

How to Profit from The Simplest
Most-Cost Effective Marketing Strategy
You're Probably Not Using
(to its' Fullest Potential)

a·media ink

Writing your business is my business.

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Let's get
started.



How to Profit from The Simplest Most-Cost Effective Marketing Strategy You're Probably Not Using (to its' Fullest Potential)

It seems everyone is rushing around trying to get caught up and capitalize on their social media presence - that's a sound idea. You can't turn around these days without seeing Facebook, Twitter or YouTube somewhere. No doubt, they're hot.

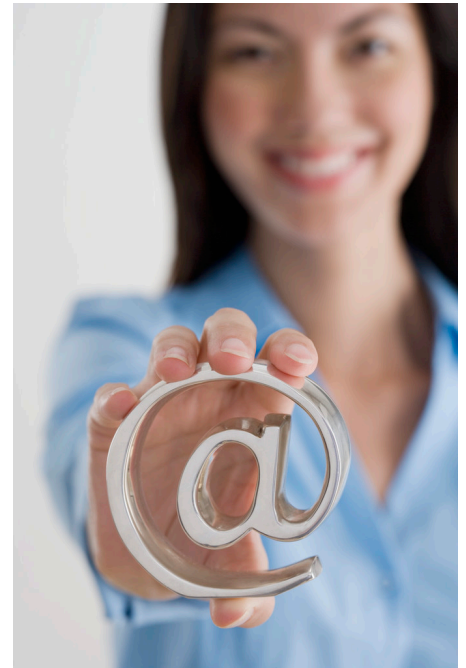
Guess what's even hotter for connecting with your customers, clients and prospects? Email. Yes, email. Email that is engaging, well written and sent consistently, is your biggest opportunity to make an impact on the people interested in what you offer. According to eMarketer.com, 7 out of 10 people would rather communicate by email than any other medium.

It's profitable too. The DMA reports: **Email's ROI in 2009 was \$43.52 for every dollar spent.**

Social media has not and will not render email obsolete – certainly not from a marketing standpoint. The inbox is still the best place to get the information and correspondence you're actually looking for.

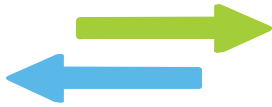
Chris Brogan, best-selling author and President of New Marketing Labs reports that **93% of email users have opt-in relationships with a consumer brand as opposed to 15% with Facebook and 4% with Twitter.** That's compelling, and perhaps surprising, but it's a good indication of where you need to be - right now.

Consistent, meaningful email communication lets you connect with people who like (or love) what you offer. Social media has changed our expectations – we want easy access to and information about the companies we do business with. The companies and brands that engage us effectively and communicate with us compellingly have our top-of-mind consciousness, attention and eventually, our business.



Email marketing lets you connect on a regular basis with people who are interested in exactly what you offer – they're **asking** you to do just that – share news, deals and information. You can provide value, build credibility and trust, engage your readers and win their business and their loyalty. There's nothing like a raving fan – you want as many of them as you can get.

Push Vs. Pull



In the old days (pre-internet), '**push marketing**' ruled the advertising and marketing universe. Businesses pushed their message out through various media: newspapers, radio, television and magazines, hoping to accomplish two key objectives. First, to create brand awareness and keep their name in front of prospects. Second, in the hope their name would appear in front of someone at the very moment they were ready to make a buying decision.

It's a well-known fact that most prospects need to see your name and/or advertisement approximately nine times before they take action. After those initial nine impressions, you've created some level of brand awareness. Your prospect has a vague or perhaps a more definite feeling they know you or your company or at least something about you. Why? Consistency builds familiarity, trust and credibility.

'**Pull marketing**' connects you directly with people you've 'pulled' toward you who have then asked to know more about your products, services and events; in this case, through your email newsletter. Being able to connect directly with people interested in what you offer and who want to hear from you is a marketer's dream come true. These are people who are asking you to keep them current on your company – it just doesn't get any better than that. If you're not taking maximum advantage of finding and reaching out to this audience, you're likely leaving way too much money – and opportunity – on the table.

Find Them Online and Offline

If you have a newsletter or email list on your website that visitors can subscribe to – that's a great start. If it's one of the first things your visitor sees that's even better. Best of all is an offer in exchange for their participation. It might be a short free report – on wine tasting, storage, how to find great value (or deals) or any of dozens of topics. Maybe you'd offer short video or report on what to look for when buying or tasting wine.



59% of email users spend more than 20 minutes a week with permission email and 27% spend an hour or more weekly.

- Merkle Interactive Services (2009)



44% of email users said email inspired at least one online purchase and 41% said it prompted at least one offline purchase.

- JupiterResearch's The Social and Portable Inbox (2008)



Create opportunities to have people sign up for your newsletter offline too. Offer an incentive in your tasting room – a discount, special tasting notes or even pre-formatted blank tasting notes they can use at home, where you advise them what to look for and how to evaluate a wine. Make a free offer (your report when you enter them into your system) or a small give-away. The value of the opt-in email address could be worth tens of thousands of dollars to you over time – it's one of the most valuable assets you can develop. Nothing markets like free – think of giving something away as an investment, not an expense.

What Does Great Email Marketing Look Like?

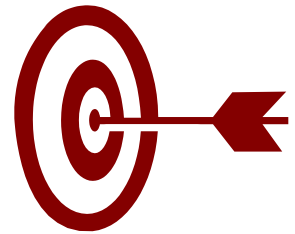
First, it has to be relevant. It needs to be carefully crafted so that it's interesting and provides value to your reader. The sales and marketing adage: facts tell, stories sell is still rock solid and your email newsletter is the perfect venue to tell the stories that engage your prospect.

It's the winemaker that tells why the weather and soil matters and how it impacted particular wines in a given year. It's the nursery that tells about the gardens they

visited in England last year and how you can recreate them or the auto dealer that writes about safety innovation and technology by telling a story about what happened to someone driving their make of vehicle. It's relatable and real and connects with people emotionally.

Targeted and Exclusive

Your email newsletter has to be targeted. Audiences are sophisticated and they're time poor. They want information that is useful, relevant and engaging; it helps if it's well written and amusing too. Email that entertains, educates and offers valuable information accomplishes your goal nicely.



Create a sense of exclusivity by making periodic offers that are only available to readers of your newsletter. This serves two purposes. It entices people to sign up – if they know they're going to get special offers – particularly money saving offers – it's a reason to subscribe and read what you send. It also makes your readers feel they belong to something – a special group of your valued clients and customers. Belonging is a huge psychological driver – don't overlook it in your marketing efforts.

67% of US internet users say the motivation behind giving their email address to a company is to receive discounts and promotions.
- ExactTarget "Email X-Factor Study" (2010)

Finally, your email needs to build relationships. More than ever, people are 'in relationship' with the brands they buy. Trust and credibility are important to them – build that and you'll create loyalty, you'll create fans and you'll create word of mouth business – still the most powerful marketing on the planet.

Consistency Rules

I recommend a weekly newsletter. However, consistency is more important than frequency. Whatever frequency you choose, stick to it. Consistency builds your brand. Inconsistency builds doubt and results in a 'who cares' attitude from your prospects – the kiss of marketing death. When people hear from you on a regular schedule, they come to expect your communication and ideally, if you do it well, they'll look forward to it and plan on reading it. You build loyalty by providing valuable content on a consistent schedule.

Our local seafood store sends a great email newsletter every week, a story about what's fresh, where it was caught, weather conditions and anything interesting that occurred during the catch along with a recipe. Every week, I read it, enjoy it AND go downtown and buy whatever Kyra is recommending. I feel like I know her and her husband and their daughter and I want to spend my money there – it works. Especially when you consider that reading their email newsletter changed my buying habits. I don't buy seafood in any of the other places I used to shop. I have a loyalty to the people I (feel like) I know.



55% of US internet users say the motivation behind giving their email address to a company is to get a "freebie" in exchange for my email address.

- ExactTarget "Email X-Factor Study" (2010)



How Long Should Your Email Be?

Not every newsletter you send needs to be the same length, although it may be easier to stick to a format – the same number of short articles each week. For example, every newsletter might have a short anecdotal story relevant to your offerings, something seasonally relevant, a special offer and one other topic that rotates each week or month. In that space, you might promote a special event or write about something topically relevant. Another good format is a longer newsletter once a month and a shorter newsletter the other 3 weeks.

Email newsletters can range anywhere from 300-500 words (500 words is approximately one page) and a newsletter can be as long as 1200-1500 words or a shorter newsletter might average 800-1000 words. You might opt for very short 'blurbs' linking to your website to read more details.

Make it Easy on the Eye

Using images and keeping your newsletter sharp, quick to load and easy to look at is a good idea. I recommend managing your list through one of the reputable web-based companies like aWeber, iContact or Constant Contact – they all provide templates to make your life easier. You can jazz up your emails with photos from sources like istockphoto.com where you'll find a large variety of royalty-free images for just a few dollars each.

The companies I mentioned all provide simple opt-in list building capabilities. I use aWeber on my site and with many of my clients – they offer an easy-to-create opt-in box you can put on your website and 'capture' names. Do that by offering a special give-away – a free report or video – give your visitors something of value in exchange for their name and the opportunity to get more value from you!

If You Already Have a Newsletter

Does your visitor see the signup quickly and easily at your site? Are you offering something for free in exchange for their contact information? Most people won't stay at your site very long. Don't miss the opportunity to engage them and make an offer so you can stay in touch and build a relationship. They might stop by and never come back. If you offer them a free



gift and they opt-in to your list, you can give them a reason to hear from you regularly, fall in love with your brand, your dealership and to buy more of your wine, more often.

Writing Tips

The well-known author, sales trainer and motivational speaker Zig Ziglar is famously quoted as saying: "We're all dialed into WII-FM, or What's In It For Me". Everything you write should speak directly to your reader and relate to their interests.

Be real and personal. Don't write formally – write as one person writing to another. Even though the newsletter is coming from your company and you can use the plural 'we' – writing sounds much more natural coming from one person. Be careful not to mix up your persona(s) if you decide to write in the 'we' format.

It helps to remember that your newsletter is only being read by one person at a time. Avoid saying things like "some of you may" instead say "you may" – remember that 'some of them' aren't reading your email, one person is.

The more your newsletter feels like it's written to that one person, the more engaged they'll be. It's a subconscious phenomenon, but a very real one. Your reader might not even be aware that something isn't speaking to them, but they'll know for dead certain when something does – that's what you're aiming for.

Don't use jargon or terminology that any or some of your audience might not be familiar with – it only serves to alienate readers. Your job is to draw them in and connect. If you want to use an industry term, take the time to explain it.

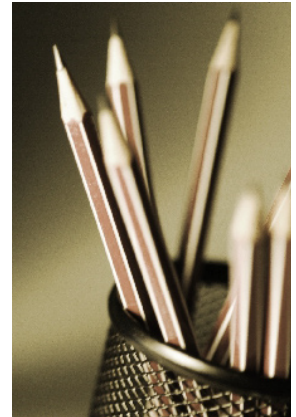
Learn how to edit – be ruthless. Eliminate language that isn't necessary. Don't 'over-describe'. Look for sentences where you use the word 'that'. The word 'that' can almost always be edited out and usually has some other descriptive language surrounding it that you can cut out as well – your piece will read stronger and quicker - always a good thing. When you use the word 'it' try instead to say what 'it' is – your writing will become more descriptive and flow better.

Bottom Line? It Builds Yours!

Communicating directly with the people most likely to spend their hard earned dollars with you and creating a reason for them to hear from you regularly is one of the best things you can do for your bottom line. It's simple, it's effective and it's targeted. The mind space of your target market is arguably the most valuable marketing real estate in existence – occupying their 'top-of-mind consciousness' because they asked you to is an opportunity you can't afford to miss.



57% of internet users worldwide said they are more apt to buy a product in a store after getting a marketing email. - e-Dialog, "Global Perspectives: a Study of Consumer Attitudes to Digital Marketing" (2010)

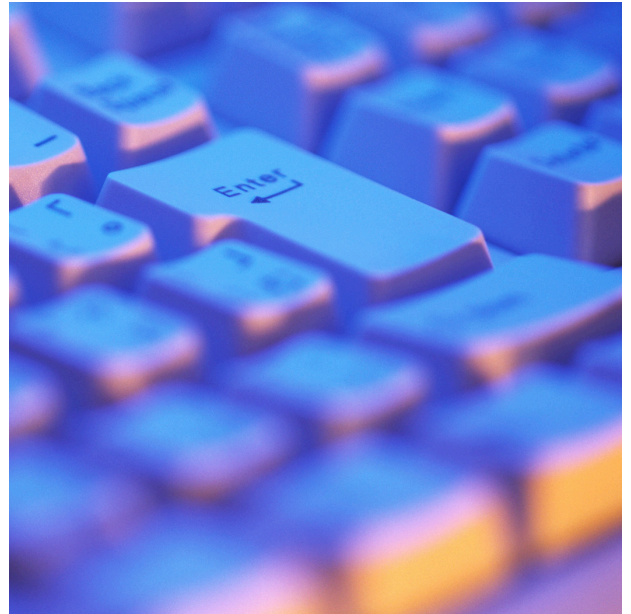


Do What You're Best At

It's fairly typical that owners of most small and medium businesses spend more time working IN their businesses than ON their businesses. It's hard to find the time to develop new initiatives and work on business development. Most business owners have their schedules full doing what's right in front of them and most marketing managers find themselves in the same boat.

You know that keeping in closer touch with your customers and prospects would be a good idea and like many people in your position, you might feel overwhelmed by the prospect of doing it well on any kind of regular basis. Or you delegate it to someone who just isn't that good at it – that might be worse than not doing it at all. Maybe you're good at it, but just don't have the time. Often people see the value, get off to a good start, but fail to keep up the effort.

By creating an email newsletter and building a mailing list, you build a huge business asset - a solid opt-in mailing list is 'marketing gold'. Remember, these are people who are **asking** to hear from you. That's not something you can buy, but once you build it, it adds long lasting value to your business that will see you through every economy and invariably make you money.



Take advantage of the culture created by social media and the internet and use the most powerful and overlooked medium available: email. It's cost effective, it's smart and it will make you money. Need I say more?



Who is Amy Posner and Why Should You Listen to Her?

Amy Posner is a business writer and marketing strategist with 20 years experience helping businesses make more money, cost effectively and quickly.

Known for being easy to work with, Amy has created email campaigns that have generated tens of thousands of dollars for clients and she is a sought after international copywriter with clients in the United States, Canada, The UK, Ireland, Australia and Sweden.

A native of the east coast, Amy built her marketing chops in New York City and Boston where she lived and wrote for companies large and small. Amy has lived in Olympia WA since 1999.

Amy makes the process simple. Your email newsletter will be professionally written and produced – it will add value to your customers, build your reputation and your bottom line. Let's get started!

