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# 20 ways to build an online business without an email list

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I recently came across a conversation on Facebook regarding how a new entrepreneur can build their business without an email list. If you have read articles or watch videos from successful entrepreneurs, you may have heard many of suggest focusing on building an email list.

If you have an email list already, of course it would be easier to market your existing tribe but that may not always be the case.

Below I have put together a list of 20 ways you can build your online business without an email list. One of the first objectives before building the list would naturally be to bring visitors to your site so that they CAN get on your email list, whether it just signing up to get blog updates from your site or an awesome lead magnet.

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## 1. Be a part of conversations and engage in Facebook Groups

Join Facebook groups, be where your target audience is (or where you think they are). Look for clues in their posts of something they are struggling with and genuinely try to help them. A little kindness in a blog post that can give them a quick win in public can entice your potential clients/customers to check out your Facebook profile and eventually to your website.

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## 2. Build a private Facebook group

Building a Facebook group and inviting your audience to hang out where other like minded individuals are can really help strengthen your authority as well as make it easier to market to. In a private group, your messages don't get lost in their feeds and through the plethora of other posts that people have to go through daily on Facebook.

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### 3. Deliver value and offer free strategy sessions

Give away some free services. These are perfect to build authority when first starting out, it helps you practice your pitches and fine tune your message. If you did a good job and brought true value and a transformation to your client, you could easily get a testimonial out of them.

Ask for a video testimonial and you'll really kick it up a notch. Testimonials will really escalate the trust value and your authority to other potential site visitors and help make a buying decision easier for them.

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## 4. Use Google AdWords to direct visitors to your sales page

You could go through a traditional route and pay for some Google Ads to get you started with getting traffic or getting people to end up on your landing page with an enticing lead magnet.

Offer a free download to an ebook, checklist, free video or mini-course that will bring them instant gratification and immediate results. This will go a long way, especially if your lead magnet solves a big problem. Later when you have them on your email list you can upset them to more of your offerings.

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## 5. Create 1-to-1 connections and add people as friends on Facebook

Talk to people one on one in groups, ask them questions and get to know them better. Ask them what their biggest challenges are and what they struggle with. If you truly listen to your target audience, they will give you clues and the language that you can use in your email and website copy that will resonate best with them. Since you are using the same words that they use, you will connect better and they will feel that you really “get” them and their issues. Once you build the trust, they are more likely willing to do business with you.

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## 6. Write great Facebook posts

Share a powerful message in Facebook groups. Try to write an inspiring message or a great tip that will help your target audience without asking them to buy anything. If you show yourself as being genuinely wanting to help and provide value, most people will check out your profile to see who this powerful message came from.

Again, they check out your profile, then your website and then hopefully sign up for your email newsletters for more great content. Try out a post of 300-400 words just to keep it short. You might be able to even take an excerpt from a longer post on your website, grab about 300 words and put a link to your website for the rest of the article. But check with the group rules before trying this one.



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## 7. Engage in public speaking

Here is another approach by using public speaking to get your message and business out there. Public speaking shows authority, and when you show authority then people want to do business with you since you are perceived as the expert.

If you do end up doing public speaking, get some business cards printed up that have a url to a lead magnet and offer it as a free gift to your seminar attendees. Next thing you know, they are on your list.

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## 8. Ask for referrals from existing clients

Have a few existing clients already? Ask them for referrals! If they love the work that you do and are please with your services, most clients would be happy to refer you to others. Maybe even offer them an incentive that would make it worthwhile for them. Maybe a percentage or dollar amount off for each new client that signs up with you, kind of like a finders fee.

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## 9. Give back to the community

This one is very similar to #1 above, but for this I would suggest starting the conversation. Create a new post and get people to engage and keep the conversation going. Ask a question that people would be interested in knowing the answer to.

Try sharing a great tip that people would want to share or learn more. Maybe even offer a free webinar that shows them how to do something that relates to your niche. Try opening up a few seats to free sessions, one to one coaching or training. This will help get the word out and hopefully get them to sign up for your paid services. You could even try asking them for a public post recommendation on Facebook.

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## 10. Work on building relationships on social media

Building relationships doesn't have to be limited to just Facebook. Tweet with others on Twitter and engage with people on Instagram and Google Plus. Thank them for following and share their posts and in time, those people will share your stuff too.

Start up real conversations with your followers, check out their profiles and websites. See what they are all about and what their likes/dislikes are. Those relationships can take you pretty far if you are genuine. Remember it's about them, not you.

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## 11. Create Facebook Ads

If you have some extra cash to invest in paid ads, then creating Facebook ads is another route you can take to send people to your email list. Create a great opt-in offer, i.e. eBook, a free mini-course (video or email), etc. to get people to visit your website and join your email list.

With Facebook ads you can target your audience and have your ad appear to a specific group of people, demographic, region etc. By targeting your Facebook ads you have a higher probability that the audience will be your ideal customer that you want.

When building your ad campaign, be sure to have an attractive image, compelling headline and a good call to action. Test it on a smaller group of people before releasing the ad to a larger group or market, otherwise this option can get very expensive fast.

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## 12. Network with real people

Traditional networking shouldn't be ruled out when trying to build you online business. Social gatherings, business meetings, local chamber of commerce meetings and even local [meetups](#) in your area can be a great place to network.

Talk to people, run ideas past them and let them know what you do and what types of problems you and your business solves. If they don't have an immediate need for your business maybe they know someone that does. Give them a business card with a url to your website for more information.

Add a call to action link on your business cards that encourages people to download an ebook to learn a new tip or free advice that might help them with something they struggle with.

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## 13. Send out warm letters (or emails)

If you have an existing client list from an offline business, perhaps you have their physical home address. Send them a handwritten letter, invite them to join your email list online and offer a discount or free offer of some sort in exchange for their email.

Let them know that you will be sending out regular updates and other discounts and offers that they would love and benefit from. Focus on giving them a real good reason for them to jump onto your website and give you that email address.

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## 14. Join private group boards

Here is a tip that I like because it's perfect for both introverts and extroverts.

Join private Facebook and LinkedIn groups. Read what people have to say and chime in when you can offer some really helpful and actionable advice that people with problems can use.

Try to spark up some though provoking conversations that could spark curiosity and make people want to check you and your profile out. Just make sure your profile has a direct link to your website (preferably a custom landing page specifically for that social media channel).

As an example create a landing page on your website with a url of [www.yourdomain.com/welcome-facebook](http://www.yourdomain.com/welcome-facebook) and have the page welcome the visitor to your site and maybe as a free gift offer them a valuable lead magnet in exchange for their email.

Do the same for your other social media channels you are on, i.e., LinkedIn, Twitter, Google, Instagram, etc.



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## 15. Ask people you know for referrals – friends, family and relatives

This tip piggy backs off of tip #12 of networking with real people.

Face to face conversations will always trump online conversations, and people still do like the personalized and real human contact for conversations. Also don't be shy about asking for help on referrals. You can always return the favor if the opportunity arises.

Let people know what you do and give it to them in a 30 second pitch. Make your pitch something that is easy to remember, that tells people what kind of problem you solve.

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## 16. Hand out business cards

This tip was briefly mentioned in an earlier tip and I thought I would add a little more here. In addition to the traditional website address on your card that leads back to your website, create a special gift for anyone that you give the card to.

Add a special code to the card that someone would have to enter to get your free offer like a password of sorts, i.e. FREEGIFT or something then they can download or view special content.

Try making your business card stand out and make it a memorable design or with a graphic that stands out from the typical business card that can get lost in the shuffle. Maybe even make your business card, vertical instead. Be different.

Also adding a QR code that someone can scan with their cell phone on the spot and take them directly to your opt-in offer on your website can make it easier for customers that aren't on a computer.

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## 17. Create videos with tips

Videos have been gaining some serious popularity amongst social media and other channels.

People love watching videos and sharing videos. Create videos that offer a really helpful tip that your audience can take something away with. Teach them something new, show them a shortcut or share some insider news from your industry.

Some popular and very effective lead magnets come from mini-courses using the video medium. As an example, offer a free mini-course in exchange for their email address. The video course doesn't have to be long either, 10-15 minutes and straight to the point with some key action steps will go a long way.

If you do it just right, your audience may check out your website and just contact you and for more information and possibly even hire you.

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## 18. Use Periscope

This new kid on the block by Twitter has taken social media by storm.

With over 15 million users in just a few months, this is the place where many people have started flocking to. If you haven't heard about [Periscope](#) yet, it is basically live video streaming from your mobile phone that you can use to share your message with your followers.

Your followers/views can then type messages back to you to ask questions, post comments and just plain chat. A feedback system that Periscope has built in is this concept of "hearts". Hearts in Periscope signify how you are resonating with your audience and if the message and topic is something that your viewers are enjoying.

A viewer would tap on the screen to give virtual hearts if they like what you are saying giving you a visual cue that your audience like the topic you're on and to keep going.

People are still trying to figure Periscope out, but what I have found that seems to be effective is to have a clear outline of the topic you are going to be discussing in the "scope", let your viewers know at the beginning and middle (for those joining late) what your topic is, what advice you are giving them and then ask them for feedback and save a little time for some Q&A.

Keep your viewers engaged and they'll share your scope with their followers helping your base grow.

My recommendation on this one is at the ending of your scope, give your audience a clear call to action and let them know if they want more information to visit [www.yourwebsite.com/periscope](http://www.yourwebsite.com/periscope) (a tip previously mentioned above).

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## 19. Promote other people's products

This tip seems pretty interesting in a sense that you promote other people's products to gain the trust of your audience and to imply you are not out to just get their money, but to offer them true value.

If there is a product or service that you use and would highly recommend to others, your customers will thank you for it if it helps solve a current problem they are having and are probably more willing to listen when you have one of your offers on the table that can help them solve a different problem.

Sometimes you can work with other small businesses and do a referral exchange and reciprocate and send customers and clients your way if you can fulfill a need for their customers.

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## 20. Make sure the copy on your website is awesome

Finally in this tip I would like to add, make sure your website is awesome.

Invest a little money in a nice WordPress template with some nice graphics on the page. Make the website functional and useful and clearly laid out.

Be sure that your copy is persuasive and speaks the same language and words that your customers use. Add clear call-to-actions and have a goal in mind of what you want your users to experience when they visit your website.

Be sure you have clear goals for your website and clear on what the purpose of the website is as well.

Are your goals to collect email addresses? More traffic? More signups? Selling something?

Be sure to set your website up to collect email addresses and start building your email list from the beginning.

Many veteran entrepreneurs that have been asked what one thing they would have done differently when they first started out was that they wished that they had started building their email list from the beginning.

Hence the reason that I am passing this advice on to you and reminding you that its probably one critical element on your website that you don't want to forget.

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## Conclusion

Hopefully you were able to get some more ideas on how you can build your business further without starting off with an email list.

Many people that are just starting out on their entrepreneurial adventure struggle with building their business and not sure where to begin. I hope you can take 1 or 2 or even more tips out of this list and apply it to your business.