

# How can lawyers build their email lists? 5 tips for 2010

At the Marketing Partner Forum in Palm Beach, Florida, two weeks ago there was a panel that spoke about blogs, social media, and how to build up a subscriber base or “list” for your blog. I wanted to take a few moments to explain some simple proven methods for building a list that have helped me.

Let me make something clear though, there is a big difference between those who read your blog and those on your email list. Readers are pretty transient, they come and go. You may have a great article that really resonates with a lot of people, but those on your list are engaged at a higher level. These are the people that have given you permission to market to them. This is very valuable, and here’s why: it takes 6-7 touches on average before somebody will buy your product or service. If somebody is on your list, you have easy access to them to make sure you can get in a half dozen touches or more.

With cheesy clip art!

**1. Do: start a monthly or weekly newsletter.** This doesn’t have to be long, and it can even use mostly information from your blog. This can be highlights, or possibly one or two additional insights. Just make sure to send it out on a regular basis.

**2. Don’t: Ask people to “sign up for my newsletter.”** It is all about how you sell the newsletter. People get enough email as it is, and so they generally won’t sign up for newsletters unless it is something they really think is essential to their business. A much better approach is to create a “freebie” that people can sign up for on your website in exchange for their name and email address. (And in the process they sign up for your newsletter). I recommend using [Aweber](#), a simple and inexpensive service that helps you manage your list, build out your campaign, and track the open rates to your messages. There are free options out there, but in my experience they are harder to use and give you much fewer options. Feel free to post in the comments sections your experience with other services.

**3. Design a great Freebie.** Your great articles and blog posts will drive traffic to your site, but they won’t really help build your list- unless you offer a freebie that people can have emailed to them for free in exchange for their email address. Again, you need to really offer value, or people won’t part with their email address.

## Remember, Opting in is Their Choice

Do you like giving away your email address? Most people don't, they hold onto it as if it were a piece of gold. That's why you need to offer a valuable freebie to get people to part with their precious contact info. I recommend something like a Whitepaper, or a guide to a certain area of law. One past client created a "Peace of Mind Checklist" to help build an estate planning list, while another created a "Warranty Checklist" for large companies that need to create warnings for their products. I give away a free chapter of my book [Social Media for Lawyers: Twitter Edition](#), which has been very effective to help build my list. I know what some of you are thinking, "will people still hire you if you give away all your good information?" Some will, some won't- but all of them opting in will give you their email address so you can build your list, and have future opportunities to engage them. It is just a numbers game after that.

**4. Always Use a Resource Box.** Keep the great blog posts and articles coming on a regular basis, and at the end of every article use a little italicized box to explain who you are, what you do, and what freebie you have to offer with link explaining the freebie. Don't just do this on your blog either, do it for any article you write anywhere, or even for live presentations you give. "I will give you a free copy of my whitepaper on the subject, in exchange for a business card." This works like a charm. In presentations I will often have over half the audience come up and give me their card. These people are all joining my list. They can opt out at any time after that, but it is my experience that less than 10 percent leave my list after joining it.

**5. Add business cards to your mailing list.** Using a service like [Aweber](#) (one of my affiliates because I love their service) set up an automated message that says something like, "You likely gave me your business card or signed up for my list sometime in the last few weeks. I would like to add you to my mailing list, please click the link below and I will start sending you out the good stuff." You or your secretary can set this up once, and then simply input the name and email address from each business card. It is process that takes time to set up, but is guaranteed to pay off in the future.

The final thought is this: it took Chris Brogan seven years of blogging before he had 1,000 subscribers to his blog, now he has over 25,000 subscribers with over 100,000 followers. You won't get there over night, but you will get there- so be patient, keep at it, and don't get discouraged.

*Adrian Dayton, esq is a New York Attorney that helps large firms bring in more business through social media. Email him at [info@adriandayton.com](mailto:info@adriandayton.com) for questions about building out your own list building campaign*