

Are You Respecting Your E-mail List?

By Stephanie Chandler

I'm probably going to get some flack for this post, but I'm writing it anyway because I feel strongly about its importance. Most marketers will tell you that your e-mail list is golden. It is. It's a big deal when someone gives you permission to contact them via e-mail, especially considering how overwhelmed we all are by e-mail these days.

Anyone who has been on my list for awhile can tell you that I don't send a lot of e-mail. I'm lucky if I manage to send my newsletter once each month. Call me a lousy marketer or call me someone who is overly-protective of my list. What I know for sure is that I don't want to abuse the privilege I have to send e-mail out to a captive audience.

I am highly selective about what I will send out; I don't participate in other people's book marketing campaigns or event promotion, and I try to save up most announcements for my newsletter. As a result, I have a high subscriber retention rate.

Am I missing out on opportunities? Probably. I could be participating in tons of affiliate programs and making more money by selling, selling, selling. But I choose not to. As a subscriber to other people's lists, I grow more wary each year. Even if the content is great, having it land in my Inbox on a weekly basis—or more than once a week (yikes!)—is just too much. I frequently unsubscribe from lists that hit me too often, and especially if they do nothing but sell.

Now it's all permeating through social media. I can't get over the amount of e-mail I'm receiving in my Facebook inbox. Invitations to open houses in cities on the other side of the country, endless invites to teleseminars that have nothing to do with my interests, and the list goes on.

I wonder if marketers are paying attention to their unsubscribe rates? Or perhaps they are simply working to add new subscribers en masse to make up for the ones they are losing? I fear that all of us who send e-mail are collectively causing a major shift. People may stop subscribing to lists altogether due to the overwhelm of too many messages and not enough time. We will need to continue finding new ways to reach people. Social media presents great opportunities, but soon that will be saturated too.

Call me crazy, but I will continue to respect my list.

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