INTERNET MARKETING | PROMOTION | TECHNOLOGY

The 4th Lie of Network Marketing on the Internet: All you have to do is build a mailing list and blast out some emails and you'll get a ton of sign ups

This article presents the FOURTH of the 5 Lies the Experts tell you-
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This month I want to talk about the fourth lie in my series on the 5 lies the experts tell you. This is a mistake many of us have fallen for in our business.

You've probably heard the phrase "The power is in the list." This is so true!

> ***There really is a lot of power in having your own mailing list of people who have requested to receive information from you.***

You might hear stories of top affiliate marketers on the internet who can make $100,000 (or more) simply from recommending someone else's product. Guess what? They ALL have their own mailing list.

So when you are just starting out it can be very tempting to try and host your own mailing list. Perhaps you bought some leads that include email addresses. You could just load those into your email and blast out a bunch of emails, right?

Well hopefully you're smart enough not to use your work computer for that kind of thing. Instead, you've decided to use your free email account

at Yahoo, AOL, or Gmail. Guess what? What happens to you if one of those people who receives your email hits the “spam” button? What if a bunch of them hit the spam button? Remember - you just bought a bunch of cheap email leads. You don’t know how “fresh” they are. They could be 6 months old. Or, maybe the people just decide they don’t want the information any more.

> ***All too often users will simply click on the “spam” button to report you as a spammer even if they once wanted to receive your information. When that happens, your email address could become blacklisted!***

Blacklisted means that any emails you send will automatically go into a spam or junk mail folder. This is one way internet providers block spam; by finding known spammers and adding them to a list of email they won’t accept. Blacklisting is something you want to try and avoid with your email as it could be extremely harmful to your business. What if your email address is blacklisted and it is a personal email account as well as for your business? Not only will your prospects and your downline have a hard time emailing you, but your family might even have a hard time receiving your emails.

You might think a better solution could be to download and set up an email list software like “Worldmerge” and blast out emails right from your desktop to all those leads? Not so fast! There is a big problem with hosting and sending your own email. Spammers use tactics like taking over people’s home computers with a virus designed to blast out junk emails. So, using software like WorldMerge to blast out emails from your desktop is a “No-No”. If you do, many of your emails won’t even get to their expected destinations.

Technical explanation follows for those that want to know, if not skip to the next paragraph: You see, spammers often infect home user’s computers like yours with a virus that allows them to send spam emails

from all over the world. These “botnets” are people who have home computers but don’t have an anti-virus program or don’t keep their computer up to date. Spammers use these computers to send junk email. Unfortunately for business people like us this means when we use our own computers to install mailing list software it makes our computers look like one of these infected computers. Instead, the Internet service providers try to verify that each computer sending email is actually a “mail server” not just an ordinary home computer. If they see a lot of email originating from your home computer they will just block it!

So you can’t use your home computer to send emails to your big mailing list…Perhaps you can use the free mailing list or autoresponder that came with your web site when you purchased your web hosting account. Great! This worked well in the 1990’s… Unfortunately in the 21st century this doesn’t work so well any more either!

It really comes down to the same issues we discussed earlier. If people forget they signed up for your mailing list then they might report you as a spammer. What’s worse is people are lazy. They might simply click “spam” instead of opting out of your mailing list. You might be doing everything right. You might have an opt-out link at the bottom of all your emails but the reader might not want to scan down that far and they know they can just hit “spam” and make your email go away. So you get reported as a spammer.

Guess what? If you’re sending your emails from your web site then not only can your email address be blacklisted but your web site and your domain name can be blacklisted too! Now any emails that come from any email addresses of yours don’t get through. You might find that any time they see your web address in the body of an email it doesn’t get through the spam filters, even if you sent the email from a new email address. This means you’ve been blacklisted.

Another problem with hosting your own mailing list is the laws surrounding spam.

Do you know what the requirements are in the USA to send commercial bulk email? Do you know what a double opt in is? Do you know that all

your emails have to contain a physical mailing address for your company? Do you know that all your emails have to contain an easy to use “opt-out” link or “opt-out” policy? Do you know that in some areas you might be required to allow people to opt-out of all your mailing lists with just one click, instead of opting out one at a time?

My suggestion to anyone who is building a business is to invest $20 a month into a professional mailing list solution.

The one I use is called Aweber (http://www.aweber.com – not an affiliate link) and they are $20 for up to 10,000 email addresses and only $9.95 per 10,000 additional addresses. Some of the reasons I like professional mailing list services are:

1. They are paid to make sure your email gets through to the end user. They monitor things like “blacklists” and make sure your email doesn’t get on them.

2. They monitor the laws regarding bulk email and notify you of changes in the law that you need to be aware of.

3. They provide tools to make the mailing list process simple including the double opt in and opt out process.

4. They monitor the spam reports for your mailing lists and let you know if you have been reported as a spammer. You might want to manually opt out those users or change the wording of your email so it looks less like spam.

5. They offer advanced tracking so you can see how many people opened your email or how many people clicked on links within your email.

Here is a quick story for you. This is a real story of a friend of mine who hosted his own email list.

In 2000 my friend Fabio started a mailing list called *Fabman's Secrets*. He provided financial advice and tips in his newsletter. Fabio had his own web site and used the free mailing list software provided by his web hosting company instead of paying a professional email service provider to handle his emails. As Fabio's list grew he became more and more popular and eventually released a book with his financial advice.

Gradually he noticed a decline in the response rate of his mailing list and he even began to see that a lot of emails weren't being delivered or opened. As Fabio learned more about internet marketing he realized that one of the reasons his emails weren't getting through is because he had been added to a Blacklist. Fabio realized that over the years some of his users reported him for spam. Maybe they didn't like something he wrote or maybe due to the infrequency of his emails they forgot about him and clicked "spam". Worse yet, some of his readers might have just been lazy and clicked spam to get the emails to stop. Now Fabio's list of ten thousand people (or more) was basically worthless. Very few of his emails were getting to his readers so he had to start over.

This is a true story from a personal friend of mine. Fabio didn't use a professional mailing list provider like Aweber. So, eventually, when problems happened with his mailing list he got blacklisted. If he had been using a service like Aweber to begin with, the likelihood of getting blacklisted would have been minimal. If he had been blacklisted, then Aweber could help him get off the blacklist.

I hope you have learned from Fabio and will not try and blast out your own emails to your prospects.

I know that a small investment in a professional email list provider like Aweber will save you a lot of money and headache in the future. For as little as $20 a month you can use a service that will help you make sure your emails get delivered to your prospects and they will help protect you from legal liability.

Next month we'll cover my final topic in my series of 5 lies the experts tell

you. Next month we'll talk about banner advertising and putting banners on your web sites.

Benjamin Fitts is a little bit of a geek. He got started on the internet in 1993 and has owned several internet businesses including his own internet service provider. In 2001 Ben launched his network marketing career and began to apply his internet marketing skills to building his MLM business. Ben currently works full time from the comfort of his home building his network marketing business using the internet techniques he picked up along the way. Learn more about Ben and get more tips and advice at Home Business Blogs.