How to Grow Your Email List

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Introduction

Email acquisition and email list building are crucial strategies for nonprofit organizations aiming to grow their reach, engage their audience, and drive their mission forward.

Email acquisition refers to the process of collecting email addresses from potential supporters, volunteers, and donors, while email list building involves maintaining and expanding a database of these contacts. Effective email communication can significantly enhance a nonprofit's ability to inform, inspire, and mobilize its community.

Importance of Email Acquisition and Email List Building

For nonprofits, building a robust email list is essential for several reasons. Firstly, it provides a direct and personal line of communication with supporters, allowing for the dissemination of important updates, fundraising campaigns, and event invitations. Secondly, email marketing and solicitation are cost-effective, making it a valuable tool for organizations with limited budgets. Finally, a well-maintained email list can help foster a sense of community and loyalty among supporters, ultimately leading to increased engagement and donations.

How to grow your email list?

Acquiring new email addresses is a systematic process that involves multiple strategies and platforms. Nonprofit organizations can leverage a variety of tools and techniques to effectively gather email addresses from potential supporters. Here are some high-level ideas to get you started regardless of the nonprofit sector you are in:

⊘ Create lead magnets
• Develop valuable content
• Host webinars and events

⊘ Optimize your website for email capture
• Implement pop-up forms
• Create landing pages
• Embed sign-up forms

⊘ Utilize social media platforms
• Promote sign-up forms
• Run social media contests
• Leverage ads

⊘ Leverage email marketing platforms
• Set up new subscriber's welcome series
• Send automated resource emails

⊘ Collaborate with partners and influencers
• Partner with relevant organizations
• Influencer marketing

⊘ Attend conferences and events
• Collect emails at events

⊘ Offer incentives
• Exclusive access to events or a tangible item

Consider running ads through:
Google Ad Grant
Google Paid Ads
Meta Ads
LinkedIn Ads
Micro-influencers
YouTube Ads

Healthcare

Healthcare sector nonprofits have unique opportunities to engage with their audience and acquire email addresses through targeted strategies. Here are some specific ideas tailored for healthcare-related nonprofits:

⊘ Health Awareness Campaigns

Educational Content: Create and distribute informative content such as e-books, whitepapers, and guides on specific health issues. Offer these resources in exchange for email sign-ups.

Health Tips Newsletter: Launch a regular newsletter that provides valuable health tips, latest research findings, and updates on healthcare trends. Promote this through your website and social media channels.

⊘ Webinars and Online Workshops

Expert Q&A Sessions: Host webinars with healthcare professionals who can answer questions and provide insights on relevant health topics. Require email registration to attend these sessions.

Virtual Health Workshops: Offer online workshops on various health-related topics such as mental health, nutrition, or disease prevention. Collect email addresses as part of the registration process.

⊘ Patient Stories and Testimonials

Storytelling Campaigns: Share inspiring patient stories and testimonials through email series. Encourage website visitors to subscribe to receive these stories directly in their inbox. Or ask website visitors to share their own stories.

Video Content: Create engaging video content featuring patient testimonials and health tips. Use these videos as lead magnets, offering exclusive access in exchange for email addresses.

⊘ Health Screenings and Check-ups

Online Health Assessments: Develop online health assessment tools that provide personalized feedback. Offer the results via email, requiring users to submit their email addresses to receive them.

TIP: Make sure to review the advertising policies on each platform to ensure you are compliant. Some platforms are more strict than others.

✛ Healthcare

⊘ Collaboration with Healthcare Providers

Partner with Clinics and Hospitals: Collaborate with local clinics, hospitals, and other healthcare providers to promote your email sign-up forms in their facilities and on their websites.

Joint Health Campaigns: Work together with healthcare providers on joint awareness campaigns and events, collecting email addresses from participants.

⊘ Health Challenges and Programs

Wellness Challenges: Organize wellness challenges, such as fitness programs or healthy eating contests. Require participants to sign up with their email addresses to join.

Support Groups: Create online support groups for patients dealing with specific health conditions. Use email registration to join these groups.

⊘ Leveraging Social Media and Online Communities

Health Forums and Communities: Engage with online health forums and social media groups. Share valuable content and encourage members to subscribe to your email list for more information.

Influencer Collaborations: Partner with health influencers and bloggers to promote your email sign-up forms and lead magnets to their followers.

⊘ Events and Conferences

Health Fairs and Expos: Participate in or organize health fairs and expos. Collect email addresses from attendees by offering to send them additional resources or event follow-ups.

Conference Sign-ups: If your organization hosts or attends healthcare conferences, use these events to gather email addresses from participants interested in your cause.

⊘ Mobile Health Applications

App Integration: If your nonprofit offers a mobile health app, integrate an email sign-up option within the app to keep users informed about updates and new features.

App-exclusive Content: Provide app users with access to exclusive content or features in exchange for subscribing to your email list.

Food Banks & Human Services

Food banks play a crucial role in supporting communities by providing essential resources to those in need. Here are specific email acquisition strategies tailored for food banks:

⊘ Community Awareness Campaigns

Educational Content: Create informative resources on hunger issues, food security, and nutrition tips. Offer these materials in exchange for email sign-ups.

Monthly Newsletter: Launch a monthly newsletter that provides updates on your food bank's activities, success stories, and ways to get involved. Promote the newsletter through your website and social media channels.

⊘ Fundraising Events

Virtual and In-person Events: Host fundraising events such as virtual food drives, charity runs, or community dinners. Require participants to register with their email addresses to attend.

Donation Incentives: Offer exclusive content, thank-you messages, or small gifts to donors who subscribe to your email list during donation drives.

⊘ Volunteer Recruitment and Engagement

Volunteer Sign-up Forms: Create easy-to-use online forms for individuals interested in volunteering. Collect email addresses as part of the volunteer registration process.

Volunteer Newsletters: Send regular newsletters to volunteers, providing updates on upcoming opportunities, training sessions, and volunteer appreciation events.

⊘ Partnerships with Local Businesses and Organizations

Collaborate with Local Businesses: Partner with local businesses to promote your email sign-up forms. For example, local grocery stores can display flyers with QR codes leading to your sign-up page.

Joint Community Events: Work with local organizations to host joint events, such as food drives or community fairs, where you can collect email addresses from attendees.

Food Banks & Human Services

✓ Social Media Campaigns

Promote Sign-up Forms: Share links to your email sign-up forms on your social media profiles, highlighting the benefits of subscribing.

Social Media Contests: Run contests or giveaways on platforms like Facebook and Instagram that require participants to enter their email addresses to participate.

✓ Online Content and Resources

Blog and Website Content: Publish blog posts and articles on your website about food security, community stories, and volunteer experiences. Include call-to-action buttons encouraging readers to subscribe to your email list.

Downloadable Resources: Offer downloadable resources such as meal planning guides, budget-friendly recipes, and nutrition tips. Require visitors to provide their email addresses to access these resources.

✓ Community Outreach Programs

School and Community Programs: Engage with local schools and community centers to promote your food bank's initiatives. Collect email addresses from participants and their families.

Health and Nutrition Workshops: Host workshops on nutrition, cooking, and budgeting. Use these events to gather email addresses from attendees interested in receiving more information.

✓ Website Optimization

Pop-up Forms: Implement timed or exit-intent pop-up forms on your website to capture email addresses from visitors.

Embedded Sign-up Forms: Place email sign-up forms in prominent locations on your website, such as the homepage, blog posts, and donation pages.

✓ Testimonials and Success Stories

Share Client Stories: Feature stories of individuals and families who have benefited from your food bank. Encourage website visitors to subscribe to your email list to receive more heartwarming stories and updates.

Video Content: Create videos showcasing the impact of your food bank's work. Use these videos as lead magnets, offering exclusive access in exchange for email addresses.

✓ Community Engagement and Networking

Attend Local Events: Participate in community events, farmers' markets, and local fairs. Use these opportunities to engage with the community and collect email addresses.

Information Booths: Set up information booths at various locations, such as libraries, community centers, and local festivals. Provide materials about your food bank and collect email addresses from interested individuals.

Higher Education

Higher education sector nonprofits, including colleges, universities, and educational foundations, need robust email acquisition strategies to connect with students, alumni, faculty, donors, and other stakeholders. Additionally, these ideas can be used to spark engagement with existing constituents that may not be active. Here are specific email acquisition strategies tailored for the higher education sector:

⊘ Educational Content and Resources

E-books and Guides: Create comprehensive guides on topics like college application tips, scholarship information, and career advice. Offer these resources in exchange for email sign-ups.

Research Publications: Share access to exclusive research papers, articles, and publications. Require email registration to download or access these materials.

⊘ Campus Events and Webinars

Virtual Open Houses and Campus Tours: Host virtual open houses and campus tours for prospective students. Collect email addresses during the registration process.

Webinar Series: Organize webinars on topics such as academic programs, financial aid, and student life. Require participants to register with their email addresses.

⊘ Alumni Engagement

Alumni Newsletters: Launch newsletters specifically for alumni, featuring updates on campus news, alumni achievements, and upcoming events. Promote the newsletter through alumni networks and social media.

Alumni Events: Host reunions, networking events, and guest lectures. Collect email addresses from attendees as part of the event registration.

⊘ Partnerships with Academic Departments and Student Organizations

Collaborate with Departments: Work with academic departments to promote email sign-up forms on their web pages and during departmental events.

Student Organization Collaborations: Partner with student organizations to reach a broader audience. Use events and activities organized by these groups to gather email addresses.

Higher Education

Social Media Campaigns

Promote Alumni/Donor Portal: Consider developing an Alumni/Donor Portal or Member Center that can be publicized to a targeted audience on social media to encourage email updates as well as new sign ups.

Social Media Contests: Run contests or giveaways on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn that require participants to enter their email addresses to participate.

Online Platforms and Websites

Website Pop-up Forms: Implement timed or exit-intent pop-up forms on your website to capture email addresses from visitors.

Embedded Sign-up Forms: Place email sign-up forms in prominent locations on your website, such as the homepage, blog posts, and program pages.

Student Recruitment and Admissions

Prospective Student Sign-ups: Collect email addresses from prospective students during college fairs, high school visits, and through online inquiry forms.

Admissions Newsletters: Create a newsletter for prospective students, providing updates on admissions deadlines, application tips, and campus news.

Donor and Fundraising Campaigns

Donation Incentives: Offer exclusive updates, thank-you messages, or small gifts to donors who subscribe to your email list during fundraising campaigns.

Crowdfunding Campaigns: Use crowdfunding platforms to raise funds for specific projects. Collect email addresses from donors as part of the contribution process.

Career Services and Job Placement

Job Alerts and Career Advice: Provide job alerts, internship opportunities, and career advice through a dedicated email newsletter. Promote this service to current students and alumni.

Career Fairs: Host career fairs and networking events. Require email registration from participants and follow up with relevant information and opportunities.

Higher Education

⊘ Online Learning

Online Courses: Offer free online courses. Require email registration to access course materials and updates.

E-learning Platforms: Provide access to e-learning platforms with exclusive content. Collect email addresses as part of the registration process.

⊘ Campus Facilities and Services

Library and Resource Centers: Promote email sign-ups for updates on new resources, workshops, and events hosted by campus libraries and resource centers.

Health and Wellness Programs: Offer newsletters focused on health and wellness, including updates on services, events, and wellness tips. Collect email addresses from participants.

⊘ Surveys and Feedback Forms

Student Surveys: Conduct surveys to gather feedback on various aspects of campus life and academic programs. Offer the option to subscribe to email updates.

Alumni Feedback: Use surveys to collect feedback from alumni on events and services. Include an option for alumni to sign up for newsletters and updates.

Environmental

Environmental sector nonprofits focus on addressing critical issues such as climate change, conservation, sustainability, and wildlife protection. Here are specific email acquisition strategies tailored for environmental nonprofits:

## Educational Content and Resources

E-books and Guides: Create comprehensive guides on topics like sustainable living, wildlife conservation, and climate change mitigation. Offer these resources in exchange for email sign-ups.

Fact Sheets and Infographics: Develop visually appealing fact sheets and infographics that provide key information on environmental issues. Require email registration to access these materials.

Campaigns and Advocacy

Petitions and Pledges: Launch petitions and pledges related to environmental causes. Collect email addresses from supporters who sign these petitions or make pledges.

Campaign Updates: Offer email updates on ongoing campaigns and advocacy efforts. Encourage supporters to subscribe for the latest news and action alerts.
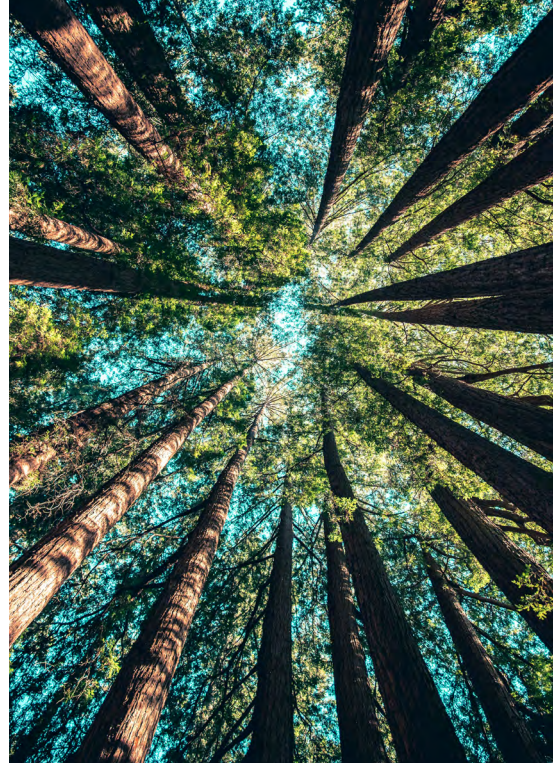
Events and Webinars

Virtual and In-person Events: Host events such as virtual town halls, workshops, and community clean-ups. Require participants to register with their email addresses.

Webinar Series: Organize webinars on topics such as renewable energy, conservation strategies, and environmental policy. Require participants to register with their email addresses.

Partnerships with Eco-friendly Businesses and Organizations

Collaborate with Green Businesses: Partner with eco-friendly businesses to promote your email sign-up forms. For example, local organic stores or eco-friendly product companies can display flyers with QR codes leading to your sign-up page.

Joint Community Events: Work with other environmental organizations to host joint events, such as tree planting drives or beach clean-ups, where you can collect email addresses from attendees.

Environmental

⊘ Social Media Campaigns

Promote Sign-up Forms: Share links to your email sign-up forms on your social media profiles, highlighting the benefits of subscribing.

Social Media Contests: Run contests or giveaways on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter that require participants to enter their email addresses to participate.

⊘ Online Content and Resources

Blog and Website Content: Publish blog posts and articles on your website about environmental issues, success stories, and volunteer experiences. Include call-to-action buttons encouraging readers to subscribe to your email list.

Downloadable Resources: Offer downloadable resources such as sustainability checklists, eco-friendly tips, and conservation guides. Require visitors to provide their email addresses to access these resources.

⊘ Community Outreach Programs

School and Community Programs: Engage with local schools and community centers to promote your initiatives. Collect email addresses from participants and their families.

Environmental Workshops: Host workshops on topics such as composting, recycling, and water conservation. Use these events to gather email addresses from attendees interested in receiving more information.

⊘ Website Optimization

Pop-up Forms: Implement timed or exit-intent pop-up forms on your website to capture email addresses from visitors.

Embedded Sign-up Forms: Place email sign-up forms in prominent locations on your website, such as the homepage, blog posts, and campaign pages.

⊘ Success Stories and Impact Reports

Share Success Stories: Feature stories of successful conservation projects and positive environmental impacts. Encourage website visitors to subscribe to your email list to receive more inspiring stories and updates.

Impact Reports: Provide access to detailed impact reports that showcase your organization's achievements. Require email registration to download or access these reports.

Environmental

⊘ Community Engagement and Networking

Attend Local Events: Participate in community events, farmers' markets, and environmental fairs. Use these opportunities to engage with the community and collect email addresses.

Information Booths: Set up information booths at various locations, such as libraries, community centers, and local festivals. Provide materials about your organization and collect email addresses from interested individuals.

⊘ Volunteer and Membership Programs

Volunteer Sign-up Forms: Create user-friendly online forms for individuals interested in volunteering. Collect email addresses as part of the volunteer registration process.

Membership Programs: Offer membership programs with exclusive benefits such as newsletters, event invitations, and special reports. Encourage people to sign up for membership by providing their email addresses.

⊘ Online Courses and Educational Programs

E-learning Platforms: Offer online courses and educational programs on environmental topics. Require email registration to access course materials and updates.

Webinar Series: Host a series of webinars on relevant topics, inviting experts to speak. Require attendees to register with their email addresses to participate.

Animal Welfare

Animal welfare nonprofits work to protect animals, promote humane treatment, and advocate for animal rights. Here are specific email acquisition strategies tailored for animal welfare nonprofits:

⊘ Educational Content and Resources

E-books and Guides: Create comprehensive guides on topics like pet care, animal rights, and adoption tips. Offer these resources in exchange for email sign-ups.

Fact Sheets and Infographics: Develop visually appealing fact sheets and infographics that provide key information on animal welfare issues. Require email registration to access these materials.

⊘ Pet Adoption and Foster Programs

Adoption Alerts: Offer email notifications for upcoming adoption events and information about animals available for adoption. Encourage visitors to sign up for these alerts.

Foster Care Programs: Create a sign-up form for those interested in becoming foster parents for animals. Collect email addresses during the registration process.

⊘ Campaigns and Advocacy

Petitions and Pledges: Launch petitions and pledges related to animal welfare causes. Collect email addresses from supporters who sign these petitions or make pledges.

Campaign Updates: Offer email updates on ongoing campaigns and advocacy efforts. Encourage supporters to subscribe for the latest news and action alerts.

⊘ Events and Webinars

Virtual and In-person Events: Host events such as virtual pet meet-and-greets, workshops, and community fundraisers. Require participants to register with their email addresses.

Webinar Series: Organize webinars on topics such as responsible pet ownership, animal behavior, and veterinary care. Require participants to register with their email addresses.

🐾 Animal Welfare

✅ Partnerships with Pet-related Businesses and Organizations

Collaborate with Pet Stores and Veterinary Clinics: Partner with pet stores, veterinary clinics, and groomers to promote your email sign-up forms. Display flyers with QR codes leading to your sign-up page.

Joint Community Events: Work with other animal welfare organizations to host joint events, such as pet fairs or vaccination clinics, where you can collect email addresses from attendees.

✅ Social Media Campaigns

Promote Sign-up Forms: Share links to your email sign-up forms on your social media profiles, highlighting the benefits of subscribing.

Social Media Contests: Run contests or giveaways on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter that require participants to enter their email addresses to participate.

✅ Online Content and Resources

Blog and Website Content: Publish blog posts and articles on your website about animal welfare issues, success stories, and volunteer experiences. Include call-to-action buttons encouraging readers to subscribe to your email list.

Downloadable Resources: Offer downloadable resources such as pet care checklists, training guides, and wellness tips. Require visitors to provide their email addresses to access these resources.

✅ Community Outreach Programs

School and Community Programs: Engage with local schools and community centers to promote your initiatives. Collect email addresses from participants and their families.

Animal Welfare Workshops: Host workshops on topics such as pet adoption, spaying/neutering, and wildlife conservation. Use these events to gather email addresses from attendees interested in receiving more information.

✅ Website Optimization

Pop-up Forms: Implement timed or exit-intent pop-up forms on your website to capture email addresses from visitors.

Embedded Sign-up Forms: Place email sign-up forms in prominent locations on your website, such as the homepage, blog posts, and campaign pages.

✅ Success Stories and Impact Reports

Share Success Stories: Feature stories of rescued and adopted animals, showcasing their transformation. Encourage website visitors to subscribe to your email list to receive more inspiring stories and updates.

Impact Reports: Provide access to detailed impact reports that showcase your organization's achievements. Require email registration to download or access these reports.

Animal Welfare

✓ **Community Engagement and Networking**

Attend Local Events: Participate in community events, farmers' markets, and animal fairs. Use these opportunities to engage with the community and collect email addresses.

Information Booths: Set up information booths at various locations, such as libraries, community centers, and local festivals. Provide materials about your organization and collect email addresses from interested individuals.

✓ **Volunteer and Membership Programs**

Volunteer Sign-up Forms: Create user-friendly online forms for individuals interested in volunteering. Collect email addresses as part of the volunteer registration process.

Membership Programs: Offer membership programs with exclusive benefits such as newsletters, event invitations, and special reports. Encourage people to sign up for membership by providing their email addresses.

✓ **Pet Owner Support Services**

Pet Care Alerts: Provide email alerts with tips on pet care, seasonal health advisories, and reminders for vaccinations and check-ups. Encourage pet owners to sign up for these alerts.

Lost and Found Notifications: Create a lost and found pet notification system that requires email registration to receive updates about lost or found animals in the community.
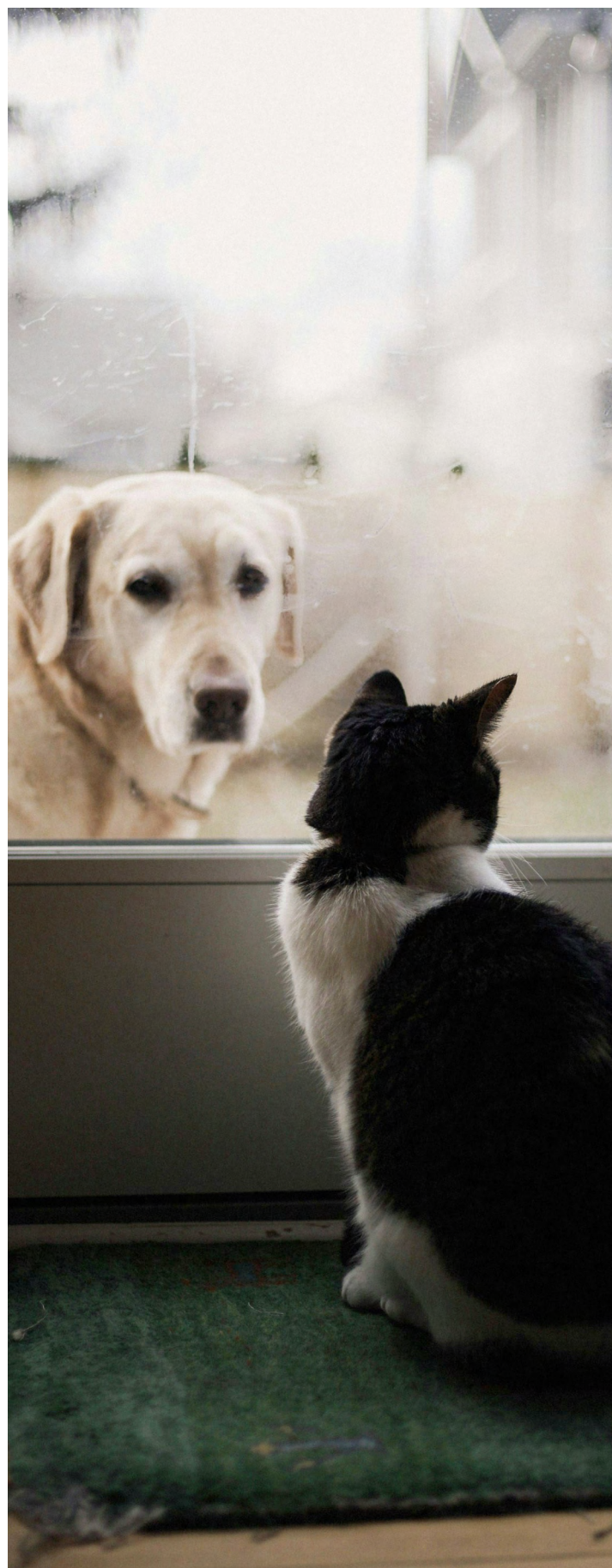
You got their email addresses, now what?

A welcome series for new subscribers is a vital component of any nonprofit's email marketing strategy. This series of emails serves as the first impression and sets the tone for the relationship between the nonprofit and its new subscribers. It offers a unique opportunity to engage, educate, and build trust with potential supporters from the moment they express interest in your organization.

Typically, we recommend a series of around three emails to introduce your organization to new subscribers. The key messages can look something like this:

Email 1: Welcome to our organization! Here is what you can expect from us

Email 2: Provide key facts and services about your organization

Email 3: Other ways to give. This could include one-time giving, monthly giving, planned giving, volunteering, and more.

The goal is to get people to engage with your emails, so be sure to add graphics, buttons and text links for your subscribers to click on. Once new subscribers have gone through the welcome series, they should be funneled into your annual giving calendar and receive regular solicitation and stewardship emails.
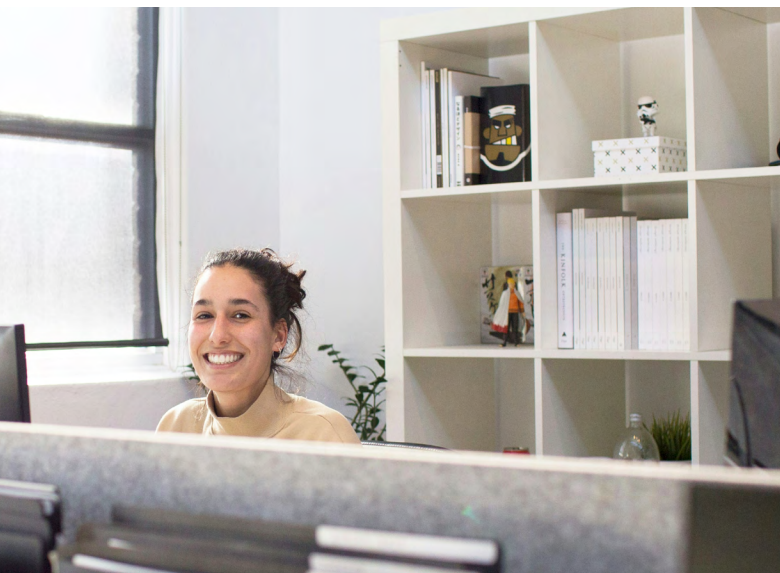
Conclusion

In conclusion, building and maintaining a strong email list is essential for nonprofits to raise funds to sustain their operations and tell their stories. Effective email acquisition tactics not only expand the reach of an organization but also foster a community of engaged and committed supporters. By leveraging the power of email, nonprofits can enhance their communication, increase their fundraising capabilities, and ultimately, make a greater impact on their mission.

Reach out to us anytime and we will help you brainstorm unique ways to build your email list.

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