The e-mail marketing sign-up process: best & worst practices, with automotive industry examples.

http://www.emailmonday.com/driving-email-signups
Driving sign-ups is driving success

One of the foundations of email success is the quality and size of your engaged audience of opt-in email subscribers. That is why companies successful in e-mail marketing manage their list growth strategy closely. Building a quality e-mail list takes effort, no matter what industry you are in.

This whitepaper gives you real-life examples of sign-up processes in the automotive industry, so you can avoid their wrong turns and drive your e-mail sign-ups to success. Enjoy!

10 - 30% of your list will become inactive over the course of a year.

Organic list growth is seen as one of the most effective ways to gain new subscribers.
Each visitor to your site is a possible subscriber. If gathering new sign-ups is a priority, make sure the sign-up is actively promoted across the website.

1. **Edmunds.com** makes sure you can sign up from each page by adding a subscription link to the top right site navigation.

2. In addition they offer a *simple signup box* directly on the page. Just enter your e-mail address and go! Incentives, car listings and money saving tips: the *benefits are clearly described.*
When landing on a sign-up page, it should be perfectly **clear what the visitor should be doing.**

This means removing clutter and being as clear as you can.

GMC drops the ball. After the clear header **“GET EMAIL UPDATES”** they add a “request information by email” subtitle. Is the visitor subscribing **or filling in a contact form?**

The “Quick Tools” section spreads attention thinner. The visitor is already on a conversion page. Why send possible subscribers away to **“follow us on Facebook?”** Remove all unnecessary elements.
Cadillac asks which vehicles the subscribers are interested in. This enables them to **tailor their messages to subscriber interests**. Sorting the cars by category on the form keeps it organized while still presenting plenty of options.

**Key questions:**

- What information do we really need, but aren't asking?
- How can we tailor our messages to the subscriber?

In general, a message that is tuned to the needs of the individual subscriber will produce better results. The sign-up form is the ideal place to ask for preference information.
Find the right parking spot

Placing your subscription boxes, buttons and forms in the right place.

1. Use in-text links on high traffic pages
2. Add a sign-up check box to a contact form or any kind of registration form
3. Put a subscription form directly in the footer of every page

Buick puts a sign-up banner and button on their news page, capturing those who have shown interest in news about the brand.
Toyota uses a huge form with a two-step process. This can definitely lead to people changing their minds and leaving the subscription process. In general, more people will sign up if the form is easier and shorter.

Key questions

What information are we asking for, but not using?

Can we design the form to look (and be!) easier to complete?

Text matters. These sentences can easily be improved:

- “Check box if you prefer to receive your communications in Spanish when available”,
- “Please fill in the required fields”
- “Do you currently own a Toyota?” Yes / No (optional)
Volvo checks the email address by asking for it twice. The form checks if the address includes the @ symbol and a domain extension like .com. It doesn’t check for common misspellings.

Volvo asks for both state and zipcode, but doesn’t check if they match.

**Adding some intelligence** to your form can reduce mistakes and increase completion rate.

- **Prefill fields** if you already know some of the data.
- **Check the input while the subscriber uses the form** and ask people to correct errors right away.
- **Use indicators** like red and green colors and icons to show (in)correct data entries.
- **Hide or combine fields** when possible.
THANK YOU

After submitting the sign-up form, a user is taken to a confirmation or Thank You page.

A poor confirmation page:

The Lexus page:
- Thanks you for submitting your information.
- Then makes the subscribers think about the possibility that they could be selling their information.
- …and doesn’t offer any next action.

A better confirmation page:

The Nissan page:
- Thanks you for your interest.
- Then welcomes you and looks forward to sharing the latest news.
- …and offers three navigation options to continue exploring.

Think about the Next Best Action (NBA): the thing your subscriber should do after signing up.
Make a good first impression in the inbox and don’t let your subscribers wait too long for your first message.

Send a welcome email right away, with a small incentive or things to do.

You might even consider setting up a welcome series, with multiple emails.

1. Emails sent in the first hour after registering, **perform significantly better** than emails that are sent with a delay.

2. Be sure to mention the welcome email on your thank you or confirmation page.
Let’s continue…

I hope you enjoyed some solid e-mail marketing ideas.

Offer your own feedback and tips:
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