

Email Marketing – Guides, Outfitters and Lodges

E-mail marketing drives results — in the form of traffic, awareness and engagement. And don't think for a moment that your top competitor doesn't realize its importance to their bottom line either.

Why email marketing makes competitive sense:

- Serves both as direct-response vehicle and branding tool
- Creates personalized interactive relationships with customers
- Targets and entices recipients with relevant promotions and offers
- Plants seed in the minds of recipients regarding future travel plans
- Serves as a tool to move distressed lodging inventory
- Functions as a sales force - tens of thousands reached in seconds
- Recruits and retains customers, new and old
- Least expensive form of active marketing available; pennies per email compared to \$1 to \$3 or more per direct mail.

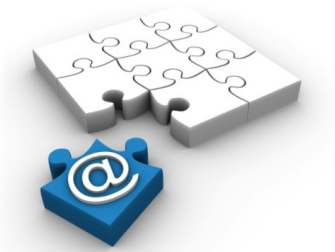
If lodges use email to engage new customers, reward loyal ones and re-activate old ones, email can be an efficient marketing tactic and a welcome relationship-building platform.

Get Permission

Use "confirmed" opt-in, in which a confirmation message must be sent to the recipient, who in turn must reply to the message for the opt-in to take effect. When you market to people who have told you expressly that they want to hear from you, you can expect to see these results:

- Better response rates
- Increased trust and brand loyalty
- Better deliverability

It takes time to build a permission-based mailing list. Yes, your list will be smaller than if it was an unsolicited email list. Support this by developing and posting a privacy policy for your web site. This will reinforce how valuable your subscribers are to you.



Build a List

Start with the gold mine you already have - the email addresses of past guests, and then add new ones.

10 List Building Actions That Work

1. **Feature a Sign-Up Form on Every Page of Your Web Site** – Be sure to remember this basic concept. Sign-up opportunities should be everywhere throughout your site and located "above the fold".
2. **Offer Opt-In Incentives** – Incentives like discounts and special offers significantly increase sign-up rates.
3. **Add Opt-in Check Boxes on Registration Forms** – Well-designed forms and pages may improve sign-up rates by 50 percent or more.
4. **Include "Send to a Friend" Options** – Generate new subscribers with minimal effort if bundled with promotional campaigns.
5. **Encourage email subscriptions on all print ads.**
6. **Include Messages and Links in Email Signature Lines of all Lodge Email** – Add "Subscribe to the Lodge X Email Newsletter" to lodge email signatures.
7. **Reservation Center and Sales Employees Must Obtain Permission and Capture Email Addresses Over the Phone** – Instruct reservation center and sales staff to ask customers and prospects if they'd like to receive newsletters or promotional email.
8. **Send Post Cards to Customers Encouraging Them to Subscribe to Email** – If you have postal contact information for customers but not email addresses, send a post card with opt-in sign-up offer and URL.
9. **Include Newsletter Subscriptions in Trade Show Lead Generation Forms** – Obtain permission to send your monthly newsletter to booth visitors.
10. **Include Opt-in Information on Customer Satisfaction Surveys** – Ask permission to communicate valuable information via email newsletters and promotions.

Get Off on the Right Foot

An auto responder is an email that is scheduled to be sent at a certain time interval after someone subscribes to your mailing list. Auto responders are a great way to automatically follow up right away with your subscribers.

For example, setup three auto responders for new subscribers: the first is sent one hour after they subscribe. It contains a thank you message and a link to your reservation page or reservation information. The second is sent 24 hours after they subscribe, telling them about your blog or encourage them to follow you on Twitter, and the third is sent 72 hours after they subscribe, in which you can offer them a special deal or discount on booking a trip. Auto responders help your subscribers build trust in both your lodge and your brand, and this can help make it easier when trying to close sales in the future.

Personalization

People respond favorably to marketing when they feel special and unique. When done correctly, personalization can be a powerful way to reinforce the bond between your lodge and your customer. Using a first name in the initial greeting has a tremendous impact on whether a recipient will read the rest of an email.

Segmentation

Not every subscriber should receive the same emails.

Here are five ideas for "what criteria" to segment your email list by:

1. **Prospects that have become clients:** Once an email list member has become a client, it's time to move them to a different level of list where they receive emails that are designed for clients and not prospects. There is nothing that can create more conflict than for an existing client to receive an email marketing to them as if they were a prospect offering them a better deal than they just received.
2. **Adventure Type:** If your lodge has a wide line of distinct adventure offerings, it's best to address your prospects and clients by adventure interest. Give this segment specific offers or content relevant to the adventure type they are interested in.
3. **Major clients:** VIP clients need to be acknowledged, remembered and given better attention, gifts of exclusive information / content and some of your best deals.
4. **Interest-based preferences:** If you've done surveys over the past year, then you know certain email members have different interests that can help you classify their interest levels in various offerings related to your core product or service.
5. **Open rate or CTR action rates:** Simply stated, email list members that open your newsletter or click on something on a frequent basis are clearly more engaged than members who do not click on things... therefore, you can test sending a higher frequency to your most engaged members to increase conversion or response.

Content

Keep the message personal and casual. Think like a customer and write in a conversational tone - people crave a little humanity behind the business mask. Any good lodge owner should think of his customers as extension of him and his lodge. I know that when I answer emails from our customers (and I answer at least 50 a day) or if I'm writing sales copy for a web site, I structure my sentences as if I'm talking to a close friend. I find that formality in web copy, email or phone conversations only adds awkwardness, so I try to avoid it.

Consistency

When you're sending a newsletter or frequent email publication, make sure you keep the look and feel consistent from issue to issue. By keeping the look and feel consistent, you help to maintain and strengthen your brand and your image to your subscribers, which again will make it easier to close sales when you need to. Create a template for your newsletter and whenever you need to create a new issue, use that template as the basis for each issue.

When sending a regular email to your subscribers, always make sure that it's sent on the same day, at the same time. For example, Wednesday at 11AM. Your subscribers will come to "expect" your email to arrive in their inbox on the same day at the same time, meaning that they want to read your content and are generally more receptive to any special offers or promotions you may include.

Incorporate Google Analytics

It's becoming increasingly important to know what your email subscribers are doing after they click through to your site. Google Analytics is an excellent tool for campaign measurement. It's very easy to set up campaigns in Google and track paths and do optimization. I highly recommend you use these tools with your email service provider to get a better view of what email really drives.

FOLLOW UP

Weak follow-up wastes marketing money: The pipeline that fuels a sale typically begins with a query or a display of interest. Most lodges are wasting marketing dollars by weak follow-up. The solution is to set up a cost-efficient system that triggers appropriate responses at various points of customer interaction. Do you think it would be wise to follow-up with the subscriber the moment you identify a click on a specific link in a email campaign? They would be the perfect target for increased attention and offers. From email analytics, you are able to track clicked on links and follow up with personal emails inviting them to call and discuss a trip.

Unsubscribe Detail

A quick, painless, gracious, positive unsubscribe experience makes a good impression on a subscriber who's leaving your list. When someone leaves, take the trouble to thank them for their previous interest, solicit feedback (without making it compulsory to give that feedback) and let them know they'll always be welcome back. The unsubscribe page is the perfect place to put a short survey to learn about potential weaknesses of your email marketing.

Outdoor Adventure Marketing

We are a virtual agency composed of marketing, graphic design, web design, public relations and operations professionals with years of experience and success operating and marketing adventure lodges. We are a flexible organization dedicated to generating strategic and creative solutions for our clients.

What we do for you:

Email Marketing - Utilizing internet based communications we work with hunting, wingshooting and fly fishing lodges to start and maintain a permission-based conversation with their customers. Sending e-mails with the purpose of enhancing the relationship of a lodge with its current or previous customers and to encourage customer loyalty and repeat business.

Search Engine Marketing - Your web site needs to be listed in the top of all major search engines. Many web designers don't understand how search engines work and can leave you with a beautiful site that is lost in the trillions of sites out there. SEM is not black magic, it's a combination of math, experience, and resources, that can dramatically improve your organic search ranking.

Web Site Reporting - Analyzing and using information about your search engine rankings, site visitors, and their behavior on your site, the ways they found your site, and conversion rates, to make continual improvements in rankings and conversion rates.

Why you need Outdoor Adventure Lodge Marketing: Because the rules for success in the adventure lodge market have changed, 'old school' advertising agencies will no longer do. To cut through the noise and clutter of advertising that is bombarded on consumers daily, a new solution is needed. Permission-based email messaging allows your organization to be heard, loud and clear. Recipients are open and receptive as long as you are delivering what they want. Email allows you to segment and target your communication to connect and engage the consumer in a relevant and rewarding conversation. In addition, permission-based programs work, unlike the vast majority of 'old school' advertising.

For more information visit: <http://www.outdooradventure-marketing.com>