

28 content upgrades that will boost your email list

Although your blog posts are generating traffic and the visitor numbers are growing, your email list isn't what you want it to be. Most people know the importance of an email subscriber list and, if you have one, you may have an extremely low conversation rate – one or two percent, if you're lucky.

Wouldn't it be great if you could increase this percentage to 10 or 20 percent?

Now, you may be thinking of the adage, "if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is." Well, not in this case! This method has been proven to work and is already being carried out by other bloggers. For that reason, it can work for you, but you need to put in the work to make it happen.

For it to work, you need to develop content upgrades that are irresistible to your visitors.

Content Upgrades: What Are They and How Do They Work?

To use content upgrades effectively, you need to know what they are. They're bonus information that correlates with the material the readers has an interest in already. The bonus material is just as, if not more than, valuable and needs to go along with page's material. The idea is to ask for the reader's email address or to share the material on Facebook or Twitter or with friends.

Simply put: a content upgrade is something of value to attain a visitor's email address or encourages them to promote you.

For instance: You write a blog post about how to change a tire. While reading it is fine, some people would rather see it for themselves. A bonus video can go along with the article, showing you how to change the tire and replace it with another one.

There you have it! It's an ideal content upgrade since the video shows your visitors how to change a tire, and it goes along with the article you've written for them.

Why Should You Consider Content Upgrades?

Content upgrades help bloggers increase the number of people on their email list. Now, you may be wondering if using content upgrades would be best for you. Consider the following graph below:

Primary Dimension: **Landing Page** Source Keyword Other ▾

Secondary dimension ▾ Sort Type: Default ▾

Landing Page	Goal Conversion Rate
	785.01% ▲ 4.82% vs 0.54%
1. /google-ranking-factors	
Jun 1, 2014 - Jun 9, 2014	4.82%
May 1, 2014 - May 31, 2014	0.54%

Well-known SEO expert and entrepreneur Brian Dean provides the information, which comes from Backlinko. As you see, there was a 785 percent improvement.

Why are conversion rates so high on content upgrades? It's due to the immediate reward they offer instead of the usual "subscribe to get free updates" call-to-action many people use. Readers will want to provide you with their email to attain that useful, important information.

It's not that hard to create your content upgrades, but it can be. With the Thrive Leads tool, the setup to create them can be five minutes or less. Of course, in the grand scheme of things, look at any content upgrade as an investment. The effects of using them can be astronomical.

And, depending on what kind of content upgrade you go with, the entire process – from ideation to development to execution – may take no more than 30 minutes.

What constitutes as a content upgrade?

28 Easily Creatable Content Upgrades To Apply To Your Material

Cheat Sheet

Your blog post is going to dictate whether or not you need a simple content upgrade like a cheat sheet. For instance, if you wrote a blog post about the kinds of tags in HTML, you could develop a one-page cheat sheet for all the available HTML tags and how those tags can be used.

Checklist

This content upgrade can turn a rather long blog post (2,000 words or more) into an easy-to-understand checklist, providing a step-by-step guide for the article. For instance, you want to

share the process of how to promote your blog post. A checklist provides the reader with the tools they need to promote the blog post.

Consider Checkli, SweetProcess or Forgett to develop your checklist.

Resource List

Does your blog post mention a plethora of resources or tools? If so, come up with a master list that links these resources for readers so they don't need to search for each one in the blog post. Consider making this list available in PDF format.

Transcribe Interviews For Video and Podcast Shows

If you do a podcast, do video shows or interviews, consider transcribing the recordings into a downloadable PDF file. If you can do this for yourself, a freelance transcriber can do it for you. You can find these services on Rev or Fiverr.

Audio or Video Recording

If you have ever hosted a webinar, done an interview or something that can easily be made into a blog post, consider using that material as your bonus to your subscribers. Each person processes information in their own way – some want to read it while others want to hear it. And, for some folks, it's a mixture of both. Consider recording a how-to video or do a recording of you reading the blog post.

Audacity is a useful audio editing tool

Camtasia is a useful video editing tool

Simplified Guide

Are you going to teach something that's a little complex? If so, then simplify it for your readers. Your readers want to get things going right away without the need to worry down the road about any complexities. To make things easy on your reader, simplify the process for them.

Complete Guide

Once your readers have gone through the simplified guide or if they want to read a more comprehensive one, develop a longer guide that offers them a step-by-step instruction on the process. Yes, it's going to be longer but useful to those folks who look for comprehensive information and tools.

Report/Whitepaper

If you've done an exhaustive amount of research on a topic, turn it into a report that your readers want to learn about their interest or industry. Whitepapers and reports will help others recognize your experience on the topic.

Printable

A way to keep your readers focused and organized is to offer them things they can print. These can include a motivation image, quote or applicable diagram.

Worksheets/Assignments

When you want your readers to truly understand something, develop a worksheet or assignment they need to download so they can use that information.

Special Interviews

Is there anyone within the industry or even friends that are knowledgeable about the information you're talking about? If so, conduct an interview with them about the topic your readers have an interest in. A bigger bonus is to do a video recording of that interview.

Case Study

There's no reason to do an in-depth analysis of a group or company to carry out a case study. In fact, you can just use yourself as the case study.

Split The List

Instead of listing everything you want to say in one blog post, split it up into two or more posts.

Mini E-Book

Create a mini e-book to bring related blog posts into one informative book. Coming up with a mini e-book takes less effort than an actual complete e-book, but the information still needs to offer value.

Challenge

Challenges are similar to the homework assignment in that it can be a long-term project for them to tackle or a simple reminder of something they must do. Come up with a hashtag so that they can share their progress via Twitter and allow you to check up on them.

Templates

You can make templates out all sorts of things – email, business card, budget, etc. If you want to reach out to your press contacts, you can create an email template, sharing it with other folks if you want.

Formulas

Instead of templates that people need to fill in for themselves, a formula such as how to make clients happy, how to write headlines or developing blog ideas can give them the foundation to apply for any scenario.

Scripts

These are not much different than templates but useful since the reader doesn't need to think about what he/she needs to say.

Free Trial

Yes, from time to time, it does make sense to offer a free trial as your content upgrade. While it doesn't need to be content, it should be relevant and a real bonus for the readers.

Teaser

Teasers are a little similar to free trials. Instead of giving away your whole e-book for the free trial, just give them a couple of chapters or maybe a section or two in a paid course.

Free Course

Offering free course works in two ways: it educates your readers on the topic, and you get seen as the "go-to" person in the industry. Your course can consist of emails, videos, e-books, etc. Regardless of what format you go with, you want something that offers value to your readers.

Raw Files

If you can design things, consider offering a raw EPS or PSD file for folks to tailor toward their needs.

Pictures or Images

Most folks, marketers especially, love to look at beautiful images. Pick up a camera and start snapping some photos. And, if you can't do this for yourself, you can always hire a freelancer to do this for you. You can package the pictures up and offer them for downloads.

Infographics

Why do people seem drawn into infographics? It's because it takes complicated information and offers it up in a way to understand. If you have readers with blogs of their own, they can make notations of your infographics, which creates important backlinks. If you need assistance in developing infographics, there is Canva, Easel, Snappa, and Piktochart.

SlideShare

There are some readers who take information in another way than just a blog post. Enter SlideShare, which reduces the word amount for them to better understand what you're trying to say. Make sure to add a link to the blog post in your SlideShare so that anybody who comes across it first can still read the entire article...if they want to.

Swipe Files

Most people have never heard of swipe files, but it's just a collection of materials you use as a reference. Copywriters may have a collection of well-written ads or headlines. Graphics designers may have a collection of graphics they like. These can be packaged and given as an offer.

Turn A Blog Post Into A PDF

One of the easiest kinds of content bonus offers is turning a blog post into a PDF. Use Google Docs to type your articles and download into a PDF.

Spreadsheets

If the post you make has an array of information to it, a spreadsheet is a wonderful content upgrade to provide readers with an easy way to work on the list and give them something to fall back on.

How You Can Begin Using Content Upgrades

You've learned about all the content upgrades you can use, and you'd like to start using them for yourself. There's a five-step process you need to follow to move things along:

Learn What Page Has The Highest Traffic

To learn what page of your website has the highest amount of traffic, you'll need to go into Google Analytics. You'll need to see what your top posts were and, from that, you can come up with offers around the pages.

If Google Analytics has not been installed, you can still find out the information by using Coschedule or Buzzsumo to see what posts got the most social shares.

And, if you can't find out this information, consider just offering content upgrades for any of your blog posts.

Figure Out What Resource Is Best With The Content

Look at the content upgrades to determine what upgrade would be best for your blog posts. You'll learn how to develop ideas a little later, but for now, this will get you to thinking.

Develop Your Resource

When it comes to your resource, you can create it for yourself or hire a freelancer to do it for you. Remember, a great design will add value to your content upgrades, as it speaks of quality and how easy it is to use.

Have A Resource On Your Site

A tool such as Thrive Leads to host the resource on the blog post.

Increase Your Email Subscribers

While this isn't an actual step, it is a part of the whole list building process.

4 Questions To Ask Yourself To Develop Enticing Content Upgrades

If you're having issues coming up with resources, fear not! There are four questions you should ask yourself that will help you come up with resources that can work out best for you.

What Can You Do To Encourage Readers To Take Steps?

If your offer is a little complicated, consider offering a bonus guide that will help the reader in the initial steps. You can either tell them what they need to do or provide them with fill-in-the-blank templates.

What Is Your Readers' Biggest Challenge?

You need to recognize what your readers' biggest challenge, and that challenge could be implementing the knowledge you've given them. How can you handle this? Come up with an offer that helps them overcome it.

How Can You Simplify The Information For Readers?

If you have a large blog for your readers, simplify the information by offering an infographic or video that explains the information.

What Is Working For Other Bloggers?

Consider looking at what's working for your blogging competition. You don't want to copy what's working for them, but you should get some inspiration from it. Are they offering a bonus that you can better? Can sections of the blog be turned into a bonus? What do you see readers mentioning in the comments section?

With BuzzSumo, you can learn what topic is generating popular blogs.

Do you have some ideas for content upgrades? If so, then it's time to take action and make them work for you.

9 Key Tips To Effectively Use Content Upgrades To Increase Your Email Subscriber List

Come Up With Catchy, Eye-Appealing Headlines

In order to get a reader's attention, your headline needs to speak volumes about the content. Be sure you come up with a headline that's both appealing and eye-catching. Remember, the goal is to get them to subscribe so they'll want to read all your content.

Have Your Subscribe Button Stand Out

There's no need to test every single color or shade. Instead, the button needs to stand out from the rest of the website.

Quality Is What Matters... Not Size

There's no reason you need to offer subscribers a large e-book to get their attention. In fact, it's something you shouldn't do. Why? It means the reader has to read 100 pages, and may not feel they got anything from it. Instead, offer them something that provides immediate value – short, concise articles or links to longer articles.

Provide Readers With Many Chances To Opt-In

A great way to increase your email subscriber list is to have the bonus offer mentioned several times in the article (or on the page). When the content upgrade is mentioned at least two times (one of which is at the top), there was a 315 percent improvement in conversion than in posts that mentioned the offer just one time and at the bottom. Mention the offer at the top, middle and bottom.

Benefit From Each Post

Develop a content upgrade for every blog post, making it specific. All you need to do is use the relevant content upgrade for each post.

Make It Easy For Content Upgrade To Be Shared

You want your readers to share the content upgrade once they've downloaded it, make it easy for them being using Click to Tweet. You want the Tweet to go back to the original blog post and not the content upgrade.

Always Keep It Relevant

Regardless of when a visitor readers the post, you want the upgrade to be relevant to them all the time.

Using The Color Yellow

So long as your website isn't using a yellow background, make sure the content upgrade stands out by putting it in a yellow box.

Write Guests Blog Posts

When you write a guest post on another person's blog and link it back to one of your own with a content upgrade, it can increase the number of people who read your posts and subscribe to your email list.

It's Time For You To Increase The Numbers Of Your Email List

Yes, you'll have to put in the extra work for the content upgrades; but when you do it, it can produce some amazing results. Think of these content upgrades as an investment that will grow the email list and, in the end, your company.

Although each content upgrade will perform differently, it won't be hard to understand why these upgrades are worth your time and investment. Of course, for them to work, you need to offer some type of value.

There is a five-step process you need to follow:

- Locate the highest-traffic page on your website
- Determine what resource would improve the content
- Develop that resource
- Use Thrive Leads to add that resource to the website
- Increase your email subscriber list

It sounds easy to do, right? Well, it's not hard, but does take time. It's worth the investment so go ahead and make it. What do you have to lose?