you could do also, and I like this, some people might disagree with me, but employ use of a simple pop-up box when someone...

04:26 Justin Johnson: People...

04:28 Ken Franzen: Visits your website, it comes in and it says, "Hey, would you like to receive email updates from our company," or "Download our new guide on how to do x, y, z." Go to sumo.com. Sumo.com's got a lot of great tools that you can download a list builder tool that's excellent. They have a couple other tools that do some of the things we're going to talk about here for building a list. But they're real easy to implement add-ins for a website and they're very affordable as well. Sumo.com, we'll include a link in the show notes. But I just wanted to touch on that quick. Great ways to get that simple email sign up form on your website.

05:11 Justin Johnson: Yeah. I like the idea of when they come in, also when they're leaving the website as well. When they go to check that box off to have that same pop-up show up for entering the sign up.

05:26 Ken Franzen: Sure. Yeah. That's some of the advanced sophistication of some of the functionality in that Sumo.com list builder. You can add some behavioral conditions in there so that you can say I want it to pop up right when the session starts, right when they first come to your page, you can designate which pages you want the pop-up to show up on.

05:49 Justin Johnson: Yeah.



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05:49 Ken Franzen: Or you could say, if they're giving indications that they might be leaving the site then go ahead and circle them up with a, "Hey!

05:56 Justin Johnson: You forgot! Come back.

06:00 Ken Franzen: Exactly. Come back.

06:02 Justin Johnson: Alright, cool. How about running a contest? Who doesn't like to win stuff? Everybody likes to win stuff.

06:08 Ken Franzen: Absolutely.

06:09 Justin Johnson: Yeah. Create a content that offers a prize, something specific to a date maybe, make the prize something that's enticing related to whatever industry that you guys are in. Display just some type of a value to whatever that prize is that they could win.

06:30 Ken Franzen: Absolutely. It's awesome. Contests have a tendency to go viral and you wanna provide the option or the ability for them to be shared. You can even go so far as having that be... Allow for added entries in the winning the contest, where if you share this on social media you get an extra entry, if you tweet this you get an extra entry, if you email to five friends you get 10 extra entries. And you made mention, make it something similar to your industry. I think that's important to touch on. Why is that? You're trying to build an email list of individuals that want to learn more about what you do and are interested and likely your target persona, your buyer persona. Don't offer up a \$100 Amazon gift card because my grandma's gonna sign up for that. And my grandma's...

07:31 Justin Johnson: Everybody's signing up for that.

07:32 Ken Franzen: Absolutely.



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07:33 Justin Johnson: What about something more specific though, like a specific blog. You're wife's gluten-free right?

07:43 Ken Franzen: Yes. My wife is, not by choice, not to say that there's anything wrong with gluten-free dieting by choice, but she has to eat gluten-free because she has wheat allergies.

07:57 Justin Johnson: You guys know all kinds of gluten-free stuff.

08:00 Ken Franzen: More than I ever thought I'd like to know and so we do have some resources we've spied online. So yeah, there's a couple bloggers out there. You bring up a great point. One really cool offer, contest one of these bloggers could do, let's say that they were to offer up, let's say three... There's tons of gluten-free cookbooks now. This is definitely a booming industry and let's say that one of these bloggers offered up a contest where you could try to win three kick-ass gluten-free cookbooks. Which they're not as plentiful as regular cookbooks and finding recipes that good that taste, that have... That are tasty.

08:48 Justin Johnson: Yeah, there's a big audience for that.

08:50 Ken Franzen: Oh, absolutely. But that would be pointed. 'Cause not everybody one's going to be interested, no one's going to be interested in a gluten-free cookbook unless you truly have to or choosing to eat gluten-free and be in that market or a potential buyer for that interested person for that blog. So that's a great idea as far as a contest prize.

09:16 Justin Johnson: Yeah.

09:17 Ken Franzen: No. Good point.

09:18 Justin Johnson: More targeted. Not Amazon. Grandma's not gonna be probably clicking on that.



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09:23 Ken Franzen: No. No. Grandma probably stick away, unless grandma's gluten-free.

[laughter]

09:29 Justin Johnson: Alright, cool. How about offering content upgrades?

09:32 Ken Franzen: This is one of my favorites, we do this a lot and it's one of the easiest. So at this point hopefully, we are all jamming out some remarkable content. We're creating blog posts and videos and all sorts of things that just knock the socks off everything and anyone out there that's doing anything else. But this content, it's being read, it's being shared, it's being linked to, it's getting promoted, it's out there, so you're getting traffic to this content. So one way to build your email list is to go ahead and add in some calls to action, and make it related to the actual piece they're reading. So we call it a content upgrade, because what you've done is you presented a valuable piece of content in some sort, a remarkable piece of content, and then you say, "Hey, if you really like this, you should check out this next piece." So going back to the gluten-free blog example. Let's say that we've crafted this killer blog post on how challenging it is to bake gluten-free. Which it is, for desserts and things along those lines. There's some chocolate cake mixes that are killer that you wouldn't even be able to tell it's brownie stuff, but to...

10:51 Justin Johnson: It's gotta be more healthy too, I would think.

10:57 Ken Franzen: I don't know how much more... No, you still got sugar in there. There's still sugar in there.

11:00 Justin Johnson: Right. [chuckle] I'm not gluten-free, so I don't know.

11:02 Ken Franzen: You're not gluten-free, no. But the biggest challenge is just to get it to taste and really sort of doesn't have the notable difference, just the texture is off mostly. And so to have this kick-ass blog post that has all these tricks and everything else, people are gonna gravitate towards that.

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11:26 Justin Johnson: Yeah. You should get a lot of engagement there.

11:29 Ken Franzen: Sure. Absolutely. And so in the middle of that blog post, insert or at the end of that blog post, or somewhere on that page, have a call to action for an offer to download, let's say, five gluten-free dessert recipes.

11:45 Justin Johnson: Cool.

11:47 Ken Franzen: It won't be tied into... So you're reading about baking gluten-free, and now you can download five gluten-free recipes.

11:54 Justin Johnson: Dessert recipes by the way.

11:55 Ken Franzen: Dessert. Yes, absolutely, dessert.

11:56 Justin Johnson: I want that. I want the dessert recipes.

12:00 Ken Franzen: Sure. Sure, absolutely. So the CTA would go to a landing page and have a simple form asking for the email in exchange for the offer. Boom. You serve up that offer, you now have them, someone that is interested in gluten-free baking in your email list.

12:15 Justin Johnson: Love it. I'm gonna have to join that. You're gonna have to send me the gluten-free link for that blog.

12:23 Ken Franzen: Yeah, I definitely will. I definitely will.

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12:25 Justin Johnson: Alright, next up. How about creating a quiz or a calculator on your website?

12:31 Ken Franzen: Quizzes and calculators are awesome. They're a tool that we can create, develop, that's gonna provide some engagement for the site visitor so that when they're on their journey for looking for more information, they have something fun and interactive to play with on your website. And let's take a quiz, for example. Your quiz could have a series of questions. It'd be the same type of questions you'd ask during your normal back and forth with a client, helping them identify what is the best fit. What options, which products and services best fit their particular needs. And so these questions could be high level questions that mirror that and will help them come to the conclusion of, "Do I need option A or option B?" We previously covered this, but you kinda went through this when you bought a freezer from Home Depot, right?

13:28 Justin Johnson: Yeah, freezer. There was actually another one that was a hot tub, which was pretty cool. We just didn't have any idea what kind of hot tub we wanted and we went through the... It was basically a quiz that's asking you the different stuff, the different features and whatnot that you wanted in your hot tub. And the quiz, it was maybe 10 to 15 questions, nothing crazy at all. You go through it and it presents you with options, your three best hot tubs that you would purchase. And it was pretty cool. So not knowing what we wanted, it was a great tool for us to go on the website and interactive. It wasn't a sales rep calling us and allowed us to... I had to enter some information and enter an email address in order to go through that quiz but then they started sending me information about that particular hot tub so it worked out really well.

14:24 Ken Franzen: Alright. So they asked you for your... Because there's a couple of different ways you can go about collecting the email address with a quiz or a calculator.

14:30 Justin Johnson: Sure.

14:31 Ken Franzen: You just said you had to use a...

14:35 Justin Johnson: I had to enter my email address in initially in order to start taking the quiz, but I'm sure they could've flipped that and at the end they probably could have asked me for my email address in order to see the three hot tubs that I was interested in.

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14:54 Ken Franzen: Yeah, I guess you could hold hostage the answer for the email address.

15:00 Justin Johnson: No, either way it was a very effective tool for me to understand a little bit more about the different hot tubs.

15:10 Ken Franzen: Yeah, that's awesome. One other option you could go with is right, I've seen this done before, is where right before the answer is revealed or your options are presented, there's an opt-in page that maybe has an offer that's asking. So it's a little less of a...

15:29 Justin Johnson: Give me the results.

15:30 Ken Franzen: Less security or less confining. You can use the quiz freely without opting in for anything. It's more of a, "Hey, if you've gotten to this point and you really like what we have, there's some great tools before we reveal what's behind door number 1."

15:46 Justin Johnson: Door number 1.

15:48 Ken Franzen: Let me show you this shiny, gold ring here.

[chuckle]

15:52 Ken Franzen: So it's an opt-in offer opportunity for that. The other thing that we've all... I was gonna say we've all done this, it's kind of assumptive but a lot of us have seen the quizzes on social media that you take a quiz and you can share your results with...

16:13 Justin Johnson: Yep.



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16:14 Ken Franzen: Your social media audience. A lot of times these aren't business related they're, which country star would make the best spouse for you or something silly like that.

[chuckle]

16:27 Ken Franzen: And you go through and take the quiz and you find out that it's Brad Pitt.

16:33 Justin Johnson: I don't even know any country stars.

16:33 Ken Franzen: I know a couple just because I'm force-fed country music by my family.

[chuckle]

16:39 Ken Franzen: I don't particularly buy it, but I do know a couple. At any rate though, making the option to share your answers there, or just to share the quiz, for an example, of your hot tub, maybe it's, "Hey I just used this awesome calculator, tweet it. " Or, "These are my three options, which one do you think would fit me best?"

17:01 Justin Johnson: Yeah, that's a great idea.

17:01 Ken Franzen: And ask your social media audiences for maybe their weigh in on it. And have a link to that calculator and...

17:09 Justin Johnson: Additional eye balls. Right, that's a great idea.



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17:10 Ken Franzen: Yep, those eye balls might start taking the quiz. Quizzes or calculators they are fun things to do.

17:17 Justin Johnson: All good ideas. Calculators and quizzes work very, very well. Alright, what do you think about creating a joint email campaign with a similar business?

17:27 Ken Franzen: No, this is cool. This is something that is a great idea. And so think about all the different businesses out there that maybe aren't direct competitors to you but complement what you do. There's often times influencers in these industries who have audiences that they reach out to and what you can do here is kinda team up and promote one another to each other's audiences. So I find conferences as a good place to find these types of relationships. Obviously, if you don't have a conference you're attending coming up, you can go hunting on LinkedIn, Twitter, and different various places the Internet can take us to find and formulate relationships. But conferences are kinda cool 'cause you're face to face and you can grab a coffee or a beer and learn more about 'em in a lot quicker fashion than the back and forth sometimes the Internet or an email exchange might. But if you're like us, we go to conferences, we like to meet lots of people. And once you've identified someone that you think might be a good fit for this campaign or this type of strategy, just mention to them about your email list and how you're looking to grow it. Get a feel to see if they have a similar interest or not and if they'd be willing to explore ways that you could benefit from one another.

18:54 Justin Johnson: Yeah.

18:54 Ken Franzen: So let's say for example, let's say that you have a blog that helps working moms, busy working moms learn life hacks on how to balance their work life, their family life, their overall sanity. I know my wife, she is a working mom.

19:14 Justin Johnson: That's my wife.

19:15 Ken Franzen: Your wife as well is a working mom.

19:17 Justin Johnson: She's gonna want to read that blog.



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19:19 Ken Franzen: Sure, absolutely. And so, you're the writer or the owner of this blog and you meet someone at a conference or through an Internet exchange or mutual acquaintance that specializes in, let's say yoga and Pilates, something that my wife also is interested in. And this person offers online classes that can be, you subscribe to it. You can watch them at home. You can do these at home and they're new classes daily in something that keeps them fresh and new and everything else of that nature. Also something that my wife would be interested in. So, here we have two very similar... They're different. They're not competitors but they serve the same audience.

20:04 Justin Johnson: Complement each other.

20:04 Ken Franzen: Exactly. And so what you could do is you could craft a couple emails that you would send to your own list talking... Maybe you talk about the interaction like, "Hey, I bumped into this person, they gave me a sample of their course. I checked this course out. This course is fantastic. I'm telling you, all my followers, all my listeners, all my audience check this course out. You are gonna love it. And because I met this individual, they told me that they would give my audience a discount on their first month's subscription," something along those lines to say, "Hey, entice." Obviously if you're gonna endorse someone, you wanna make sure they're legitimate. And of course, you're gonna do your due diligence. I don't think you'd probably back anyone just for the heck of it but stranger things have happened. You wanna make sure that though, you don't recommend a bad apple. You just don't wanna lose that credibility you worked so hard to build up your audience. And so, make sure that you go through and you understand. But everyone, I'm sure, is gonna do a fantastic job vetting that process.

21:11 Justin Johnson: Right. Cool, cool, cool. What about hosting a webinar?

21:16 Ken Franzen: Yeah. You like webinars?

21:18 Justin Johnson: I love webinars.

21:20 Ken Franzen: Me too. Me too. And the one thing about webinars is, I always like to learn something new and usually...



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21:29 Justin Johnson: There's huge groups of people all in one spot.

21:31 Ken Franzen: Well, that's just it. I'm always blown away by how many people are attending these webinars and they're from all over the world.

21:38 Justin Johnson: Yup.

21:39 Ken Franzen: And the nice thing about it is whenever you set up for a webinar, you have to enter an email address to register for it. And so, entering that email address is a great, great process or a great, great way to build your list. So, host a webinar. Put together a killer idea about a topic in your industry that people are just falling over themselves to learn more about. And build a lot of hype. This is gonna require some promotion. Maybe you could even go ahead and take a similar strategy or similar approach like we just discussed, and co-host a webinar with someone that you meet, that's in a similar industry. Now, of course you're gonna invite everyone that's in your audience to attend the webinar, which is gonna cross promote to them and they would do the same to you plus the promotion you can do outside to get brand new eyeballs to both of you into the group, into the webinar.

22:38 Ken Franzen: And then in the webinar itself, have a killer slide deck and some really, really, really great points. Really drive home some value. Over-deliver. Make them feel like they've just invested, the time that they've invested is well spent, that it wasn't wasted. That they're not gonna bail halfway through because you're reading to them from the slide deck. I don't wanna get into a whole presentation strategies but really do a killer job of the webinar. Because if you do leave them craving more then you're gonna definitely get more opt-ins for different products, maybe if you're selling something soft sell 'em or try to... You're pitching something there at the end of the webinar because it's a selling opportunity as well. And even if you can convert a couple percentage points of, a couple percentage of the people in the webinar, that's money in your pocket.

23:36 Justin Johnson: Definitely. Love webinars. Ton of people there. Very, very effective. You can get the eyeballs and visitors to that actual event. What do you think about viral loops on opt-in pages?

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23:51 Ken Franzen: So viral loops, this is great. It gives you the ability to leverage that social media audience of the person that just opted in. So here's how this works. You have an offer, someone signs up, they say "Great, yeah. Ken, I want the e-book on the eight things you should consider when hiring a website designer." And they go to the thank you page that has the actual download link on it. But also on that page, you have a content upgrade there, where if you share the offer that you just downloaded, or you email it to a friend, you could get that next even better offer, download it as well. So what that does is, yeah, this is kind of a piggyback off of already getting someone to subscribe. What you're doing is just leveraging your exposure. Say, "Alright Bob, thanks for downloading, now I want you to tell all your friends about what you just downloaded, so I'll give you... Here's another carrot I'm dangling in front of you, if you share this with your friends in hopes that..." It boils back to more eyeballs and just getting your information in front of others that you normally wouldn't. So, viral loops, opt-in pages, I really...

25:16 Justin Johnson: Work great.

25:17 Ken Franzen: Yeah. I love the idea.

25:19 Justin Johnson: Alright, so here's another one that I think that people miss out on quite a bit. It's just placing links in your email signature. A lot of people do it, a lot of people don't. If you're not using any particular email signature yet, do it. It's extremely easy. You can start plugging information about your offers, you can plug information about particular blog posts that you have coming up. It's very effective. I've seen a handful of clients that have gone from not doing that, to publishing information about their blogs and different offers and have built large lists simply off of doing something, and it's extremely easy to implement and update.

26:04 Ken Franzen: Well exactly. We email. How many emails do you send a day? I send to quite a few.

26:09 Justin Johnson: A ton.

26:10 Ken Franzen: Sure. And a lot of the people that we're sending emails to, aren't subscribing. They're not subscribed to our list yet. So, give them the opportunity. It's just a simple link, you don't have to do anything extra. Just set it up inside the signature and boom, it is there.

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26:27 Justin Johnson: So, writing guest posts on influencer's blogs is also pretty important.

26:33 Ken Franzen: Yeah. This kinda goes back to the idea of leveraging another's audience. And so, often times great blogs, who have large audiences, they're looking for others to contribute content. They're really trying to feed the hunger of their audience, so they're always looking for great writers to...

27:00 Justin Johnson: Additional copy.

27:01 Ken Franzen: Exactly, contribute. And so they want unique content exclusive to their blog. And so, you can approach or sometimes they might approach you if you have a noted blog and you're a good writer. They'll allow guest posts. Before a guest post, it's typical to allow an insertion of a link or some type of signature, author, line, maybe you can include a CTA of some sorts and see what they would allow you to do. But in this, you have the opportunity to gain exposure from, again, an influencer audience. So in doing so, you wanna bring your A game here. Not that you wouldn't create a piece of killer content, but there's a couple things here. One, you wanna create an awesome piece of content that's going to be your guest post. And you're a guest in someone's home so you wanna be the best...

28:06 Justin Johnson: Yeah, bring your A game. Make it awesome.

28:09 Ken Franzen: Two, you have an audience here that you get to audition for. And say, "Hey, I'm also relevant. Obviously the owner of this blog is allowing me to communicate with you, but here's how killer my content is. How much of a thought leader I am in this industry." And really give them this urge of, "I have to follow this person, too. Because what they're saying is so on point and it makes such sense. So you're gonna grab their attention and hopefully convert them into becoming one of your followers. So guest posting I think is awesome. It's one of those things where you have to go out and find those influencers and formulate those relationships. But it's worth the time to put in.

28:58 Justin Johnson: Well that's a wrap for today. While there are many different ways that you can go about growing your email list, these are a handful of ways to get you started. Go out and start growing your audience. Until next time, this is Ken and Justin with Neon Noise. Make it a great day.



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29:13 Announcer: Thank you for listening to this episode of the Neon Noise podcast. Did you enjoy the podcast? If so, please subscribe, share with a friend, or write a review. We wanna cover the topics you wanna hear. If you have an idea for a topic you'd like Justin and Ken to cover, connect with us on Twitter at Neon Goldfish, or through our website at neongoldfish.com.



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