

THE AGENT COLLABORATIVE WITH COLTON WHITNEY

12 Ways to Grow Your Contact List Part 1

Despite the boom in social media over the last decade, email users still outnumber social media users by a landslide.

Email marketing continues to be the most effective way to reach out to your prospects/leads and clients, which means your contact list needs to be in tip-top shape and continually growing.

It's likely you already have a list of contacts that have given you implied permission to email (because they attended an open house or were referred by a friend) and a mix of others you need to have opt-in to receive your emails. This list might be in your current CRM or scattered throughout the contacts in your phone, your personal email, and social media accounts.

Over time, you've probably accumulated a ton of email addresses, now how do you best optimize and grow that list to its fullest potential?

Scrub, Scrub Scrub!

The first step is to compile all of your contacts and scrub that list. Your contacts' email addresses frequently need to be updated as they switch jobs, get married and change their last name/email address, or ditch their old Yahoo accounts. And yes, this means you'll probably have to remove some emails from your list, which sounds counterproductive but don't be afraid to delete irrelevant contacts that might harm your email marketing success.

Some examples of emails to scratch off your list are invalid and duplicated email addresses, unsubscribes, and hard bounce emails (i.e. blocked email addresses). Cleaning up your list will not only improve your deliverability but will also help you properly segment your lists.

Once you have a rejuvenated list, there are plenty of ways to build upon it and keep your numbers moving onward and upward.

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12 Ways to Grow Your Contact List Part 2

1. Promise Consistent Value

If you want people to continue to subscribe to your emails, you have to provide them with valuable content consistently to keep them engaged and craving more. Let your subscribers know what type of emails they can expect from you. They'll be more likely to share their email address if they know what's in it for them.

2. Offer Incentive

Many people are reluctant to subscribe to yet another email list for fear of being listed as SPAM. In addition to promising them value, offer some sort of incentive for those who provide you with their email address. This could be a drawing for a gift card or a free consultation with an interior designer. Everyone loves to be a winner!

3. Contact Form on Your Website

One of the easiest ways to capture leads and grow your email list is to add a contact form tab to your homepage. Once they see the valuable content you offer above, they'll look to you as their industry expert.

Pro-tip: Limit the number of questions on the form to just three or four – name, email, if they're buying or selling, and what town or city they live in so you can set up targeted emails. Asking too many questions upfront could potentially scare them off.

4. Segment Your Lists

Don't send every lead every email. Create varying types of email campaigns based on interest, so first-time homebuyers aren't receiving content about why they should list their house before the spring.

Create lists based on where the majority of your subscribers fall such as prospective buyers/sellers, past clients, those who only want to receive emails on new listings, etc.

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12 Ways to Grow Your Contact List Part 3

5. Lead Generation Magnet on Website

Add a link to your lead capture page for your buyer and seller guides on your website (keeping current matters - has free ones for you to use when you subscribe to their service) Those who land on this page and fill in their contact information will automatically receive a copy of the guide, and you'll receive a notification so you can follow up with them directly.

6. Exclusive Offer/Content

If you create your own local update or monthly market report, offer this exclusively to your email subscribers. Add a description of the report(s) on your website so they know what they'll receive with a link to subscribe.

7. Saved Searches on Website

Many agents provide Multiple Listing Service (MLS) access on their websites. If you're one of them, including the option for a saved search so visitors can enter in their email to receive new listings.

Pro-tip: Include a button to "email to a friend" on your listing pages so your website visitors can share listings with others.

8. Use Your Blog to Collect Subscribers

If you have your own blog or use your KCM Blog on your website, include a link at the bottom of the post for your visitors to subscribe.

9. Facebook Business Page

If you don't have the "sign up" call to action (CTA) button visible on your business page, add it now! Make it super easy for new visitors and those who currently "like" your page to join your email list by directing them to your contact form.

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12 Ways to Grow Your Contact List Part 4

10. Open Houses

Print and bind a copy of your Buyers Guide and display it at your open house next to your sign-in sheet or iPad. Both ways are great for capturing email addresses, however, downloading a sign-up form app on your iPad or tablet will allow you to automatically sync those contacts to your email list, whether you use a CRM or Gmail/Outlook.

After the open house, follow up with everyone who signed in with a copy of your guide. This goes above and beyond just handing out a fact sheet about the home and a business card.

11. Add a QR Code to Printed Materials

If you door knock with printed materials or send paper mailings, provide a QR code to allow people to scan and subscribe to your email list right through their phone.

If you're not familiar with a QR code, it's a machine-scannable image that can instantly be read by Smartphone cameras. You can use the code to redirect prospects to your contact form or a link to subscribe to your blog.

Bottom Line

As an agent, a good portion of your day is devoted to lead follow-up. You don't want your contact list filled with outdated emails, that can force you into buying leads or cold calling to generate new prospects.

Ultimately, your email deliverability and open rate will improve with a clean and sparkly contact list.