

Tiny Course Empire Podcast Episode 93:
Create a Newsletter Habit (Online Business Roadmap Step 3)

I knew from the very start of my online journey that building a mailing list was important. I even had some early successes at it, and I pretty quickly had a few hundred people on my list.

What I didn't have any clue about was how to actually stay in touch with them. I mean, I knew I had to send emails, but that's where I got stuck. I talked myself out of sending email at every turn.

I told myself that I didn't have anything new or important to say.

If I did come across something I thought my subscribers needed to know, I'd convince myself that they must have already seen it. Someone else would have already sent it to them.

Of course, by that point, weeks had passed since I sent my last email, and how could I just randomly drop into their inbox now? I'd have to have something really amazing to send to make up for it.

So I didn't send anything at all. For months. Maybe even for years.

Sound familiar? I know dozens of new—and not so new—business owners who are in the same boat, telling themselves the same stories about why now is not the right time to send an email to that list they've worked so hard to build.

This is episode 93 of the Tiny Course Empire Podcast, and this is part three of the online business roadmap series, where I'm walking you through starting an online business from scratch.

Last week we covered how to create a compelling lead magnet and how to get it in front of your audience so you can start building your email list. This week, we're going to talk about what you can say to them now that you have their attention.

Hey, it's Cindy, and thank you for spending a few minutes of your day with me.

You'll find the show notes and recommended resources for this episode at TinyCourseEmpire.com/93.

While you're there, be sure to hit the subscribe button. New episodes drop every Thursday morning. Next week, we're talking about creating your first digital product. I'll give you my tips for creating a simple information product you can launch in just a couple of days.

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But that's next week. This week is all about building a relationship with your new email subscribers, because those are the people who will buy from you over and over again, and that won't happen if you're not staying in touch.

Now, before we dive into that, I do want to caution you again—like I did last week—to not try to move too quickly through these steps. If you're still putting your content publishing system together, then keep doing that. Get really good at consistent publication before you move on to creating your lead magnet, because it's the content that's going to attract subscribers. Get that first piece in place, and don't rush it. It's ok to take your time.

Once you have your content process in place and you're consistently publishing new content week after week, then it's time to move onto creating your lead magnet. That was step two of the process, and I'll link to both of those episodes in the show notes if you haven't listened to them yet.

So first, content publishing. That's the foundation. Then create your lead magnet, so you can start adding calls to action to all your content that leads to your opt-in.

Then the very next step—the instant you have even one single person on your mailing list—is to begin emailing them twice each week.

I know some people say once a week. Heck, I know some people who say once a month is enough, but it's not. It's not nearly enough. Eventually I want you to work up to mailing your list every single day, but that's a long-term plan. I know it's a lot for you to think about right now, so we're going to aim for twice a week instead.

And don't worry—this is going to be easy. I'll give you the process to follow that's going to make this a piece of cake for you.

Let's go!

If you're publishing content like I recommend, you already have one email in the bag

Honestly, this is one big reason why I recommend you start with content instead of product creation. It gives you something to share with your subscribers. It makes emailing them at least once per week stupidly easy.

All you have to do is point them to your latest piece of content.

It seriously does not get any easier than that.

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Let's say you publish a blog post every Monday. And it doesn't have to be a blog post. It could be a podcast episode or a YouTube video or a Facebook live. Whatever long-form content you're putting out into the world is a good fit here.

But let's just say it's a blog post and you publish it on Mondays.

Then what you're going to do is on Tuesday, you're going to send an email to your list saying, "Hey, there's a new blog post. Go read it."

Now, you're going to be a little more personable than that. You're maybe going to give people some reasons why they might want to read it. You're going to tell them what's in it for them, in other words, but that's the basic structure.

All you're doing here is sharing what you've published.

There's a couple of big advantages here.

First, it's already written. Steal a paragraph or two if you need a shortcut or you're feeling a little writer's block. Just grab the first two paragraphs of your blog post, paste them into your email, and follow it up with a "read more" and a link to the post.

It will take you five minutes, tops.

That's of course the bare minimum you should do with this email, and you should feel free to do more. I mean, go ahead and write a better intro or share a story or whatever else you like for this email. But at a minimum, if you're feeling stuck and not creative and like you really don't want to send an email, grab those first two paragraphs and invite your subscribers to read more by clicking the link.

So that's the first big advantage of this method. It's just so easy to do. You will literally have no excuses for not mailing your list if you're consistently publishing long-form content.

The second big advantage is you'll be less likely to talk yourself out of hitting send.

A few minutes ago I told you all the ways I talked myself out of mailing my list.

I told myself I didn't have anything new to say and that everyone had already heard about whatever it was I was thinking of sending to them, so what was the point.

Well, when you're emailing about your own content, none of that is true. You do have something new and important to say, or you wouldn't have written that post

in the first place. And chances are, no one else is talking about it, so your subscribers are unlikely to hear about your new post unless you tell them.

And when you're consistent with your content publishing and you're following up with a weekly email about your content, worry number three becomes irrelevant as well. You never have to wonder how you can re-engage with a cold list, because they'll never be cold. You'll always be in touch with them, building that relationship.

But this is just one email. Remember I recommend you send two emails. The first one is easy, but this second one will take a little bit more thought—although not a lot at this point.

Share something someone else wrote or is selling

Let's go back to our example and say you're publishing a blog post on Monday, and you're emailing about your blog post on Tuesday.

Then you're going to pick another day during the week to send a second email.

It doesn't matter so much what day you send it, and if I'm honest you probably don't even have to send it on the same day each week, but I'm going to ask you to do that anyway, just because it will help build consistency. If you tell yourself you just have to send it SOME TIME this week, it's a lot less likely to get done than if you have a schedule to stick to.

So pick a day. If you're already mailing on Tuesday, maybe you decide to send your second email on Friday, or maybe Saturday. Again, totally up to you, just pick a day and stick with it. That's the most important bit.

But then what will you mail about on that second email?

You have three choices here. You can either email about something someone else published, you can email an entirely new idea, or you can email for an affiliate product—in other words, something someone else is selling.

Or, you can mix and match. The only rule here is that you send that second email, but otherwise, you get to decide what works for you.

Let's look at each of these ideas and see how they might work in real life.

First, and easiest, is to simply email about something someone else has published. Maybe you listened to a podcast or watched a video that you particularly liked, and that you think your subscribers need to hear or watch.

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You're going to do the same thing you did with your own blog post in this case. Just write a little one or two paragraph introduction with the reasons why it's important to listen or watch this thing, and give them the link where they can find it.

Super easy. Not a lot of work to do there. It will take you maybe 10 minutes or so, and you can get on with your Friday, right?

So you CAN do that, and I would 100% encourage you to do so while you're getting your email process in place and building up that consistency. But don't stop with just linking to other people's content. Remember, you're in business to grow your own brand and to make money, so don't stop there.

Sometimes, you're going to want to send your own original thoughts and ideas in an email. This isn't what you wrote in a blog or made a video about, this is content that lives only in your email. That's what makes it special. It's exclusive. Only people who are subscribed to your list will ever see it.

You might be thinking, but I'm already writing and publishing once a week, and now you want me to come up with new stuff to publish in my email?

Yes. Yes I do. But don't worry. It's not that hard to do.

Remember that this is an email. That means people aren't going to read 1,000 words. They probably don't even want to read 500 words in an email. They want two or three paragraphs at most.

I know, I know, if you're on my list then you know I violate this rule almost every day. My emails typically weigh in at around 500 words, and all I'm going to say about that is you do you.

If you like long-form emails, write them. But if you're thinking I don't have time or patience or ideas to write another piece of long-form content, then you have my permission to keep this second email super short. Your readers will probably appreciate it.

But what about ideas. What will you even write about if you're going down this path to creating exclusive content.

Back in the first episode of this series, I asked you to brainstorm ideas for content. My goal for you was to come up with 100 ideas. Not all of them had to be good or even interesting, but I wanted you to create a big list to work from.

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Grab that list now and take a look. My guess is there are more than a few items there that—for one reason or another—just aren't a good fit for your long-form publishing plan.

Maybe it's an idea that's not beefy enough. That's perfect for an email, since you might be looking for something shorter anyway. Think about things like 3 quick tips to get your cat to stop chewing up your houseplants, or the one piece of advice you wish you'd known before planting tomatoes, or a little-known idea for saving money on a destination wedding.

Another idea is to tell a more personal story. You could write about how you got started growing tomatoes, or your own destination wedding regrets. Personal stories like that can make strong connections with email subscribers, and they're not often useful in blog posts or videos.

Encouragement and inspiration are good options for emails, too. Again, that kind of content doesn't usually make for good blog posts—unless that's what kind of blog you have, in which case, carry on—but for email, it can work, and it's not hard to come up with ideas.

The last idea I have for you for this second weekly email is the most important one, because it's going to help you make money. That's to send an email promoting an affiliate product.

This isn't a course about how to be an affiliate marketer, so I don't want to go too far off track here, but the basic idea behind affiliate marketing is that you sign up to an affiliate program. Some of them have requirements such as minimum amount of traffic or subscribers. Most of them don't, but you will have to give them information such as your mailing address and tax information.

Once you get signed up, they'll give you a unique link to share with your subscribers. That link is tied to you, so the program owner can know who referred a sale. Then after a period of time — usually 30 to 90 days — they'll send you your portion of the sale.

Whatever niche you're in, there are affiliate programs you can join, and you can get started with most of these even if you're brand new.

For example, if you're writing about photography, you can promote cameras and other equipment, online courses, books, and any other related stuff.

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If you're in the gardening niche, look for things like equipment, garden towers, seed and seedling programs, and even clothing.

If you already have affiliate accounts, you're ahead of the game. Log into your affiliate dashboard and pick out two or three items you want to talk about in your upcoming emails.

If you don't have affiliate accounts, you'll need to get signed up to a couple first. Fire up Google or your favorite search engine and search for your niche and affiliate program and see what's available.

So that's your third option for an additional email each week—promote an affiliate product.

Any of these emails—either sharing content someone else published, offering some quick tips or ideas, or promoting an affiliate offer—all of these are quick to write, so you're not going to be spending hours and hours in front of your computer coming up with email content.

Remember, the goal here is to get in the habit of sending two emails every single week. You pick the days—it doesn't really matter right now which ones you choose, just keep it consistent—and put them in your calendar, then do not go to bed on those days until you've sent your email.

I know I said there were no rules with this, but that's a good rule, so I'm going to go with it. You cannot go to bed on your email day until you click send. Make a commitment. That's how email-marketing based businesses grow.

You can do this.

If you want to learn more about how I manage my email marketing, I do have a couple of courses you should take a look at. I'll link to them in the show notes.

But really, you should just come and join us inside Six-Figure Systems, because guys, we talk about this stuff all the time. I'm there to look into your unique business and give you personalized advice based on my 12+ years of experience with not just email marketing, but also with content, product creation, team building, automation, and more.

Come over to SixFigureSystems.com to get started today.

Ok - just to recap what we talked about today.

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As soon as you have your very first subscriber on your list, you're going to start emailing twice each week. It's just as important for you to be emailing on a regular basis now, when your list is small, as it is down the road when your list is bigger. In fact, it's even MORE important to do that now. THIS is your best opportunity to build those relationships. This is when people are going to be the most interested in what you have to say, so don't wait until your list is bigger. Email those 5 people or 10 people or 20 people, just as if you had 200 or 2,000 or 200,000 subscribers.

You're going to send one email per week about the content you created. Your blog post, your podcast, whatever it is. The day after that's published, email your list and let them know about it.

Then you're going to send one other email each week that's about something else. A piece of content someone else published, a tip or idea your subscribers need to hear, or an affiliate offer.

And here's a tip: lean toward those affiliate offers. Send more of those than the other kinds. You'll make more money that way, and that is the point of being in business. Never forget that. We are here to make money, and it's ok to say it and think it, and you can make money and be of service to your subscribers at the same time.

Now I'd love to hear from you. Click over to TinyCourseEmpire.com/93 and leave me a comment. Tell me what two days you'll be emailing your list, and drop a link to your lead magnet. I'm going to go get on your mailing list so you have no excuse not to send those emails.

And could you do me a favor? If you have a friend or colleague who could use business-building advice, would you share the link with them? It's a great way to grow our audience, and I'd appreciate your support. All the episodes can be found at TinyCourseEmpire.com.

That's it for me this week. I'll be back next week with my best advice for creating your first info product.

Have a terrific rest of your day, and I'll talk to you next week.