

# Case In Point: Getting Your List To Respond

By Karon Thackston

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We all wish we could have ultra-responsive mailing lists, don't we? The dream of most marketers is to send out their ezine and sit back to watch a flood of orders come in. After all, while we always DO want to provide good, solid information for our readers, we'd all be fibbing if we said our ezines were not a promotional tool as well. So how do we build a responsive list? Ryan Deiss of <http://www.SiteSightings.com> has some great information to share regarding his last mailing that we can all learn from.

KARON: Hi Ryan! Thanks for your time.

RYAN: Anytime, Karon.

KARON: I know you have several lists. How many subscribers do you have right now?

RYAN: I have about 2000 on my main newsletter list and another 3000 subscribers to my lead generating courses and ebook downloads from my OptInAutomator.com and PopUpRotator.com sites.

KARON: The last time you mailed out an issue featuring a product or service, what was the offer, and what kind of response did you get?

RYAN: I sent out a recommendation for Alex Sampson's new ebook, "Grilling the Net Gurus," and a little more than 11% of the people on my list \*purchased\* the product. Note that that's an 11% purchase rate, not click-through rate, which still amazes me. And in case you were wondering, my click-through rate was over 20%.

KARON: Wow! That's great, Ryan! What's your secret?

RYAN: I have Alex to thank for the high sales conversion rate. His sales letter really does its job, not to mention the fact that the product itself is a winner and way under priced. As for the high click-through rate, I credit that to a couple of things.

KARON: Like what?

RYAN: Well, I strive to fill my newsletter with quality information so that my subscribers look forward to seeing my name in their inbox. (And many have told me that this is the case.)

KARON: Yeah, that makes sense. What else?

RYAN: I send out very few mailings, never more than 3 or 4 a month, and so I don't overload my subscriber's inboxes with junk, which gets them in the habit of deleting my emails. (That, by the way, is not something you want to condition your subscribers to do.)

KARON: So less is more. All right... what else?

RYAN: The email itself was well written (if I do say so myself) and it included important elements such as a price increase deadline and a definite call to action. One thing I did not try to do, however, was to sell the product in that email. (I knew Alex's site could take care of that part.) My goal was to peak their curiosity so much that they were literally forced to click the link as soon as they saw it.

KARON: So more like dangling a carrot instead of shoving something down their throats. Now you said you got a 20% click through rate. Is this a typical response?

RYAN: I wish I could say that I received a 20+% click-through rate and an over 10% sales rate every time I sent out a mailing, but that simply wouldn't be true. Average for me is around 5-10% click through and 3-4% sales rate.

KARON: How do you account for the difference?

RYAN: There are so many elements that go into a successful email marketing campaign, and when everything lines up (like it did during my last campaign) the results are beautiful, but even when a few elements don't work out like they should it's still possible to have a successful campaign.

KARON: Now let me ask you this all-important question. Do you feel your readers are responding to YOU, to the offer or both?

RYAN: Definitely both... It doesn't matter how great your relationship with your subscribers is, if you pitch them junk they're not going to buy, and you're going to lose their trust. That's why I only send out offers for products that I've personally used and can recommend. As far as I'm concerned it's the only way to go.

KARON: I completely agree, Ryan. If you shove every affiliate offer you come across down your reader's throats just to make a buck, your success will be short lived. You have to be honest.

RYAN: That's right... but once you've picked a great product or service to plug to your subscribers, having a rapport built with them certainly doesn't hurt. I've had subscribers email me time and time again telling me how they look forward to my emails because I always provide something useful. That's exactly the kind of things I love to hear, because it means that when I send an offer to that person, they don't even have to think about whether or not they're going to read it. They see that it's from me and they're already conditioned to open the email. As a newsletter publisher, my primary goal is to get all of my subscribers conditioned in this manner.

KARON: I agree, again! So give us your own personal list, Ryan. What is the #1 Do and the #1 Don't when building a responsive list?

RYAN: DO provide valuable content outside of the offers so that your readers look forward to receiving your emails. DON'T send out an offer every single day. I'm subscribed to some ezines

that do this, and all I do is delete them every time they pop-up in my inbox.

KARON: Me, too!

RYAN: Well, I'm not going to name the ezine, but in one case I'm so conditioned to deleting this person's emails that I've accidentally deleted the ezine itself when it was delivered. It just got lost in the sea of worthless offers and "opportunity" announcements.

KARON: Excellent information, Ryan. Thanks so very much.

If you'd like to subscribe to Ryan's ezine "Site Sightings," be sure to visit <http://www.SiteSightings.com> .

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