



# Email Acquisition 2.0

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One of the most difficult tasks in email marketing is acquiring a user's email address. With a legacy of distrust and abuse, it is often difficult to start a fresh relationship with a potential customer or gain the opt-in of an existing one. Marketers are always searching for ways to improve the subscriber acquisition process but are often focusing on how to improve older methods and not looking to the future.

Email Acquisition 2.0 is the next wave of connecting with users and gaining back their trust; it's about connecting with them on a deeper level through social media, and in a more relevant way through their mobile devices. The world is changing and people are communicating in different ways. Traditional email acquisition tactics still work, but to fully maximize your opportunities to attract users and compete for their time, new methods are being used. Email Acquisition 2.0 is more social, more mobile, and meets those potential subscribers where they are instead of waiting for them to come to you.

### Social

Your social media networks can be a major source of acquiring new email addresses for your subscriber list. It's a myth that social is "killing email" or that social users prefer to use social networks exclusively to communicate. The truth is that most users prefer to use multiple channels to receive information from brands, using some channels for certain types of information and accessing those channels during different periods of their day. Just as a growing number of companies are leveraging their email list to bolster their social network subscribers, the reverse approach has been a proven tactic in Email Acquisition 2.0.

Why acquire the email address of a user already following you on a social network? Increased engagement. Research has shown that the vast majority of users following your Twitter stream or that 'like' your Facebook page are unengaged [less than 1% interact], and many miss the message altogether [90%+ never see a post, only 5% ever return to a page that they have liked]. Compare that with email marketing which gets much, much higher returns. It's not that these users aren't interested in your brand,



### Social is Good for Email

**According to a recent eMarketer report, social media users are several times more likely to check email multiple times a day and less likely to check email only once a day.**

*Users who engage in social media are highly engaged users in all digital media. Maximizing the efforts you put behind social acquisition campaigns will not only get you more customers but will get you the most engaged and vocal customers. Remember to treat them as such and you will increase the odds that they, in turn, will talk about your brand to their followers.*

it's just the nature of the flood of content they receive from their social channels and how they use those channels. These users are potentially your best email subscribers if you can make them aware of your program's benefits and give them an easy way to sign up.

## Facebook & Twitter

Facebook, being the most popular social network with over 750 million users, is the best place to start your email acquisition campaign. The first step is simply being there; working a call to action into your content calendar at regular intervals is key. Crafting a post to let your "fans" know that there are many distinct benefits to subscribing to your email list will allow them to connect with you in a deeper way. The post should be clear about why the user might sign up and can link directly to the email sign up form on your site. Alternatively, referring the user directly to a custom tab within Facebook with your email sign up form will help increase conversions by decreasing drop off since the user never leaves Facebook.

In a similar manner, Twitter is a tremendous resource to leverage for email acquisition. Tactics similar to those leveraged on Facebook should be applied to Twitter as well, although adjusting for the nuances of that network. Some things to consider when applying Email Acquisition 2.0 tactics to Twitter:

- Increased frequency of posting is acceptable and necessary when compared to Facebook. Make sure to post a link to your email sign up form during different parts of the day.
- Your message on the benefits of your email program needs to be more concise than your similar posts on Facebook.
- Although you can not create the sign up form directly on Twitter as you can with Facebook tabs, tactics such as making the sign up form look more like the Twitter environment have proven to increase conversions for some campaigns.
- Leveraging the analytic information you can access through Twitter's API, identify those followers of yours that have higher influence and target them specifically. Directly mentioning one of your influential followers will increase the chance of them signing up and retweeting your link.



Example of Custom Email Sign Up Tab

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## Mobile

With the increase of mobile devices, particularly smartphones, research has shown an increased usage in email. Most smartphone users are accessing email for nearly 50% of the time they are using their phones, higher than any other activity on the phone by far.

Mobile users also tend to use their device all day long and have it nearby at all times. No other device or media comes close to this type of attachment to an individual user. So if the number one device in a person's life is their smartphone and their number one activity is checking email, are you leveraging Email Acquisition 2.0 tactics to acquire these potential subscribers?

Campaigns created specifically targeting smartphone users have proven to be successful. When developing these campaigns make sure to optimize for both the device and the way in which the user is interacting. Typically users will be either on the move (actually mobile) and/or micro multi-tasking (performing quick, succinct tasks). Realizing this will aid in designing your campaign components.

The above example shows a simple mobile email acquisition campaign. This particular campaign starts with a clear and concise in-app banner that sends a user to a mobile landing page. The page is optimized for the dimensions and resolution of the device as well as being streamlined for the user on the go. Giving the user a simple and clear call out of the benefits of the email program is important; too much messaging or clutter can disrupt the smartphone user experience. Also, note the limited amount of information required (only email) as you can always gather additional profile data later, and a button that is easy to use via thumb/touch navigation. This form also records the device type when the user submits to leverage that data point in the user's record for a later date.

Immediately after the conversion the user should be sent a confirmation email that is mobile enabled as well. Sending a user, who signs up through mobile, a cluttered desktop-centric confirmation email can create a jarring user experience. Since the confirmation email is an important closing step in the acquisition process, it needs as much attention and thought as the other components.



Example of a Mobile Acquisition Campaign

### Standard Components for a Mobile Acquisition Campaign

- Mobile banner ads for both mobile enabled sites and smartphone apps
- Mobile landing page with email capture form
- Mobile enabled confirmation email message

## SMS

One of the most used and most universal ways to communicate through any mobile device is SMS [text] messaging. SMS is accessible through most all modern mobile phones and is expected to break 8 trillion messages worldwide in 2011\*. The ease and popularity of this communication medium makes it an ideal platform to attract new users to any subscription channel.

Setting up an SMS-Email Sign Up campaign is very similar to any text-to-subscribe campaign. Your brand can provide a short code or email address and have user text their email addresses in order to sign-up. A simple "Text your [email address] to [your short code]" call to action on a highly visible advertising medium (for example, restaurant menu) can have a tremendous effect.

### SMS considerations:

- Make sure that users realize they are signing up for your email campaigns specifically
- Give users a way to unsubscribe via SMS in addition to the sign up
- Send a confirmation SMS to confirm subscription
- Be careful not to confuse users who may already be on your SMS list. Unlike social, SMS campaigns are more one-to-one communication. If your CRM database doesn't have a relationship between mobile phone numbers and email addresses you may be sending a sign up message to a user who has already signed up to receive mobile notifications. Crafting your campaign to encourage users to "sign up or update your profile" [or similar tactics] can ease the transition and, in some cases, connect the dots for users who are both email and mobile subscribers

### SMS to mobile landing page

For those users who have already opted-in to your SMS campaigns, you can offer them an additional outlet by sending a link to your mobile email sign up form. The simplicity of this process encourages sign-ups, just as the ease of liking or following does in social. And, just as social users seek multiple avenues to connect with your brand so do SMS subscribers. Sending the occasional SMS campaign pushing your users to sign up for your emails can increase your connection to that brand loyalist.

\*Portio Research (January 2011)



Example of an SMS Email Acquisition Campaign

### SMS mobile landing page considerations

- As with simple mobile campaigns, keeping all the components of the acquisition process optimized for mobile is important
- User confusion is a concern in pushing SMS users to email as it is with acquiring users for email through SMS. If your company is running both an email subscription and SMS subscription list then syncing those two list and letting the end-user know they are signed up for both is imperative

## QR Codes

QR Codes are another emerging technology that can be extremely effective in mobile email acquisition campaigns. With the QR Code, offline assets can drive massive amounts of engagement to an already tech savvy and more social user base (smartphone users).

QR Codes can be printed on any existing advertising material, from magazine ads and flyers to grocery store aisle wobblers to vehicle signs. As long as the QR Code is clearly printed, most smartphone users will be able to scan the code which could immediately take them to your mobile optimized email sign up form. The QR Code functionality also tracks the scan, and multiple QR Codes can be used in a single campaign to compare location, creative, or any other segmentation data.

## Mobile and Social, Social Check-in

As mobile and social channels continue to evolve there will continue to be more opportunities to reach out to users and connect. One trend that currently combines the use of GPS enabled phones and social networks are social check-in networks such as Foursquare (foursquare.com). Social Check-in presents a new way to attract potential subscribers to your email list, and a new metric with which to gauge activity. Connecting all the components of these networks can be difficult but once leveraged for email acquisition can be invaluable. When using social check-in as part of your acquisition campaign:

- Utilize the openness of Foursquare and Twitter. Both networks have an open API and more than 50% overlap in users. Creating a campaign that tweets a user your email subscription link just after they have checked-in to one of your locations will produce high levels of activity.
- Remember to track this new check-in metric. Tracking the number of times a person checks-in and to which location is valuable information for your CRM database. Once this information is obtained make sure to continue to message the user appropriately. If you acquired a user through a check-in, they will expect you to know that location has some meaning to them.

## Taking the first step to Email Acquisition 2.0

With so many options, a growing audience, and new technologies coming out every day, you'll benefit from starting your acquisition campaign immediately.

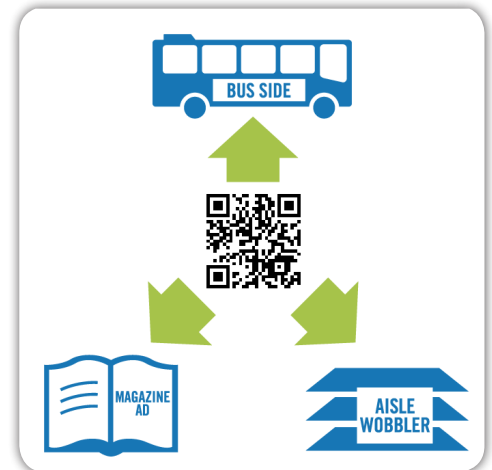
### QR Codes on the rise

Quick Response (QR) codes are continuing to increase market share and are a quick and engaging way to tie offline products and places to their online counterparts. QR codes give smartphone users direct access to online content with a simple scan. Some statistics on smartphone scanning:

- **30 - 40% of all Smartphone users have downloaded a barcode scanning application\***
- **On average, a unique user scans 2 - 3 codes per month\***
- **14 Million Americans Scanned QR Codes on their Mobile Phones in June 2011\*\***

\* ScanLife Mobile Barcode Trend Report - Jan 2011

\*\* ComScore



QR Codes can be printed on any existing advertising material, from magazine ads and flyers to grocery store aisle wobblers to vehicle signs. The QR codes may drive to an email subscription page, benefiting email acquisition efforts.

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## About BrightWave Marketing

BrightWave Marketing is North America's leading email marketing focused digital agency. The award-winning firm specializes in partnering with its clients to strategically develop, manage and optimize digital messaging programs that drive revenue, cut costs and build relationships.

Headquartered in Atlanta, GA, BrightWave Marketing has worked with a blue chip client roster, including Affiliated Computer Service (A Xerox Company), AGCO Corporation, Chick-fil-A, CoreNet Global, Cox Business, O'Charley's, RaceTrac and Sports Illustrated. For more information, please visit [www.BrightWaveMarketing.com](http://www.BrightWaveMarketing.com).

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