

# LOCAL START-UP TO NATIONAL SENSATION

How Dustin Maher built his business  
from the ground up



# It all started with a kid in Wisconsin...

Dustin Maher graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 2006 with a degree in Kinesiology and Business knowing that he wanted to help people get in shape. He began to realize that he liked working with moms the most; most likely because of his strong relationship with his own mother. So, one year after he graduated, [MamaTone Fitness](#) was created.

What started as a local fitness program turned into a program with 10 different locations, 28 DVDs, an email list with 12,000+ subscribers and a published book called *Fit Moms For Life: How To Have Endless Energy To Outplay Your Kids*.

His mission now? By 2015 he wants to help one million moms get in the best shape of their lives and create 14,000 offline support groups (that's one for every McDonald's in the United States).

At just 28 years old, Dustin has made quite the name for himself. We talked about how he got to where he is today and how email marketing fit into that equation.

## Finding a Niche and Attracting Attention

Finding a niche is a crucial part to finding success. Niches allow a brand to stand out from all the others. For instance, there are a lot of companies in the fitness industry.

But, MamaTone Fitness isn't about fitness for anyone... it's for moms! The program helped build a community with these moms; a way to bring these women together and include free child care on top of it.

Part of the community aspect meant creating social media groups. One of [Dustin's Facebook pages](#) is called "[I Love Being A Mom](#)"



Now, what mother couldn't "like" that?

With his niche established, it was time to build some credibility for his brand. Dustin began with talking to groups: "I started speaking a lot. I think public speaking is a huge thing that if you don't feel comfortable doing it, or you're not doing it, you're at a big disadvantage. It's just easier to connect with people in person and when you speak you automatically have that credibility built into it. "

After building some credibility through these groups, he contacted producers, anchorwoman and journalists who were mothers to spread the word even faster. The result was him landing television, radio and magazine spots. Here's a glimpse of some of his appearances:



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hxwH6I3avkc>

By identifying his niche and actively seeking out publicity, Dustin grew MamaTone Fitness beyond the city of Madison, Wisconsin. This is when email marketing became even more important.

# Establishing an AWeber Email Campaign

Email allows you to keep in contact with customers near and far. Here are tips from Dustin's campaign you should apply to your own.

## Make Your Offer Attractive

First, you have to get your subscribers' attention. Many email marketers have found that a [lightbox](#) type form is great for that, and Dustin is one of them. However, you'll also need to provide a compelling offer. Here's what Dustin did with his form:



The screenshot shows a lightbox form overlaid on a website. The form is titled "Free Report: How To Fit Into Your Skinny Jeans" and offers a "FREE fat loss report" and an "exclusive fitness newsletter". It lists four benefits: 15 nutritional rules, the #1 type of exercise to burn fat, 4 common myths about weight loss, and the secret to staying motivated. A sidebar on the right shows a thumbnail of the report titled "Ultimate Fat Loss Guide... how to fit into your skinny jeans and still have room left over!" by Dustin Maher. At the bottom, there is a text input field for "Your Email Address..." and a red button labeled "RECEIVE YOUR FREE GIFT". A small disclaimer at the bottom left of the form states "We hate SPAM! We will never sell your email."

As seen on: abc CBS NBC

**Free Report: How To Fit Into Your Skinny Jeans**

Get instant access to this FREE fat loss report. Also receive our exclusive fitness newsletter that is read by many thousands of moms from around the world.

- ✓ Discover The 15 Nutritional Rules You Must Follow in Order To Lose Weight
- ✓ Discover The #1 Type of Exercise To Burn Fat
- ✓ Discover The 4 Most Common Myths That Are Preventing You From Losing Weight
- ✓ Discover The Secret To Staying Motivated

Ultimate Fat Loss Guide...  
how to fit into your **skinny jeans**  
and still have room left over!

By: Dustin Maher

Your Email Address...

**RECEIVE YOUR FREE GIFT**

We hate SPAM! We will never sell your email.



The free ebook is an incentive to sign up, but he's quick to point out the benefits of his mailing list as well.

If you choose to use an incentive, it can be a free report, video, podcast or whatever works for your company.

## Provide a Teaser

Once you have subscribers on your list, you'll need them to be opening and reading your emails.

The subject line is the first thing subscribers see when they see your email in their inbox, so you want to have something catchy. Here are some of Dustin's subject lines:

Subject
<u>In Case You Missed It... did you cry?</u> (Also sent to: mamatone-fit, madiso)
<u>Fwd: Inspirational Video</u> (Also sent to: mamatone-fit, madiso)
<u>Here Is What I Would Say To Angelina</u> (Also sent to: mamatone-fit, madiso)
<u>Are you scared?</u> (Also sent to: mamatone-fit, madiso)
<u>Free Fat Burning Workout Routine</u> (Also sent to: mamatone-fit, madiso)
<u>Last Chance...</u> (Also sent to: mamatone-fit, madiso)
<u>If This 8 Month Pregnant Woman Can</u> (Also sent to: mamatone-fit, madiso)
<u>DON'T Let This Happen to You</u> (Also sent to: mamatone-fit, madiso)

To get them to interact with your emails (read, click through, etc.), Dustin recommends short copy with a teaser on what's in store for them.

## Get Personal

One of the biggest challenges businesses have is making personal connections with their subscribers/customers. People like to do business with people, not corporate entities.

“Generally, the first few sentences of my emails I tell readers what I’m up to just to keep them in the loop. I talk about where I’ve traveled, if I met someone cool or if I had an interesting experience,” explained Dustin.

Even larger businesses can add a personal touch by exposing the office culture in emails, blog posts or social media.

## Give Them Something To Do

“One mistake I do see people making is that they don’t have any links in their emails, they just have all text. But the thing is, if you’re going to sell them something they have to click out of the email to buy something. So I believe that you have to train the click and teach them to click often. I always try to have 1-3 links in my emails.”

Need an idea for what they can click on? Blog posts, FAQs, products, press releases or anything that leads back to your site!

If you don’t ask subscribers to do something regularly, they’ll get used to reading your emails and forgetting about them.

## Target Certain Groups

You don’t always want to send messages to every single subscriber on your list. Sometimes it makes more sense to send a message to a specific group on your list. Dustin recommends targeting subscribers based on location and those who haven’t opened your messages in awhile.

[Geo-targeting](#) is essential if your business has a physical location or if your product is affected by climate.

[Sending to those who haven’t opened](#) can provide subscribers another chance to read content they’ve missed. It also can provide you with better stats on who’s active and who’s not on a month to month basis.

# What To Do Now

Dustin was not anticipating becoming this famous when he started his program; it wasn't until after MamaTone had been going strong for a year that he realized he was on to something. No matter where you are right now, you should be asking these questions:

## What makes you different?

Why should someone care about you above all the others? Do you know what your competition is up to?

## How can you get in front of your audience?

Would television and radio shows work for you? How about guest posting on other blogs? Are there Meetups around you?

## How can your marketing be more personal?

Do you let your audience get to know you? Are you on social networks?

When Dustin started his business, he didn't know too much about email marketing, but addressing these questions and providing his customers with quality service propelled MamaTone Fitness and his email campaigns to success.



# 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.

