



Hey guys,

Ok so I'm doing the write 31 days challenge and I really need to promote and bump up the content on it;

However, the thought of writing 30 plus blog posts that are just purely informational in one month is not appealing to me.

So in order to make this more fun to write and more fun for you to read I'm going to write some of my blog posts kind of like short stories.

They will still be packed with helpful information but it will just be done in a little bit different way. So if you want to come on this blogging adventure with me and do summin a little different then let's go!

I'm going to write it in first person so you can really put yourself in this character's shoes and get in her head.

Since this is the Christian Blogging Academy and in school teachers would often use stories to help their students learn, why should this be any different?

This little story is just about a Christian blogger who is struggling to get email subscribers and she's really frustrated and keeps trying different email optins but none seem to be converting very well, so she's just asking the Lord what she should do next.

He gives her some pretty powerful advice, I think. You judge for yourself.

Oh and by the way, any affiliate links that I leave in this article are of products I have either used or feel confident recommending based on what others I trust have said.

Okay, here we go.

The Struggle To Get Email Subscribers Continues

Sigh.

"Ok, then... so another day and no new email subscribers," I said to myself as I scrolled through my Convertkit account again.

Of course, it's only 5:13 pm, I reasoned.

Someone who hasn't gotten off from work yet and gone through their Pinterest feed may see my newest pin, that promotes my newly created opt-in freebie.

"I mean, why not," I thought.

"My pin awesomely keyworded, I scheduled it to every relevant group board. Someones' bound to see it and say yes, I've been needing this info so badly, definitely signing up."

So I wait and keep checking and crickets... no one signs up for my email list.

Another day, and no sign-ups.

Sigh.

One Week Later...Has She Gotten Anymore Email Subscribers?

"Ok, so it's only been a week since I uploaded the pin."

Justifying.

"It can take weeks before a pin takes off."

More justifying.

But after another week goes by and only 2 optins later, I realize I've got another freebie flop on my hands.

Ugh!

"Lord," I prayed, "I know it's not all about email subscribers but can I get a sign that I'm on the right track? Or if I'm not what I should do next?"

As I did my bible study, I came across 1 Corinthians 15:58 which says " Therefore my beloved brothers be ye steadfast, unmovable always abounding in the work of the Lord forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord"

After reading that I knew it was time for a heart check.

"Am I really working for the Lord and trying to influence hearts for Him or am I just trying to get an email list so I can sell them a bunch of products?"

After I prayed about it, I felt led to make a list of ways that I could make sure that my subscribers were more than just numbers to me and that I saw them as unique individuals with needs I hope to address:

Here are just a few of the ideas I came up with.

All Christian Bloggers Should Do This For Their Email Subscribers



3 Ways To Make Sure Your Readers Are Not Just Stats Or Numbers

1. Pray for my readers:

"Duh" I thought to myself. Why had I never considered praying for my readers?

Didn't I want to help them?

Wasn't I trying to serve them?

Wasn't I trying to glorify and please God with my work?

And yes, maybe, I had prayed about my business and the direction it should take but actually praying for my readers and how I could best serve them? Hadn't really thought of it that way. I'm definitely going to do that.

2. Pray for your subscribers by name:

Okay so now, I've turned a reader into a subscriber.

But instead of just thinking of these subscribers as potential dollars signs because, you know, all the big bloggers talk about how the money is in the list, I need to be thinking about how I can build a relationship with these people not just about what I can sell to them.

The selling has to be secondary. No matter how much I pray that my car won't stop in the middle of traffic because it's on its last legs or how much my bills are piling up, I can't take my eyes off the first and second priorities of my blog which is to serve God and serve her readers.

So I make a goal to pray for my subscribers by name. Maybe it will get harder and harder as my subscriber list grows but I can take sections of my list and pray for that section one month and another section of my list another month.

3. Email them individually and ask them how they are doing with their goals:

And of course, I have an autoresponder like Convertkit or Aweber.

But I can still choose to make contact with some of my subscribers privately not to ask them to buy something but just to see how they are doing with their goals.

I could connect with them through an email or through social media. There's no reason not to try and talk to subscribers on an individual level so that I can know how to serve them better.

Will These Tips Help My Email List Grow?

It dawned on me after creating this list that, I didn't know if doing these three things would make my email list grow.

I really didn't. There's no guarantee that it will. And that's not the purpose.

The reason for this list wasn't to "gain 100 subscribers overnight" but it was to make sure that I didn't lose sight of why I created this blog in the first place, and that is to help people.

Getting my priorities firmly in place would be the foundation of my email strategy.

The subscribers would come with time...right Lord?

Right?

Please?

I'm just going to step out on faith and say that's a yes.

Will You Pray For The Readers Of Your Blog?

Okay, guys so that's the end my short story. Can you relate to how the narrator felt? I know I can for sure. It seemed to take forever before I got a subscriber. It can be so frustrating especially when so many others seem like they have thousands of subscribers.

We shouldn't fall into that horrible comparison trap but when we do, we must pull ourselves out of it or you will get [buried with self-doubt, discouragement and maybe even jealousy](#).

No ma'am and no sir, we're not doing that.

First, start with a strong spiritual foundation for your blog and your blogging strategies and then we can go from there.

I have a blogging roadmap or checklist I use that can also help your blog grow into a business. You can get a copy of it for [free by clicking here](#).

I have loved writing my blog post this way. I hope you can sense my joy through my writing!

Blog #1 of 31 is complete, ya'll...what what!

Here's a link to tomorrow's post if you want to take a gander: [3 More Ways To Treat Your Subscribers Like Friends](#)

Nicky



Welcome back to CBA, ya'll! Let's dive right into today's content which is **day 2 of my Write 31 Days challenge on email subscribers, email marketing, and list building.**

Email marketing and building your email list is one of the most important aspects of building your blog into a business.

If you're not building your email list and building a relationship with your readers then please start now if you view your blog as a business or a ministry.

It's vital to the growth of your blog and that's why I choose it as the subject my Write 31 days challenge that you can read more about here.

[Here is a link to my first post in that challenge](#) and there I explain 3 ways that you can make sure your blog readers are not just numbers or stats in your Google analytics dashboard.

I know I can personally get so caught up in the numbers and analyzing what everything means.

Why is my bounce rate lower than it was last week?

Why is it higher than it was last week?

Why are my numbers dropping?

And these things are important however as Christian bloggers (and really any blogger), we also need to be concerned about the person behind the screen.

Instead of only saying why did my numbers drop (which we should ask) we should also ask how can I serve the needs of my readers more.

I believe God has called us to blog not just to get as many readers as we can but to help our readers in whatever niche we've been called to serve.

I believe these tips that I'm going to share with you will help put you in that frame of mind to see the soul behind the number.

Yesterday, when I wrote the main part of my blog post, I wrote it in short story form. If you're curious what I mean [go ahead and check it out.](#)

In this post, I'm just going to give it to you straight.

How to see your email subscribers and readers as more than just numbers continued

1. Email your list with free exclusive content that's no strings attached

I get a ton of autoresponder emails every day, many of them from fellow bloggers.

Now, I totally understand, but I know that whenever I see an email from certain bloggers, I instinctively know, they have something to sell me.

And based on the subject line and how my wallet is doing at the time, I know I can skip that email because there's not necessarily any useful content in the email.

It'll just them trying to to get me to buy something.

I by no means believe you should flood your subscribers with tons of emails no matter what.

However, emailing them every now and then with exclusive content that's free and doesn't require them to buy something could go a long way in showing them how much you appreciate them.

Speaking of free content, I have a freebie that will help save you time and sanity which every blogger seems to be short on. Get info on Christian blogging roadmap [here](#).

2. Survey your audience

One awesome way to find out how you can serve your audience is to ask them what they need help with.

There are Wordpress plugins that you can use that will put survey questions in your sidebar on your blog. Here is a list of ones you can use.

Quiz and Survey Master
Wordpress Survey Poll
OpinionStage
WatuQuiz

Here are some examples of questions you can ask them if you're stuck for ideas:

What is your biggest struggle with (fill in the blank with your blog subject)? (For instance, I would ask "What is your biggest struggle with blogging? Or it could be more specific and say "What is your biggest struggle with email marketing?")

If you could master one thing in regards to blank what would it be?

Or you can give them a multiple choice poll question in case they can't come up with their own answers.

3) Talk to one of them on the phone

This isn't one that I've done but you can also ask one of them to get on the phone with you or to hop on skype and talk for 10 or 15 minutes and just listen to them and their needs in regards to your blog's particular subject.

What Could You Do This Week To Connect With Your Readers and Subscribers More?

I have some more suggestions on how to connect with your readers or subscribers in my Christian blogging roadmap as well as lots of other steps you can take as a blogger to help turn it into a business.

Here's a pic of some of the subjects it covers.



Free Printable Checklist!
Roadmap To Help You On
Your Christian
Blogging Journey

Includes Steps For:

- Pre-blog research/Praying For Inspiration
- Creating and Setting Up Your Blog
- How To Network With Other Bloggers
- Creating Content/Topics/Post Ideas
- Creating An Email Sales Funnel
- Launching Your Blog
- Traffic Generation
- Affiliate Marketing

Christian Blogging Academy

[As you go through the roadmap](#), I want you to look and see where you are in your blogging journey.

You may be further than you think or you may have missed a few steps. It will help you gain some clarity on what to do next in building your blogging business.

[Get Your Copy Of The Blogging RoadMap](#)

I also want you to think about how you might connect with your readers and subscribers more this next week. How can we serve them better?

How can I serve you better? Let me know in the comments or through email. Oh, and if there's an email marketing related subject you want me to talk about please let me know. See you tomorrow ya'll!

[Here's a link to tomorrow's post](#) Just in case you want to know about the blogging mistake that cost me pretty much everything (okay maybe a slightly hyperbolic statement)

Nicky



My Biggest Blogging Mistake & How It Cost Me Everything

Christian Blogging Academy

Everybody tells you, you need an email list. If you're reading this then you probably already know you need an email list but you may not completely understand the benefits of having one.

This is day 3 of my Write 31 Days challenge where I will be diving deep into email marketing, growing your subscriber list, email autoresponders and building relationships with your readers and subscribers.

In this post, I'm going to tell you my single biggest blogging mistake to illustrate just how important building an email list is and knowing what to do with it when you've got one.

My Single Biggest Blogging Mistake And What It Cost Me

I in no way am new to blogging. I have blogged off and on for some years although it's probably been more off than on.

The thing is, I was mainly doing it to make money. That was my main focus. Of course, I wanted to help people but my blogs (yes plural) definitely didn't have a Christian focus.

I heard over and over that I needed to have an email list. This is the thing. I didn't understand what the email list was for.

I'm the kind of person who if I don't understand what or why I'm doing something I either won't do it or I'll do it for a while and then stop or neglect it.

So even though I heard all the time that I should get an email list, I didn't truly understand why I should have one.

The blog that I had that I'm referring too is a blog about flat irons. I wrote flat iron reviews and had affiliate links to the flat irons that I reviewed.

I managed to get on the first page of Google for the term flat iron reviews which was major! I was so excited.

Despite not knowing why I needed one, I did have an email list. I built it up by doing giveaways.

I was able to get about 100 subscribers but I had no clue why they mattered. I had no clue what to with the list. The list just sat there in the dashboard collecting dust.

I was more concerned about being on the first page of Google.

I didn't put much emphasis on the list because I was getting so much traffic from Google and it felt so awesome.

I basically thought I had made it and that my page would always be there.

I was making money through my affiliate sales and as far as I was concerned I would just scale up my blog and I would quit my job and do this full time.



Then, one day, I went to check on my ranking like I frequently did to see if my blog had moved up any.

And it was gone.

I thought, ok don't panic. Sometimes what happens is the so-called "Google dance" which is defined as "the period when Google is rebuilding its rankings, and results fluctuate widely for a 3 to 5 day period."

Surely that's what was going on right?

So I waited a few days and checked again. My page was still nowhere to be found on Google.

My ranking disappeared literally overnight.

I was heartbroken. All my hard work went down the drain. I couldn't believe that one day my blog could be on top of the world and the next day it was gone.

What I found out later was that Google's algorithm update had repositioned the top ten rankings for lots of different search terms. It was either their penguin update or the panda update, I'm not sure which.

And I wasn't alone. Lots of people lost their rankings overnight forever, just like me.

And since Google was my only source of traffic, my readers were gone.

And because I didn't know what an email list was and I didn't really grow it that much, I had no clue how to get traffic or readers to my site.

Not understanding the importance of my email subscribers is my single biggest blogging mistake and it cost me everything.

My blog was dead...overnight.

After finally tasting success (financial), to have it be gone just like that made me want to give up. So I did, for years.

Fortunately, the Lord has called me back to it and I answered the call but I put Him off for a long time which I'm ashamed to say.

I procrastinated starting another blog because I was scared and this is one of the reasons why. I didn't want to fail again.

However, all in all, this experience taught me some vital lessons and I want to share those lessons with you tomorrow because I know they will help you.

I want to make sure you don't make the same mistakes that I made so be sure to check back tomorrow.

And if you're needing a blogging strategy guide then may I present to you my [blogging roadmap that you can download here for free](#)?

Okay, guys, that's all from me, I shall see you on the morrow where I will tell [5 things I learned from my blogging mistake](#).

God bless!

Nicky



We all make blogging mistakes but some are way more costly than others. Yesterday, I told the story of my biggest blogging mistake which you can read [here](#).

Today I'm going to talk about what I learned from those mistakes because I know they will help you know and understand what NOT to do as a blogger.

This is day 4 of the Write 31 Days challenge where I will be talking about email marketing, list building, and building relationships with your subscribers.

If this post doesn't convince you to start an email list, I'm not sure what will.

What I learned from my biggest blogging mistake

1) Don't do "get rankings" quick scams

Do y'all remember Paul Harvey? He was famous for his radio show called the Rest Of The Story.

Well, I'm going to give you the rest of the story of my biggest blogging mistake because there's a very important part that I left out of yesterday's post.

Confession time!

I talked a little about how the blogs I had before were mostly started so I could make money. I wasn't trying to make an impact. I wasn't trying to really change lives or anything inspirational.

I was concerned with profit. When you're concerned with profit then you might be willing to do some things that in hindsight are spammy.

What I did wasn't wrong as in sinful or anything but it was definitely a kind of "get rankings overnight" technique that blew up in my face.

I can't for the life of me remember what website I was using but it was some sort of article spinning website that helped you get a lot of links back to your site very quickly so that you could get your website to the first page of Google quickly.

Well, let me tell you, it worked... for a while. I was on the first page of Google for a while until Google's Panda or Penguin algorithm update took place.

Moral of the story: Don't look for shortcuts. I wanted results fast and I got them but they came at a price.

Google viewed these links that my blog as low-quality links and so they dropped my blog from their rankings.

This was years ago and my blog never recovered. Basically, if a site is promising to help your blog do something that seems too good to be true, it probably is too good to be true.

Don't fall for get-rankings, get-rich, or any other get-something too easy or too fast scheme.

It's not worth it in the long run. By the way, this was another blog that I'm talking about, not this blog. Trust me I've learned my lesson!



2) Concentrate on your mailing list

Something else I learned from this fiasco:

Do Not, I repeat do NOT neglect your email list.

Your email list is the most vital asset you have as a blogger!

Did you hear me?

Your email list is the most important asset you have as a blogger.

You own it.

You don't own the pins you put on Pinterest. I mean sure they are your creation and you own them but Pinterest can delete them at any time and then what are they worth?

You don't really "own" the followers you have on any social media platform. If you're Facebook or Instagram account was shut down, your followers are gone.

But with an email list, you can back up your email subscribers list into an excel spreadsheet and you can take it with you to another email autoresponder if you needed to.

If Google delisted your blog, Facebook said you violated their terms of service or Instagram said sayonara to you because you did something they didn't like, your following is gone.

When my blog dropped off the face of Google earth, if I had built an email list, I wouldn't have missed a beat. I could have just emailed my list and started building my blog again.

That's the beauty and the power of an email list. I wish I had known that then but I totally get that now I want to make sure you get that as well. If we are trying to build businesses and get to know people on a deeper level, we need to build an email list, period.

(Pst...I have a freebie that I'm using to build my list...It's a printable checklist of 55+ actionable steps you should take to build your business...you can [get a copy here](#)).

3) Make your blog Google algorithm proof

With that being said, if you do use Google as a source of traffic, then try to make your blog algorithm proof. Meaning being, no matter what changes Google or any other search engine makes you want to try to make your blog impervious to those changes.

You want your blog to steel like and able to withstand anything the Google bots throw at it. Of course, this really is impossible but we can get close by always keeping the reader's needs first.

This means keeping tabs on our blog's loading speed, making our sites secure, creating valuable content, and making the content readable/scannable.

Having social shares from real humans doesn't hurt either.

4) Don't put all of your traffic eggs in one basket

Another lesson learned. Don't put all your traffic eggs in one basket.

Just recently I was in a Pinterest Facebook group and someone said **they got banned from Pinterest and that Pinterest wouldn't even reconsider giving him his account back.**

If Pinterest is your only source of traffic than that is a major blow!

And that's the nature of this business because we don't own Pinterest, Facebook, or any of these platforms except our own.

Do not put all of your traffic eggs in one basket. Focus on building that email list by driving traffic to your blog from multiple traffic sources.

5) Don't blog just for money

Proverbs 28:20 says "A faithful man will abound with blessings, but whoever hastens to be rich will not go unpunished."

Could there be a verse that's more applicable to this situation? I can't think of one but if you do let me know.

I hastened to be rich and I did not go unpunished and I'm grateful really that it happened because if I had continued to make money like that then I never would have started blogs that actually had true purpose and meaning.

It was a blessing that I couldn't see or understand at the time. Blogging only for money, as a Christian, is definitely wrong because it takes so much time and effort.

There needs to be some deeper reason that we do it or else we are not being good stewards with the time God has given us.

Can You Relate? What Blogging Mistakes Have You Made?

Looking back on this mistake, as big as it was, it taught me some valuable lessons.

Plus, it gives me a cautionary tale to share with you all in hopes that you don't do something like this that could cost you everything.

You are working hard on your blog I know and I'd hate to see it all go to waste. Trust that the Lord is leading you and your blog in the direction it should go.

Learn from the mistakes of others. I've made enough mistakes for you to learn from that you don't need to make your own.

And to help you avoid as many mistakes as possible, you can get a free copy of 55+ actionable steps to help you build your blogging business. **[You can get a copy of this action checklist here.](#)**

Okay, that's all from me today, I'll see you guys tomorrow where I will [show you how having an email list can earn you money!](#)

Nicky

I'm going to jump out on a limb and assume that if you're reading this series that you are trying to blog not just for just for personal reasons but because you want to turn your blog into a business and make money.

Of course, the ultimate goal is to glorify God with our blogs and impact others but that's not mutually exclusive to building a business and supporting ourselves and our families. I work in a school so I think in terms of how we learned when were students (hence the name Christian Blogging Academy).

Because of this, I am creating an email list building curriculum of sorts with this blog series.

If you are clueless about how to start building your email list, which I believe is the most important first step in building your business overall, then every post in this series is going to break how to do it.

If you're feeling confused by email lists building when you read the first post then I would love for you to feel confident by the time you read the last post.

I tried to think of every step needed for y'all to start building your list.

So think of this as Email List Building 101 at Christian Blogging Academy. Tuition for this class is free and there will be quizzes. Oh, yes there will be quizzes.

Email list building is just one aspect of building a blogging business. Learn the other 55+ steps here.

Alright, class is in session

How email lists help you make money

Now we've already gone over some ways that we can treat our subscribers and or blog readers like friends.

This is important because we are trying to make a difference in their lives so we don't want to see them as numbers.

We want to see them as the precious souls they are so that's the most important thing to remember. This will help you build not just an email list but relationships with those on your email list.

The relationship is important because it will help guide the decisions you make when you start monetizing your list.

What does monetizing your email list really mean?

When you monetize your list, it means that you will send product offers to them that you believe will help them with their goals, problems, fears, or frustrations in regards to what your blog's topic is.

Take a paleo blog for example. They might email their list a great deal on a paleo cookbook or maybe on a paleo dinner delivery service that just launched (I have no idea if that exists...just made it up).

You can monetize your list with either [products](#) you create yourself or affiliate products. Affiliate products are those products that are created by someone else. When you promote that product, you get a commission if someone buys that product from your unique affiliate link.

Now let me show you why email lists are so important for building a business and monetizing your email list.

You can, of course, put links to your products or affiliate products in blog posts, on a resource page, and in other places too.

However, a link in a blog post does not usually convert as well as a link in an email in most cases.

Why?

Unless, the reader, has been to your blog and knows you in some capacity, there hasn't been any trust established between you and the reader.

They may not believe you when you say that Aweber is the best autoresponder. They may be thinking "she just trying to sell me something".

But if they are on your email list and you've been sending them emails that add value to their life, you've given them Freebies that add value to their life, then they've started to make a connection with you.

Maybe they've never met you in real life but they've seen you enough and trust your reputation enough through your blog and your emails that when you recommend something, they are likely to at least consider it because they feel like you wouldn't lead them astray.

That's why the bloggers always say the money is in the list.

Do you understand now why you must start an email list?

I hope this post has helped you understand just how important an email list is in building your blogging business.

It is an absolute must if you ever plan on making money from your blog.

Tomorrow I'm going to talk about the basic kinds of tools you need to have to have to start building your email list.

Now, of course, building an email list is just one part of building a business.

There's so much to do and it can be hard to keep track of it all so that's why I created an action plan checklist for you that will help you organize your blog building strategy.

You can [get your action plan here.](#)

I'll see you all tomorrow with my next post on the tools you need to start building an email list.

See you then and God bless. Please let me know if you have questions down in the comments below.

The 3 Kinds Of Tools

You Need To

Start

Making Money

From Your

Email List

Plus a free 55+ Step Action Plan To
Grow Your Blog Business

ChristianBloggingAcademy.com

This is day 6 of the Write 31 Days challenge where I will be talking about how to start an email list and building relationships with your subscribers.

So far we've learned to:

Treat readers like humans and not a Google analytics stat,

How To Treat Your Subscribers Like Friends

The blogging mistake that pretty cost me everything (ok slightly dramatic)

The 5 five lessons I learned from the blogging mistake that cost me everything and

Why you need an email list if you ever want to make money

It's time to actually start building an email list! To keep it simple, we are going to only talk about the basic tools you need to get started with list building.

Assuming you already have your blog up and running, there's only 3 tools you need to set up your email list.

Sorry but I'm going to make another huge assumption... that you're on a self-hosted WordPress.org blog.

Some of this advice might be useful if you're on Squarespace or Wix but I really couldn't say for sure.

With that out of the way, let's dive into today's lesson.

[thrive_2step id='436']*Need a blog business strategy?*[/thrive_2step]

The 3 tools you need to start your email list

I remember how lost I was when I first started blogging.

It seems like blogging was its own universe with its own separate language and I struggled to try and learn it all.

So let's demystify the meaning of these terms so you can speak to other bloggers in their language and fit right in.

1. Autoresponder

"Autoresponder: a program that automatically generates a set response to all messages sent to a particular email address."

That's the dictionary definition of an autoresponder. My definition of an autoresponder, as a blogger (as it's said in French), is this: timesaver and lifesaver.

Por exemplo (for example), let's say you run a blog about natural living.

Someone comes to your blog at 12 am in the morning and they see the freebie you created. They can't wait to read it because it'll be so amazingly helpful to them because it will help them get healthy faster.

So they sign up to get it and they check their inbox but the amazing freebies hasn't come yet.

They check again in 10 minutes... freebie's still not there. At this point they're deflated, all of their original joy in receiving your freebie is gone. They go to bed and forget all about it.

So then, you wake up the next day and see that someone signed up for your freebie and you email it to them.

But by this time, the potential subscriber is over itS she sees it in her inbox later on but now the kids are screaming and dinner is about to burn and your freebie gets buried further and further underneath a new pile of junk emails.

She never sees it.

Potential subscriber gone.

But if you'd had an autoresponder none of that would have happened.

The reader turned potential subscriber would have entered her email into the form on your blog, gone to her inbox to verify that she wanted to receive emails from you and then the freebie would have been sent.

It happens all in a matter of minutes or even seconds. She doesn't have to wait for you in order to get the freebie. It's just sent to the reader automatically.

There's an automatic response- get it? An autoresponder automatically responds to the request of your reader so you don't have to. '

Timesaver and lifesaver.

Believe it or not (I'm walking on air...ok, sorry... I'll stop singing), some bloggers are doing business this way.

They don't have an autoresponder set up on their blog for their freebie.

Just no! Friends don't let friends not use autoresponders! Please, y'all don't do business without an autoresponder.

Tomorrow we are going to talk about the autoresponders that I've used personally and hopefully, it will help you choose one. Some are free and some are not, some are good , some are not. Just stay tuned for that.

2. Squeeze page service

The second thing you need to start building your email list a squeeze page program. What's a squeeze page?

In the blogger's universe, a squeeze page has a very specific purpose. It's only purpose is to try and get the viewer to give up some information, usually an email address.

A squeeze shouldn't have links to any other page. We don't want them to get distracted by anything else. The page is only about trying to make an exchange with the viewer. If there was actual dialogue involved it would go a little something like this:

The blogger: "I have this free gift that I want to give you. It will do x,y & z for you, making your life easier than ever before. Would you like it?"

Potential subscriber:(hopefully) "yeah, sure... how do I get it?"

The blogger: " type your email address below and hit the button. I'll send it to your inbox"

Potential subscriber:" hmmm, I don't know... how can I know whether or not to trust you?"

The blogger: "because we would never sell your information or send you spam. We hate spam"

Potential subscriber: "Ok cool, signing up"

The blogger: "thanks, be sure to check your inbox to confirm you want to get emails from me"

Potential subscriber: "okay, sure" (may or may not confirm depending on how distracted they get)

End exchange.

That's basically how a landing page works. You want to make them an offer they (hopefully) can't refuse by offering them something free that's of high value.

That's where the graphics program comes in.

3. Graphics program

You need a graphics program because you want to create something that your audience needs.

The best way I've heard it put is that you want to create something that saves your audience time or money with your freebie.

For example: Like for my audience (which would be you reading this right now) I created a [55 step blogging action plan checklist](#) to help you build your business faster.

It helps cut down on blogging confusion and tells you step by step what to do turn your blog into a business. Does that save you time?

Absolutely, and it saves your brain waves. You want to figure out something for your audience so they don't have to.

You truly want to help them. That's what the freebie is for and I used a graphics program to create it.

Of course, you could offer something outside of the box that can't be created with a graphics program but that's totally outside of the scope of this post (mainly because I don't know what that would be lol)

Those are the only 3 tools you need for your email list

That's really all you need to be able to start your email list. You need to create a free gift with the graphics program.

Then you create a landing page. You connect the landing page to your autoresponder service.

Then when someone signs up to get your free gift from the landing page, the autoresponder will automatically send it to them.

Make sense?

If you have any questions please let me know in the comments and if your serious about building a blog that impacts people and makes money then [my action plan](#) can help you reach those goals.

See you in tomorrow's post where I will talk more about my experience with autoresponders.

Nicky

Email List Building 101

Convertkit vs Mailchimp vs Aweber

Mini-Reviews



Hello and welcome to day 7 of my #Write 31 Days challenge on how to grow your email list. If this is the first post you've read then let me catch you up.

[We know how treat readers like humans and not a Google analytics stat,](#)

[the blogging mistake that pretty cost me everything \(ok slightly dramatic\)](#)

[The 5 five lessons I learned from the blogging mistake that cost me everything](#)

[Why you need an email list if you ever want to make money](#)

And

[The 3 tools you need to start an email list](#)

Today, we are going to learn more about my experience with email autoresponders. Think of them as mini-reviews.

I know, exciting right?

I'm going to try to make this as exciting as possible as I have some very strong opinions about autoresponders.

We already learned yesterday what autoresponders were so I'm not going to rehash that.

Let's just jump right into the content.

Now, I'm calling these autoresponder services because we are talking about building our email lists but these companies do more than just send your freebie to your subscribers.

I don't mean to write about them as if they don't do anything else because they do. I'm just trying to keep it simple.

We're going to do an overview of the autoresponders that I have used over the years and then you can decide which one would work best for your needs.

[thrive_2step id='436']*Confused about blogging? Click here*[/thrive_2step]

This page contains affiliate links which means I get a small commission if you buy something from one of these links. But don't worry, I will keep it real with you whether I make money from the link or not.

To all the autoresponders I've used before

[1. MailChimp:](#)

MailChimp is the first autoresponder I ever used. I used it for the same reason that a lot of people use it: it's free (with limitations).

But I must truly say I hated every minute of it. Some people love it but I'm not one of those people.

For me, it was clunky, not user-friendly at all, hard to find different features that you needed, and confusing.

I would read their support guides leaving more confused than before. I probably said things I shouldn't have in frustration (Lord forgive me).

Plus customer support was basically nonexistent (it's offered through email for the first 30 days only).

But it was free so I tried to hang on but in the end, I couldn't. I had to fork over the money even though I really didn't want to.

But I will tell you about their features in case I haven't scared you off yet.

They do offer free services for up to 2,000 subscribers. I've tried to purge usage of MailChimp from my memory so I can't remember if they will automatically send an optin freebie to a new subscriber or not.'

If memory serves, they either don't do that on the free plan or they do but it was such a pain to figure out that I gave up.

You can read more about their features [here](#) if you're interested. And let me assure you, I am in no way exaggerating.

Overall: MailChimp frustrated me to no end, no shade. It just wasn't for me. Not recommended.

[2. Aweber:](#)

Aweber will definitely send your optin freebie to your new subscribers.

I've used them off and on for years. I would sign up but then I'd look for ways to save money and cancel again to go back to MailChimp again.

Then I'd remember how much I hated MailChimp and go back to Aweber. Back and forth back and forth for years.

Aweber though, if you can spare the money, is a good investment. I would recommend it over MailChimp any day but even without using MailChimp, I would still recommend it.

It has good customer service. It's fairly simple to use. However, the user interface and the names of some of the features didn't really make sense to me.

I found myself still taking a long time to do things that shouldn't have been that complicated. So this caused me to start looking elsewhere for another autoresponder.

Side note: Just saw this on Aweber's homepage:

"Grow your audience with AWeber – a time-saving easy-to-use email marketing platform that won't drive you bananas."

Methinks this might be a subtle jab at MailChimp (bananas?). Could be wrong but it's an interesting choice of words, no? If it is alluding to MailChimp, then a lot of people may have problems with it.

Overall: I recommend [Aweber](#) if you have a smaller budget.

[3. Convertkit](#)

Everyone has probably heard of [Convertkit](#) because the big bloggers have been talking about them for years.

They say it's the best autoresponder or email marketing software on the market.

In my experience, it is the best one that I've used so far. **The creators of Convertkit designed it specifically for bloggers which is why the service resonates so well with bloggers.**

The user interface is easy to use. As soon as I logged in, I was able to immediately jump in and get to work without a lot of issues or trying to figure things out.

The experience was intuitive. I haven't had to really use their support documents because I've been able to figure most things out.

However, using Convertkit has not been without issue. I started using Convertkit back in the summer and that's when they momentarily had a lapse in judgment and changed their name briefly to Seva and started making "updates".

I used their old optin forms and integrated it with my WordPress blog easily but when they changed to a new form, it was not so easy. In fact, it took days before we could figure out a workaround to the issue.

I had another issue with a Payhip integration. It took almost a week to figure out why the integration wouldn't work. **Both companies worked with me on the issue and Convertkit gave me a free month of service because of how long the solution took.**

So while Convertkit comes highly recommended (and I recommend them also) don't expect perfection.

Someone in my blog mastermind group is thinking about switching from Convertkit to another autoresponder so it's not universally loved but it really is my favorite one that I've ever used.

Overall: Its ease of use, customer service, layout, user interface, and their dedication to help you grow your email list makes [Convertkit](#) worth the money for me.

[4. Mailerlite:](#)

I don't have a ton of experience with Mailerlite. However, the little bit that I do, I really liked.

It is a good free alternative to Convertkit and the antithesis to MailChimp.

Overall: If you need a free autoresponder, look into Mailerlite to see if it meets your needs.

Which autoresponder is the best?

Not to jump on the bandwagon, but despite the issues I've had with Convertkit, it really is the best autoresponder or email marketing service I've ever used. If you have the budget, definitely go for that one. If you don't have the money to allocate for that then go for Mailerlite.

So the autoresponder was the first tool we need if we want to grow an email list. The next tool we need is a squeeze page builder or service. We will talk about those tomorrow. See you then!

Please let me know if you have any questions about blogging in the comments below and if you're serious about building a business then check out my free [55 step action plan for building a blogging business](#).

Thanks, guys and God bless you and the impact you're making on the world!

Nicky



Hey, ya'll and welcome to day 8 of my Write 31 Days Challenge called Email List Building 101 where I will write about how to build an email list and build a relationship with your subscribers.

Let's do a quick recap. We've already gone over these subjects

[We know how treat readers like humans and not a Google analytics stat.](#)
[The blogging mistake that pretty cost me everything \(ok slightly dramatic\)](#)
[The 5 five lessons I learned from the blogging mistake that cost me everything](#)
[Why you need an email list if you ever want to make money](#)
[The 3 tools you need to start an email list](#)
[Reviews of the Email Autoresponders I've used'](#)

Now, we are going to briefly talk about some of the squeeze pages available on the market.

In my the 3 tools post you need to start an email list post, I explained what a squeeze page is but I will go over it again here just in case you missed it.

Want step by step guidance on blogging? Click [here!](#)

This post may contain affiliate links which means I get a commission if you purchase something after clicking on one of those links.

An example of a squeeze page

Or perhaps I'll just demonstrate to you what a squeeze page is. If you click on [this link](#) it will lead you to a page that only has one purpose.

The only reason for its existence is to get you to sign up for the free gift (in this case it's a free 55 step action plan to build your blogging business).

This page doesn't have links to any other pages. I don't want you to like me on Facebook or follow me on Instagram or Twitter.

This page is only there to get you to give your email address in exchange for the freebie. If the viewer decides they want the free gift, they put in their email address.

The email address gets sent to my email autoresponder (ie [Convertkit](#)) and the Convertkit sends that new subscriber the free gift.

If they don't want it, they click away.

If only I could be as focused on one task in real life as a squeeze page is...but I digress.

This squeeze page, if you have a self-hosted Wordpress.org blog, is not just a simple page that you create on your Wordpress dashboard.

It is usually created via a third-party plugin or an external website that integrates with your blog.

I personally only have experience with ~~two~~ (3) squeeze page creators. I will tell you my experience with them and then let you know about some other options you have for squeeze pages.

One is fairly easy to use and the other has a pretty steep learning curve.

Squeeze Page Tools You Can Use To Grow Your Email List

[1. Seedprod's Coming Soon Page](#)

The [Coming Soon Page](#) plugin from Seedprod is by far the easiest of the 2 squeeze page plugins that I'm going to mention today.

If you are not highly tech savvy this is definitely one that I recommend.

Their customer service is some of the best I've ever gotten. It's so lightning fast! It seems like someone is always there watching the support email account in case someone messages them.

When you have a problem they try and solve it as quickly as they can. It's pretty amazing.

The plugin is also easy to use. You do have to upload the plugin as opposed to just searching for the plugin on Wordpress and installing it.

It's really not a big deal. When you're in your dashboard, once you get to the plugins page, you click on the upload plugins button and locate the zip file and upload it. It's pretty simple.

Then, after you activate your license, you go to the settings tab in the dashboard and click on the Coming Soon Pro option.

There you can make all the changes you need to make. You can add a picture of your optin, change the heading and content of what you want the text to say. You also can integrate your autoresponder with the squeeze page here.

[Here](#) is a look at what my squeeze page looks like that I made with [Coming Soon Pro](#). Very easy to make.

Overall: If your budget is a little tight I would definitely recommend [Coming Soon Pro](#). No hesitation. Even if your budget isn't tight, I would still recommend them because it is a quality product that is easy to use.

[2. Thrive Architect](#)

Oh man, without a doubt this is the more difficult of the two to use. I haven't been using it long, granted, just a few days in fact.

Usually, I can figure new programs out pretty quickly but this one has more of a learning curve.

I know that once you learn it, you can make amazing landing pages, homepages, and squeeze pages.

But if you are not highly tech savvy you might have some trouble learning how to create them.

If you're not adverse to learning how to use new programs, then Thrive Architect might be for you.

Thrive Architect comes from the suite of products from the Thrive Themes company. I do highly recommend their themes, as the theme that I use, is from Thrive Themes.

This is a company I feel comfortable recommending because I know they put out quality products, there are tons of YouTube video tutorials on how to use their products and the Thrive Themes site also has a lot of tutorials that can help you build a squeeze page.

Overall: If you are not tech savvy, this may not be for you but if you are or you like to experiment, then this would definitely be a good option for you.

3. Convertkit

This, in fact, was a bonus, that I didn't find out about until recently but I'm really excited about it.

Apparently, you can also make a landing page ie squeeze page with Convertkit.

And it's really easy to use too.

I had no idea this is possible but this is really exciting because if you already have Convertkit, you don't have to invest in a separate tool in order to build your squeeze page, **so this saves you time and saves your money!**

Totally awesome. If you don't have Convertkit then click here.

Overall: If you're looking for an all in one solution where you can collect emails, create forms, and squeeze pages in one program then [Convertkit](#) is the best option!

If you don't like any of my suggestions...

Here Are Some More Squeeze Page Options For You

If you're not feeling any of these options that i mentioned before then these articles have some additional tools that you can choose from

<https://www.softwarefindr.com/best/wordpress-squeeze-page/>
<https://wpbuffs.com/wordpress-squeeze-page-builders/>

Regardless of which one you choose, please choose one soon. I don't want the purpose of this blog and of this series to be lost. This is not just about making money.

Blogging Can Change Hearts & Minds and Christians Need To Be A Part Of That

We have a message about the risen Savior and people want to know about it. We need to learn as much as we can about building email list, SEO, blogging, writing, and using the power of the internet to point others to Jesus.

That's what this blog was created for. Do not think that we should just treat this as a hobby or no big deal. Reading blogs have literally changed my life. Some of the blogs that I have read over the years, have completely changed my perspective on life.

That's huge! That's powerful!

People go online every day searching for answers to their deep probing needs. Their spiritual needs.

I don't mean to be rude to anyone but if we can't think that we can just write a blog post and the Lord will just going to send the people to it that need to read it.

We need to use the tools, resources, and knowledge available to us online to go out and make our content known so those people who do need it can find it.

There are millions if not billions of websites online and they are all fighting for our attention.

We can't think that we will just happen to get an audience because they felt lead here.

Let's be bold and action-oriented. Let's treat our blogs like a business or a ministry if you don't plan on making money from it.

That means that we take courses and learn and pray about what we are learning so we can reach more people.

I don't mean for this to sound like a rant. I just know first hand the power of the internet to influence people.

We as Christian bloggers have the opportunity to really change the lives of our readers for Christ. Let's do that by building relationships with our readers, email subscribers, customers, and even our critics or subtractors.

I'm really excited about some of the posts I'm seeing in Christian Facebook groups. There are some leaders emerging who really get how much of an impact we can make online.

I want to be a part of that...don't you?

Thanks for bearing with me.

Love you guys and I'll see you in tomorrow's post.

Nicky



Hey and welcome back to the Write 31 Days Challenge where I'm writing a series called Email List Building 101.

If you need in-depth knowledge about growing your email list from scratch, you're in the right place.

We've already gone over:

[We know how treat readers like humans and not a Google analytics stat.](#)
[The blogging mistake that pretty cost me everything \(ok slightly dramatic\)](#)
[The 5 five lessons I learned from the blogging mistake that cost me everything](#)
[Why you need an email list if you ever want to make money](#)

[The 3 tools you need to start an email list](#)
[Reviews of the Email Autoresponders I've used](#)

[Reviews of the Squeeze Page Tools I've used](#)

Today's post is about setting goals for your email list.

"Wait, what?"

"Setting goals for your email list?"

"Why do we need to do that?"

Yeah, I was the same way. I didn't understand what the point of a goal for your email list was.

I'll admit this is not an original idea. This is something I heard in a webinar that Convertkit hosted not too long ago. You can watch the webinar [here](#) and read my thoughts on Convertkit [here](#).

In case you don't want to watch it (it's over an hour long), in the webinar, they said you should have a goal for your email list.

You might be wondering what does that mean. I thought the same thing.

So what they mean is you need to decide why you are creating the email list.

Are you creating it to get more clients for your business? For instance, are you a freelance writer trying to get more jobs?

Are you building it to drive traffic to your blog? Or you doing it to sell affiliate products or to sell your own products?

Asking these questions helps you know 2 things:

- 1) what kind of freebie to create.
- 2) what to email your subscribers

Let's say you want to create a blog that helps single mother raise Godly children.

Your goal might be to provide advice and resources to single mothers to help them achieve that goal of raising Godly children.

So then the freebie you create might be a resource guide on all the articles, books, videos that helped you as a single mother.

If this was going to be a business for you then you would maybe include some affiliate links in the freebie.

And eventually, you could sell them digital products that would help them and then one day your own products.

Overall, the goal would be to sell products to your audience that would help them raise godly children

Make sense?

Here are some common goals people have for their email list according to the webinar :

1. to sell their digital products
2. To sell their physical products
3. to make affiliate income
4. sustainable blog traffic
5. get more clients
6. get feedback from the target audience

Assignment: Since this Email List Building 101, I have a short assignment I'd love for you to complete.

If you have an email list or want to have an email list in the future, write out your goals for your email list.

What do you want to do with your email list? If you dare you can share your goals in the comments but even if you don't, this will help you as your building your list.

Ok, that's all for today join me tomorrow when I will talk about what makes a good optin freebie.

See you guys tomorrow,

Nicky

Hey and welcome back to the Write 31 Days Challenge where I'm writing a series called Email List Building 101.

If you need in-depth knowledge about growing your email list from scratch, you're in the right place.

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[The 3 tools you need to start an email list](#)
[Reviews of the Email Autoresponders I've used](#)

[Reviews of the Squeeze Page Tools I've used](#)

Okay, so I pride myself on keeping it real with you all. Writing a blog post every single day (most of them being over 1,000 words) is muy difencil (really hard).

I want to try and keep up with it but there's also life to live and that's what's happening today.

I'm out of town hanging with my sister, watching the Titan's game, and then going to a For King and Country concert right after. My mind isn't really on blogging right now.

But I do want to try and honor my commitment to this challenge so here is a post that I planned to do in a few days. I will try and come and flesh it out later with more content.

Here are some videos that I've found to be indispensable in helping me create my freebies.

[*Need step by step blogging directions? Click here!*](#)

Videos To Help You Create Your Opt-in Freebie

Here are the links to the videos:

<https://youtu.be/xpdkyDuMUCc>

<https://youtu.be/RZ-cac-zgLg>

https://youtu.be/Kb4zFuHHA_gk

<https://youtu.be/BMgxzR9-5Os>

<https://youtu.be/KkVXp1fBi74>

I hope you will find this helpful and I hope you will forgive me for not making a more comprehensive post!

I'm human what can I say?

Okay, guys, that's all from me today. Ya'll have a blessed week!

Nicky

Email List Building 101: A few tips for creating an opt-in freebie for a Christian blog

Hello, everyone! If you haven't created an opt-in freebie to grow your email list then you're in the right place.

Or if your freebie isn't converting like you'd like then you might want to stick around as well for the next few blog posts.

Over the next few days of the email list building 101 series that I'm writing for the #Write 31 days challenge I'm going to:

-Give you a list of free tools you can use to create your freebies

-Ideas to help you come up with a freebie idea, and

-Then show you some [helpful YouTube videos that will help you create your Freebies.](#)

[If you need help making sense of blogging click here.](#)

Let's first talk a little about why a freebie matters

Why you need an opt-in freebie to grow your email list.

When I first started blogging I noticed that a lot of bloggers just had "sign up for my newsletter" and a sign-up form for the reader to enter their email.

Unless you're super famous or super charismatic or your life is super fabulous, the days of just asking someone to sign up to your email list are probably over.

Blog readers are very sophisticated now and they know what's up.

So not only do we need to offer a gift but we also need to offer a gift that will actually help them achieve their goal.

And can we blame them? We are bombarded with emails on a daily and they know if they sign up for the freebie they will get emails from us.

They only want to sign up for email lists that they will actually enjoy reading emails from.

What are the hallmarks of an opt-in freebie that your readers will want?

In theory, your email opt-ins should have these characteristics:

1. It should save your readers time

One of the characteristics of a good freebie is the freebie saving your readers time.

For instance, our time as bloggers is stretched thin so I know I'm always looking for a way to save time.

There's so much to do so anytime I see a freebie that will make my life as a blogger easier or will make a task faster or easier, I want in.

Of course, the freebie that you create will depend on the kind of blog that you have and the audience.

A freebie that I make for this blog will be different than one made for a mommy blogger or a blog about sewing.

In tomorrow's post, I will give you some ideas on the kinds of freebies you can create.

2. It should save them money

Another way you can look at an opt-in freebie is one that saves people money.

In the blogging niche, I know bloggers have put so much money into blogging with so little ROI so if they find a freebie that saves them money on something that they really want and need, they will probably sign up for it.

This is the thing...

In the real world, there's no guarantee that your audience will like the first freebie that you create.

I know that I have personally tried 2 or 3 freebies for this blog and I keep tweaking it, as I get to know my readers better and where their heart is and what they need as bloggers.

Sometimes you can be so sure that "Yes, this is the one that everyone will love" and then it flops and no one signs up for it.

It can be so disappointing too when you put a lot of time and effort into it and then no one cares.

That's one reason why it's recommended that you don't spend too long on any one freebie until you know it's something people want.

I've heard that you should spend an hour or less on your freebie before you send it out into the world.

Then if people are loving it, you can either leave it as is or update or upgrade it into something better or more polished.

I have not followed this advice because I get really caught up in wanting it to be perfect.

Please don't be like me. Don't try to make your freebie perfect.

Just make it as awesome as you can in 1 hour and then send it out into the etherwebs and hope for the best.

It's all about trial and error and testing out what you've made to see if it fits your reader's needs.

A Few Tips For Creating Opt-ins For Christian Blogs

If you only read one thing in this post, then let it be this one. If you write for a Christian audience specifically then your freebie criteria might be a little different than the "save your readers time or money" concept.

For example, based on my observations and study of other Christian blogs, if your audience is mostly Christian women, then you will probably want a freebie that will capture their hearts as well as their minds.

I'll admit that this can be hard for me because I can be so cerebral and I have to find that balance between thinking with my heart and thinking with my head.

I believe a lot of Christian women are a good mixture of both heart and head so if you can create an opt-in freebie that is a balance of the two, you might be able to make a real connection with your audience.

I'm going to share with you some Christian optin ideas that might help you create a freebie that will help you really build a relationship with your readers/email subscribers.

I hope this list will help you and me as well, as I continue to learn more about you all and continue to [see you as more than just a "number"](#).

Until tomorrow,

Nicky



Hey and welcome back to the Write 31 Days Challenge where I'm writing a series called Email List Building 101.

If you need in-depth knowledge about growing your email list from scratch, you're in the right place.

Okay, so today was a most fortuitous day because as I was scrolling through my Facebook feed I happened upon a thread that could not have come at a more perfect time.

I totally understand why they call this a challenge because that's what it is. Writing a post every day is grueling, to say the least.

Coming up with an idea for every day and then executing it is grueling.

You don't want to just throw something on your blog because you want it your blog to be associated with quality.

Mediocrity is not something you want to be known for.

But after waking up at 5 am and a long day at work, finding a way to write a blog post with creativity and aplomb every day is a rather daunting task.

So when I saw this post on the By His Grace Bloggers Facebook group, I nearly leapt with joy.

An idea began to swirl around in my head.

Not only can I use this post to highlight some awesome email opt-in ideas for my readers but I could also use this post to highlight the creativity of my fellow Christian bloggers!

Win win!

The post asked the members to list the email opt-in freebies that they had created for their blogs.

I am so happy to be able to use their posts as examples of the kinds of email opt-ins that you could create for your own blog.

Let's dive right in!

Need help building your Christian blogging business? Click [here!](#)

5 Awesome Email Optin Freebie Ideas For Christian Bloggers

1. Challenges

Challenges are popular because we as humans love to be put to the test. We want to know if we can rise to the occasion and endure to the end of the challenge.

However, Allyson's challenge at Rapt Motherhood is a little different.

This challenge is not so much about endurance as it is about encouraging her readers to develop a more intimate relationship with Jesus.

Be sure to check out Allyson's Rapt Motherhood optin [here](#)

2. Resource library

I work in a library and love books so this one always jumps out at me.

This freebie works well because your reader gets to unlock a secret page on your blog.

They get to be a part of an exclusive club that gains access to special knowledge not available to the other readers of your blog.

For some resource library inspiration, I want to highlight these resource libraries:

- **Check out Sophie Elise's [resource library](#) at My Cup Runs Over (also my blog mastermind buddy!)**
- Ashley's [resource library](#) at Faithfully Planted has some bible study/journaling resources she wants to share with you.
- Amy (who I know has a huge heart for God) at Take a Walk Ministries has a [resource library](#) where you can get studies on "prayer, scripture memorization, short studies, and devotionals..." (Plus she has a workbook that she created to help us have a more intimate relationship with Jesus...check that out [here](#))
- Melissa at Humble Faith Family Wellness also has a [resource library](#).

3. Mini-Course

Mini-course freebies offer so much value to your readers.

You're offering to share your expert knowledge with them in an organized, easily digestible way for free.

Arabah Joy has a free mini-course called [Abiding in Christ](#) that can help us grow closer in our walk with Christ.

4. Devotionals

It's really not hard to guess why a devotional would resonate well with a Christian audience.

We love discovering new ways to connect with our Lord. If t

Rob and Joanna from Growing Home Together have a 31-day devotional called Brave Love Devotional that you can signup for [here](#).

5. Printables/Checklist

Checklists and or printables are popular on lots of blogs including Christian ones.

Checklists are popular because they bring clarity and focus to tasks that can seem overwhelming.

The structure and organization that they give to busy lives can prove to be invaluable.

My [checklist freebie](#) to help you pray over, start, and grow your Christian blog can help you make sense of this confusing blogging world that we are all in.

6. Creative Optin Ideas

For those of you who are in a more unique niche you might need an optin that is a little bit different like a quiz. Or if you're in a creative type niche you might do something artistic.

One idea is to do coloring pages like Ashley at Created to Glorify did.

Check out her coloring page optin [here](#).

Conclusion

Alright you guys, that's all for tonight. I hope you have found some opt-in freebie inspiration for your blog on this list. Be sure to check out these awesome Christian bloggers' opt-ins. I'll see you tomorrow when talk more about email list building.

Nicky

5 graphic design tools to create your email opt-in freebie (4 you might like better than Canva)

Hello and welcome back to my Write 31 Days challenge where I'm breaking down email list building...Yesterday's post was a pop quiz over all the stuff we've gone over to help you grow your email list.

If you haven't taken the quizzes yet, then go ahead check them out [here](#) and [here](#).

Today In order to help you create your own opt-in freebie, I'm sharing 5 free graphic design tools.

Need step by step instructions on turning your blog into business? Click [here](#).

5 Free Graphic Design Tools To Help You Create Your Email Optin Freebie

1. Canva

Canva is a tool that probably every blogger on Pinterest has heard of and with good reason.

You can start creating your Pinterest masterpieces in a matter of minutes because the user interface is so easy to use.

And you can truly create a masterpiece because they have such beautiful fonts and graphic elements for you to choose from.

They also have free pictures although I don't usually use them as much. Canva does have drawbacks in that you can't resize an image (without having the paid version).

Sometimes I want to take an image I created for Pinterest and just resize it for Instagram but I don't have that option. It would be such a time saver!

2. Adobe Spark

If for some reason you've used Canva and you don't like it, there are other alternatives available to you. Adobe Spark is one such alternative.

To be frank, I couldn't really find any major differences in features or any advantages that Adobe Spark has over Canva.

It would really be a matter of if you like one user interface over the other.

[3. Stencil](#)

Stencil is another free(ish) graphics tool that you can use.

Notice I said freeish.

With Stencil, you can only create up to 10 images a month. I know for me personally I create about that many in 2 weeks so this would not be feasible for me.

But if you don't create that many images then this is a good option. Some of the things that makes them stand apart from other graphics programs is their huge collection of stock photos.

They have over 2 million images and they add thousands more per week. If your a blogger who uses Pinterest then this is a good thing.

The photos that we chose matter. We don't want to use the same stock photo that everyone else is using.

From what I read Pinterest ranks your pin lower when your pin uses a photo that has been used a million other times on Pinterest.

There might be more image variety on Stencil as opposed to the common free image sites like Pixabay etc.

Another drawback on the free plan is that you can only save 10 graphics at a time. Again not an option for me but maybe it would work for you.

[4. Snappa](#)

Ok, Snappa is really cool.

It does what Canva does but it has some additional features that really make it stand out.

After you create your graphic, without leaving the Snappa website, you can schedule your posts to different social media outlets.

And that's not all. You can also resize your images! I'm super stoked about this guys because I hate that I can't resize my graphics in canva (without paying).

But on Snappa it's is free (I think). But wait...it gets better. You can even link Snappa to your Buffer account so you can schedule to your social media account that way too.

Snappa is definitely a tool I'm going to play around with and see how it works.

5. Designbold

The more I research these other graphic designers the more I realize why you might want to use them over Canva.

No shade at Canva, but you know how in Canva there's not a lot of photo editing power going on there?

Well on Designbold's free plan they have a photo editor with filter presets, brightness, saturation and "much much more".

Plus you get to resize your template! The lack of a true photo editor and not being able to resize my graphic are my two biggest gripes with Canva so I'm super excited to find these features available in another program.

Which program do you use to create your graphics?

While I love Canva, it's been cool to discover that they aren't the only game in town.

There's also some other programs I didn't mention like Fotor and Pablo that you can also take a look at.

If you need tutorials on how to create your freebie then [go to this post](#) and if you need some inspiration on what to create [click here](#).

See you all tomorrow and God bless!

Nicky

Email List Building 101: 5 unique spots on you blog you should put your email opt-in forms to get more subscribers

Autoresponder bought and set up? Check.

Amazing Opt-in freebie created? Check.

Squeeze page designed and ready to go? Check.

Now what we need to do is set up our opt-in forms on your blog. But where should they go? I mean there are some obvious places but we shouldn't just be putting our opt-in forms in obvious paces, now should we.

There are some less obvious places where our opt-in forms can go that can really increase your subscriber counts.

But why does it matter where we put our opt-in forms, I hear you ask?

Well think about when you go to a blog. When you see an opt-in in an obvious place do you scroll right over it or do you look at each and everyone of them with rapt attention?

I'm thinking it's not the rapt attention one.

I notice opt-in freebies when they are really offering something awesome or when they pop up in unique places.

I'm finding that getting in the head of your reader and making tweaks not just with your email opt-ins but on your blog in general can really make a difference in connecting with your readers and getting more subscribers.

So what are some more unique places to put your email opt-in forms?

1. On your about page

When we land on a blog or website where we really relate to the author or blog host, we typically will go to their about page so we can read more about their story and their blogs purpose.

This is the perfect opportunity to offer that reader your optin freebie as a thank you for being on your site. You can set it up really quickly.

You can either have a link to your optin in freebie somewhere in the text or you can have the optin forms incorporated onto the page.

2. You can put an optin link in your navigation menu

This one is really easy. All you have to do is take the squeeze page that you've already created (I'm assuming you did it already) and put it in your main navigation menu.

You can put the title as join, join my tribe, join our community, or something similar. What I wouldn't put is subscribe.

Based on my research, you don't want to remind people that they are subscribing to something. We either associate subscribing with buying something or with getting a lot of emails encouraging you to buy something.

Presenting it like a community where you will be offering value to each other is a better approach.

3. In your newsletters

If you are building a relationship with your subscribers and they really like what your doing, asking them to forward your optin freebie to someone they believe will be helped by it can be a way to get more people in your tribe.

When a friend tells you about something or someone and they really love it, then I'm likely going to look it up myself and see what it's about.

Why?

Because I trust them. I already know this person so if they recommend it I'm more likely to be interested in it than if a random stranger tells me about it.

4. Put an optin form before your "read more"

Something ive been doing recently is putting an optin link right before my read more tag.

Put another way: when people are scrolling through my homepage trying to find a post they want to read, it's possible that they may not click on my post to read it.

However, they may see my link that says something like *"need help building your blog into a business?"* that I've placed right before the read more tag.

So even if the post title doesn't catch their eye, the link to the freebie might.

5. In the end of your post or footer

if someone has made it until the end of your post then clearly like your writing and your writing style.

So take the opportunity to either give them a quick reminder about your freebie at the end of your post when your saying goodbye or by having an optin form in your blogs footer.

This reader is now more of a warmer prospect than they were when they first came on your blog because they've gotten to know you a little through your post.

At that point they may be more comfortable exchanging their email address with you for your freebie.

What new places do you put your optin forms?

Is there some unique place where you put your optin forms on your blog to gain more subscribers? Share your knowledge with your fellow bloggers so we can all learn from each other.

And Ok ok, i know there's a baby elephant in the room (if you've been following my series). i won't try and front like I haven't been neglecting my email list building 101 post series.

I fully admit that I've fallen off. My only defense is that writing a blog post every day is far more grueling than I thought. I can only ask for your forgiveness. I appreciate each and every one of you and

I'll see you in the next post and thanks for reading.

Nicky

4 Eye-Opening Facebook Traffic Tips To Get More Email Subscribers

Getting Facebook traffic to your page and to your blog is a puzzle that a lot of people can't solve. Me being one of them but I'm determined to do it.

It's mystifying trying to figure out how to get Facebook likes and to get engagement on your page so you can turn that into blog traffic and then turn that blog traffic into email subscribers.

I'm always looking for tips and tricks increase my likes on my Facebook page but I'm starting to see that I'm thinking about this all wrong. It's not necessarily about techniques to employ.

What seems to be the most important thing is learning how to meet the needs of your target audience. In other words, serve and care for your audience and give them what they need.

Yeah, but how do you do serve your audience on Facebook?

Well, let's talk about it some more. Here are some ways that I've found that you can use Facebook to drive traffic to your blog. And when you drive traffic to your site you will be driving traffic to your email opt-in and growing your email list.

The more people who see your list the more your email list will grow (if your freebie is something that they want).

So let's discuss some ways you can use Facebook traffic to build traffic to your blog. I found these tips to be quite eye-opening and I hope you will too.

[Want more guidance on building a blog into a business? Click here to get a 55 step guide on building your Christian blog into a business with a heart](#)

Use Facebook groups To Get Facebook Traffic To Your Page and Blog:

You can get Facebook traffic to your blog using Facebook groups in several ways to drive traffic to your blog. These are some ways that have worked for me.

1. Conduct market research on your target audience:

Find a Facebook group that was created for the target market of your blog. (for instance, if you blog is for Christian moms then search for Facebook groups for Christian moms).

Then ask them what their biggest challenge is with fill in the blank. What I've done is create a survey on Survey Monkey and post that (after getting admin approval).

Doing a survey can help you create content that will drive traffic to your site.

2. Offer them your knowledge and expertise:

You can also offer your expertise in the group. Be there to answer the questions that people ask. Give thoughtful answers that really do help them solve their problems.

3. Offer your blog posts as solutions or write blog posts for them:

You can also offer your blog post as a solution as long as it's not against the group's rules (sometimes it is so just check with the admins).

I've even written a quick blog post for a person who needed help in a Facebook group. Just look for ways to help people in the group and do it because you genuinely want to help not just because you want to drive traffic.

The more that you do this the more you will set yourself up to be a leader and expert in your field. You will become respected in the group and that can make people in the group look up your Facebook page and your blog.

I know I've clicked on a person's name in a Facebook group when I find them to be extra helpful or intriguing in some way.

4. Share Shareable Content:

Also think about what gets shared on Facebook- quotes, pictures, videos. If you think your blog posts have some words of wisdom that would be shareable then you can do image quotes and then add either your name underneath or add your blog's name underneath.

Or sometimes what I do is add the name of the blog post that the quote came from and the name of the blog. You can also do Facebook live videos.

I haven't gathered the courage to do that yet but if you feel ready then I know that this a good way for you to really start getting more Facebook likes and then by default driving more traffic to your blog.

What Facebook "Techniques" Have You Tried To Get More Traffic That Have Worked For You?

As I began to unravel the mysteries of Facebook (Instagram is a lot more intuitive to me), I'm really learning that my way of thinking of Facebook is backward.

I hope some of these tips have helped you understand Facebook more. The more that you can get engagement on your Facebook page, the more you can drive traffic to your blog and in turn drive traffic to your email opt-in, the faster you can grow your email list.

And of course, you can totally, promote your email opt-in on your Facebook page. You could probably promote it every month and not in any way be seen as too spammy.

I would love to hear what you guys have tried to drive traffic to your blog from Facebook. Talk to you guys tomorrow!

Nicky

Driving Pinterest Traffic To Your Blog To Grow Your Email List

I bet you thought the hard work was over.

You've already set up your autoresponder (if you haven't then click here to read more about them), you already have a squeeze page set up (if not click here to choose a squeeze page builder), and you've already made your email opt-in.

So now you just sit back and watch the subscriptions roll in, right?

Wrong.

If you build it they will come don't work in the blogging world. Oh how I wish it did my friend but once you build it, you must promote it.

For me, this is the hardest part. I'm terrible at self-promotion and if you are too this is a hurdle that you must jump over to start building your email list in any real way.

So once you've set everything up, you have to start driving traffic to your blog and your squeeze page where your opt-in forms reside.

How do we drive Pinterest traffic to our blogs and to our opt-in freebie?

Glad you asked!

Need to make money from your Christian blog to support your family? [Click here to get my free 55 step checklist that shows you how.](#)

One of the most important ways to drive traffic to your blog from Pinterest is by being found in search via keywords.

Let's discuss how to be found in Pinterest search

How to be found in Pinterest search

Being found in Pinterest search is a matter of getting your keywords combination right in these places:

1. Pinterest Board descriptions

What you say in your board descriptions matter. They should be rich with keywords. For instance, if you have a board named Blogging Tips, you should have blogging tips in the board description as well.

You want to use the same keywords in the board description as you do in the board name. Going back to my previous example.

If I have a board named "Christian blogging tips" then I will put in the board description something like "Christian blogging tips that will help you gain more readers" or something to that effect.

2. Pinterest Board Name

The board name should be a keyword that your target audience is searching for. For my target audience, I will type into Pinterest, Christian blog.

Then I will look at the keyword suggestions that come up underneath the search bar and I will use those keywords as the names of my boards.

That's because I know this is what my audience wants to know about.

3. Pin Descriptions

The pin descriptions should also be what? You guessed it! Keyword rich. Noticing a pattern here? Something I'm going to try.

Now let's go back to my previous example.

If you can use the keyword Christian blogging tips in that particular pin's description (meaning it actually applies to that pin) and you pin it to the board named Christian blogging tips, which has a board description with the keywords Christian blogging tips, then if someone searches for Christian blogging tips, I'm hoping my pin will be optimized so well that my pins show up in search for that keyword.

That's the plan.

5. Pin headlines

Then if you actually put on the pin itself the keyword "Christian blogging tips", you have done a beautiful job in the keyword department!

But wait there's more.

6. The name of your blog post

If the name of the blog post that the pin is leading too also has the keywords Christian blogging tips, then you have almost hit the keyword jackpot at this point.

Do You Understand Where To Put Your Pinterest Keywords?

At this point, I hope you can see just how important keywords are and see how they work. They work synergistically to help your target reader find your content on Pinterest.

If you can put a keyword or keyword phrase in all of those different places then you stand an amazing chance at your pins being found in search.

If your pins are found in search then they are likely to be clicked on more often (if you're writing headlines they would click on) and then you will be driving traffic to your blog and to your opt-in freebie by default.

If you need some more Pinterest tips (because keywords are just the tip of the iceberg), I would suggest you check out the paid ebook [Pinteresting Strategies](#).

If Pinterest has you feeling crazy confused then this book is well worth the money. Check out Carly's (the author's) sales page. She is so real and trustworthy.

I use this book as a reference all the time and if you read the next section of this post, you'll see how this book has helped me.

My Email List has Grown 175% This Month. This is Why

As this email list building 101 series is winding down (phew), I hope the big picture is really coming together.

I hope these posts have illuminated how to start building an email list. I know that in this month alone my email list has grown 175% over last year praise God!

I'm so thankful that these strategies have been working and I hope they have been helpful for you. This is why I believe it has grown so much.

I believe it's because I'm learning more about my audience and what they want to know about.

I'm producing content that they want to read. This is, in turn, driving more readers to my blog and then exposing them to [my freebie](#).

I also believe it has grown this much because I've been producing so much steady content. The more content you produce and promote the more eyeballs see your content. Plain and simple.

These strategies and much more are what I'm learning in books like [Pinteresting Strategies](#) and in [Pinterest Traffic Avalanche](#).

If Pinterest is a mystery to you like it was to me when I first started using it, these resources will help you understand how to use Pinterest to grow your email list.

Email list building is one of the most important parts of building a business but it's not the only part. Be sure to [get my free download that has steps to starting, growing, and monetizing your Christian blog.](#)

Okay, ya'll...just two more days of the email list building 1o1 series. See you guys there.

Nicky

Driving traffic with to your blog with Pinterest Ads To Boost Your Email List

You're curious about them.

You've seen Pinterest ads for other bloggers. And if you see them over and over again then they must be working right?

They wouldn't keep spending money on ads if they didn't get results, right?

But you might feel unsure about whether or not they are right for you and your blog.

Or even if you can afford Pinterest ads or not. If these are some of the doubts you have about, I hope I can put some of those doubts to bed.

This is the second to the last post in the email list building series that I've written for the write 31 days challenge.

The series was designed to teach you what I know about building an email list which is one of the most aspects of building a business.

Since I started this email series I have grown my email list by 175% and tomorrow I will talk about why I think that is.

I will also have all of my email list building series together in a nice and neat pdf that you can download so that you can look at it any time whether you can get online or not.

Quick Tip: Any time there is a document that I want to look at over and over and I don't want WIFI or 3G, or lack thereof to be a hindrance, I put that document in my iBooks or another app that does not require internet for me to access it. That way I can learn any time anywhere. This is what I suggest you do with my pdf download that I'm going to have for you tomorrow if you choose to download it.

Okay now let's talk about Pinterest Ads

[\(need help with the other aspects of building your blog besides email list building? Then click here to get my 55 step action plan on turning your blog into a business\)](#)

My Experience with Pinterest Ads or 3 Dumb Things You Shouldn't Do When You Buy Pinterest Ads

I have personal experience with Pinterest Ads. It was both a success and a failure. Let me explain what I mean.

It was a success in the fact that a lot of people saw my ads.

It was a failure in the fact that it didn't convert very well.

I have written a book about Christians who have been called to blog but have procrastinated actually taking the plunge and doing it. It encourages bloggers to follow the calling that God has laid on their hearts.

I think this book can really help Christians who want to blog but are on the fence about doing it. The book pushes them off the fence and firmly into "I'm ready to do this now" territory.

I know that there is a market for this kind of book because I have read comments from Christians saying that they should start a blog but they are scared, nervous, too busy, fill in the blank.

I got the bright idea to take my book and market it on Pinterest.

Did a guru tell me to do that?

No.

Have I seen other people do that on Pinterest?

No.

Did I do research on marketing books on Pinterest and see that people have been successful doing it?

No.

In fact, people said they were NOT successful doing this method.

In fact, a webinar I saw on Pinterest from someone who works for Pinterest said that you should link to a blog post first and then the sales page because that converts better.

But did I do it anyway?

Why of course I did. I'm hard headed like that.

So I did an ad campaign on Pinterest with my (poorly designed hard to read) book cover on Pinterest linking straight to my sales page, despite all the warning signals flashing, saying "abort abort".

And I got lots of impressions. And I got some click-throughs as well. But sales. Not so much.

Gee, I wonder why. Moral of the story.

Unless your book, course, or product is so amazing that everyone in your target market naturally will want it, it is a harder hill to climb when you link directly to the sales page of that product.

The blog post makes that potential customer warmer than say a sales page.

Plus my book cover was hard to read and understand and the user probably didn't understand what they were clicking on or looking at.

Long story short?

Don't think you are going to break the mold.

Sorry to be a Debbie downer but more than likely if a method hasn't worked for anyone else then it probably won't work for you either.

Not saying don't be original because I think that is important but still don't be surprised if it's not successful, at least not the first time.

Now let's talk about some of the things you should do

3 Lessons You Can Learn From The Dumb Mistakes I Made With Pinterest Ads

1. Choose a traffic awareness campaign

I'm sure there is a reason for the awareness ads on Pinterest. I'm sure there's got to be a reason why people want to pay just for someone to see their ads.

However, I really can't understand what that reason is. When I did my ad, I got thousands of impressions. That's awareness as far as I'm concerned.

So it just doesn't make a lot of sense to me at the moment to pay for someone just to see your ad (maybe I'm misunderstanding?).

Instead, do the traffic ad which you only pay for when someone clicks on your ad. A lot cheaper in the long run.

2. Make sure your pin is easy to read and has a clear headline/title and call to action

When I made my pin for my book to promote on Pinterest, I had my title of the book really big. The title (right now ha ha ha) is Write Now!

I was trying to be cute and have a play on words. You know start your blog Write Now...get it?

I mean really, no one has time to be figuring out what you mean on Pinterest.

No one calls about puns, plays on words or anything of the sort. I think that's a cute name and it's possible that I will keep the name of the book because I really do love it but was it right for the pin's headline?

No!

The pins headline should have been more keyword rich and easier to read and more explanatory about what the pin was about.

I had a tagline too but could the user read that quickly and easily. No! (sorry to keep shouting lol).

They couldn't read it. You know what happens when users can't read your pin? They keep it moving.

I also should have had a call to action on the pin (that was easy to read) like click here, read more, or something. What I've learned is that with a Pinterest ad you only get one shot to really grab their attention.

They don't get to have a closer look at your pin. They only get to look at your pin, click on it, and then go to the page that you linked to immediately.

That gives you very little time to convince the reader to give you a chance. Not only that, but as far as I can see, there is no way to save a promoted pin and come back to it later.

So that person scrolling through their feed has to really want to see your content right then and there because there's no getting back to it (unless they bookmark it outside of Pinterest).

Make those pins good and make them count.

3. Use keywords that are as targeted as possible and pick broader audiences for promoted pins

When I did my ad, I was very unsure of which keywords to pick. When you use the Pinterest keyword tool, they don't give you the option of choosing keywords that only like 5,000 people search for.

The keywords that are available to you or only those that are in the hundreds of thousands of searches to millions of searches per month.

With the kind of audience I was targeting, that made it very difficult. I wanted to choose Christians who want to become writers or bloggers.

How many searches do you think there are with those keywords "Christians who want to write or blog" not lots.

In fact, Christian blog or bloggers is not even an option as a keyword, let alone potential Christian bloggers or writers.

That made me have to pick keywords that were only quasi-related to my book's topic which made it very difficult to really hone in on my target market.

The target audience for my book is so niche that it just won't work on Pinterest. Instead, the best kinds of pins to promote or ones that have broader audiences and that have keywords that can actually be found in the Pinterest keyword tool.

You live and you learn.

How to use Pinterest Ads to build your email list.

Although you could very well link directly to your squeeze page in your promoted pin, probably the best course would be to link to a blog post that really highlights why your email opt-in freebie is really necessary and needed and will help your audience, and then link to your squeeze page in that blog post.

For your keywords, I would do it like this.

Let's say for instance, that I wanted to link a promoted pin to [my 55 step action plan for turning your blog into a business checklist](#).

Some of the keywords that I would choose would be "Blogging tips" "monetize your blog" "blogging printables" "blog how to" and so forth because people who are looking for these terms would probably be interested in a printable that helped them turn their blog into a business, based on the kinds of terms they are searching for.

It's true that my blog is targeting Christians but I would just take the chance that some of the 5 million people who are searching for those topics are also Christians and would click.

I'm still learning about the keyword aspect of this but this is the approach I would take based on what I know right now.

Have you tried Pinterest ads?

Even though my Pinterest ads were a massive fail, I still don't regret the experience.

The ads were not terribly expensive, either, in case that is holding you back. I think I spent less than \$50.

I'm pretty sure I spent quite a bit less than that I just don't want to lie to you but it was not over that. And I did get lots of impressions, just not as many click-throughs for the reasons I stated above.

If you thinking about doing Pinterest ads, I would say do your research, actually follow what the experts say (unlike me) and go for it if it's in your budget.

I definitely learned a lot and now I can tell ya'll what not to do and hopefully spare you some wasted time and money.

Okay, guys join me tomorrow for my last post in the email list building series.

I'm really excited that we've come this far! I missed some days in the challenge but I published more days than I didn't so I'm really grateful that I stuck with it and I think it has resonated with some of you as well.

See you guys tomorrow...we are at the finish line! Woo hoo!

Nicky