



The ultimate guide to email capture

How to get your website visitors
to subscribe to your email lists



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What you'll get from this guide

What's unglamorous, unsexy and old school...but also the single most effective digital marketing channel around?

Here's a hint:

Last year, email automation company Campaign Monitor reported a [\\$44 return](#) on every \$1 spent on email (up from \$38 in 2015 and \$34 in 2014).



Return on investment

4400%

Yep, the humble email is still one of the most effective ways to reach your customers.

A message is [five times more likely](#) to be seen in an email than via Facebook. Customers are fans of email too: 72% of people [prefer](#) to receive promotional content through email, compared to 17% who prefer social media.

As if you needed any more reasons to invest in getting people onto your email list, according to [McKinsey](#), the average value of an order that originates from email is at least **three times higher** than one that comes from social media.

So while e-commerce retailers should be continuously optimising their sites for [sales conversions](#), a secondary conversion aim should be to acquire a visitor's email (we like to call this a microconversion). After all, not everyone's ready to buy straight away – by capturing their email address, you open the door to nurturing them into a position where they're ready for that macroconversion.

This guide is all about getting that visitor to become a subscriber.

In it, you'll learn the right approaches to acquiring more email addresses from your traffic – from the right incentives to the right moments – while avoiding the potential pitfalls that can come from being too aggressive.

Let's get started...

When to ask

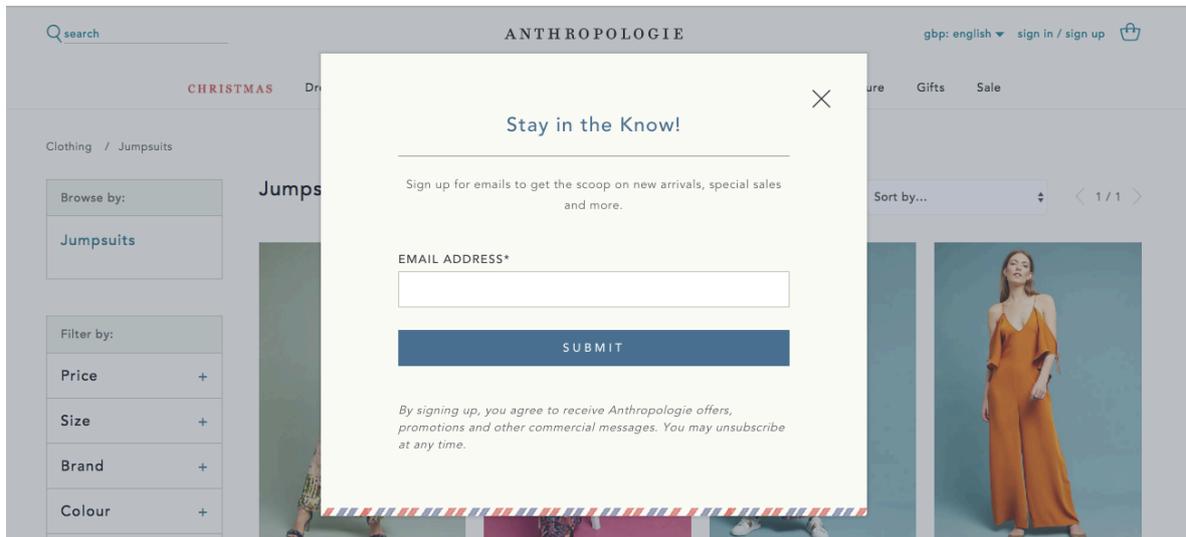
As with most things, asking for an email address is all in the timing. While many websites are aggressive in chasing email sign-ups, sometimes asking for an email before people have even reached their content, it's much more effective to trigger an email sign-up prompt once the customer has demonstrated an interest in your brand.

In our experience, visitors are 2.5 times more likely to give sign up to your mailing list when they have engaged with the site compared to when they first enter the site.

See for example clothing retailer Anthropologie:



The primary CTA, 'shop knitwear', is very clear and the main focus of the front page – there's only a very small 'Sign Up' button in the top right. The email CTA doesn't appear until you're browsing the collection itself:



The key thing here is that they've waited not only until the visitor is deeper into the site, but also while they're dwelling. We've seen a 7.5% conversion rate increase in asking visitors to sign up with email when they are dwelling on a page. This is because they're likely to be reading content or making a decision, interacting with your products and becoming familiar with your brand.

An email sign-up at the right time can also lead to an increase in the conversion rate for new visitors (+54% average conversion rate uplift), as they are given the nudge they need to make their first purchase at just the right time.

Many brands make the mistake of pushing for a email sign-up the minute a customer lands on the site. We liken this to asking someone for their number two seconds after you've met – it's an overly aggressive approach, and while it might yield some results it comes at the cost of your customer experience.

Who to ask

As we've already mentioned, asking someone for their email address is a step to take once they've shown some interest in your offering – you'll get much better engagement and a much clearer understanding of what individual customers are interested in.

Next, you'll want to think about who you're asking in order to make your CTA as compelling as possible – particularly if you're thinking about an incentive (we'll come to that a little later in this book).

First of all, you'll want to filter out anyone who's already subscribed – there's no point interrupting their journey and foregoing other potential CTAs to capture an email address that you already have.

Second, you could think about how you can segment your visitors by where they've arrived at your site from. For example, if you're running a PPC campaign around a holiday sale, you could target these new visitors with a sign-up opportunity to be the first to hear about upcoming sales.

Third, think about how you can adapt that CTA depending on the area of your site. If we've just seen traffic source used as an indicator of interest and intent, segmenting your site is another way of getting that information. For example, someone browsing a product page is more engaged than someone who doesn't get further than a category page – how would you differ your CTAs to engage those varying levels of intent?

How to ask

Your ideal email ask will evolve over time and with testing, but there are some fundamentals to consider along the way:

Call to action clarity

‘Buy now!’ ‘Click here!’ ‘Check this out!’ ‘Sign up now!’ ‘Shop the look!’

Effective calls to action are essential prompts along the customer journey, creating a sense of urgency and directing the actions of the consumer. But they have to be used strategically to get maximum effect.

Too many calls to action can be confusing and ultimately off-putting for visitors to your site – after all, [too much choice leads to inaction](#). CTAs are a way to guide your visitors gently through their customer journey – too many and you risk your customers feeling shouted at from every angle.

It’s important that your email capture CTA isn’t just creating more noise, that it’s offering something valuable, and that it’s integrated in a way that’s not interrupting the customer journey.

Using a permanent sign-up button

If you're designing your page to include a sign-up form, consider the placement of your sign-up button. Kissmetrics reports that one retailer gained a [30% uplift](#) in sign-ups (and a 27% increase in revenue!) by putting their form above the fold.

Static field vs targeted pop-up

With tools like Yieldify, you can target an email capture overlay or notification to very specific user behaviour, whether that's intent to leave, interacting with deeper content, or dwelling on a checkout page. This means you can tailor your creative to meet different customer needs and profiles.

For example, one Yieldify client recently tested a dynamic design vs a static design and found that users were almost twice as likely to enter their email address when the creative was dynamic.

Avoiding being 'pushy'

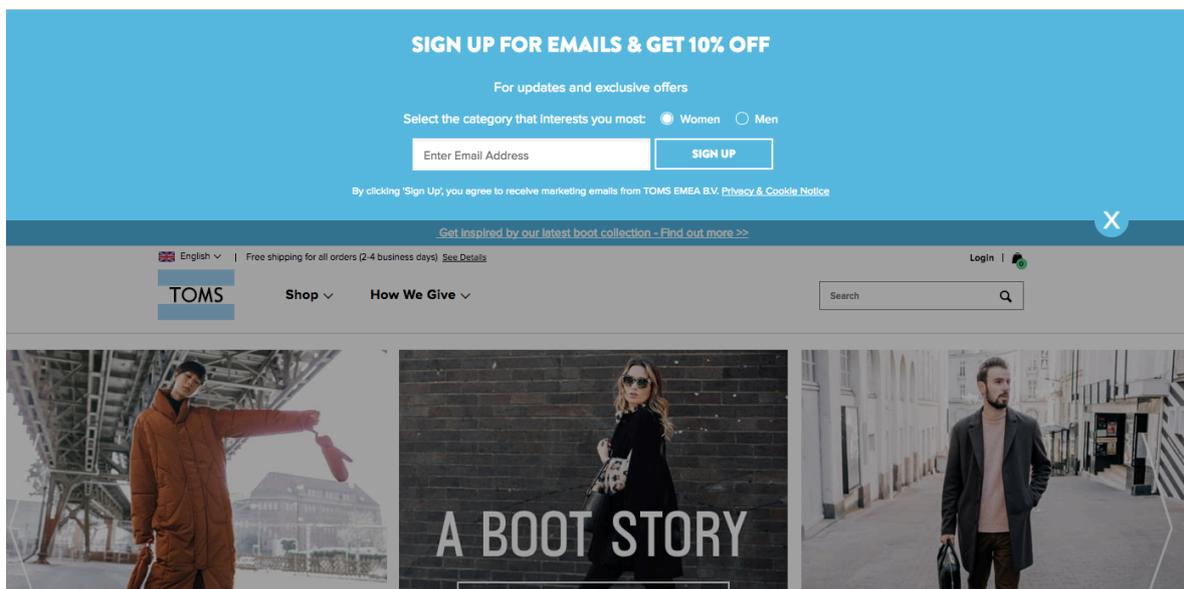
The eternal conundrum: where's the line between persistent and pushy? It can be hard to know what will turn an interested browser into a bounce, so once again, laser-focused analysis of user behaviour and testing will give you the answer that's specific to your customers' needs at the time.

What to offer

As we've already covered, emails are a valuable commodity: and consumers [know it](#). You'll have a much greater chance of persuading your visitors to hand over their email address if you're offering something valuable in return, not just creating more noise.

The discount

For the majority of e-commerce retailers, a discount in exchange for an email address is a [major incentive](#) for customers to sign up.



The image shows a screenshot of a TOMS website sign-up form. The form is set against a blue background and features the following elements:

- Headline:** "SIGN UP FOR EMAILS & GET 10% OFF"
- Subtext:** "For updates and exclusive offers"
- Category Selection:** "Select the category that interests you most:" with radio buttons for "Women" (selected) and "Men".
- Input Fields:** A text box labeled "Enter Email Address" and a "SIGN UP" button.
- Disclaimer:** "By clicking 'Sign Up', you agree to receive marketing emails from TOMS EMEA B.V. [Privacy & Cookie Notice](#)"
- Footer:** Includes the TOMS logo, navigation links for "Shop" and "How We Give", a search bar, and a "Login" link.
- Visuals:** Below the form, there are three promotional images: a man in a brown winter jacket, a woman in a black outfit with the text "A BOOT STORY", and a man in a dark coat walking down a street.

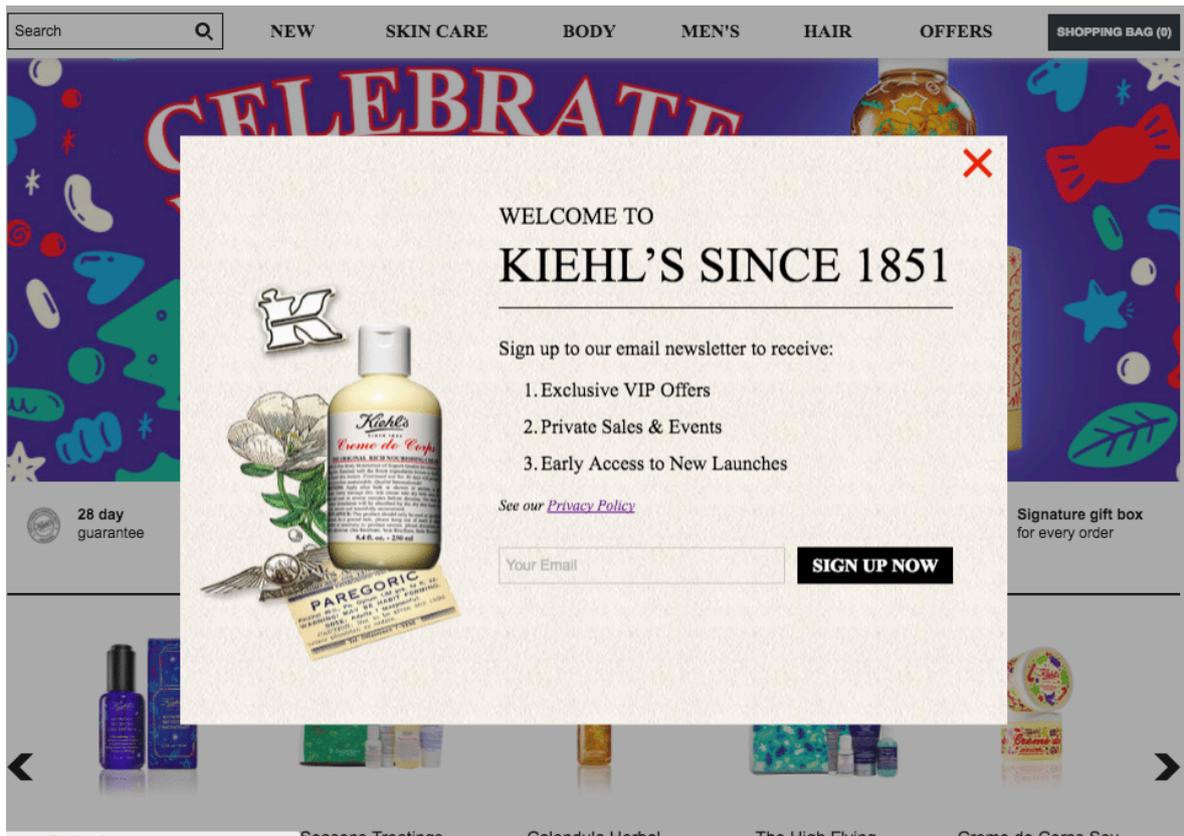
Some things to consider...

- Testing to find the right incentive is essential for margin preservation. One Yieldify client – a national food outlet with high brand recognition – tested 20% vs 25% off for new users and found that the lower incentive actually gave them the same number of leads and incremental revenue.
- For visitors who are already showing intent to purchase with items in the basket, this presents an opportunity to upsell, particularly if they're dwelling on a page. For example, you could offer a discount on orders over a certain price.

The VIP track

Discounts, while being very effective, aren't necessarily the only valuable incentive out there. Many customers find value in being in-the-know.

Kiehl's, a long-established brand with a passionate following, makes use of its email sign-up message to underline the exclusivity of signing up to the Kiehl's email list. It hints at discounts without going into specifics, focusing instead on the VIP treatment:



Some things to consider...

- Do you have the operational capacity to manage early access, private events and sales?
- Are people passionate enough about your brand to be enticed by becoming a VIP?

The content upgrade

Depending on your product and your audience, some free content might be the ideal incentive. For example, Really Good Stuff, a retailer selling classroom supplies for teachers, offers an eBook targeted to specific audience segments.

The format of the pop-up also allows the business to collect two pieces of information: both email address and marketing segment, which provides an excellent basis for sending targeted emails:

The image shows a screenshot of the Really Good Stuff website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with categories like CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION, TEACHER SUPPLIES, and more. A search bar is also present. A prominent yellow banner at the top right offers 'FREE SHIPPING!' with code GETFREE. A central popup window is overlaid on the page, titled 'Get Exclusive Savings!' and 'Receive a FREE eBook*'. The popup includes a form to 'Enter email address' and a 'What Is Your Role?' section with radio button options: Teacher, Childcare or Preschool Teacher/Director, School Administrator, and Parent/Other. A 'Sign Up' button is at the bottom of the form. Below the form, there is a disclaimer: '*eBook download link delivered via email. Offer valid for new subscribers only. By signing up you agree to receive emails with Really Good Stuff® promotions and messages tailored to your interests. You can unsubscribe at any time. See Privacy Policy for more information.' The background of the website shows various classroom organization products and a '20% Off Private' offer.

Some things to consider...

- What content would attract your audience?
- Do you have the resources to create a valuable piece of content?

Other non-financial incentives

While discounts may be the most obvious incentive, you might not have to take a financial hit in order to acquire an email. We've seen that 5% of users will exchange an email for entry into a competition and 4.3% will after being made aware that free delivery is available. It's time to get creative and test, test, test.

Some things to consider...

- Do your customer persona research to find out what interests, motivations and demographics best represent your target customers.
- When choosing an incentive, it's essential that your website build enables you to run A/B testing to find the messaging that resonates the most with new users.

Pro tip

You [risk losing customers](#) if you require them to register in order to buy your product. While having an email is useful for re-targeting abandoned shopping baskets, [a complicated sign-up form](#) might even be causing customers to abandon their baskets in the first place. If you've got a registration section to collect emails, make sure it's a light-touch one that doesn't turn buyers into abandoners.

What to do next

Needless to say, there's no point in acquiring leads unless you put your shiny new email addresses to good use. Coming up with a great email marketing strategy could fill a whole guide on its own, so we'll just leave you with some top tips:

- Once a user has submitted their email, make sure to send them a welcome email straight away to give them a complete experience (you can do this by making sure you have a smooth integration with your ESP). We've seen this simple tactic increase conversion by 5%.
- Send automated, personalised emails based on user behaviour – in 2015, a study found that segmented, personalised emails account for [58% of all email-generated revenue](#).
- When designing your emails, use an HTML button as your call to action instead of a text link: this simple step can [increase conversion rates](#) by as much as 28%.
- Sending four emails in a month instead of one [has been found](#) to significantly increase the number of consumers opening more than one email.

Personalised emails [have been found](#) to have 29% higher unique open rates and 41% more unique click-through rates than those that didn't.

Conclusion

The art of the email ask is a tricky one to master: it can be endlessly tailored and tinkered with, and involves a lot of testing. But it's worth it: instead of losing potential customers to the depths of the internet, you can hang on to them, guide them into your funnel, and ultimately convert many of them into making purchases.

Keep the following in mind and watch your email lists grow:

- Not every incentive has to be a discount – there are other ways to get visitors to become subscribers
- Segment your website visitors and tailor your approach to their intent and their behaviour
- Be mindful of your customer journey when balancing your email capture CTAs with your purchase CTAs – a smart segmentation strategy will help you with this
- Test, test, and test again

Request your free [CJO](#) consultation today.

About Yieldify

Yieldify makes it easy for e-commerce businesses to deliver customer journeys that convert, through a combination of smart and simple multichannel technology and expert strategy.

Trusted by over 500 brands on more than 1,000 websites globally, Yieldify helps some of the world's innovative companies drive incremental revenue, including Marks and Spencer, French Connection, Steiner Sports, Omni Hotels and Anthropologie.

Some of our clients

GOLDSMITHS
SINCE 1778

The Fragrance Shop

M&S

EST. 1884

Kiehl's
SINCE 1851

FRENCH CONNECTION

WATCHSHOP