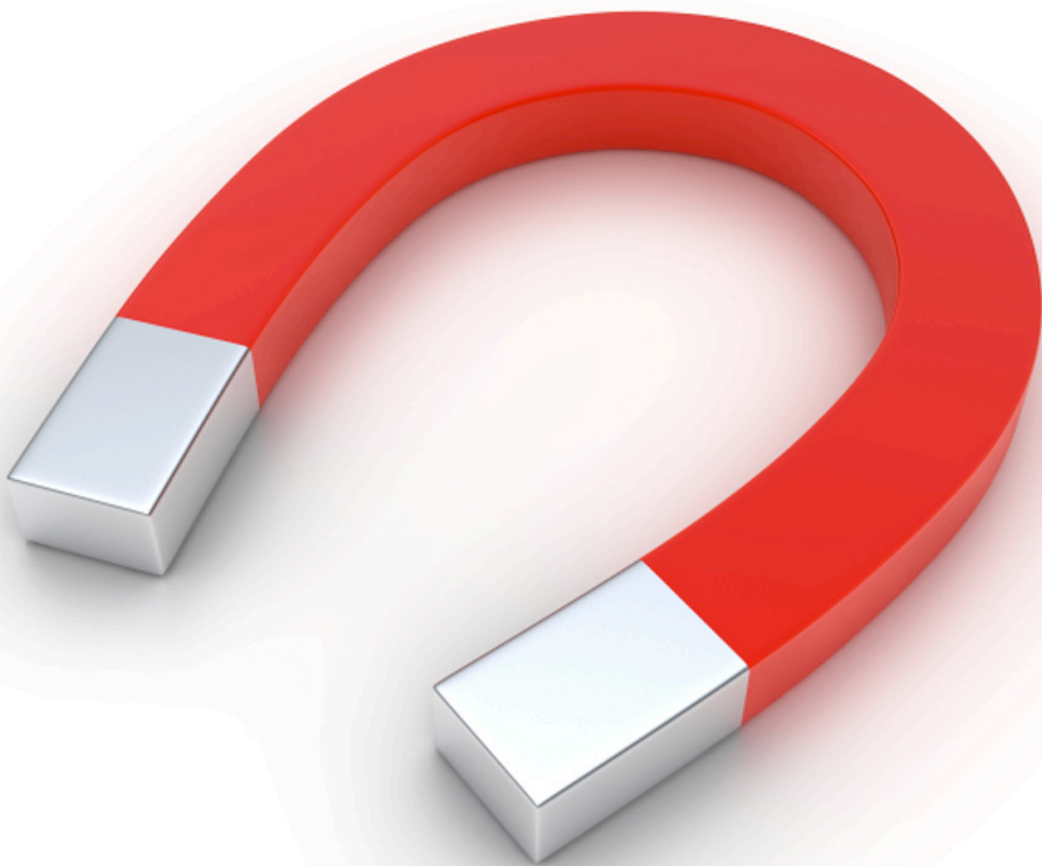# HOW TO CREATE
SITE CONTENT THAT ATTRACTS VISITORS

And turn those visitors into subscribers

You want more subscribers. More subscribers means more people reading your emails and potentially more people responding to your calls to action. To get more subscribers you need more traffic coming to your website.

This step-by-step guide will walk you through how to start getting more traffic to your website by creating attractive content. Each step will be explained in detail and contain examples, plus you'll have a plan for what to do next.

Before you begin, it's important to note where you should be at this point in order to get the most out of this guide. First, you need to have a solid business model. We have a worksheet that can help you get there. Next, you'll need to have a live website. The steps in this guide will cover how to enhance your website for better results.

Now it's time to get started!

Creating Coveted Content

Since your goal right now is to get more traffic, we'll look at two ways you can attract more traffic with site content geared toward marketing: giving out free stuff and holding online contests.

Both of these methods are a great way to get started with effective and relatively easy to put together material.

Provide Something to Share

For consistency, we'll use the term "content" for what will be shared. It can be an ebook, video, something humorous, a podcast or whatever you see fit. EVERYONE has something they can create and share, it's just a matter of what works for your business.

Free guides and other digital products can get lots of attention. Once you create and introduce your content, others will most likely spread it around quickly, as long as it's valuable.

You will need to either create something worthwhile for people to check out, or find or buy someone else's content to share. This may take some time, along with some trial and error.

What Should I Create?

First, ask what can help your audience and then create materials full of the information they need. Chances are there is a lot of information your visitors may like to learn about your company and industry, so you'll just need to figure out what will help them the most.

Here are some ideas for different industries:

Health
Discuss interesting facts, advice on when to call a doctor about something, exercise and nutrition tips or hot topics.

Food
Provide your favorite recipes or details on equipment and ingredients home cooks should always have on hand.

Marketing
Talk about what new internet marketers should do first, describe your success story, or discuss common trouble points in marketing.
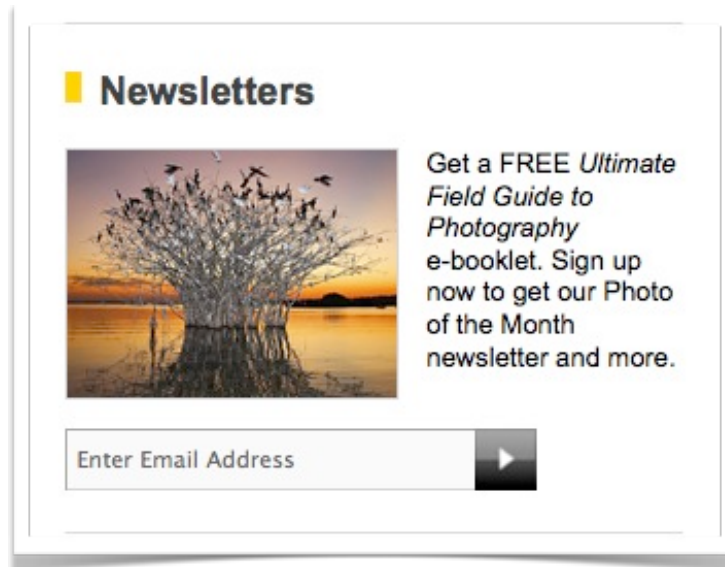
Retail
Include a catalog of your products, review products or do brand comparisons.

Service
Offer a how-to for getting started with your service, results people have seen using your service or common questions you get.

Example: National Geographic

Take a look at what National Geographic has on their sidebar:

National Geographic provides a free booklet that interested visitors can receive when they enter their email address. This booklet was probably very easy for National Geographic to put together given how many photos they have on hand, but visitors will find it very appealing.

In order to get your free content out there, make it as visible as possible. Use sites such as LinkedIn, or on forums in your niche, to get word out. If you have a blog, put up a post about it and don't forget to share it with your social media followers.

Encourage people to share the content with others, and provide direct links for them to easily share it.

There are also sites you can advertise your content on, such as:

Free-eBooks.net
docstoc.com
Scribd.com
slideshare.net
Calameo.com

If you're not ready to share your own content, you can download content relevant to what you're doing on the websites listed above. As long as you give credit to the author, you can use this content for sharing.

Online Contests

Contests appeal to the human psyche; people like the thrill of winning something. They are relatively easy to set up and can provide an increase in traffic for a couple months (or however long your contest is). Online contests require visitors to submit their information (and possibly more) on the website in hopes to win the advertised prize.

First, figure out what kind of contest you want to run.Your contest can be as simple as requiring a name and email address or require more time from the participant, such as a picture or a response to something.

Next, you'll need to think about what your goal is for the contest. Is it to get more subscribers? If that's it, you may be fine with just an email address submission. If you want to learn something such as what your audience is interested in, or have participants teach you something, you'll need to have a more involved contest.

You can also get content for your blog and email campaign to use from contests, depending on what the contest is. If you're asking participants to answer a question or submit something to be judged, you can talk about these submissions in posts and emails.

You'll need to consider how much time you have to devote to the contest. If you're asking participants to submit something to be judged, either you or your co-workers will need to take the time out to go through the entries. Someone who is creative and has the time to invest in developing a contest, promoting it, judging and providing a prize can find this to be highly effective.

Choose a Prize

Once you decide on what type of contest you'll be running, you'll need to come up with a prize to give away.

The value of the prize should be relevant to the effort your contest requires. Here are a few examples of good contest prizes:

> *Free week, month or year of service*
> *E-book or other digital content*
> *Personal assistance or coaching*
> *Coupon to redeem at a store or restaurant*

If you don't have something produced by your company, you can always offer a gift card. You may also find free samples of a product you can provide. One site that offers cool free stuff is Shop4Freebies.com; check them out if you need ideas.

Another option you have with contests is to provide the prize for another site's contest. This will give you publicity when that site advertises the contest and prize, and you won't need to worry about running or judging the contest itself.

Spread the Word

Contests can gain lots of traffic just because people love them, but if you don't already have a big subscriber base here are other ways to get attention:

> *Offer advantages or incentives to entrants who refer friends or write about the contest.*
>
> *Contact others in your niche and ask them to spread the word.*
>
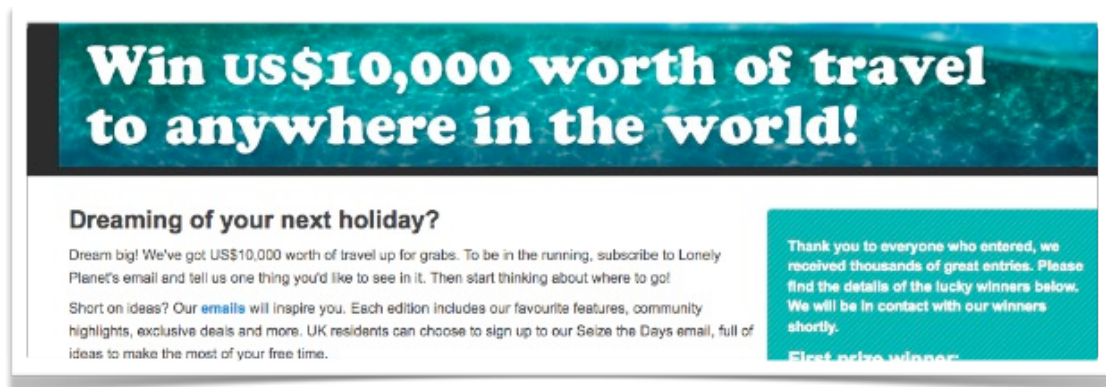> *Post comments on forums relevant to your industry promoting the contest.*
>
> *List your contest on a directory such as Online-Sweepstakes.com. This will make it easier for contest seekers to learn about you and your business.*

Contest Examples

AWeber recently awarded a scholarship to the student who best described what they think will happen to email now that social media and text messaging has become so popular. This not only brought AWeber new and different exposure, but it also led to the creation of several blog posts on and off the site and various press releases.

To help give you some more ideas, here are four sites that are offering online contests in different ways:

Lonely Planet finds out what their audience is looking for:

In order to be in the running for this contest, visitors need to sign up for the email list and submit one thing they'd like to see in these emails. The visitor sees their benefit for submitting this information (the chance for travel money), and Lonely Planet gets feedback from visitors that can be very useful when creating their emails.

[Adventure Insider](#) asks subscribers to tell their friends:

Get your friends to subscribe and win cool gear

in **ERICK** by **Erick** — April 11, 2011 11:49 am | **1 comment**

We are giving away some sweet 18oz. Hydro Flask vacuum-insulated stainless steel water bottles. So how do you get your hands on one? Simple! Get your friends to subscribe to Adventure Insider Magazine (and make sure you subscribe yourself if you haven't already) and at the end of April we will pick one subscriber at random. That person will win one Hydro Flask for themself and one for the friend that pointed them our way. It's that easy. So head over and Subscribe and then send your friends. Hopefully we'll be sending you a brand new Hydro Flask in a couple weeks.

Tags: **Contest** **Hydro Flask**

Hydro Flask

Adventure Insider asks their audience to refer others to their site and magazine, and winners get two prizes (one for them, one for the friend that referred them). This is a very clever set up. Essentially, the visitor just needs to sign up to the mailing list and they'll be in the running for the prize. However, since Adventure Insider is offering 2 prizes, it promotes bringing others to the site to increase their chances of winning.

[YMAA](#) encourages visitors to join their mailing list:
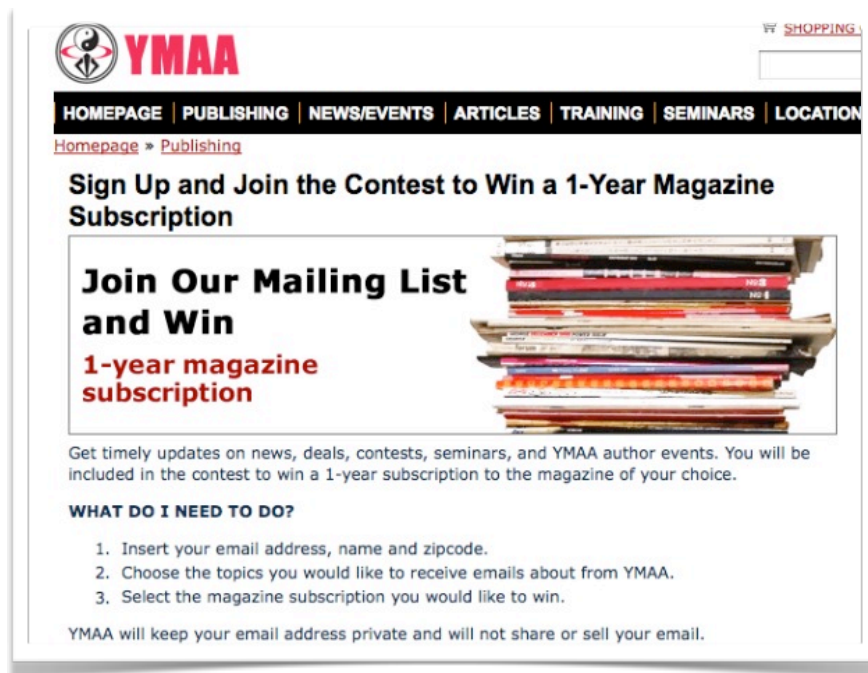
YMAA simply requires visitors to subscribe to their mailing list in order to enter their contest. This is very simple for visitors to complete, which may attract more submissions. While they don't get any additional benefits such as feedback from their visitors, an easy contest that's user-friendly and lets subscribers choose what they would like to win can bring in lots of new subscribers.

[The Homemade Baby Food Recipes Blog](#) has subscribers get creative:

Participants need to submit recipes that will be judged here, and the winner receives a gift card for Amazon.com. This is a great prize and easy to provide, although it does cost to offer a prize like this. What the blog gets in return is some cool recipes they can add to their collection.

Note On Permission

You will need to be careful about assuming permission when it comes to participants' information. If you plan to add participants' email address to your mailing list, you have to say so. The entry form must clearly state your intentions and what they can expect. If they do not request your emails, it's considered spam to send them anything.

Along the same lines, you need to make sure the emails you'll be offering to these subscribers is relevant to your audience to prevent them from losing interested once they've entered the contest.

Convert Traffic to Subscribers

Once you get the traffic to your site, you want to get these visitors on your mailing list. Why? So they keep coming back to your site. The more exposure someone gets to your brand, the more likely they'll come back and buy something.
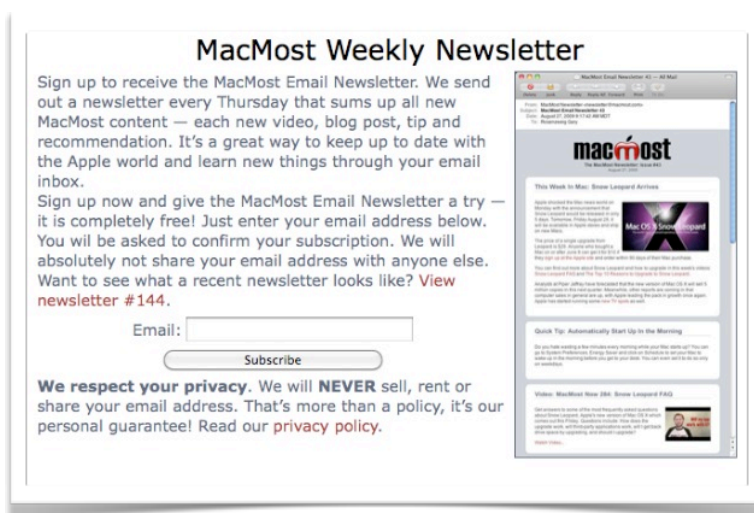
A web form, or sign up form, is all you need to convert traffic to subscribers. Visitors can enter their name, email and other information to join your mailing list.

In order to get visitors to sign up on your web form, you'll need to think about the location of your web form, how you're going to convince them, what incentives you have to offer and how to show you're open to communication.

Wording

Don't forget to include why visitors should sign up. Explain the benefits for being on your mailing list and what they can expect when they sign up. Will they get news of your latest sales first? Do you have content that can help them? Let them know!
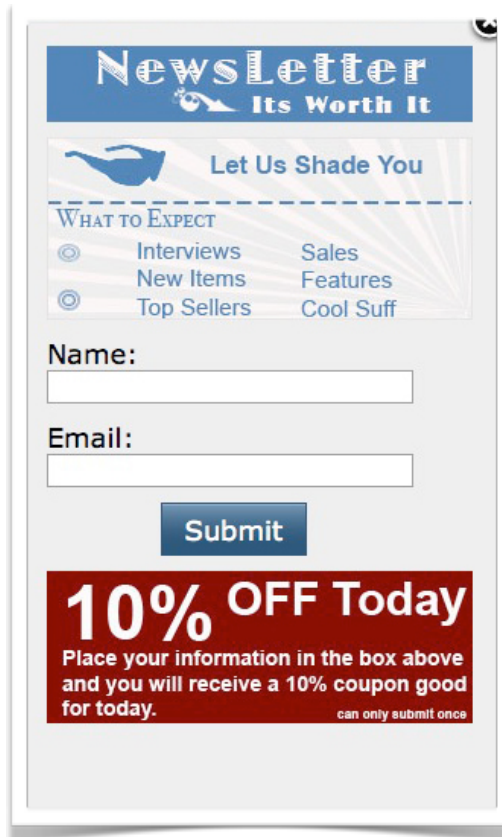
Here is a form that does this well:

Not only does this talk about what is in the emails and provides a link to a recent newsletter, it lets potential subscribers know they can expect emails every Thursday.

Incentives

We talked about contests, and they typically ask visitors to submit their email address to enter and sign up to the mailing list, making them a one-two punch in this regard; they're attractive to share and an incentive to sign up.

If you're not running the contest with the sign up form, you can try using other incentives to get visitors to sign up to your mailing list. This is usually in the form of digital content or coupons.

Here's an example:

This form gives a brief overview of what to expect in their emails plus an incentive: 10% off a purchase. The offer gives them a good reason to sign up while the incentive seals the deal.

Transparency

Help visitors get to know you by sharing your own information and show you're willing and able to help them. You're expecting them to give you their personal information, so the more information about yourself you provide, the more comfortable they'll feel. Here's how to make yourself transparent:

Post a link to your privacy policy to reassure them their information is secure with you.

Provide FAQs (if applicable) that are valid and detailed.

Give contact information where they can reach you quickly, and inform them of your office or store hours.

They might want to see what some others think of your company as well. People like to read reviews of products they're thinking of purchasing, and the same concept can apply to email subscribers.
You can include testimonials on your sign up page to influence the visitor's decision. Seeing what good things others have to say about you builds your credibility.

Check out how Panic Away handles transparency:

The form has the privacy policy plus testimonials.

This site also has a very transparent contact page:

They provide a link to their FAQs, email information, postal address and telephone number.

Placement

The location of your web form will impact the number of submissions it gets. It's best to have your form be immediately visible upon landing on the page, and easily accessible.
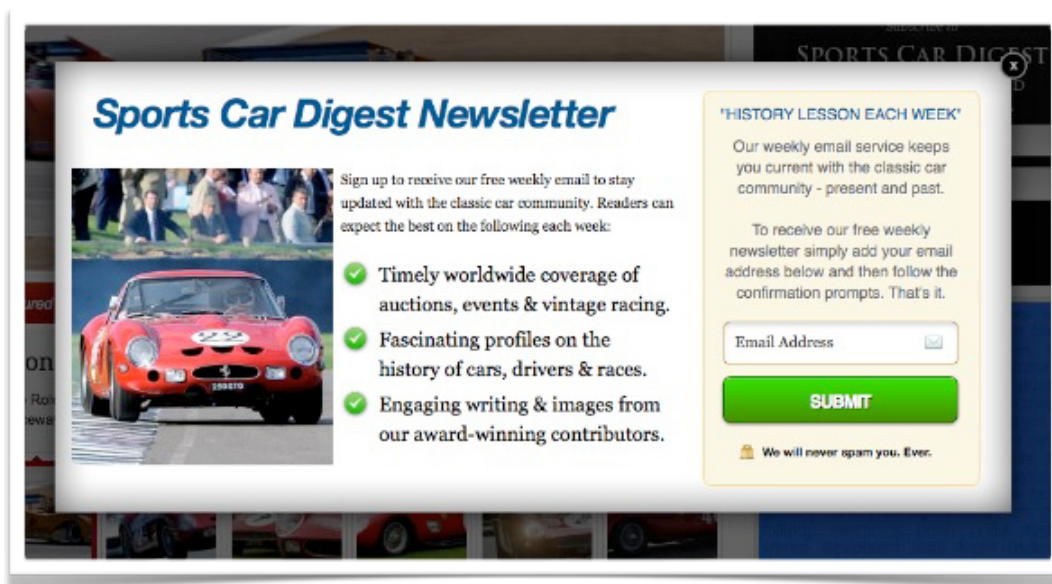
You might also find that including it in your sidebar or header is an easier option than putting it in the body of a page, since this will put your form on every page of your website. Here's an example:

This type of form is called an inline form, as it renders your form directly on the page.

One way to make your form stand out is to [add a popover](#) type form. A popover form will appear above your page content, but since it does not open in a new window it doesn't get blocked by pop-up blockers.

Here's what a popover type form can look like:

The popover form is great at grabbing attention, and can bring in more subscribers than an inline form that can be more easily overlooked.

It's best to supplement your inline form with a popover, rather than just having one or the other. That way if the visitor closes the popover form without filling it out, but later decide they want to sign up, they still have that option available.

Using these tips, you can now create content to attract visitors and build an effective web form to convert more of those visitors to subscribers.

About AWeber

What do leading sites such as Social Media Examiner, Copyblogger, Which Test Won, ProBlogger and Harvard Business Review all have in common?

They rely on AWeber for easy-to-use email and social media tools to cultivate relationships with their readers. Since 1998, AWeber has been the email engine powering the growth of organizations around the world.

Today, more than 110,000 small- and midsize-businesses, entrepreneurs, agencies and nonprofits are making the most of AWeber's sophisticated segmentation and analytics capabilities, social media and testing applications, extensive template libraries, and industry-leading deliverability and live support.

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