

# Avoiding the Perils and Pitfalls of Opt-in Lists

By Steve Shaw

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It's almost part of an initiation ceremony for budding internet marketers to grab a quick-as-they-can opt-in list, with all the promises of instant riches, only to find that rather than the bed of roses they were dreaming of, they end up with their fledgling internet business immediately shut down and their dreams in ruins.

This article, via a set of basic FAQs, tells you exactly how to avoid the perils and pitfalls of opt-in lists that befall so many, and instead move your internet business onto a solid, and profitable, foundation for the future.

1. When I purchase an opt-in list from somebody, how can I check and confirm that they are truly opt-in?

My advice here is simply NOT to purchase a pre-existing opt-in list from somebody, but to build your own - otherwise you are taking a sizeable risk.

What you can do instead is to order opt-in leads from a reputable source, eg. you purchase say 600 leads, and these leads opt-in over time via the lead forwarding company. This means you may say get 20 new leads a day until your order is complete.

In general, such companies purchase advertising space on other web sites to advertise your list - but just be careful to order your leads from somewhere reputable. The ones I use and can recommend are at

<http://www.takanomi.com/leadfactory/> and <http://www.worldwidelists.com> .

2. How can I check and confirm that the company that is selling opt-in lists is legitimate?

Again, I'd advise you not to purchase a ready-made opt-in list - if you think about it, these people have definitely not 'opted in' to your list, they probably didn't know it existed, and have no idea that their names and email addresses are on a particular list that is being sold to people like you.

As such, their reactions are not likely to be favorable when you start mailing them, and you could find that your ISP shuts you down very quickly.

My general rule here is, if you are in any doubt whatsoever, just steer clear.

### 3. Can I send bulk emails to my opt-in list?

You can of course send emails to your list, I would advise using an online service such as the one I use at <http://www.takanomi.com/par> , or more basic providers such as at <http://www.freeautobot.com> .

This not only means that the delivery of your messages is taken care of on a server (rather than relying on your own PC and perhaps shaky internet connection), but it also makes the collection of your own opt-in leads very easy.

All you do is compose the email you want to send, and then click to send it to your group of contacts.

### 4. When I send bulk emails, should I send one email at a time or can I send 100 email at a time showing all 100 email addresses on Cc field?

I'd strongly advise that you use an online service as described above, or specialist PC-based software such as Mailloop from <http://takanomi.com/mailloop> or WorldCast from <http://www.fairlogic.com/worldcast> , rather than use existing mail software such as Outlook, which simply isn't designed for bulk mailing.

This means that you can not only send thousands of emails with a single click, but that each subscriber receives a personally addressed email that usually includes an easy unsubscribe option, which is important to build up the trust of your opt-in list, as well as your own credibility.

### 5. What if I purchased illegal opt-in emails (by mistake) from somebody and started marketing my product?

This would be your big risk of purchasing pre-existing opt-in lists, and a risk that I'd very strongly advise you not to take. So many fledgling internet businesses start off on this wrong foot, and have to live with the consequences.

The most likely result would be that your host would fairly quickly shut your site down and your internet business would simply cease to exist.

In conclusion, just ensure that everyone you are sending email to has definitely opted in to receive your individual publication, either via a reputable lead forwarding company such as described above, or via subscription from your own web site.

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Steve Shaw shows how you can boost your opt-ins by up to 535% using the pop-up secrets of masters like Jim Daniels and Terry Dean - sign up for the free PopUp Masters eCourse at <http://takanomi.com/newsletter> .

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