



Episode 4 - Changes to My Email Marketing Strategy

Hello everyone this is Jason Owens. Thanks a lot for joining me for episode number four. I hope you've been enjoying these podcasts that we've released here over the past few days.

Doing my best to have four for you available very quickly so that as you're discovering this podcast that you can have a good a chunk of content to go ahead and grab ahold of right away.

In the very first podcast we ended up talking about what you can expect by listening to the series. Of course we're all about helping you package what you know and scaling that across a very wide audience.

Whether that is in the form of having a blog or having some training videos or packaging your material into a sellable product, a sellable program, maybe even a membership site where you can get residual income.

I love working with people who are experts, people who are authors, people who are public speakers. Love working with you all and I'll tell you what I've been having a blast. Many of you know that my wife and I moved this summer.

We ended up moving to Pennsylvania and I tell you what that was quite a transition and I am just having a blast getting my feet under me once again getting a new routine established and it's just been going great guns here as we head into the winter.

So looking forward to this episode. So again in episode one, we talked a lot about what you can expect by listening to the podcast series.

Episode two, I shared with you the results of my most recent flash sale which if you haven't listened to that episode yet I certainly encourage you to go back, check out episode two.

A lot of really good gold nuggets there. If you ever thought about packaging something that will really grab a hold of the market and really grab some attention.

Let me tell you, you will certainly get attraction in your business. It's certainly been worth it for me. So go back and check out episode 2.

In episode 3, we highlighted Joe Phillips who is part of the community, part of the tribe here. He is somebody that I think we can all look to as what a good solid expert type business will look like.

That expert public speaking business. One that has products to it on the one that scales. When you think about what you want to be when you grow up, Joe Phillips is actually a pretty good model to look at.

So go ahead and check out episode 3 and you'll just begin to get a taste for the breath that Joe Phillips has in his business, that's pretty impressive.

So with that in mind here we are in episode 4 where I want to talk about some of the pretty massive changes that I'm making in the email marketing strategy that I have for my business.

So what I have done in my business. I evolved over; oh gee, was the course of a couple years I had started on I can't remember if it was constant contact or eye contact.

It was a type of email marketing service. I know that I was on a Weber for I don't know about six or eight months. So I've tried a few of those programs and frankly I was seeing the pros and cons to pretty much all of that, right.

So there's some that I liked for some reasons and some that I like for other reasons. What I ended up doing was I just I looked at what Michael Hyatt was doing at the time.

And what I saw from Michael Hyatt is that he was broadcasting his content. So he would publish something on his blog and that would automatically publish the next morning out to his list alright.

So he's doing something called 'RSS Syndication' or a really simple syndication on RSS feed and he was; he had connected that feed over to his MailChimp account.

So he was serving a lot of emails out of MailChimp. But that is how he was primarily getting his content out to his readers and he was one of the few people that I saw using the entire blog post length, right.

This wasn't a 200-word blurb just to kind of tease you into clicking on the link. No, this was the full podcast from sorry, the full blog post itself.

So anyway I like that these emails were very content rich. They had great big shareable images inside of them, great big quotes; they had tweetable links and they were quite frankly they were really aesthetically appealing emails.

So I saw that and thought well, if that's working for Michael Hyatt I'll certainly give that a go. Now that wasn't the only thing he was doing of course.

He also; I noticed when he had a campaign that we would run meaning that he has some kind of a launch that he's doing, some kind of a sale that's happening. His really big promotion.

He would begin to use his messages from MailChimp to get you to click over once you click in to show some kind of interest. Well it really seemed that you were moving from MailChimp over into Infusion soft.

So I know a bit; quite a bit about Infusion soft have been on it for years. So I noticed that the campaigning to buy that product seemed to happen in Infusion soft. So anyway I watched that it seemed to be a hybrid strategy.

So he was using MailChimp to go ahead and send out content and tease people get them into a campaign.

But once you were into a campaign maybe once you signed an opt-in page to go in and check out a new eBook that he was launching from that point on you were into a campaign and that campaign was sending you through a sales funnel, through a series of emails that were all automated and all typed up ahead of time.

And of course the intention is to get you to buy right. For you to make a decision. So I watched that hybrid strategy and I was able to put that into effect in my business I had my blog setup.

Of course I'm on the GetNoticed! theme to get noticed themed love it. And I was I spent a lot of time when of course of a couple days figuring out how I can custom code an email template so that when I hooked up this RSS feed that talked from my blog over to MailChimp that it ended up looking really good whenever it's sent out the emails.

So I was really happy with that and frankly that was working for me. I also did a lot of campaigning over inside Infusion soft and I have a ton of things set up an infusion soft, love it.

It has my shopping cart, all of my affiliate management, all my campaigns, all my automation. It's all an infusion soft and really, really enjoying it. I should probably do a show on just Infusion soft one day as it really is that powerful and it really is expensive but wow is it good.

So anyway that's all working for me. What I've noticed however in the ethos just watching some people as to as far as what trends seem to be lately; I've noticed that Michael Hyatt has stopped doing these really rich content, rich looking emails right.

So he's not sending the great big shareable images, the tweetable quotes, the really nice big thoughts and all that. All of that is gone and it's been replaced with really kind of a plain, boring, text-based looking email right.

I mean there are no images or no pictures. Now of course there are clickable links inside this but when I read back through his blog he pretty much said hey listen, I love doing testing in my business and here's what we're finding.

We're starting to find that with some of the changes in the email algorithms out there that a lot more of my stuff is going into spam boxes or a lot more of my stuff is being put into the unimportant order inside of gmail because I have these really big shareable images inside my emails.

So what he noticed about deliverability is that when he stopped doing the pictures that the deliverability of the emails went up, okay. Well of course if you're looking at any kind of sales funnel what matters the most is what's closest to the top of that funnel.

While sending is certainly really important people receiving your emails is wickedly important as well. So you have to have those two handled at a very high level before you can even begin to think about counting the open rate right.

And of course from open rate it's click through and opt ins and all that stuff down there. But if you don't have the stuff at the very top end of that sales funnel figure it out and figure it out well.

It can be a big deal right especially when you're sending out as many emails as some of the bigger people are out there and people will not you your platforms. Yeah let's face it sending rates definitely matter.

So with that in mind frankly I always had a bit of tension on the inside right. So I have Infusionsoft. I'm paying good money for it each month. Why in the world would I want to use anything but Infusionsoft to deliver my emails?

So anyhow I really had some internal tension about that. So what I've decided to do is follow the lead of what it appears Michael Hyatt is doing that he's going to move to the text-based emails.

And again for me I'm thinking: why do that in two different systems? Why am I not just going straight through and doing a text based email right out of my Infusionsoft? Because of course I certainly have enough horsepower inside that system to do it.

So that's what I'm doing lately. I started transitioning people all into my Infusionsoft. Now again as people have opted into my list, I've been keeping track of that and putting people in both systems but most often I'm just sending information out through MailChimp.

So here's my conundrum as I ended up migrating into just completely using one system apart from using two. What I noticed is inside my; and I'm going to use a term database which is different than my email subscribers right.

So in my database that I have I have a lot of people. I had over 700 people in my database.

Now by people here what I mean is, these are not only just subscribers but there are also people that I might have a conversation with them say oh, that person is definitely going to have a need for public speaking.

It's an event planner, that event happens in June every year I'm going to go ahead and enter that person's contact information and just make sure that I capture it somewhere.

Well of course it makes total sense to capture that inside Infusion soft right. Keep everything all in one place.

Now again these are not subscribers, I don't have permission to market to them but this is somebody that I can at least track name, phone number, address that kind of thing so that when I want to reach out I at least have it all in one place.

And it's all protected in the cloud and not going to get a raised and all that good stuff.

So I have a lot of people in that category who aren't necessarily on my list but these are people that I want to keep track up. Okay so that's one issue.

Now the next issue is I have other people that I have met all over creation over the past four and a half to five years right. I have people that I used to work with way back in my old corporate days.

I have people that I met in doing a lot of the community college speaking that I was doing there for in 2014, 15 and 16. I have people that I have met through networking events, through chamber events, you name it. People that have opted-in because they ended up responding to Facebook ads that I put out.

I've done a lot of Facebook Ads had some pretty decent response rates out of that. So I have people that again I have opted-in and I've talked to them a few times and they're on my list but people that maybe I haven't seen for a while or they might not remember who I am.

So anyway I knew that I needed to go in and sort through all of this. I need to categorize people into a couple different bucket there. Actually there's about four or five buckets.

So I'll go ahead and tell you about that. And what I want to do for the rest of this podcast is, I really am going to refer you over to the show notes for this okay. The blog post itself.

You will want to go to JasonROwens.com/4

So again first name middle initial last name. JasonROwens.com/4. That will take you over to the show notes for this episode.

Because what I'm going to give you is the high level view of this cleanup effort that I did.

I'm going to show you tactically what I did every step in the way plus I'm going to give you the exact same text that I used in my emails so that when your time comes to go through and pass through your list and do a cleanup effort like mine, you won't have to reinvent the wheel.

You'll already have a model for it and you can use what I've already done. So no one sense, no sense to reinvent the wheel. It just makes good sense to go ahead and grab something that somebody else has done.

So let me walk you through this in general. Now again I have people who I have met several different places right. So what I first did is, I went ahead and typed up an email.

I created a bit of an automation sequence inside of Infusion soft. Now I know a lot of you may not be that familiar with automation but pretty much here's how it works. You can just think of it as autopilot.

You end up creating a series of 2, 3, 4; however many emails you want. In this case for me it was two. And I created these emails and I can put people into this sequence.

These sequences are; sorry these emails are tied together with a timer in between them okay. So first you send out; you start somebody in the sequence, they get the first email then in the next step.

As soon as they get the email sends out then what they do is they go into kind of a holding tank and that holding tank can be two days, three days, five years; whatever time limit you put on it.

As for me I had that timer I think about two days in between emails. After that two days is up boom! They end up jumping into, they get sent the second email alright.

So automation like this you can set up in pretty much any email software system. Now some of you who are on MailChimp you will probably need to pay for automation to be turned on your account.

For those of you I think you are on constant contact I think you get some degree of automation from them and I can't swear to all the other systems out there. But at least for MailChimp I know that you'll need to pay to turn on automation.

So at the very tail end of this automation I created something called a gold alright. And this goal is if you click on anything inside this email the way that I have it set up. If you click on anything well that must mean that you want to stay alright.

So if you want to stay then I'm going to flag you with a marker that says hey, I want to stay a subscriber alright. So if you click then I'm going to tag you as a subscriber and I will keep you on my list.

If I don't hear anything from you, if you don't open, if you don't click well what happens then is you get caught you get tagged as a dead contact right. That's somebody that I will remove off of my list.

So now let's talk about that before I go any deeper. Let's take the aside here for a moment. Why in the world after you spent all this time getting people on your list would you want to remove people from your list?

Well here's why. Your email reputation of your domain the domain that you are sending from is a really big deal. And I'm gaining even deeper appreciation for this as time goes on.

Quite frankly at that in the earlier days I used to not pay this a whole lot of attention because frankly I didn't think it was; I didn't really believe a lot of the hype and hysteria.

Lately however, just due to a lot of the projects that I've been working with you. I'm finding that this whole idea this whole issue of email deliverability.

There's actually a lot to some of the hype that you're hearing out there. So the idea of keeping your list very clean is a very good thing and by clean what you don't want to have our emails that bounce back to you okay.

So you met somebody three years ago and you've had this business card laying around. You finally get around to entering that person in your list alright.

Assuming, assuming of course that you have permission from them. So you've put them on your list and then you start sending them something.

Well they left that job 18 months ago or they left that position or they got a job; they're no longer self-employed right something has changed in their life and that email is no longer good.

Okay so what happens there is that if you send say you have a message that goes out, you have a newsletter or whatever. You send this out to 500 people okay and you have...

I'm going to make up a number here. You have a hundred of these bad email addresses right. Well that's a 20-percent bounce rate okay.

That's really bad because Gmail is going to look at this and say okay, you are now trying to send to a whole bunch of my people and 20 of these emails that you're sending me are no longer any good, huh.

There must be something wrong with your domain. You guys might not be a reputable sender because you have such a high bounce rate.

So what happens there is that while Gmail may not lock you completely the deliverability of your emails may be somewhat up to question. So anyway with all that in mind you want to clean out your list of bounces and you also want to remove people if they're just flat-out, not engaging you.

Give it the college try given that one last push of trying to reengage people and there's a whole bunch of techniques that you can use to do that.

But just go ahead and try to reengage people and if they're still not engaging with you, you need to get them off your main list. Now you don't necessarily have to delete them completely but what you want to do is you want to take a lot of these non-responders alright.

So let's say you get all the bounces the bounces frankly if you can't get that straightened out whether it's an old email or maybe you typed it in wrong.

If it's not something easy to fix I don't know what value the bounced emails are to you because they're obviously not getting the emails. They're not going to buy anything if they can't get the email from you.

They're probably not worth having on your list at all or on any list for that matter. So the ones that are bounced frankly there's a good argument for just flat-out deleting those.

Next the next layer is hey, I've been emailing this certain group of people right. So you can look through your list you can find the people who are not opening. You've been emailing them for a while.

So again there are a couple tricks you can do there to try to get those people re-engage. But again if they're just not going to open, they're not really helping you a whole lot okay.

So some people have said, wow you really want to take your non openers off even if you've gone to all the trouble to try and re-engage them if they're just not engaging, they're not helping your open rates at all and they're not helping your reputation.

So anyway that's that is those are two levels right there of thought that you want to give to your email list. So let me tell you the exact phraseology that I used here on the email that I sent.

So I'm going to pull up my notes here and I'll give you a little bit of the psychology and the rationale behind what I did. Okay so here's what the text of the email said that I sent out as part of my cleanup effort right.

So again remember that I've cued this up. This is the first email that they will get out of a total of two.

The second email frankly sounds a lot like the first. In this verbiage here's how I start out.

We met some time in the past two years maybe it was at; and then I've created a bullet point list here: one of the workshops that I run for the community colleges in North Carolina, at a networking event or a meet up in and around Charlotte, at a Rotary meeting where I spoke, at craft content Nashville where I spoke, at the entrepreneur summit where I delivered a keynote okay.

So I list several other things there because again I'm trying to reconnect with people across the spectrum over the past two and after to three years. Okay going on either way I'm just writing to ask if you still want to stay connected.

I right marketing tips so authors, experts and public speakers can book more speaking engagements, sell more products. I write a lot on how people can leverage email marketing to make more money.

If you'd like to stay connected all you have to do is click here or click the button below okay. So that's kind of the top half of the email.

Now I literally have a big blue button right in the center of my email that says, click here to stay connected with Jason okay. So then we go on the bottom half right beneath the button let's start back up again.

You don't need to do anything to unsubscribe. You will fall off my list at the end of the next three days unless you click on the link above to tell me that you want to stay. If you have to go I fully understand.

Again you don't need to do anything to unsubscribe. If you choose to stay, I thank you profusely. I look forward to sending more and more great targeted content view over the next few weeks and months take care, Jason.

Okay so let me tell you a little bit about the psychology of what I'm doing here. Right here at the open up the reason that I list this bullet point okay.

Maybe you saw me here, maybe you saw me, here maybe you met me here is because quite frankly I've done this before where I haven't reached out to my people via email and maybe I don't know two or three months and then I send out this message and people have honest-to-goodness forgotten that they met me right.

Life is busy. People only have so much bandwidth. If they've forgotten you quite frankly it's pretty easy and pretty understandable to have that happen.

So I went ahead and listed down this list. I think I have seven or eight things there about where people could have possibly met. Okay I do another couple things here towards the end. I like making people take action.

Now some people could say well gosh Jason, you could have set this up a little differently in that if they didn't click anything they would still stay on your list. Well frankly that all that does is reward an engagement right so that's not what I want to do.

I want to reward people for clicking and staying in. I specifically say it two times; you don't need to do anything to unsubscribe.

Why I'm doing this very intentionally I would rather have I would rather personally have control over removing somebody for my list than having a whole bunch of unsubscribes. Unsubscribes aren't terrible or frankly I would just rather have control over that.

So with that again you can get that text by going to JasonROwens.com/4. That will take you over to the show notes here alright. So now let's going into the results.

What really happened out of all this?

Well if you're just sitting here thinking gosh Jason, I wouldn't think that a whole lot of my people would stick around or if you're thinking hey, my people just love me like crazy even though they're not opening my stuff they love me and they're going to want to stay with me.

They'll open this email. Well I wasn't really holding out a whole lot of hopes here for the people that I put into this sequence okay. So I ended up putting 133 total people into this sequence.

Again I'm going through my list and I'm trying to figure out, are these people either I can read you those here just a second. So here's what I did. I ended up putting 133 people into this what I call it a hygiene sequence right.

A list cleanup sequence. Of those 133 people I had 21 of them stay, alright. So you might be saying in holy cow that sounds like a pretty big attrition right.

Yeah 84.3%. 84% of my list I'm sorry. 84% of those 133 okay. So 84% of those people that I'm looking through frankly I'm looking at some of these names.

I have no idea where they came from or no I have no idea who they are. There's just not been a lot of interaction there.

I look and they opted into my list 18 months ago. They haven't done a thing, they haven't opened a thing. They came in to get the freebie from maybe a Facebook ad, or we met and talked at a networking event, and frankly it was even a stretch that they would have been interested in me in the first place.

They said, yeah, sure Jason, you can add me to the list, and frankly I don't even know why I was asking to put them on the list because I just didn't see where that relationship would go.

So, anyway those are the people that I put into the sequence. People that I just really had a pretty good feeling that they weren't going to stay at all. Now let's go back and focus on the ones who stayed.

By 21 people who stayed. 21 people who clicked and said, "Hey, wait a minute Jason! You're not going to get rid of me that easily."

So, those people raised their hand and they said that they're here, they're in they want to stay engaged with me. So that's great because now what I have of that audience. I now have a *very* engaged group of people.

I have a much higher open rate. I have a much higher engagement rate and frankly I'm really, really, happy with the list segmenting that I've done and the list cleanup work that I've done.

Last topic that we'll talk about here is the five major buckets. Yeah five major buckets that I put people in. So I have a bucket right now of my list that are **current clients**.

So people that I'm working with on a daily basis, helping them grow their platform and grow their email marketing business. I also have a bucket here of **former clients**, right. So not all projects are going to last forever things naturally come to a close. So I do have a list of former clients.

Then I have a list of what I'm calling my **subscribers**, okay.

That is the classic definition of the email list of people who opt-in to your list and people who want to receive your newsletter or your emails. These are my subscribers.

Now I have something called **non-listed**.

So you remember earlier I talked about people who I can look and say hey, that's a person that will probably have a need for a speaking engagement. They're not necessarily on my email list but these are people that I will probably end up doing business with right.

So I have a non-listed category. And have a last category that I'm calling **belong to someone else**.

Now part of what I do for my business is that I help people grow their lists right and sometimes when people are opting in it's just a lot easier for me to go ahead and create a sequence in Infusion soft.

So I'll just have people opt in and of course I tag them in my system that they belong to somebody else. So then of course we can export them from infusion soft.

So I do have some people on my list who belong to someone else and we end up doing some campaigns there periodically for others. So anyway that's really the big deal.

So I had five major categories of people and I'll tell you what I am thrilled with this work that I've done. It wasn't easy wasn't quick but I tell you what it is certainly worth it because now my email marketing is all wrapped up into one platform.

I'm not using two or three different platforms now to send out my emails. It's all going out from one system. I know who's in I know who's engaged and I know what voice I want to take to each one of these audiences.

So it's great stuff. So again now I know that I've put a lot out there going here use me a little over 28 minutes now and I think it's about time to wrap up.

I really appreciate everyone joining me here for this episode. Hey listen, please go in to iTunes give me a review. I would love to hear just the good and the bad alright.

Go ahead and give me, give it to me straight. I want to know if you're getting any value out of this. I hope that this is serving you well and I look forward to seeing those comments and responding accordingly.

Thank you so much for being here and remember everyone your mission is to take your message to just one more person. Thanks everyone take care. Bye bye.