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**Optimal Email Marketing from Opt-In Gift to Email Automation**

A large email list is crucial to your business. You don’t own your followers on social media, and the social media site can kick you off their platform at any time. But you do own your email list. If you have a 1000 email subscribers who know and trust you, then you’ve got loads of potential product purchases.

**Definitions**

Opt-in gift or lead magnet—the gift you give someone to subscribe to your email list.

Email automation sequence—an automated series of emails sent to your subscriber once they sign up for your opt-in gift.

Email broadcast—a single email you send to your list once. For example, if your course is on sale, you email your list and let them know.

Segmented email lists—are a targeted list that has been created based upon the subscribers interest (usually from the opt-in gift). Sectioned lists provide a more personalized email marketing experience for the subscriber. For example, I would not want to combine my healthy living email subscribers with my author list because they are not authors.

**Core Values**

Values are your beliefs that make you act a certain way. Differences exist between your attitude and core values. For me, a core value means living a healthy lifestyle. But I believe wheat, dairy, and soy are not good for you. Beliefs change, but core values usually do not. If you identify your core values and incorporate them into your subscriber journey, you will attract people with similar values.

**Know Your Audience**

To get to know your reader better and help them with their issues, answer these questions.

What’s the biggest struggle your audience faces right now?

Why is this a struggle for them?

**Subscriber Journey**

Figure out how you want your readers to join your email list and the journey you want to take them on, so they learn who you are. Think about how you can connect to the reader and build a relationship with them through your email sequence. How can you benefit them during their journey with you? If they were sitting in your living room what would you tell them?

Ultimately, you want your subscriber to know, love, and trust you. The subscriber journey begins with your lead magnet (opt-in gift). You could have a lead magnet for one journey like my healthy living path, and another one for another segment of readers such as author coaching. Offer an enticing gift so the reader believes it is worth giving you their email address.

After you get their email address, send the subscriber the free gift followed by a welcome email sequence of 2–3 emails within one week. Thereafter, email your list every 7­–10 days so they know who you are.

Maybe you prefer to send a newsletter that is not automated. This newsletter could include seasonal topics, tips, or what is going on in your life. A successful fiction author, [Laurel Blount](https://laurelblountbooks.com/), creates a newsletter with categories: book news, giveaway, recipe, tips, and a contest (next month the email lets them know who won). Another fiction author, [Tina Radcliffe](https://www.tinaradcliffe.com/newsletters), writes a successful newsletter.

For example, I started with free printable appendices from my book, [*7 Steps to Get Off Sugar and Carbohydrates*](https://amzn.to/3hyXAVE) as my opt-in gift. In my email sequence, I used one of the seven steps in seven emails as part of my email automation.

**Opt-In Gift**

Have your ideal reader in mind when creating your opt-in gift. Some great ideas include checklists, quizzes, videos, audios, guides, and PDFs. The gift should be short and creative. A conversion rate of 1 percent is good, and 2 percent is excellent. So you want one person out of 100 viewers who see your lead magnet to subscribe to your list.

**Gift Title**

What result does your gift provide the reader? Put those results in the title of your gift. Use checklists, bullets, and numbers under 10. Use the number 1, 2, 3, 5 or 7. Don’t go over 10. Use words like *dramatic* and *simple*.

Your lead magnet should be at the top of your website, so viewers do not have to scroll down to see it. Use a time delayed pop-up to advertise your free gift because they work. Delay the pop-up for 15 to 30 seconds.

Initially, create something simple for your gift like a PDF and see if people download it. If they do, then create an audio, video, guide, or e-book to go with it. You don’t want to invest a lot of time creating an opt-in gift that no one downloads. Match your lead magnet with your brand.

Your gift should circle back to what you sell. For example, I publish healthy living books, so my lead magnets [Reboot Your Metabolism](https://susanuneal.com/7DayChallenge) and [Gluten Intolerance Quiz](http://glutenintolerancequiz.com/) work well. I don’t sell meal plans, so having a meal plan lead magnet wouldn’t work.

**Lead Magnet Link Name, Landing Page, and Email Marketing Service**

Buy a domain name to use as a link for your opt-in gift. For example, I have <http://candiquiz.com/> and <https://glutenintolerancequiz.com/>. It is easier to remember CandiQuiz.com than SusanUNeal.com/Candi-Quiz. These short names provide a natural avenue for me to tell listeners about them when I am interviewed on podcasts.

Next, you need to choose your email marketing service. Some good ones include Constant Contact, Active Campaign (please use my [affiliate link](https://www.activecampaign.com/?_r=Y7CFTL92)), ConvertKit (my affiliate link [**https://convertkit.com/?lmref=5iAP3w**](https://convertkit.com/?lmref=5iAP3w)), MailerLite, and Klaviyo**.** Most email providers give a free version for you to use until you get to a high number of contacts. You don’t want to pay for an expensive subscription service until you build your list and make money from selling your products.

If you need assistance setting up your opt-in gift landing page and connecting it to your email service, please contact my virtual assistant, Alyssa Avant at [alyssa@alyssaavantandcompany.com](mailto:alyssa@alyssaavantandcompany.com), and tell her Susan Neal referred you. She is a wiz at technology.

**Who, What, and How**

Before you create your lead magnet you need to know WHO is your audience, WHAT they want to achieve, and HOW they can achieve it. For example, the gift landing page could say:

Hello (WHO),

Would you like lose weight (WHAT) with 7 simple steps (HOW)? Learn how with my 7-Day Challenge (Opt-in) by (Call to action).

**Welcome Email Sequence**

After you send the subscriber the free gift, send them a welcome email sequence. This consists of 2–3 emails within one week. Tell them how your emails will benefit them. Give them another freebie or two. Thereafter, email your list every 7­–10 days so they know who you are.

**Newsletter Fundamentals**

An email newsletter or automation is communication that contains beneficial information for subscribers. It should be emailed every 7–10 days and could include a story, advice, or anything useful.

If you’re going to automate your newsletter, then all content needs to be evergreen (continually relevant)

Also, I invite my subscribers to join my Facebook Group: [7 Steps to Get Off Sugar, Carbs, and Gluten.](https://www.facebook.com/groups/184355458927013) In this group, I answer their questions and get to know them a little more.

At some point in your emails offer them a product whether it’s your book, course, or an affiliate link to someone else’s product. Take my [Course: Create & Sell Digital Products](https://cipa.podia.com/) to develop more of your own products. For example, I sell the pamphlet, [How to Prevent, Improve, & Reverse Alzheimer’s and Dementia](https://susanuneal.com/product/how-to-prevent-improve-and-reverse-alzheimers-and-dementia-pdf) for $5. That’s more profit than I receive for my best seller, [*7 Steps to Get Off Sugar and Carbohydrates*](https://amzn.to/3WZX0oN)*.*

Don’t send offers with no freebies and no relationship building. Edie Melson uses the 5 to 1 rule for social media, and this could apply to your emails as well.

**Newsletter/Email Themes**

Many of my email topics come from my books and blogs. Focus on one theme at a time in an email. Keep it simple. Have you determined the keywords for your blog and website yet? If not, take the Course: Blogging to Drive Traffic to Your Website at [CIPA.Podia.com](http://cipa.podia.com/). You can determine email themes from your website’s keyword topics. For example, [my website](https://susanuneal.com/)’s keywords are candida, low-sugar diet, low-carb diet, and gluten-free. So my newsletter topics focus on these issues and how to resolve them for the reader.

Use the search engine optimization keyword in your opt-in gift title and email subject titles too. These terms are what readers search for on the internet. We don’t want to go to all the trouble of creating newsletters and blogs that no one wants to read. That’s why determining highly searched keywords is smart.

**Email Creation Tips**

The following email tips should help make your emails visually pleasing and enticing:

1. Keep it brief—300 words.
2. Use 16 font size, as it is easy to read for newsletters.
3. Preserve lots of white space.
4. Create a beautiful, branded banner for the top of all your newsletters.
5. Add a personal photo of yourself.

**Segment Your Email List**

You get higher email open rates with segmented lists. You need to segment your email lists based upon the opt-in gift you offered your readers. For example, I have a healthy living email from my Candi Quiz gift and an author email sequence from my free media kit offer.

In the email system, create tags when people download or purchase something so you can figure out who might be interested in a future product in the same genre.

Collect first names only.

**Ghosted Email List**

If you have an email list but have not emailed them in a while, do the following. First, create a series of emails, so you don’t just send one email and ghost them again. In your first email, explain how life has been busy and give them your opt-in gift that corresponds with this email subscriber list. Then start the email automated sequence with your next few emails sent every 7–14 days. Add to your calendar to create at least one, if not two, emails for the automation per month. Email marketing is vital.

**Grow Your Email List**

You can grow your email list by writing guest blogs and articles. Add a link to your free gift at the bottom of the blog or in your bio. You are welcome to submit a guest blog for my Healthy Living Series Blog at <https://susanuneal.com/healthy-living-blog> or Christian Indie Publishing Blog at <https://christianpublishers.net/blog/>. Both websites rank high on Google and have loads of monthly viewers. Email [SusanNeal@Bellsouth.net](mailto:SusanNeal@Bellsouth.net) and request the blogging guidelines.

**Email Open Rates**

For 2022, the average industry standard email open rate was 21.5 percent with click-through rates of 2.3 percent (<https://www.campaignmonitor.com/resources/guides/email-marketing-benchmarks/>). Some parameters for email open rates include:

* 17–20 percent=okay
* 20–25 percent=good
* Over 25 percent=excellent
* 30 percent and higher=exceptional

The first email someone gets when they receive an opt-in gift is usually your highest email open rate. The open rate for your gift should be 50 percent or greater; if it is not, edit your subject line. You may get a higher unsubscribe rate with the opt-in gift email too.

If someone has not opened your email for 12 months, you may want to unsubscribe them. This increases your open rate and decreases your email service charges (as charges are based on the number of email subscribers). However, first send them a brief email and ask them if they want to receive your newsletter or would they prefer to unsubscribe. If they don’t answer or open the email, unsubscribe them.

**Evaluation**

Each email provider has email open rates, click-link rates, and unsubscriber rates. After a couple of months, check to see if people have downloaded your lead magnet. A good conversion rate is 1–2 percent. If your conversion (website visitors/subscribers) is less than that, create a new opt-in gift.

Next, determine your email open rate? If it is less than 20 percent try a new subject line title.

Check to see if your subscribers are clicking on your links. Hopefully they are buying your books, courses, and opening links in your email.

Finally, check your unsubscribe rate for each email. Is there is one email where you had a large number unsubscribe? Edit that email.

**Next Steps**

1. Create your opt-in gift.
2. Create the landing page.
3. Buy a domain name for your lead magnet.
4. Choose an email marketing provider.
5. Connect your lead magnets landing page to your email marketing provider.
6. Create an automated welcome email sequence (2–3 emails in 1 week).
7. Create either a newsletter or automated email sequence (sent every 7–10 days).
8. Track and evaluate your email rates at least quarterly.

**Email Monetization**

We need to support our publishing ministry financially to keep our business viable. Four ways to monetize a newsletter or email automation include:

1. Increase website views and sell ads on your website.
2. Sell your products and services.
3. Sell other products and services through affiliate links.
4. Find newsletter sponsors to pay you.

Most of all, your newsletter or email automation must provide value, fun, and relevant information. When it does, readers will stay on your list. The more subscribers you have, the more profitable your list will be.

**Increase Website Views**

You can increase your website views by adding links to your email. I send subscribers to my website’s blogs that pertain to the email topic. You could place ads on your website too and make money from those ads.

**Offer Your Products and Services**

You don’t want to hit up your subscribers with frequent offers. How often should you include an offer in your newsletter? Use the 5 to 1 ratio or if you send a weekly newsletter provide one offer per month.

A 1–2 percent purchase rate is typical. So if you have 100 people on your list you can expect one person to buy your offer. Test your offers to see if they work. Try different subject lines and formats for the newsletter offer.

May God bless your email subscribers’ journey with you!

Susan Neal

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