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Tips for building your database of contacts by Bloomtools

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Most successful businesses have a large database of contacts, including clients, past clients, prospects, alliances and suppliers, which they keep up-to-date and fully utilise.

This is why your contact list is a goldmine for your business. The number and variety of strategies you can utilise with it are limitless, as are the results you can achieve from it. Using your database well can generate leads for your business and increase your sales.

Here are a few tips to build your database:

Get every new customer to complete a form (on your website or at your premises) that will automatically capture their details and populate your database of contacts.

Send a postcard or letter to your clients giving them an incentive to sign up on your website. For example if it will be opened by the right person, include a request with your next invoice for their email address (if you have all other details but not the email address).

Get everyone in your team to ask each new caller, visitor, or appointment for permission to be placed on your mailing list for your free e-newsletter and special offers that go to members only. Describe your content from a WIIFM perspective so they have an incentive to say yes.

Run a competition on your website or through other mediums. Include a tick box, already ticked, for receiving future offers.

Promote a 'sign up' form on the home page of your website (or better still on every page within your site) that automatically places their details into your contact database.

Promote the 'sign up' facility in your newsletter so that if someone 'sends it to a friend' they too can subscribe easily.

Have a subscribe link in the signature file on all your team's outgoing emails (i.e. at the end of each email).

Look at every point of contact you have with people and utilize it to gather details. Ask people to join your database at:

Seminars

Workshops

Trade shows (get cards from fellow presenters and attendees in your target market)

Networking functions

Advertise on search engines

Advertise on other websites

Supply articles to other businesses and include a link to your website with a sign up page

An important factor in getting people to join your database is the signup form you ask them to complete. Here are some tips for the form:

It needs to be simple and fast for the user

Briefly describe what they are signing up for and its frequency so they know what they are getting

Keep your details requested under 7 points

Where possible, use drop down boxes for speed and efficiency.

Use a form that automatically updates your contact list to save you time

Use incentives to encourage signips, including prizes, sample products, ebooks, white papers or discounts

Put all of these processes into consistent action and your database of contacts will be constantly growing. And so will your business.

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