

List Building

Leading Marketers' First Love



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Overview

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A rookie marketer may often ask, what's the use of steep targets and bags full of business cards that might lead someday to a little boat down the crowded eastern seaboard? Is it really worth the efforts? To however many their numbers grow to, 80% of the marketing is sure to go to the dumps at any point of time.

Only 20% of the prospects will actually listen. But WHICH twenty – that's the question! So, it's the hundred that you have to hold onto with equal intensity to reach your hard-earned twenty. And that is where list building runs in.

A well-informed marketer knows that a good email list can even give a country a run for its money. If you are close to White House gossips, you'll know how often the 'gold dust' contacts database of the current President's prized donors and supporters are doing the rounds. A rift between the President and his Party also seems imminent, says officials close to the bureaucratic brigade.

Even if it handles the most serious business in the country, the White House is no commercial corporate. But sadly, your company is. And it takes more than just waving hands and kissing first-borns to get your required support of customers. To build a list that fuels your Lamborghini dreams, only sure-shot strategies will get you through. Frequent brush-ups of your marketing pawns require a lot of strain, unless you have a magic wand that magically shorten the work-cycle of a busy Marketing Head.

This document secures latest trends of lead generation and contact list building. A clear-cut checklist for high-end officials to supervise the customer generation process has also been provided for at the end.

His Lamborghini doesn't run on petrol – it runs on L-E-A-D-S. Once that agenda is clear for your next board meeting, you're half-way through. Otherwise, if you are already warming the seat of a crack-shot CMO, you know how shaky it can get without that valuable commodity (read: necessity). Time to get what you want – your way. List building strategies for the strong-hearted...

You KNOW List Building is Important – but HOW?

As a decision maker, you might often skip tiny details in wake of looking at the big picture most of the times. As a result, the varied inputs from your many-levelled management about outcome(s) from individual departments might fall on deaf ears. List building – online or offline – is one of those prospects in your company which is directly connected to the customer generation cycle. It needs your direct attention and a channel for direct authority that's why is required.

You can start by being abreast with the nitty-gritties of the list building process. The first step is learning the lists' need and their vital functionalities in the corporate machinery.

Adding Value through List Building

Knowledge-intensive productions and technological developments have taken marketing to a whole different level in the new millennium.

Such products that:

- Cross a complex knowledge-intensive production process
- Integrate superior and unique structural and functional applications
- Provide competitive advantage in the market
- Potentially address regional challenges

are termed as Value Added Materials (VAM).

Things as small as company contact databases may not fetch the supreme title, yet that doesn't make it fail to add value (and customers) to the concerned industries. Being an important part of customer acquisition, a fairly tested and organized contact list remains vital in arranging proper client profiles. The extensive procedure has made its own place in the marketing arena – namely, Data Marketing.

Do Emails Impact as Much as Social Platforms?

'Social media' is the new catchword in the marketing arena these days.

It is:

- User friendly – even for marketers!
- Has a much higher visit rate, and
- Converges a diverse demographic of people.

The ideal solution for every market – as it may so seem. So should you start your list building in the social media?

Technical advances of marketing in social media, website analytics, RSS feeds and other online jargons might surprise you with their quick and massive accessibility. But a Facebook page is still a long-way off to earn its place as a substitute to an email account. In the B2B circle, a solid email contact database is still considered as a valued asset.

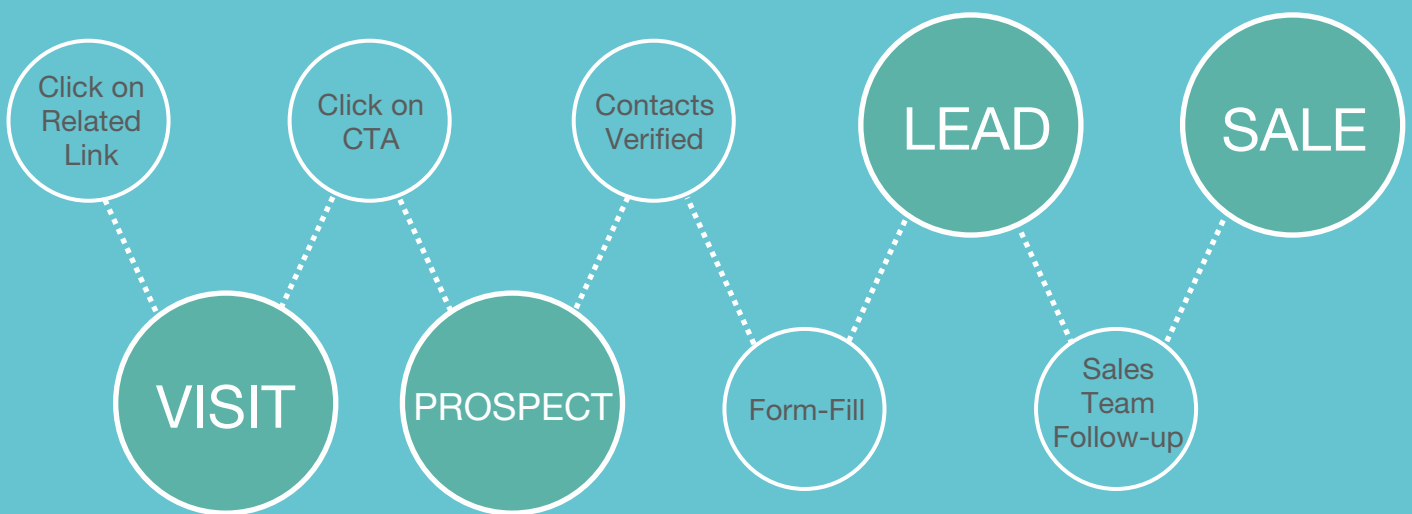
Creating the Ideal Subscription Gateway

Leads vs. Lists – What's the Ruckus!

Frankly, creating viewership doesn't always guarantee subscriptions – and so forth – leads. Apart from creativity in content and designing, the marketing element of your website also needs unique inputs. As a chief marketer, hence it's one of your responsibility must sit with the developers more often than is expected. Your subordinates need to work in tandem with each other to bring in successful leads from online platforms.

Let's first get the obvious thing out of the way. Leads and visits - they're two different things. Lists can be of leads, prospects, verified contacts, old client databases, cold-calls - any of them, or more. They can be structured on varieties of criteria. Leads, on the other hand, are clean verified contacts who are ready for the sales pitch. But leads are not customers either - not yet. Only after the purchasing do they become a sale (customer). Visitor-Prospect-Lead-Customer - with that concludes your sales conversion cycle.

Breadcrumbs follow:



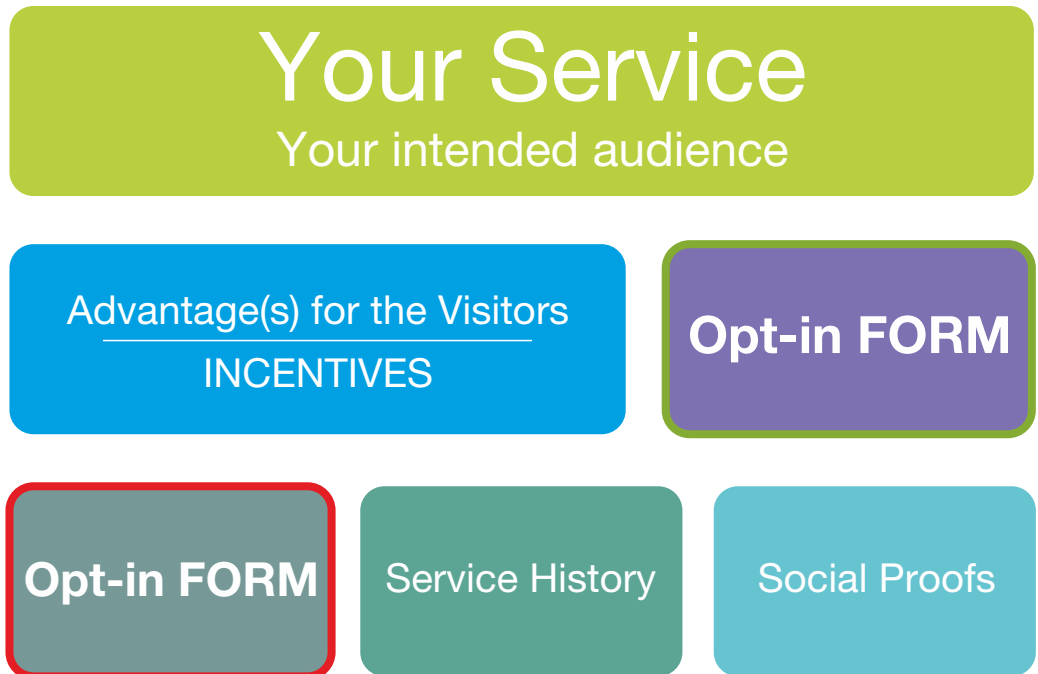
Source: Span Global Services

Feedback Collection:

Most of B2B clients are dissatisfied by online vendors from the lack of information available on their respective websites. Proper information on the company, their area(s) of service and contact information is vital in making an impression in the B2B market.

Your 'About Us' page also can't sit idle. Direct linking to the page from the company homepage with thorough highlights can work wonders for website click-throughs. An appropriate feedback form on the 'About Us' page can be the lead generation tool that you are looking for. Form-fills on this page have the advantage of guaranteed interest-factor from the prospect's side. Statistics prove that people with genuine queries about the business mostly put it through the 'About Us' page.

An ideal 'About Us' template can be like the one mentioned:



Source: SocialTriggers

As highlighted, the Opt-In forms are there at every corner (not at an alarming amount though). If the client wants to judge the capability of the business, he/she can opt-in. Want detailed information: Opt-in! Want to avail your service: Opt-in! Apart from that, basic information has been already provided in the page to leave no doubt in the visitor's minds about your company. The interest factor must be invoked through incentives.

The Conversion Mechanism:

Are you confident about your website's content? Then put a sign-up form at the end of each article. A short, simple, prominent sign-up! When a reader has read through a whole article it is safe to assume that the reader has liked your content. And at the end of reading, he/she will be looking to share your document on relevant fields. Studies prove the tendency of B2B clients to share relevant and useful documents.

The reader's interest is confirmed. Now it's the time to engage them by asking them to fill in their email addresses. Thus, sign-up form! Or even an opt-in form could also be an option. Email sign-ups could be static or could be a little more aggressive – like in the form of a pop-up.

Side-Bar Set Up:

Abundance of choices confuse customers. Since it's more convenient for them, they simply switch sites to get what they want. In a marketing perspective, if your visitors are choosing other sites over yours – it's bad. One way to end that is NOT to overwhelm the visitor with choices.

Keep it simple. The right-hand side-bar is one of the most important aspects of your websites as it provides all of its major features. This can be both be a good or a bad thing – depending on how you manage it. Answers to the previous questions will provide you an ideal side-bar outlook.

Ask yourself three questions:

1. How many section(s) does your side-bar have?
2. Does your newsletter sign-up feature at the top?
3. Have you included social links?

Ans -1:

Featuring your services is good – but don't choke the reader with too many things to read. The whole point of a side-bar is to be brief. If you want elaboration, separate webpages are there for that. This is especially important for big businesses who have hundreds of webpages to portray their credibility. A side-bar column should consist of not more than four sections, three being ideal. Content stuffing is not the solution. The lesser you put, more the people understand, and more they act!

An Ideal Side-Bar

+ Sign-up Tab

+ Popular Posts/Features (Top 3)

+ Search Bar

+ Ads (only if supremely necessary)

Source: CopyBlogger

Ans -2:

Newsletters are *the* most valuable aspects in terms of email salability. What is the one thing that visitors would at least expect in their inboxes once they're signing up? Answer: Newsletters! So, it's better to pack them up right at the beginning. A small newsletter sign-up at the top of the side-bar is must.

Ans -3:

Social website links do promote websites – but only for the sake of credibility building – not lists. It is just an easy and hassle-free way to show how popular you are. Just add your social media hit counter at the bottom of the side-bar. Careful! This technique can back-fire if you lack a big number of followers. So, judge your position in the social media cautiously beforehand.

The intention behind list building is simple. Same for execution! Experts suggest how:

Engagement : *Engaging contacts on an individual level – establishing reliability*

People react to emails differently than to other online media interactions. After formal letters, email only has been able to somewhat hold the trait of formal communications in the virtual world. An email account is a place where consumers take things seriously and would address matters which are only of high importance to them.

Plugging the Gaps – Check-List for CMOs

Action:

An email is the big ticket for any marketer to engage clients in a one-to-one platform. Featuring as a helpful and enthusiastic (NOT over-enthusiastic) provider attracts the attention of the reader. Readers feel only those businesses reliable who take their business seriously. Otherwise, it's just a waste of time for both you and the recipient.

Personalization : *Pitching multiple products/service through a personalized approach*

When we say serious, we don't mean a grumpy stoic approach. Genuine interest in the client should reflect in the content and approach of the email. To the recipient, the sender is an unknown person – a stranger. So, unless he/she is confident about your knowledge on his/her requirements and your efficiency to solve their situation, it's not going to work out.

Action:

An email should become an organic communication which invokes a conversation from the recipient's side. Remember, a person's business concern almost never consists of a single facet. Put this fact into the mail to pitch multiple products/services. It doesn't only provide you a platform to pitch a number of products, but also gives the client an option to choose.

Ownership : *Growing and owning the customer network rather than renting it from others*

Building a network on G+ or other social media may solve your reachability issues for the time being but as a marketer you have to depend on the third-parties blindfolded. If suddenly one day Facebook wants to disappear, so goes your communication platform. Your prized contacts also become invalid. And till they the time they do exist, a rented contact platform also owns the list that you so proudly claim as yours.

Action:

Email is a separate medium – operated from a secluded domain of your own. Once you build a contact base here, it's yours. You can grow and customize your lists according to your business needs.

Security : *Securing your contacts from the constantly changing search engine policies*

Creating an audience base through blog posts and search rankings is one of the most effective ways of online promotions. Yet, such products lie at the mercy of search engine policies which change more frequently with each new update. Email databases act as a back-up link to your loyal readers – a post-apocalypse policy, as one might suggest!

Action:

Attach social site links in your emails. But not the other way around! Let emails serve the basic communication platform for your business. Customers and subscribers feel more confident about the company's credibility with a soberly designed mail.

Effectivity : *Increasing effective customer reach – not just increasing followers*

Facebook late at night. Emails in the morning. That's how the trend is going these days. But when it comes to serious business, email is the most preferred medium. Experts say that emails can even drive 80-90% website traffic. While social media collects followers, emails attract loyal readers and clients who have genuine interest in your business.

Action:

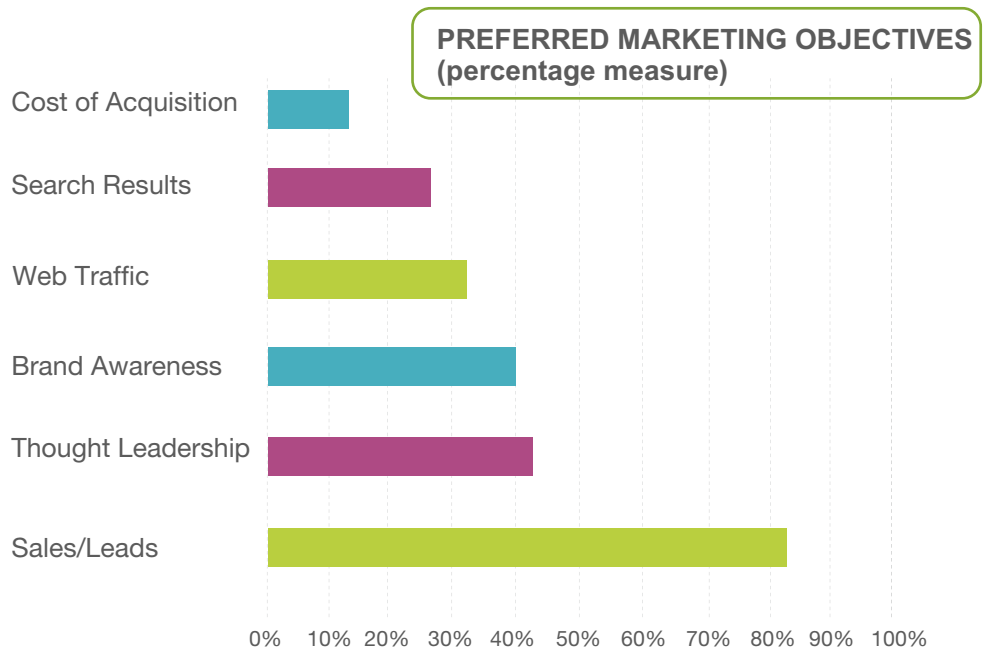
Businesses should project their image through email marketing.

- *Inform the readers of a new product in advance, with repeated follow-ups*
- *Mention efforts that you put into the business – promote the brand*
- *Testimonials of other customers builds reliability*

Companies still lack in applying these strategies effectively. But the ones who have built their email lists, all wish they should've started sooner.

Ending Line:

We know that chief marketers such as you give leads and sales the highest importance. Statistics show:



Source: CMS Wire

The content seems fine only till the time it fetches expected results. But shouting on subordinates won't solve the problem. They might not see the big picture of the business like you – a big disadvantage on their side. Guide them! As decision makers go on with their big jobs, valued inputs on decisive marketing plans change courses of businesses. The journey up – or down – is just a matter of choice. Make the right one. The better list you build, the better prospects you keep for the company's future – and for your Lamborghini!

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About Us:



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