

Ebook

Six customer acquisition strategies for your ecommerce store



1. Customer acquisition is hard
2. Pay to email someone else's subscriber list
3. Leverage existing customers in a different way
4. Use really niche, targeted landing pages
5. Talk about your competition
6. Update older, high-performing content
7. Resend unopened emails
8. It's time to go get those prospects

When you think about it, every single ecommerce store has the same goal: sell more.

When it comes to converting someone who's already a customer, there are a lot of ways that we know can help drive that conversion.

Need to bring someone back to the store? People love sales and coupons. Want to incentivize them to share with their friends? Affiliate programs, coupons, and credits can make that happen.

But what should you do if you need to attract new customers and set your store apart from others in the first place? This is perhaps the most challenging part of ecommerce. To achieve this goal, there are many steps store owners must take.

In this ebook, we'll walk through several ideas and approaches that will help you acquire more customers.



Section 2: Pay to email someone else's subscriber list

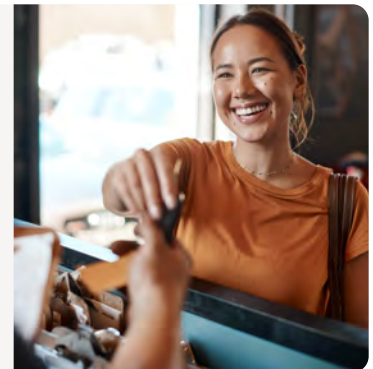
One of the first things you can do is pay to email someone else's subscriber list, regardless of whether you have a well-established database or not. If there is synergy between your audiences and their interests, or if these people are interested in the ecosystem around your offerings, then the potential for targeted traffic – and therefore a high conversion rate – will be there.

Find a complementary product and work to build a relationship with someone. As an example, take the automobile industry. Potential customers might think, "I'm not going to repair this car, I'm just going to buy a new one." So car repair companies are great places to work with when recommending a new, used car.

Whether you're selling a used car or something else, find partners who are involved in that value chain of delivering service within your ecosystem. Remember, they can work at other points in that lifecycle. In the context of cars, this might mean car repair, detailing, or customization. Any point in that lifecycle is fair game when it comes to partnering because the context is all tacitly related.

Pro tip

Find a **complementary product** and work to build a relationship with someone.



Now that you understand how to pick a partner, here's a list of questions you should ask them:



How big is your email list?

You need to make sure the size makes it worth it. Look for partners with a database of at least a couple thousand.



Who is on this list – customers, or prospects?

Are these people just blog subscribers or have they actually paid for something? This will affect how well they convert.



What are your average open rates and click through rates (CTRs)?

Most of the folks sending email to their customers are using some sort of email service provider and that data should be readily available to them. Open rates above 35% can be useful. Especially if the list is filled with shoppers, not just newsletter subscribers.



What are the options for sending the email?

Can you take up the whole body of the email? Talking through what options you have in terms of putting your information into that email is critical.



What's it going to cost?

The only way to know if it makes sense for you is to evaluate your own cost of acquisition.

As you can see, buying an email list is a very easy approach to customer acquisition because you don't have to do a lot of work other than deciding on messaging to your potential customers. Partnering with different parts of your ecosystem can help diversify your database, especially if you repeat it more than once.

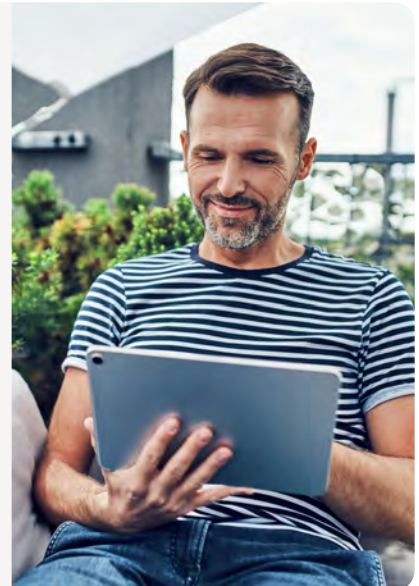
Section 3: Leverage existing customers in a different way

Another strategy for customer acquisition is to lean on existing customers to bring new prospects to your store. The trick here is to create an inherently viral approach to sharing.

As an example, Liquid Web worked with a company that sold patio furniture. You might be asking, “What’s viral about patio furniture?” Well, most people who buy patio furniture don’t purchase a full set. Instead customers might start with just a set of chairs and a table, as opposed to adding fancier gear like a grill, outdoor couch, and the heating lamp.

To drive sales, the patio furniture company offered a free item to existing customers – if they got three referrals in their network to purchase something. They tracked this by giving the current customer a specific code to give out so their network could get 15% off as well. This way, all parties were incentivized.

The viral nature of it wasn't so much the dynamic of sharing this coupon. Instead, the motivating factor was that the customer got something for free.



Notice the important part of this interaction:

Before a customer makes their full purchase, let them know what they could get for free or at significant discounts if they recommend others to purchase. Swap out a traditional upsell or cross-promotion at the end of a transaction with something to the effect of, “Can we tell you a little about our referral promotion program?”

This works because some people won’t purchase the heat lamp just to wait to get it for free. If the customer could save some money, they were interested – and that’s what got them invested in the process. This is a very powerful, motivational tool for sharing.

Section 4: Use really niche, targeted landing pages

Another user acquisition strategy is to create targeted landing pages that are specific to an industry, a vertical market, a feature, or a location. Rather than focusing on generic search terms, which are highly competitive, try long tail keywords to bring new traffic to your store.

Long tail keywords refer to highly specific searches on Google, where prospects include detailed terms related to specific features, markets, or locations. Often, Google will return a thousand generic results, but nothing very specific to match the query. This is where you can win.

Stop worrying about competing for major keywords and focus on long tail phrases. Then, create dedicated pages for your vertical market, industry, feature, or relocation.

So what does this look like?

Let's say you're a hosting company, but your focus is real estate agents. The phrase, "the best hosting for real estate agents" is unique and will return more targeted traffic than just a page geared toward "hosting" because it's specific, nuanced and focused.

"the best hosting for real estate agents"	
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The trick is to build more pages tailored to those detailed search queries, increasing your chances of appearing prominently and frequently in Google's search results. It's not just about making sure you're using keywords or long tail phrases or creating regular content. It's about creating specific pages.

Whether they buy from you is secondary. The primary challenge is getting them to visit your store, which has a far greater impact.

Section 5: Talk about your competition

The fourth acquisition strategy is the least used yet most effective strategy for bringing customers to your site: talk about your competition.

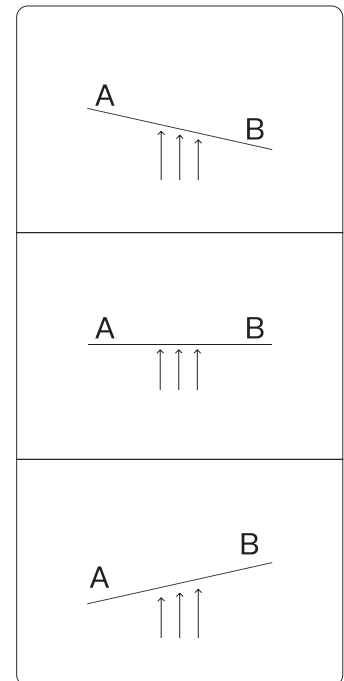
Most businesses shy away from mentioning other companies in their space, but here's the thing: your prospects may know your competition. In fact, they may know your competition more than they know you. This means you should write your landing pages, blog posts, and content in a way that lets you compare your offerings to theirs.

As an example, if you're selling Sony cameras and everyone buys Canon cameras, your content should mention Canon to hijack their popularity. Since most people start their searches with Canon, you should start with them, too.

To check on what other content is out there, search for “Canon versus” on Google. First, you'll notice that Google pre-populates search with topic suggestions. Next, you'll discover that many people have written similar stories, but most of the time it's not from vendors — it's from a third-party reviewer.

If you write similar content with a competitive overview, it's an opportunity to get exposure you might not otherwise get and take the lead on how you want to position yourself against the competition. On your landing page, you can establish the criteria for comparison, guiding visitors to approach the problem from your desired perspective.

Creating this A versus B content, whether it's a white paper, landing page, or blog post, is a smart strategy for discussing your competitors.



Section 6: Update older, high-performing content

Another great way to drive acquisition is to update older, popular content. Go in, go to that same post, update the text, add some new photos, put the new date at the top of it, publish it again, and get more traffic.

Doing this is a fantastic way to bring people back to your site and drive more traffic.

It's content that already works. Now use it again.

One benefit is that your traffic increases over time. Initially, your post gets a certain number of shares. Then you update and repost it, it gets additional shares, which accumulate on top of the original ones, enhancing the article's perceived importance.

Section 7: Resend unopened emails



If you're sending emails to prospects, a good best practice is to resend to the group that didn't open the first email.

If you have a 30% open rate, which is decent, it means you also have a 70% unopened rate.

Wait two days, change the subject line, and resend the same content to those who didn't open it initially. This gives you a second chance to capture their attention and increase your reach by simply trying a new title.

Section 8: It's time to go get those prospects

We've presented you with a series of customer acquisition strategies, and none of them are super complicated.

They're all feasible and straightforward — much simpler than more advanced tactics, like purchasing another website and migrating all its content to your own. Doing that can be very powerful, but it'll take a lot more work than the strategies we've shared here.

Of course, there are many other strategies to consider, like driving conversions, encouraging recommendations, outbound marketing, and attracting repeat visitors.

While those efforts remain important, our focus here was on customer acquisition because it drives business growth by attracting new customers, expanding your market reach, and increasing revenue.

Now, it's time to get to work!



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