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Is Your Autoresponder Service Obsolete?

By Mark Flavin

If gold is in your mailing list, then an autoresponder service provides the mining tools for you to enjoy the same.

Indeed, the heart of every email marketing campaign is an excellent autoresponder service. If the autoresponder service you are subscribed to has few features which have been rendered outdated by the changing times, then you won't be able to make the most out of your mailing list. You won't be able to derive as much sales as you'd want. You won't receive the response that you'd expect. And you won't realize the value of having a sizable subscriber base.

So how would you know if the autoresponder service you're subscribed to is the best partner for you could possibly have for your online business' success?

1. Does your autoresponder service provide for an unlimited number of mailing lists per account? Modern day marketing prescribed that you should group your prospects into different categories to increase response. You can't jumble them up under one mailing list. People who have bought from you, for example, necessitate a different approach than the one you're pursuing with people who have yet to make a purchase of any of your products.
2. Does your autoresponder service gather the details that you need? If you want to determine that you're tapping into the right market, then your subscribers' general statistics would have to be studied. And these stats are dependent on the information they will leave when they signed up. Your autoresponder service must be able to ask the details that you will need for your review.
3. Can your autoresponder service personalize message delivery based on the details given by your subscribers? Studies show that if your subscribers are referred to by their names, you'd get a better response.
4. Does your autoresponder service provide for a double opt-in approach? Double opt-in would require that your subscribers confirm their subscription before finally being included in the mailing list. This would eliminate the problem of bogus email addresses and eventual spam complaints.

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5. Is your autoresponder committed to improvements that would make it cope up with the changing internet marketing landscape? Spam filters evolve. New email marketing tactics develop. Consumer behavioral patterns mature. Your autoresponder service must be dedicated enough to face, and conquer, new challenges that will come up.

6. Does your autoresponder allow an infinite number of signups? Email marketing is a numbers game. The more subscribers you have, the more success you can achieve from this tactic. Your marketing campaign may be in a rampage, but if your autoresponder is not up to the task, all your efforts would be for naught.

7. How innovative is your autoresponder service? Most autoresponders these days offer a variety of fantastic subscriber-harvesting tools such as normal pop-ups, time-sensitive pop-ups, HTML or text delivery, built-in search engines, subscriber editing options, and the likes. These are all helpful for your email marketing campaign.

8. Does your autoresponder service promise a devoted technical support, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week? Your email marketing campaign is crucial to your online business plan. An autoresponder service should serve as your best partner for the task. There should be no interruption to its service, or at the very least, any inconvenience should be attended to at the soonest possible time.

9. Can your autoresponder service guarantee a high deliverability ratio? The leading autoresponder services promise at least a 99% chance that your messages would reach your subscribers. Is your autoresponder service up to par?

10. Will your autoresponder service defend you against spam complaints? You won't be able to battle all spam complaints by yourself, especially if most of them would be improperly laid. You need a comrade, and an excellent autoresponder service should realize this need and be ready to stand by your side.

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Personalizing Autoresponders

By Anton Cheranov

Have you ever walked into a store in your town, and been addressed by name? This has probably happened to you at stores that you frequent often. The shop owner knows your name, and uses it. He remembers you, and he wants you to know that he cared enough about you and your business to remember you. In the offline world, this is just one aspect of customer support.

Customer service like this is almost impossible to achieve on the Internet, but some semblance of it can exist when you personalize your autoresponder messages. Autoresponder messages can be set up to address people by their first or last name - or both. In fact, there is quite a bit of personalized information that can be added, depending on the autoresponder that you are using.

The information is included in the autoresponder messages by using codes. Each autoresponder will use different codes to insert the information in your messages. You simply write your message, and put the codes where you want the personalized information to appear. For instance, your message may start out with `Hello (code for first name)! In this case, the person's first name will be inserted where that code is.

Personalizing your autoresponder messages will most likely improve your response rate. Research has shown that emails that are personalized with the person's first name are opened more often, and those people are generally more receptive to the contents of the email message. It is usually very easy to do. You write one message, using the codes where you want the personalization, then, no matter who that one email is sent out to, their personal information will appear where the codes are.

Of course, the autoresponder must collect the information first. This is done with the use of forms that activate the autoresponder. For instance, if you are giving away a free ebook, and you have your visitor fill out a form with their email address to receive the download instructions for the ebook by email, that form should collect any type of information that you want for personalization - such as a first name, as well as the email address. If that information is not collected, the autoresponder won't have anything to insert where that code appears in your messages!

Take a look around the control panel of your autoresponder, and find out what type of personalization you can add to your autoresponder messages. You may be very surprised at the improved results!

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