

EMAIL MARKETING FOR DENTISTS



“Thanks, but I’d rather go to the dentist.” Have you ever heard this quote used sincerely? Getting patients into your chair for regular check ups or cleanings and keeping them there can feel like pulling teeth. When it comes to coaxing reluctant patients back into your office or growing your practice with new ones, email marketing can ease the pain.

This guide will take you through the set-up for your practice’s own email marketing campaign with examples and ideas you can try out on your own patient list.

Why Email Marketing?

Besides connecting with current patients and attracting new ones, email marketing establishes trust and rapport between you and your subscribers, which are important characteristics in a patient’s relationship with his or her dentist. Email can build trust from the beginning, before they’re even in the chair.

Your patients use their email every day, and regular emails can serve as a handy reminder when your name appears in their inbox. Your newsletter might just jog the selective memories of patients who are overdue for a cleaning!

Email also makes it easy to send relevant information about treatment plans to patients based on their oral health needs and interests.

Building Your Subscriber List

Before you can start sending emails, you need a list of people to send to. People who sign up to your list are called subscribers. As your list of subscribers grows, it will likely include new, current and prospective patients - groups you can target with specific information. We’ll talk about ways to do that a little later on.

For now, let’s focus on ways to get subscribers in the first place.

Building Your List Online

Think about all the traffic your practice’s web site gets every day. How much of it comes from people searching for a dentist? Adding these prospectives to your email list can help you bring new patients in the door by sending them basic information about your office, services and oral health.

You can collect the names and email addresses of your visitors by placing a web form on your site. You can create a web form in your AWeber account with fields for all the information you need to know about a new patient. Visitors who add their information on your web forms are automatically added to your list.

Our web form generator makes it easy to create a form that matches your site’s design. Pick a template that matches your logo and customize it in the generator.

Now it’s time to get your form online.

Choose one or several of these places to put your web form.

Web Site

Your web site is probably the first stop for internet users who need a dentist. Place a form on every page of your site to make it easy for new patients to sign up for more information.

The screenshot displays a website layout with a dark blue sidebar on the left and a main content area on the right. The sidebar contains a 'newsletter subscription' form with the following text: 'Subscribe to the Village Dental Care Newsletter', 'Simply enter your email address below to subscribe to our email newsletter. Stay up to date with the very latest developments on:', a bulleted list of 'Procedures', 'Treatments', 'Technologies', and 'Practice Developments', and a sign-up instruction. Below this is an email input field and a 'Go' button. The main content area features several promotional blocks: 'ask dr. karen andrews' with a photo and a sign-up link; 'village dental care exclusive special offer' with details about a free scale & polish and dental photography, a 50% off tooth whitening offer, and a link to book a consultation; 'download village dental care welcome pack' with a link to download an introductory brochure; and 'subscribe to e-newsletter' with another email sign-up form.

newsletter subscription

Subscribe to the Village Dental Care Newsletter

Simply enter your email address below to subscribe to our email newsletter. Stay up to date with the very latest developments on:

- Procedures
- Treatments
- Technologies
- Practice Developments

To sign-up online today, please enter your email address below and click 'go'.

Enter Your Email

ask dr. karen andrews

Dr. Andrews is happy to answer any questions you may have about your dental health & care.

Please click on the link below to email us today.

[Click here to email us now](#)

village dental care exclusive special offer

All new patients at our practice will receive a **FREE scale & polish AND dental photography** during their initial consultation.

We are also offering **50% off Tooth Whitening** for all patients who join our practice and are suitable for this treatment.

[Click here to book your consultation now!](#)

download village dental care welcome pack

Click here to download the Village Dental Care Introductory Brochure today. With everything you need to know about our practice, treatment & Membership.

[Click here to download Info Pack](#)

subscribe to e-newsletter

Simply enter you email address below to subscribe to our email newsletter today.

Enter Your Email

Village Dental Care includes a web form in their sidebar and a special sign up page that tells new subscribers exactly what kind of valuable dental information they'll receive.

Blog

Some dental practices keep a blog with smile care tips, treatment options, new products and other oral health concerns. Keep your patients updated with the latest developments in oral health care by posting a web form on your blog. Now your patients can subscribe to updates instead of having to remember to check your blog for new posts.

The screenshot displays the West Hills Dental Center website. At the top, the logo features a green leaf next to the text "West Hills DENTAL CENTER". To the right, it says "CALL TODAY 503 291 0000" and includes a search bar with a "GO" button. The date "FRIDAY, JULY 15, 2011" is in the top right corner. A navigation bar below the header contains links: HOME, ABOUT US, PROCEDURES, GALLERY, PATIENT CENTER, FAQs, CONTACT US, and social media icons for SHARE, Facebook, Twitter, and RSS. A secondary navigation bar lists services: Cosmetic, Dental Costs, Dental Implants, Dentures, Family, Orthodontics, Sedation Dentistry, and Top Dental Tips. Below this is a "Uncategorized" dropdown menu.

The main content area is divided into three columns. The left column, titled "Featured Category", features a post by Pam Johnson about "Where's the money?" with a photo of Dr. Steven Little. The middle column, also titled "Featured Category", features a post about "Types of Braces - Which Type Is Best For You" with a photo of a smiling woman. The right column, titled "VISIT OUR WEBSITES...", lists various dental services with corresponding colored buttons: SEDATION DENTISTRY (green), DENTAL IMPLANTS (blue), FAMILY DENTISTRY (purple), ORTHODONTICS (orange), COSMETIC DENTISTRY (light blue), and DENTURES (light green). Below this is a "Newsletter" sign-up form with the email "bek.henson@gmail.com" and a "GO" button. At the bottom right, a "Recent Posts" section lists three articles with small icons.

Featured Category
Where's the money? by Pam Johnson (As featured on July 29, 2009 - dentalproductsreport.com)

Featured Category
Types of Braces - Which Type Is Best For You

VISIT OUR WEBSITES...

Newsletter

Recent Posts

Social Networks

Do you connect with your patients on social networks like Facebook and Twitter? Post a web form on your practice's Facebook page so patients can sign up and stay in the know with office news or upcoming discounts on popular treatments.



Montrose Smile Studio showcases a teeth whitening promotion with a web form on their Facebook page.

Post samples of your previous newsletters or office promotions to Facebook, Twitter and on your web site so newcomers can see the helpful content you offer.

Building Your List Offline

You don't have to restrict your list building efforts to the Internet. There are plenty of opportunities to add patients to your list right in your own office.

- Ask new patients for their email address as they're filling out their initial paperwork. Include a short survey about their oral health concerns with an option to receive your office newsletter and other relevant information.
- Sign current patients up to your list when they schedule their next appointment. Ask if they'd like your email updates to keep their smiles healthy between appointments.
- Get involved in community events to find new faces to add to your list (and come to your office for an appointment!). Set up an educational booth at the annual fair with free toothbrushes for every email sign up. Partner with local elementary and middle schools for a parent/child education day and collect email addresses there. Bring along an email sign up sheet to any events where you regularly market your practice. You'll fill your chair with new patients as you build rapport with the community (and their inboxes).

What About Spam Complaints?

Occasionally, computer scripts (or even people) may stumble across your web form and subscribe with someone else's email address.

Other times, someone misspells their address, and you end up sending to the wrong person. In these situations, the recipient thinks the messages are unrequested junk mail, otherwise known as spam. You're not likely to get much response from these people.

And if they click the "report spam" button, ISPs (Gmail, Hotmail and the like) notice. If enough people complain, they may stop delivering your messages.

The Solution: Confirmed Opt-In

Confirmed opt-in is like a preventative fluoride treatment for your campaign, protecting you from the problems mentioned above.

The "treatment" works by asking new subscribers to click a link to confirm their interest in receiving your emails.

When a subscriber clicks the link, the email address is added to your list. As a sender, you're assured the address is legitimate. And your subscribers are likely to be more engaged and responsive as they're receiving emails from you that they actually want.

☆ **Simon W Rosenberg, DMD** drsimon@drsimonrosenberg.com via aweber.com [show details](#) 4:48 PM (16 hours ago) [Reply](#)

We received your request for information from Simon W Rosenberg, DMD. Before we begin sending you the information you requested, we want to be certain we have your permission.

CONFIRM BY VISITING THE LINK BELOW:

<http://www.aweber.com/z/c/?xsws3cqbdamds72dgmtan9rbctzupk=685>

Click the link above to give us permission to send you information. It's fast and easy! If you cannot click the full URL above, please copy and paste it into your web browser.

If you do not want to confirm, simply ignore this message.

You may UNSUBSCRIBE at any time. We look forward to giving you the latest dental info we have.

399 E 72nd St #1A, New York, NY 10021-4649, USA

Request generated by:

IP: 207.106.239.81

Date: July 12, 2011 16:47 EDT

URL: <http://www.drsimonrosenberg.com/Subscribe-to-My-Newsletter.html>

[Reply](#) [Forward](#)

Types of Emails You Can Send

Remember what we said earlier about building trust with your email marketing campaign? Not all of your emails will have the same content, but you should establish consistency with your subscribers by using the same template base for your messages. All of your emails should include the following information, regardless of the content you're sending:

- A subject line that tells subscribers what's inside. Honest subject lines help your patients trust you.
- Your name or the name of your practice. This goes in the from line and should be something your subscribers will recognize as coming from you.
- All of your contact information. Make it easy for people to get in touch with you. Place your full postal address, phone number, emergency line, web site, social network profiles and any other pertinent information in all your email communications.
- A call to action that tells your subscribers how you want them to respond. If you want to get patients back in the chair for an overdue cleaning, include a link to an area on your site where they can request an appointment.
- Pictures. Put a mini-tour of your office in a follow up for brand new patients who haven't been to your practice yet. With some dental treatments like teeth whitening or orthodontics, seeing is believing. Include some before and after photos of your best patient success stories to prove the benefits of these treatments.

The rest of your content will vary depending on the kind of email you're sending. Types of emails in your campaign could include:

1. An autoresponder (or "follow up") series for new subscribers
2. A regular newsletter with updates about your practice
3. Occasional announcements or special promotions
4. Dental tips and articles pulled from your blog

Get Started With Follow Ups

A follow up series is a great way to get new patients familiar with your practice and get their smiles ready for your tune-up.

Follow ups are a series of messages that are automatically sent to new subscribers. You can include as many messages as you want in your series and set them to send at certain time intervals. Structure your series around information you think would be helpful for your patients to know.

- Give subscribers a crash course in dental hygiene that will keep their teeth healthy before their first (or next) appointment.
- Send a series of cavity prevention tips.
- Cover common questions about teeth whitening, orthodontic procedures, crowns and fillings, or whatever treatments your practice specializes in.



Montrose Smile Studio sends new subscribers a "Tooth Gym" follow up series that covers a different common dental concern every week.

Keep Them Current With Regular Newsletters

You tell your patients to establish good dental habits with a regular brushing routine. Start your own good emailing habits by setting a regular sending routine.

Newsletters are great for consistent updates, helpful tips and reviews of new oral healthcare products on the market. When your newsletter regularly appears in your patients' inboxes, it can also be a gentle reminder that maybe they're due for a check-up.

How often you send your newsletters will depend on your content, how much time you can invest, and how often your subscribers want to hear from you. Take these points into consideration when setting your newsletter frequency.

Here are some content ideas to include in your newsletters:

- Introduce new staff members as they join your team so patients can get to know them before their next office visit.
- Review new or popular dental products that your patients might want to use. Give your professional opinion on their value and safety.
- Announce new equipment or treatment plans that your patients will be interested in
- Send seasonal tips for maintaining a healthy smile throughout the year



Medina Family Dentistry includes an "Ask the Doctor" feature in their quarterly newsletters.



Monthly Newsletter

July 2011

Finesse Dental Launches its NEW WEBSITE

Our new bigger and better website is more user-friendly with easy navigation and browsing! It will provide you with detailed and more educational explanations on services as well as our newly added services. You will be able to view our current specials and newsletters all in a click of a button! Have a question you always wondered about? Browse through our FAQ's and it may be answered for you if not submit your question online and we will endeavour to answer it for you. Are you new to Finesse Dental? Browse through our Practice Gallery to see our practice. Be the judge yourself as you flick through our smile gallery providing exceptional smiles with exceptional care!

[Please follow the link and enjoy our new happy, healthy smiling website!](#)

Healthy Snacks for healthy teeth

A healthy and balanced diet is essential for good growth, development and strong healthy teeth of children.

Why do acidic and sweet foods cause tooth decay?

There are always bacteria in the mouth and on our teeth which change carbohydrates and sugars into acid, especially sweet food and drinks. Acid in the mouth dissolves tooth enamel, thus causing tooth decay and cavities. If you don't eat much sugar, the bacteria can't produce as much of the acid that eats away enamel.

Snacks that damage teeth

To reduce decay, it is best to avoid the following between meals and at school:

Soft drinks such as cola and lemonade

Juice, cordial and flavored milk

Cakes, sweet biscuits and lollies especially sticky lollies

Jam and Honey

Tooth Friendly Snacks

These foods are much less sweet and acidic and are less likely to cause decay:

Water and plain milk

Cracker biscuits and rice cakes

Butter, vegemite, sliced ham, salmon, turkey, cheese

Cut up raw vegetables and fresh fruit

Sushi and nuts

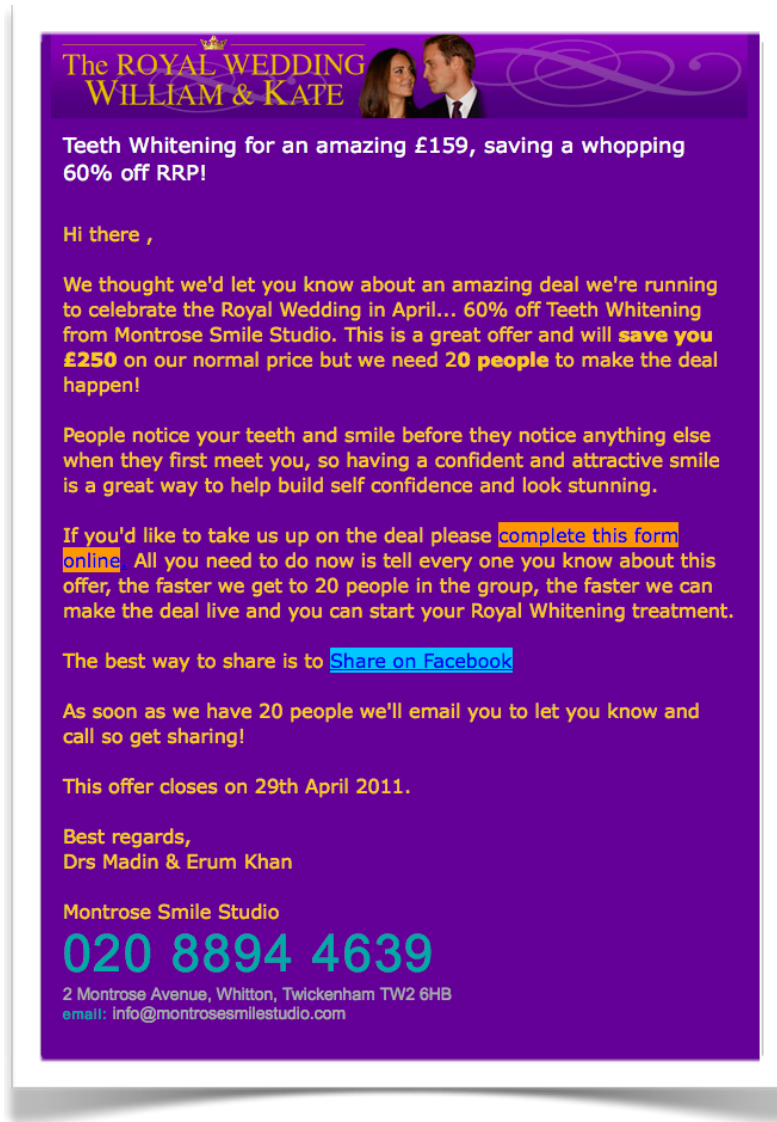
Finesse Dental has tips for teeth-healthy snacks plus an announcement for their new and improved web site.

The frequency of your newsletters depends on how much content you have and how much time you have to compile it all. Your subscribers will depend on your consistency, so establish a frequency that can easily fit into your office schedule.

Send Offers And Announcements With Broadcasts

Broadcasts are for one-time announcements or special offers that happen between your regularly scheduled newsletters. Send broadcasts when you want to announce a special promotion or need to update patients on important changes to your billing plans or office hours.

Your special offers can tie in with seasonal or social events. Montrose Smile Studio ran a tooth whitening discount promotion tied in with the Royal Wedding and announced it in a short broadcast message:



Are you promoting a deal through coupon sites like [Livingsocial](#) or [Groupon](#)? Send a broadcast to let your subscribers know about the deal before it happens, and again as a reminder before the deal expires.

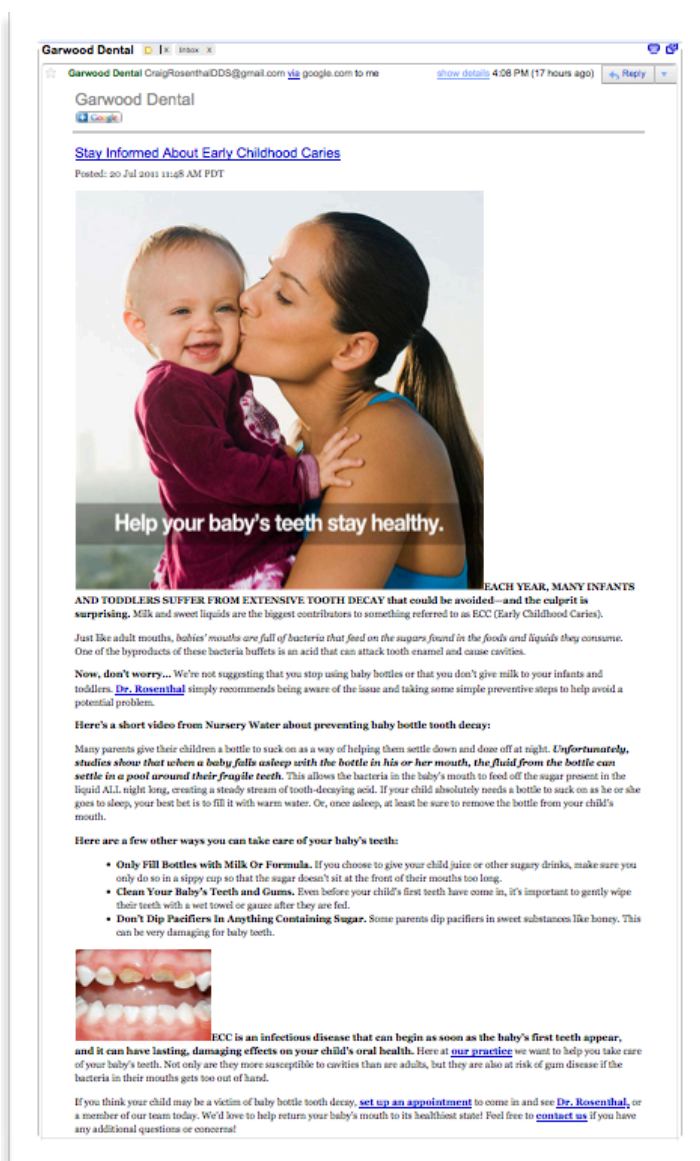
Broadcast From Your Blog

Having a blog for your dental practice can keep your patients up-to-date on dental health news and what's happening in your office. But your articles won't do them any good if they don't remember to read your blog regularly.

Instead of relying on patients to visit your blog on their own, you can send your blog directly to their inboxes with a blog broadcast. Blog broadcasts automatically convert your recent posts into email.

You can control the number of articles and frequency for each broadcast and which subscribers they go to. Everything else is taken care of automatically.

If your blog articles already cover the same topics a newsletter would, you can send blog broadcasts in place of regular newsletters. Or use it as a supplement to your newsletter if your newsletter goes out less frequently.



Garwood Dental emails new posts as their blog is updated.

When To Send Your Emails

It's important to establish a sending routine in your campaign, but it's just as important to make sure you're not overwhelming your subscribers. If you're uncertain whether your schedule crosses the line between often and too often, ask your subscribers and adjust your frequency based on their feedback.

Send newsletters or blog broadcasts on a consistent and frequent schedule. One-time broadcasts should only go out when you have a promotion or important update to announce.

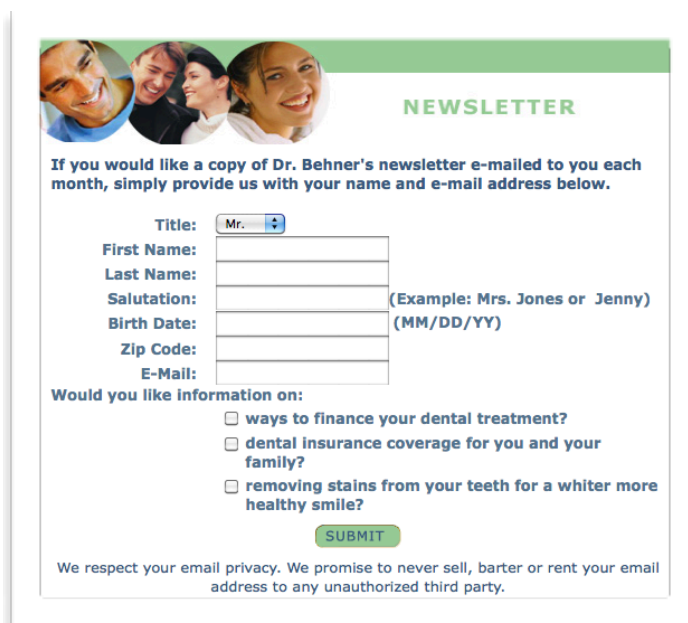
Some other ideas for when to send can include:

- Seasonal promotions: Discount cleanings after Halloween or specials on whitening treatments in time for the holidays or at the start of wedding season
- Industry news: Is there a popular new toothpaste or at-home whitening kit on the market that your patients will want to try? Announce it and review it so they can benefit from it.
- Check-up reminders: Send these at key points in the year, like holidays, the start of the school year or other times when it's important for people to have a fresh and healthy smile. Patients who haven't scheduled appointments yet will be reminded when they see your email in their inbox.

Targeting Subscribers

Do all of your patients have the same oral health concerns? Would you send a promotion for braces to your 90-year-old patient with dentures? Or denture care tips to your 20-somethings? Email marketing allows you to target specific groups of subscribers to send relevant information to.


Segment your subscribers based on the dental issues that are most important to them. You can use your web form to gauge your subscribers' interests like [Dr. Behner's](#) form here:



The image shows a web form for Dr. Behner's newsletter. At the top, there's a green header with the word "NEWSLETTER" in white. Below the header, there's a photo of four smiling people. The text says: "If you would like a copy of Dr. Behner's newsletter e-mailed to you each month, simply provide us with your name and e-mail address below." The form fields include: Title (dropdown menu with "Mr." selected), First Name, Last Name, Salutation (dropdown menu with "(Example: Mrs. Jones or Jenny)" as a hint), Birth Date (dropdown menu with "(MM/DD/YY)" as a hint), Zip Code, and E-Mail. Below these fields, there's a section titled "Would you like information on:" with three checkboxes: "ways to finance your dental treatment?", "dental insurance coverage for you and your family?", and "removing stains from your teeth for a whiter more healthy smile?". At the bottom of the form, there's a green "SUBMIT" button and a privacy statement: "We respect your email privacy. We promise to never sell, barter or rent your email address to any unauthorized third party."

Or distinguish between new patients and current ones to determine who needs an introduction to your office and services and who doesn't:

Newsletter Signup



If you would like a copy of the Belle Meade Family Dentistry newsletter emailed to you each month, simply provide us with your name and email address below.

*Title:

*First name:

*Last name:

I like to be called:
(Sample: Mrs. Jones or Jennie)

*I am a current patient. ☐ Yes ☐ No

*Email:

*ZIP/Postal Code:

Our email policy - We promise never to sell, barter or rent your email address to any unauthorized party.

You can also segment in your emails using surveys to ask your patients what matters most to them. Now you can send targeted offers to the moms who want braces for their kids or reviews of the newest denture care products to your older patients based on the content preferences they indicate.

Making Improvements

Your campaign is running smoothly, you've gotten some sign ups online and in your office, and patients are opening your emails. Now it's time to think about optimizing for better performance.

As a dentist, you're in the business of optimizing your patients' oral health. If they're brushing once a day, you recommend twice a day instead. If they're brushing but not flossing, you suggest they start for more effective cavity prevention. Split testing will give you the good advice you need to optimize your email campaign's health.

Split testing sets up a controlled experiment for your campaign that lets you compare two or more versions of your web form, email subject line, calls to action or other variable to see which gets the best response from your subscribers.

Test your web forms to see which gets the most number of subscribers. Try adding or subtracting fields, changing the text on your "Submit" button, or offering a new incentive. Stick with the form that attracts the most sign ups.

Are your newsletters not getting opened as much as you'd like? Split test the subject lines and use the phrasing that gets the most opens. Or maybe it's your schedule is off. Test different days and times and schedule messages to send at the times that get the highest open rates.

Split test content, article lengths, text links vs. buttons or anything else that you think could improve your subscribers' email experience.

Reactivating Silent Subscribers

You might notice some subscribers who don't open your emails no matter how many improvements you make. Reconnect with these subscribers through a reactivation campaign to make sure they still want to get emails from you.

The point of your email campaign is to engage your subscribers and get them into the office for a check-up or treatment. If you're not engaging some of your subscribers, it's important to know why.

You can segment these subscribers in your AWeber account and send a special broadcast message to these inactive subscribers on your list. Put a survey in your message to ask if they still want your emails and offer an incentive (like a complimentary consultation) to bring them back to the office.

Delete the subscribers who don't want to be on your list anymore. The ones who are still interested will appreciate your reaching out to reconnect and reinforce their trust and loyalty.

Keeping Your Campaign Healthy

With the information and ideas you have here, you should be able to create and run your own reactivation campaign.

When it's over, and you're ready to explore other ways to make your emails even more effective, come find us on our site or social pages!

And if you have a question about how to complete these steps in your AWeber account – or how to sign up for one – give us a call!

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.

For marketing advice, examples and inspiration, please join us here:

