



The Modern Marketer's Guide to Growing an Email List

concilio

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00 Introduction

Today, email is as popular as ever. We've learned how to personalize our emails, automate messages, use dynamic content and optimize the design for mobile devices.

A recent report from [eConsultancy](#) now ranks email as the #1 most effective channel at driving ROI.¹

But in order to maximize your email marketing, you've got to grow a great list of engaged people to send to. After all, it's common to lose 20% of your subscribers each year to attrition.²

So it's important to have a great strategy for growing your list—not to mention the persistence to keep it up. Read on as we share actionable tips that every modern marketer can use to grow a thriving list.

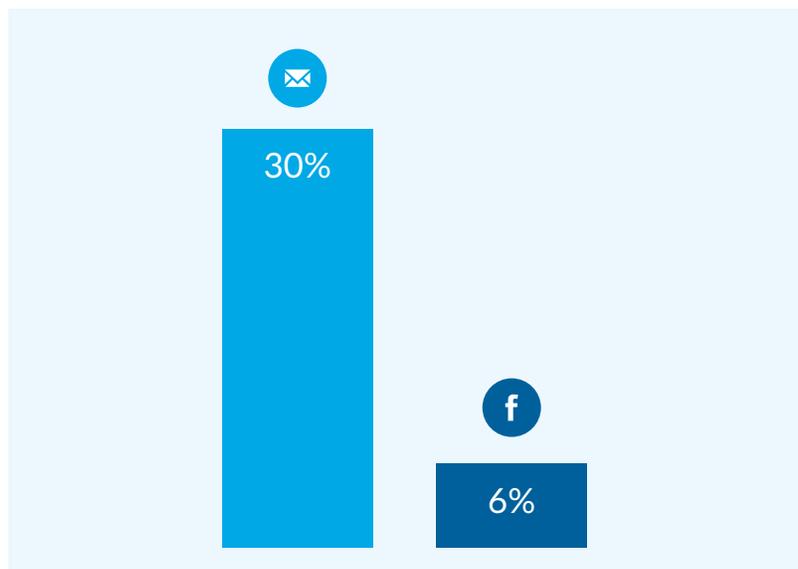
1. [EConsultancy 2015, Email Marketing Industry Census](#)

2. [Hubspot 2014, Database Decay Simulation](#)

01 Why build your email list?

Here are two major reasons why modern businesses of all shapes and sizes should focus on building their email lists:

Organic reach: Email vs. Facebook



1. Email has a huge reach

Social media sites like Facebook and Twitter garner attention for their large user bases, yet email marketing has a much higher reach than both of them—combined. Facebook claims to have more than 1.35 billion users and Twitter has more than 270 million users, but...

There are upwards of 4 billion email accounts worldwide, meaning email has a reach 3x greater than Facebook and 15x greater than Twitter.³

Case in point: Both sites use email to send notifications and requests, knowing people rely heavily on email and that it's an effective way to drive traffic back to their sites.

2. Email is crazy effective

Facebook has progressively reduced the number of people that a brand's posts can reach in attempt to drive businesses towards paid advertising options.

In fact, organic reach on Facebook is only 6%, a decline of 49% from peak levels, according to analysis from Ogilvy. This means every time your business posts a Facebook update or promotion, less than 6% of your audience will see it.

By comparison, email open rates hover around 30%, making your message 5x more likely to be seen through email than Facebook.⁴

3. Radicati 2013, Email Statistics Report 2013–2017

4. Email Marketing vs Social Media: Are you focusing on the wrong channel?

02 The formula for success

There's a simple two-part formula for building your email list:



Basic logic tells us that no matter how many subscribe opportunities you present to a visitor, it's unlikely they'll act without an incentive.

And no matter how good your incentive is, you may have a tough time getting people to subscribe if you don't make it easy.

Over the next few pages, we'll delve deeper into each part of the equation.



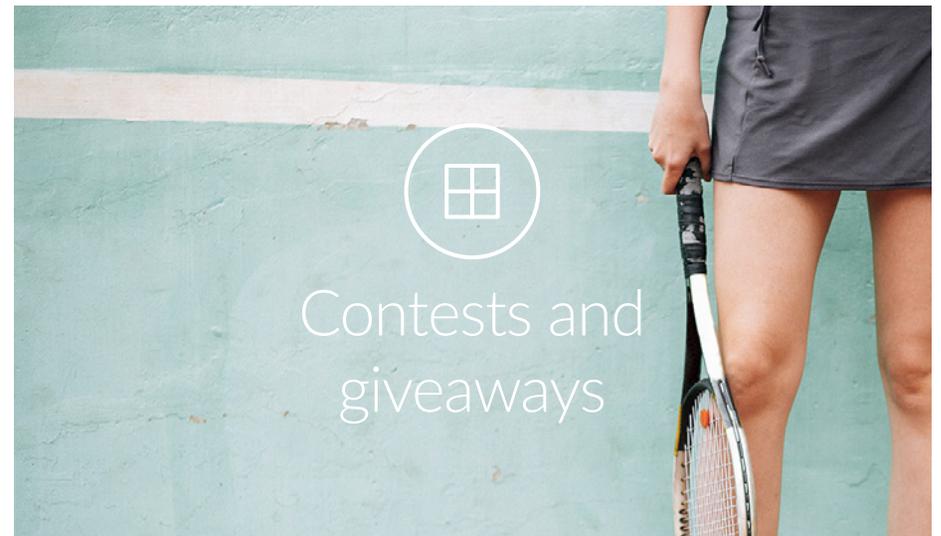
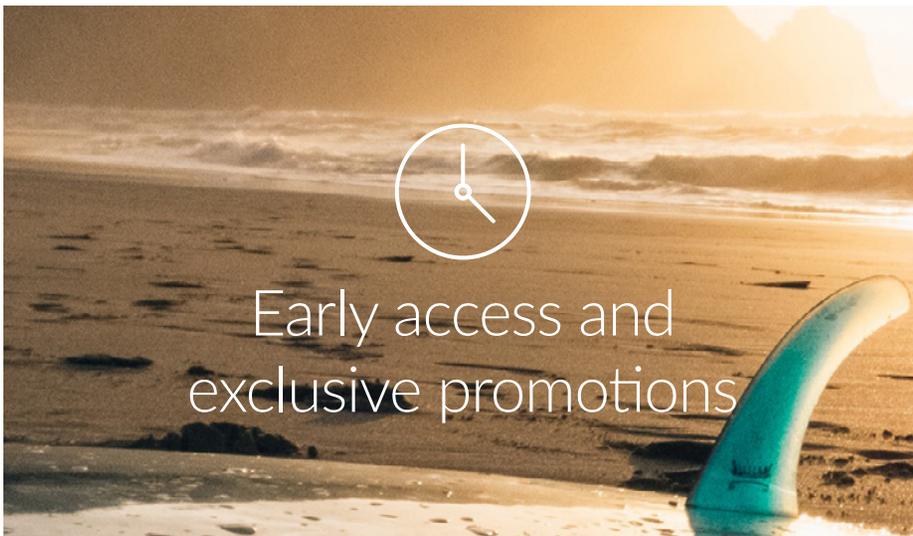
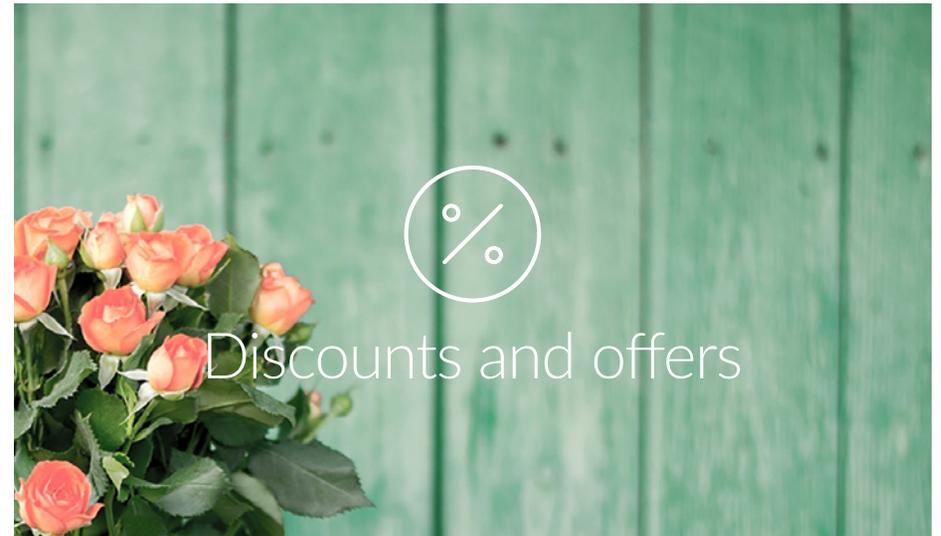
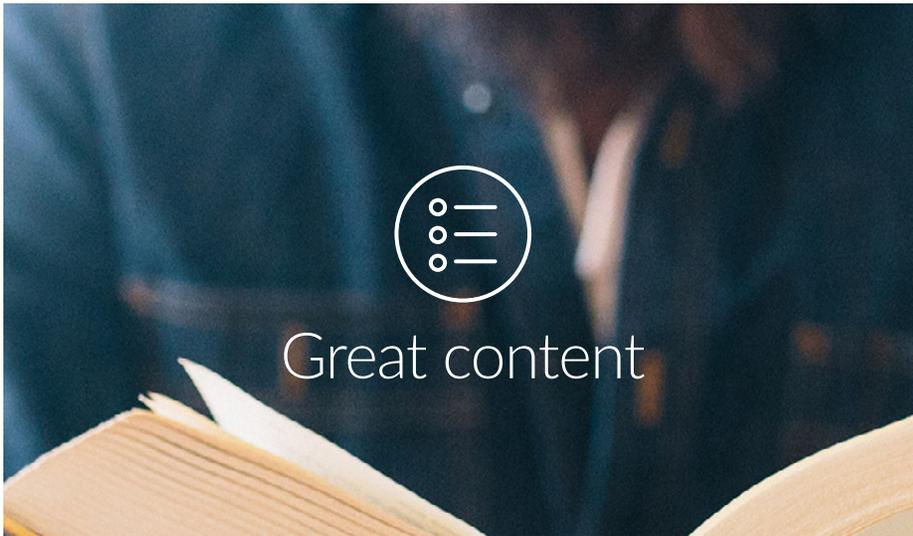
03 Creating a valuable incentive

Marketers have dreamed up millions of incentives over the years to encourage people to join their email lists and the sky's the limit. It really depends on your product or service, as well as the style of your brand.

For instance, consumer sites can market with catchy phrases and discounts, while financial services companies generally take a more formal and conservative approach. The key is to pick out what makes sense for your business and its audience.



04 4 ideas for awesome incentives





Great content

Have a blog or some helpful eBooks or guides? High quality content may be all you need. The folks at [Buffer](#), for example, write helpful posts about social media marketing and productivity. The quality of the content alone is valuable enough to entice 1,000+ people each week to subscribe to their email list.

Alternately, you can try the approach that marketing blog [KISSmetrics](#) takes and use live webinars as an incentive to capture email addresses. Their webinars are deep dives into popular topics featuring industry experts sharing their success stories.

Here are 3 tips to help you create great content:

1. Use extensive research

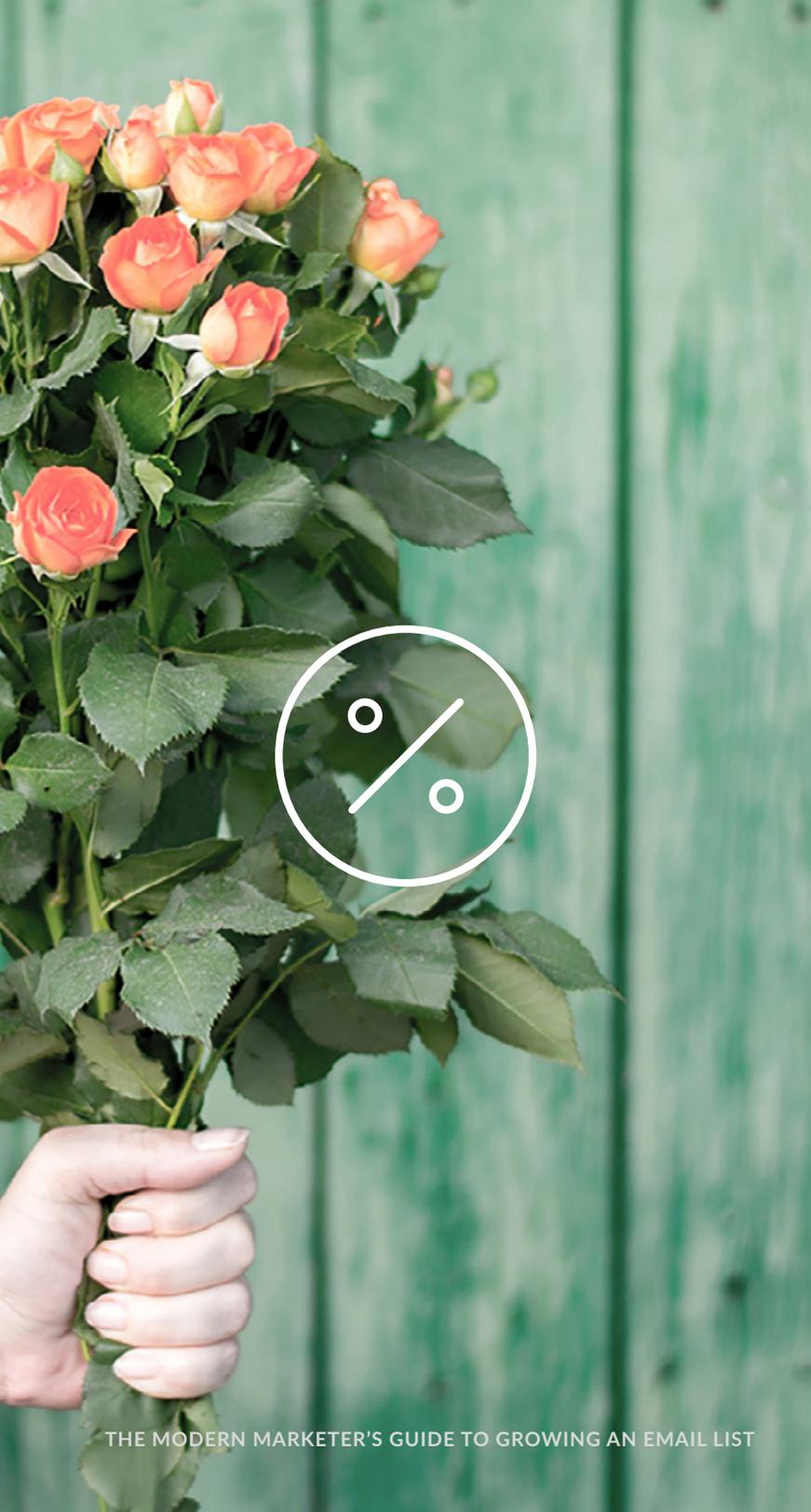
The team at Buffer will spend, on average, 6-8 hours writing a single blog post over a period of three days.

2. Tell a story

According to the crew at [Groove](#), telling a story through your content can increase readership by 300%.

3. Make it visual

The brain processes visuals faster than text and 65% of people are visual learners, so add unique images to drive home your point.



Discounts and offers

If you sell something online, offering discounts or presenting various other value-added offers can be a great incentive for people to join your email list.

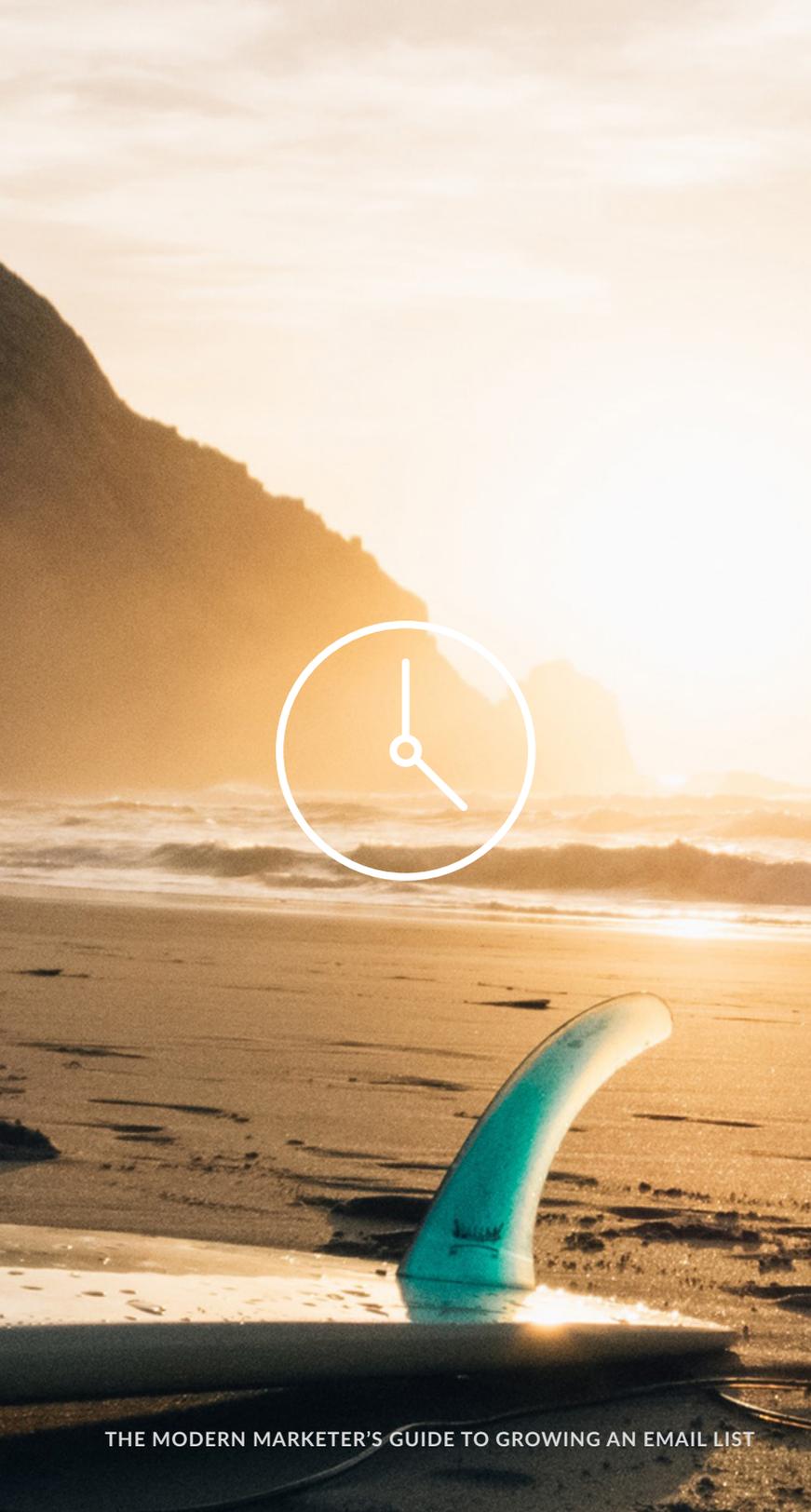
Some examples include:

First-order discounts

The potential to save money on an initial purchase is a great incentive to subscribe, but the discount is also a motivator to buy. So you can build your email list and increase sales at the same time. It's a win-win!

Free or express shipping upgrade

Not only is this offer highly relevant (particularly when offered during the checkout process), but to get your hands on a wanted item quicker is a powerful incentive.



Early access and exclusive promotions

If you've got brand awareness, offering early access and exclusives as an incentive to subscribe to your email list can work miracles and keep costs down.

Fashion retailer [Huckberry](#) takes this to the extreme by requiring people to create an account and join their mailing list before they can enter the online store. This unorthodox approach, along with beautiful imagery and compelling copy, creates a sense that this is an exclusive community—and people's desire to be part of it creates a fantastic incentive to subscribe.

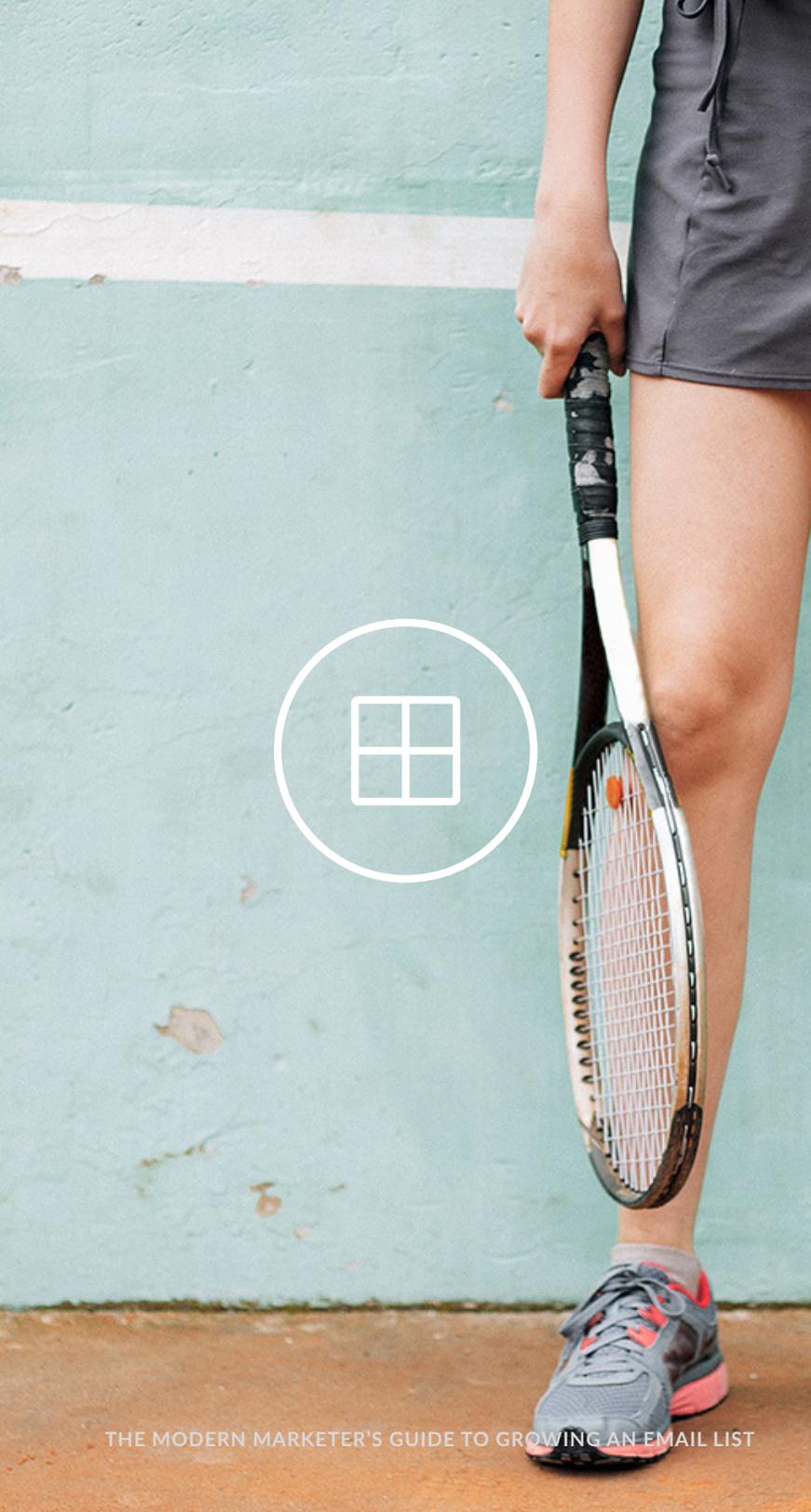
Not sure this will work for you? Try these subtle alternatives:

Early access to new products

We all like to be the first to own something, so offering early access to new products and features can be a great incentive to subscribe.

Special discounts and promotions

Special access is an effective way to build your list, so it's worth trying an exclusive offer as an incentive to subscribe.



Contests and giveaways

Humans are naturally competitive. Use this to your advantage by running giveaways and contests on your website where people provide their email address for the chance to win something.

[Unbounce](#) recently did a study on the effect a contest had on 100 of their customers' landing pages.

They analyzed the results from more than 3 million visitors and found that landing pages with a contest gathered 700% more email subscribers than those without a contest option.⁵

📌 MAKE THE PRIZE UNIQUE.

Queensland Tourism's "[Best Job in the World](#)" campaign offered the winner a job touring Great Barrier Reef and blogging about it for a year. This once-in-a-lifetime prize not only attracted over 34,000 entries, but also secured an estimated \$400 million worth of media coverage on CNN, Time, NBC and more.

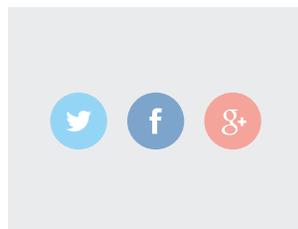
So consider things you could offer beyond cash; training sessions with athletes, celebrity meetings and backstage passes are all great examples of money-can't-buy prizes that appeal.

05 10 simple subscribe opportunities

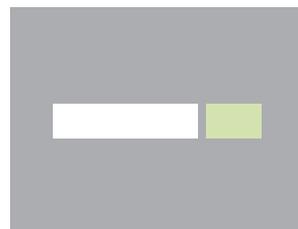
Just as there are a number of incentives to offer, there are dozens of ways to make subscribing to your list super simple.

Here are our 10 favorites

Each won't be relevant for you, of course; the key is understanding your incentives and choosing the technique that best fits your needs.



1. SOCIAL BAR



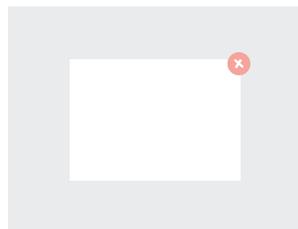
2. SUBSCRIBE LANDING PAGE



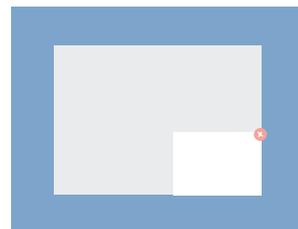
3. LEAD GENERATION CARD



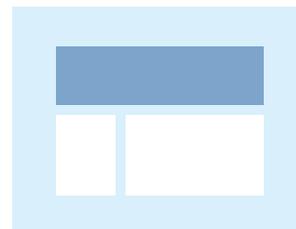
4. FACEBOOK SUBSCRIBE FORM



5. POP-UPS



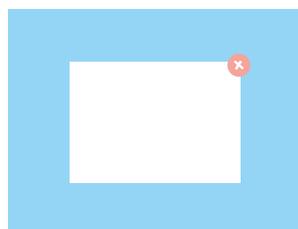
6. SLIDER



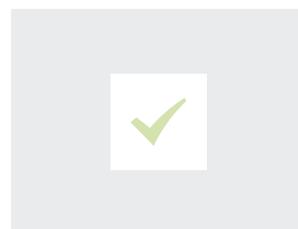
7. FEATURE BOX



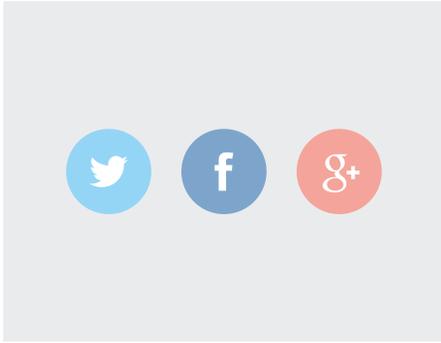
8. SCROLLING HEADER BAR



9. POP-UP SURVEY

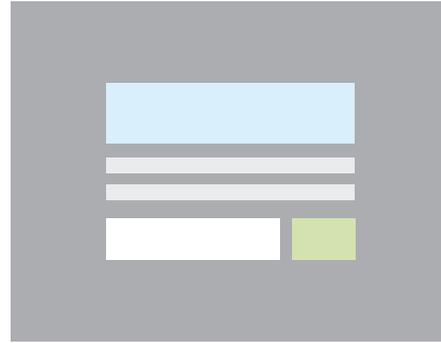


10. SIGNUP AND CHECKOUT FORMS



1. Social bar

If your business shares other people's content via your social media accounts, you're essentially driving traffic to outside websites. But by using a social bar you can curate content while still building your list. A social bar sits over the top of content you've shared via your social media channels and promotes signing up to your email list. Use simple copy such as "Subscribe to get similar articles delivered to your inbox" to entice viewers. Need a tool? Try [Sniply](#).



2. Subscribe landing page

Say you want to promote your email list to your social media followers or via an ad campaign. Where would you send these people? Create a subscribe landing page and you'll have a dedicated place to send anyone interested in subscribing to your email list.

If you're using a content management system like [WordPress](#) for your website, it's easy to create a new page, enter some text about why people should subscribe and add a subscribe form. Alternatively, you can use a landing page builder tool like [Unbounce](#) to create the landing page and add in a form.



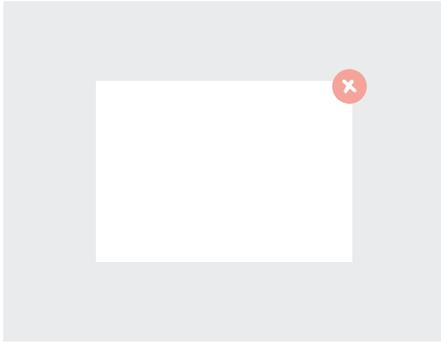
3. Lead generation card

Active on Twitter? [Lead Generation Cards](#) help you gather new customer email addresses within a tweet. When you tweet out the link, it pre-populates a user's full name, @username and email address into the expanded area of your tweet and allows them to submit it with just one click. Some of the best ways to take advantage of this are tweeting about your list and @replying to people who tweet about your business or need a tool? If you're a Concilio customer, set it up with [these instructions](#).



4. Facebook subscribe form

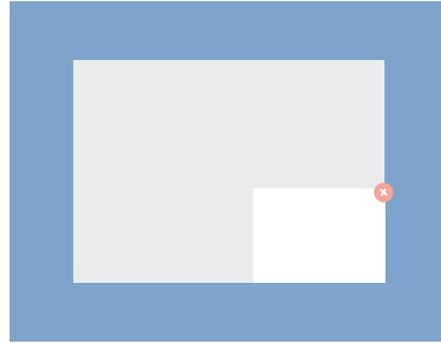
If your business has a Facebook page, chances are you've seen diminishing returns from your efforts as Facebook continues to limit the page's reach. A great way to overcome this is to convert your Facebook fans into email subscribers by adding a dedicated subscribe app to your Facebook page. It's easy to set up and sits in the header area of your Facebook page for everyone to see. Need a tool? Concilio customers can use our [Facebook Subscribe Form](#).



5. Pop-ups

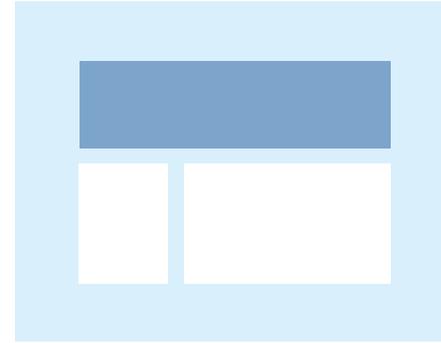
Pop-ups still cause some people to shudder, but they've come a long way in the last few years. Pop-ups give you the space to sell a promotion or idea—like subscribing to your email list—while focusing the visitor's attention.

When ConversionXL implemented one, the company saw a 30% increase in email subscribers each month. Keep in mind that they can be a major annoyance when not executed properly, so focus on nailing the pop-up's message, timing and targeting. Need a tool? Try [AddThis](#).



6. Slider

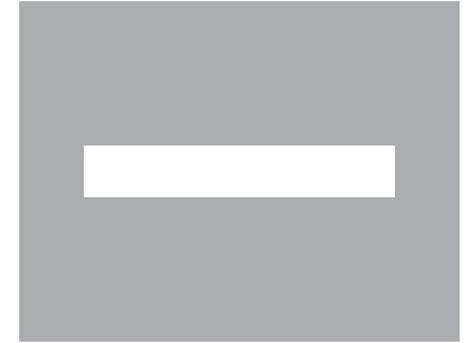
A slider is small box that “slides in” to the bottom corner of your page at a designated interval. It's a prominent subscribe option that's not as invasive as a popup. It also gives you a lot of room to really sell the benefits of subscribing to your email list. When targeted, sliders are very effective because they allow users to form an opinion about the website before deciding to subscribe. Need a tool? Try [Sleeknote](#).



7. Feature box

Your blog's homepage is likely its most visited page, so use it to promote your email list. A feature box is a large call to action below the header but above the posts.

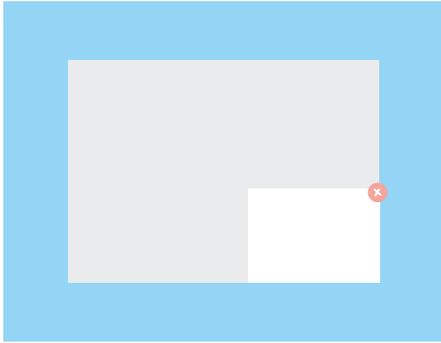
Need a tool? You can use a plugin like [Plugmatter](#) to incorporate a custom feature box without additional coding or design, or if you're familiar with coding, you can code it directly into the blog's template and use the API to send any emails captured directly into your lists.



8. Scrolling header bar

This small bar sits atop the screen when people are on your website. As people scroll through your site, it remains fixed to the top of their browser window. Does it work? The scrolling header bar is the second biggest source of new subscribers for Buffer, making up roughly 30% of their phenomenal 1,000 new subscribers per week run rate.

Need a tool? Try the simple and free [Smart Bar](#). Or if you're looking for a paid option with more customization, try [Hello Bar](#).



9. Pop-up survey

These little surveys popup in the bottom corner of your website and can be targeted to appear based on specific criteria (such as current page, number of pages viewed, or arrival channel). Then, by asking a question like “You seem interested in our content. Would you like to sign up for the daily email?” you can capture people’s attention and direct them to your subscribe form.

When the University of Alberta tested implementing this on their website, they grew their email list by 500%. Need a tool? Try [Wufoo](#).



10. Signup and checkout forms

Anytime people are buying a product from you is a perfect time to ask them to opt-in to your emails. After all, these people clearly have an interest in what you offer. How you do it depends on your platform. If your online business is built on a platform like [Shopify](#), you can easily add a subscribe tickbox to your checkout process for people to opt-in to your email list.

From here, you can use integration tools like [Zapier](#) to make sure all captured email addresses are automatically added to your lists. Check out [our integrations](#) for more eCommerce-related options.

06 Start building your list now

All right, modern marketers... now that you've got the formula for building a solid and successful email list, what's stopping you?

Just use the methods, tips and tools you've learned in this guide to start building your email list today.

