

SUBSCRIPTION ENTREPRENEUR



HOSTED BY ERIC TURNNESSEN, FOUNDER OF **membermouse™**

EP 144: Tested Email Marketing Strategies That Will Make You Money with Brennan Hopkins

"I will preach the email marketing gospel all day long. To this day, it's still the most effective means of communicating with your audience and currently has an ROI of up to 42 to one which is ridiculously high. So essentially, not only does it have the highest return on investment, but it's also the preferred medium that people want to hear from businesses and people that they are interacting with."

INTRO:

You're listening to Brennan Hopkins - my special guest on today's episode of The Subscription Entrepreneur Podcast.

As you may have guessed from the intro, Brennan is an email marketing specialist and copywriter.

I'm really excited to share our conversation with you because in it, Brennan shares sound insights and practical advice about how you can use email marketing to create more profit for your online business.

In fact, Brennan shares the exact strategies and sequences he uses to help his clients generate up to a 42:1 return-on-investment... all through email.

In a world full of shiny marketing objects and flashy new technologies, it seems the tried-and-true techniques of email marketing are frequently overlooked or neglected. Brennan is a refreshing voice in this sea of noise and reminds you why email marketing should absolutely be a top priority for you and your business.

So, if you've ever wondered how to write friendly, natural sounding emails that actually make money, this episode is for you. And after you listen to this episode, I have a feeling you'll want to open up your email service provider and implement a few of the proven "money making email campaigns" Brennan outlines in the second half of our talk.

As always, I'm your host Eric Turnnessen and this is episode 144 of The Subscription Entrepreneur Podcast.

Eric: Welcome to the show, Brennan.

Brennan: Hi, thanks so much for having me. I'm pumped to be here with you, Eric.

Eric: It's my pleasure. Thank you so much for taking the time to join us. To get started, let's just give our audience a 30,000-foot view of who you are and what you do.

Brennan: It's a little bit hard sometimes when I get asked a question like that because I feel like there's so many facets, but essentially, I am an email copywriter and direct response marketer, so I help businesses and owners create more revenue through email marketing, essentially.

Eric: We love hearing how people got into the world of online marketing, entrepreneurship, et cetera. So, what's your story here? How did you get into email marketing? Were you always interested in that?

Brennan: My story is kind of funny because this was nowhere on my radar. I was actually working in a call center at my old university that I went to and I was actually on track to go to seminary, but I happen to have a Degree in Communications and my wife and I were pretty fed up with the lack of job opportunities. Couldn't seem to get out of the town that we were living in. So, I said stuff that, "Let me see what type of online opportunities there are."

Within a week, I learned all about copywriting. It was a natural fit for my inherent skillset and my education and I just started applying for jobs on a freelance platform. I got a job within a couple of weeks and essentially decided I was going to go all in. So, my wife and I, we quit our jobs, we sold our stuff, and we just started traveling depending on my freelance income and a few months in I basically got brought on with an email marketing agency and just kind of started ground floor with them and have been doing it ever since. So, that was a little over three years ago now.

Eric: When you started with that email marketing agency, what were some of the... because you had a communications major, you mentioned, what were some of the things that you were able to take from communications and what were some of the things that were completely new that you were learning in those early days, months, at the email marketing agency?

Brennan: I would have to say that I did a lot of public speaking actually in my degree specialization, so that probably equipped me best for the type of writing that seems to be most effective in email marketing because I had a lot of standup experience, like actually trying to communicate my ideas in front of people and being able to gauge their reaction. You do that enough and you kind of start to learn how certain things will fall with the audience, what they'll respond to. So, I definitely feel as though I had a bit of a leg up than maybe some other people because I kind of naturally translated my speaking style into my writing style.

Eric: That's really cool. I've actually never considered the proximity between them but when you say it, it makes so much sense.

Brennan: Maybe we'll cover this later, but I would have to say that probably the most effective emails are the ones that sound like the type of conversation that you would have in real life and

that's where a lot of people get hung up and kind of miss out on the real potential that they have with this medium.

Eric: We'll definitely dive into that. Before we get there, let's talk about email itself. I mean in this day and age, there are so many ways that online entrepreneurs can reach their target audiences and there's a lot more seemingly flashy ways like video and other things, so many in fact that people often neglect older "tried" and true marketing channels like email. Can you tell our listeners why they should absolutely be focusing a significant portion of their marketing efforts in designing powerful email marketing campaigns?

Brennan: I will preach the email marketing gospel all day long. To this day, it's still the most effective means of communicating with your audience and currently has an ROI of up to 42 to one which is ridiculously high. But I was just having a look recently over some other stats and according to some of the recent studies, 99% of people check their email daily and I was quite surprised to find this out, but somewhere around 79% of millennials actually prefer communication from businesses by email. So, essentially, not only does it have the highest return on investment, but it's also the preferred medium that people want to hear from businesses and people that they are interacting with.

Eric: In that stat, 79% prefer email. What were the other options of receiving communication?

Brennan: It was in comparison to just all of the digital means and so at this point, maybe we can touch this as well, but there's messenger marketing that's coming out. There's text-based marketing that's coming out and then there's marketing via just the regular channels on social media. So, like ads, different things like that. So, currently, people still prefer to keep the marketing type messages in their inbox as much as possible. If you ask them, that's what they're going to say.

Eric: Well, I know that's my preference. There's something psychologically about it. It's a contained space. It's kind of like they're quarantined so you don't feel like you have to do something as opposed to ads or text messages. They feel like they have a time component. So, it can be a little bit stressful for me personally. Like, "Oh, I have to respond to this." Or, "I have to do this now." But if it's in my inbox I'm like, "Oh, I have a little bit more control in this situation. Plus, I can also unsubscribe," stuff like that. I definitely appreciate.

Brennan: I would say that certainly a big component and that's the big overarching thing that you want to pay attention to. Messenger marketing, so like by a Facebook company's messaging through Facebook is a ridiculously high open rate and engagement rate, but it's also plummeted so fast between implementation because there's basically user fatigue already. I'm not saying don't do that, but as far as email is the tried and true means of communicating officially and so people never get upset that they have an email because that's what it's for.

Eric: Something I've heard you say before is that email marketing is great for the little guy and why do you say that? What does that mean to you?

Brennan: It probably has a lot to do with just kind of the simplicity around email. There are, of course, a lot of things we could get into the nitty gritty and that's why people like me have a job. But at face value in comparison to a lot of other marketing channels, it's quite straight forward.

As I mentioned earlier, a lot of times the most effective emails are the ones that talk or sound like they're just friends and there's not many people that I know that couldn't sit down and write some sort of friendly message and so it's something that you can do when you're bootstrapped and is still going to be highly effective as far as building your brand and converting potential subscribers into customers or clients.

Eric: It sometimes can be surprisingly difficult to do that. I know that it's easy for me to have a conversation with people. However, sometimes if I've sat down to write and I'm like, "Oh, I just want to type a friendly message." I think about it too much and therefore it makes it harder to just type something friendly. Do you have any advice for that type of situation?

Brennan: That totally makes sense. It is something that does get easier with time, but I find that a lot of times it just has to do with mindset. I have kind of a little formula that I use for myself. I call it 3D messaging and the 3D is the reminder that I'm communicating with a human and then there's basically three aspects of any message, which is a point of connection. So, that's going to be like a story or some way to relate to the person. There's an aspect of education. So, that's where I'm informing them really what the purpose of my message. Then there's a sale or a call to action, whatever that is for the specific email, if it's to share, if it's to come and visit something, if it's to make a purchase.

Basically, just following that simple formula, it makes the whole email writing process so much easier and takes a lot of the pressure, I think out of getting it perfect or getting it right. So, that's probably something else. You send out an email and you're like, "Oh my goodness, a thousand, two thousand, 20,000 people are going to see this." Well, actually like one person is going to read this and that's who you're writing to. So, if you can keep it in mind that you're trying to deliver a specific message to one person, then it tends to simplify the whole process for you.

Eric: You mentioned some stats earlier, 42:1 ratio of why email marketing is good. To kind of get more close to home with that, are there some results from the work that you've done working with clients where you've seen that email marketing has helped with our business and what impact it's had for them?

Brennan: I've had the opportunity to work with probably around 30 different stores and entrepreneurs at this point. So, I've seen quite a fair bit of results all over the place. A resounding theme is email marketing always adds a positive boost to their monthly revenues. So, I've seen numbers with my clients go up to 20% of their monthly revenue coming just

through email. Depending on the types of products and services that people have, they can increase that number even higher.

Ultimately, email is not the silver bullet or it's not everything. It depends on other factors. However, it will always add a substantial percentage of revenue to your business.

Eric: So, I think at this point people listening, if they haven't taken an email into account in their marketing strategy, they're probably like, "Okay, I should probably do this." Even though for those people who have, there's probably a way it can be improved. So, let's start talking about some of the nuts and bolts of this. So, can you give our listeners an overview of the email marketing blueprint or toolset that they should have in place in order to go through this? We can break this down into different sections because it's a big question to ask just all at once, but let's just start with how do they look for that first entry point in terms of placing email in their business?

Brennan: There's a few kind of essentials that you always want to have employees and it's a combination of manual, like you do it on a regular basis type stuff and things that you can actually set up that will be automated and will run and just need occasional tweaking or can be used to test to improve over time. But the biggest thing that any entrepreneur needs to have is some sort of welcome series. We're all quite familiar with this because we've all given our email to somebody and then had some sort of emails that hit our inbox for one to five days or whatever that include the relevant information to whomever that we've subscribed.

So, that is a must have for any business mostly because that tends to be directly tied to any of the lead generation efforts that you're doing outside of your homepage. But then there's kind of the secondary thing that if someone gives you their email, they've expressed a level of interest in your brand and so you need to jump on that while you have the opportunity because it's kind of like the digital version of first impressions.

I guess you get kind of a few of those first impressions, but one of the first impressions is, do you have a welcome series that will immediately start engaging your subscribers and teaching them and informing them about your brand?

Eric: Just to kind of boil this down even more to the basic level, you're talking about opt-in forms, welcome series. These are all things that you get from an email service provider, right?

Brennan: Yes, correct. The opt-in forms, there's actually apps and providers that do things like that exclusively just because there's so much potential within the opt-in form itself. But in a robust kind of email service provider, we'll have that also built in, so at the very least you could utilize the default, but the very beginning, the most important step is you have to get people's emails.

Otherwise, you can't email them. There's basically three main ways from your website specifically that you can collect emails and that's through a fly out, the Papa, which even

though everybody hates them, everybody still puts their email in, so take that as you will. I will continue to use them despite the fact that everybody hates them because people still put their emails in. Just don't go overboard. There's also typically some sort of footer newsletter signup as well on a lot of pages. Then finally, if someone completes checkout or begins checkout, then they also have to put their email in. So, those are kind of the primary ways just through the website itself.

Obviously, there are other methods. If there's any types of free training or webinars or any sort of the lead gen that's happening outside of the website specifically itself, that might also capture emails.

Eric: With regards to email service providers, do you have any recommendations in terms of how to choose the correct one for a business?

Brennan: I would say that there are a few main things that are most important. Then from there, I'd say it's personal preference. I interact in a lot of email marketing and copywriting spheres and there's opinions all over the place. What I've found to be the most important is the ability to, of course, set up the automated series, like the welcome series. There's some others that I will perhaps be able to suggest later. Then you need to be able to split tests, which is basically where you send two versions of one piece of content to an audience so you can gauge which is most effective.

Eric: How big of a list do you need to be able to start split testing and have it be effective and meaningful?

Brennan: That's a great question. Common knowledge is the rule of the a thousand, so you kind of need to have a thousand responses on both options to be able to determine what's the most effective. I wouldn't worry about it. Yet, honestly, I wouldn't worry about it for the first hundred or maybe even the first couple thousand subscribers as much. You can always do simple tests, but I wouldn't stress out about it because just your numbers aren't going to actually matter that much and it's more probably more important that you devote the energy to other things that are going to be growing your business.

But once you start having five, 10,000, 15,000 people on your email list, 1% of an increase starts translating to big numbers.

Eric: So, split testing essentially is something that you start doing once you have larger numbers?

Brennan: Yes, correct.

Eric: Then prior to that, is there a way that you can leverage the stats and the email service provider like open rates and something to help you refine your email?

Brennan: Yeah. Certainly, I believe that a lot of email... Well, and that's probably another point to bring up for the ESPs is what level of stats they'll give you. I've worked with a lot of clients in e-commerce and so they use Klaviyo, which pretty awesome. They have an open rate, a click through rate, and then they actually have the percentage of buyers and so you can kind of be paying attention to those numbers and gauge industry. Well, there's an old list for open rates based on industry from 2016, I think, and that's four years ago now. I wouldn't say that's accurate, but then they kind of say more across the board that the email open rate is around 20% which given my experience, I know who knows what that is. Because some industries or I've had clients that we've gotten nearly 60% on the open rate on an email to thousands of people, which is crazy high.

Then I've had other clients that have had below the 20% mark. That's not necessarily for everyone, but it is kind of a good guide. The average is 20% open rate and then in between three and 5% click rate. Those are kind of the average benchmarks. Then you can start tweaking your emails based off of those kind of percentages, I guess. But also, the email statistics aren't always the best representation of how effective your messaging is because not everyone is necessarily ready to buy. But if they're opening your emails, that's awesome. They're being indoctrinated and you never know when they're going to be ready. There's kind of an aspect to where you also just want to celebrate that you're doing something consistently because it is a long game and you're shaping the culture of your subscribers, not just doing one thing which is trying to get them to buy.

Eric: Since we're on this topic now somewhat of polishing your message and its effectiveness, it kind of goes back to when you were doing public speaking, right? The benefit of public speaking is that you can actually work off of and real time your audience, where you can adjust things based on the energy that you're feeling from them in that moment. Analytics definitely and stats have their limitation in terms of what they're actually communicating to you. How else can you get that feedback so that you can polish the message and make it more effective

Brennan: Anytime that you can actually have a real-life conversation with someone, that's the best feedback and I would have to say that that's probably where with so many of the owners, the business owners, that I worked with, they've had essentially no communication with their audience. If you have the opportunity to actually speak with people directly, that's going to be an awesome source of feedback directly. It was cool. One time a client actually in their product review, left a note saying that they just loved reading the emails. So, that's kind of the dream I guess that they just have their own volition talk about how awesome the emails are.

But another thing is kind of consistency as far as with the numbers is also a good indicator. If you are seeing, we want to strive for growth, but if you see that there's overall tends to be somewhat of a good number that tends to be consistent, that also means that more than likely your messaging is doing pretty well because conversely, you'll see drop-offs kind of quickly and you can measure things... This is getting back to analytics, but you can measure things theoretically within your email service provider like unsubscribes and spam rates as well.

Eric: Got it.

Brennan: That's another number that factors in. You'll once again get varying opinions within the email marketing world about how dire unsubscribe rates are. Because there's no one metric, you're basically kind of pulling from a lot of things, not giving any one of them too much weight, but kind of creating a holistic picture based off of all of the various inputs.

Eric: I've used a number of email service providers. Usually, there's an emphasis placed in their feature set on the email designer, so being able to have templates and stuff like this, and I wonder to myself, "How important is the look and feel of the email?" Because I've gotten emails that are straight up text, no flash, no graphics, no nothing, and some of those are super effective from a personal standpoint. It doesn't seem to be a straight answer, but I would feel like sometimes a beginner may feel like, "Oh, I need to make it pretty, it needs to look professional." What's your take on this?

Brennan: My kind of unofficial stance is the only bad email is one you don't send, but it has a lot to do with more of your overall brand and image and what your goal is with your email. If we're talking about effectiveness text, like the personalized text-based emails always outperform image based or HTML as they call them based emails always. Now, I read something recently that was quite interesting where it said according to this one source that people prefer to get the image-based ones, but there's more sales associated with the ones that are just primarily text-based.

So, ultimately, it's a place where you can split test and that might be something that you could split test maybe a little earlier on if you want. I guess it really depends on what your overall goal is with your email.

Eric: One intention could be I'm sending out a newsletter, in which case maybe there is no specific call to action there. It's just keeping consistency and communication with the client and then one may be to offer a product, in which case that may be better as a text-based email.

Brennan: There's not a lot of smaller stores doing the beautiful emails that you'd see from movement watches or Nike or all these people and not just because they're pretty challenging and expensive to do because you have to make sure that you have high resolution relevant photos. You have to have a graphic designer that can actually make the image how you need it. Also, if you think about it from a sales perspective, you're putting a lot of weight on the sales power of an image when you just throw that into an email rather than when you add the words component because ultimately, that's where a lot of the selling power comes from is through the written or verbal communication

Eric: Unintentionally, I think we're kind of building up a list of things that you don't have to worry about when you're starting to email marketing leads. So, you don't have to worry about split testing, you don't have to worry about your pretty designs. Focus on the message, focus on consistency, have automation be a part of it.

Brennan: The one last thing that is pretty essential for the ESP is you want the opportunity to be able to tag people or subscribers based off of their certain behaviors and so that essentially say someone's purchased from you, you want to make sure that they have a purchaser tag onto their subscriber account. That way, you can send them more relevant or targeted emails. Also, there's a lot of... it's called segmentation when it's where you specify a particular amount of your email list for a particular message and it always performs higher than bulk sending emails.

So, in addition to that, there's a lot of potential with automation that basically generates passive monthly revenue once you set it up, and that's kind of based off of the ability to be able to tag people on their behaviors. Then there's a second benefit of that. All of the big email hosts like Gmail, Yahoo, they keep running tabs on every single business that sends out an email. You get an actual score associated with your business based off of your open rates and spam rates essentially, or unsubscribes.

By targeting your message more effectively through segmentation, it keeps you on the good side of the email platforms and keeps you out of spam essentially.

Eric: It's basically replicating the real-world situation, so you just meet somebody you're going to have maybe that welcome sequence that you talk to them about. Then if they take action and they buy something from you, the next time you talk to them, you don't want to just not know the fact that they bought something from you and basically not talk about it or not be able to leverage that in terms of, "Oh, hey, you bought that thing, maybe you're interested in this." You can end up with some very sophisticated automation sequences, but it's essentially like you're trying to program in what we would do naturally.

Brennan: We've all had our feelings hurt by that one person that we met somewhere and we hit it off really well and had a great conversation and then ran into that person one week to a year later and they didn't remember us and we had the same conversation. I've been that person to people, so I know.

Eric: A lot of times now I don't even ask people their names when I meet them because I know that if I didn't know it then I can't forget it, right?

Brennan: Yes. I was having a conversation yesterday actually about this with a friend. So, yeah, social requirements, man, they are a burden, especially in today's very connected world.

Eric: Everybody's trying to gather your stats basically. Okay, what's your name? What do you do? It's great for machines to do that, but when we're talking to each other as people, we spend so much time dealing with machines and automation on the web and everything that I think we're all a little bit ready to just like, "Hey, I just took a break from my computer. Can we just connect and forget about what our names are and what we do? What's happening right now?" This is the thing that's new, let's say.

Brennan: Yeah, that's 100% and see that is the perfect mindset to be in when doing regular email, at least for me currently with a lot of the clients that I work with, I'm trying to be a breath of fresh air in their inbox. That's what actually stands the test of time as far as effectiveness is not how good you were at all of these little specifics, and tweaks, and send times, and what color your button was and all of these types of things. What stands the test of time is, do people actually like you? That's what we're really trying to do by email is we're trying to be a digital extension of the person that we would hope to be if we were an actual in having a physical meeting, building rapport, connecting, sharing, and then trying to share with them how we think that we can help them or be of value.

Eric: We did a podcast with David Sherry a little bit ago. He's also a very talented marketer and a copywriter and I'm a subscriber to one of his email campaigns and he's just super authentic and he basically said that that was going to happen. It seemed at one point he was doing things a certain way and then you get an email. He's like, "You know what? I have emails, I have a schedule and you know what? I'm just not going to do a schedule anymore." When I feel like writing email, I'm going to write it and I'm going to write what I'm thinking about because I've just gotten so disconnected with my own stuff because I try to schedule things out and stuff like this. But I know there's a certain sense that I get, it's authentic and so I may read one of every five emails that he sends, but I also don't unsubscribe.

Brennan: Yeah, that's the thing. Dean Jackson has done pretty extensive research and he's 90% of purchasers. There's basically only 5% of people by now, but there's a potential that up to 90% will purchase over after 18 months. Keeping people around, especially if you have more higher ticket life changing based offers, that's always what your real goal is. I'd have to say probably what the biggest downside, I guess, to the level of which we can quantify effectiveness nowadays through data and I've fallen prey to this, is you just kind of want that short term boost. You want the instant gratification, the microwave effect basically with your email.

You can do that and you can have a nice influx, but you sacrifice really the longevity of your subscribers, of your email list, and basically put yourself into a cycle of where you'll only be as effective as how much you can spend to acquire a new subscriber basically.

Eric: Right, and nothing made in a microwave ever tastes good. Would you rather have a microwave, freezer pizza or would you rather have a nice wood fired oven pizza?

Brennan: Yeah, exactly. The outside's going to burn my mouth in the middle is going to be cold. It's hard just in general with marketing especially when you're kind of a one man show or you're small business. You need your revenue, you have your requirements and you have a vision and you have a big goal. But realistically you always want to be thinking what, are the long-term implications of this decision?

Eric: Speaking of long-term implications, we started to get into this a little bit when we were talking about the email segmentation and building up chains of things strategically based on

tagging. There's the email, low-level writing of emails, but then you'd have to stitch all of these together into things like campaigns to accomplish a specific strategic goal. Something that you said, I think is you have something called moneymaking email campaigns.

Once someone has the proper email foundation, how do you recommend that they move forward from that point and create campaigns that bring profits into their business?

Brennan: There are few different things that you can do on... So, on the automated side of things, we've already discussed the welcome series. I'll say really quick that the most effective welcome series talk about the brand basically in relation to the person. Don't ever just talk about yourself without tying it back to the person because that's the fastest way to turn people away.

But they make the connection between the business, and the subscriber, and how the business can actually impact the subscriber's life and then typically have some sort of incentive to take some sort of action, which and like I said, because people have just subscribed. They're more likely to be able to respond in that moment, that 5% type of thing. Then we have the abandoned cart email series and so we're pretty much all have gotten one of these from Amazon before and that's basically when you just put an item in your cart and then don't check out and then you get these random messages in the next 30 minutes to 72 hours later reminding you that there's an item in your cart that is by far on par with the welcome series in importance and it can be just as effective depending on the type of audience and offer that you have.

Eric: How complicated is that to implement?

Brennan: It all depends on your ESP, honestly. If you have an ESP that has the ability for that, it's relatively simple honestly because you basically just have a tag that goes on for a person that added to cart that didn't complete checkout. It will automatically send that out to the people. You can just do three emails. I wouldn't build out a long big thing. I would just do a few reminders. You're not trying to like harass the people and hold a gun to them or like I say, "Buy this or your grandma gets it." That's how some people like to do their email marketing. That's not what we're trying to do.

The thing is it's just statistically abandoned cards always perform well. So, people respond to them because we've all had, and I think we all like to assume, "Oh man, the whole world can have their baby crying at this one time and forget to check out." But there are an infinite number of versions like that or there are people that are at work, can't complete a checkout right then and are like, "I'm going to add this to cart, so I remember it. I'll check out when I get home tonight." Things like that. There's a bajillion types of life things that could happen. Not to mention you have just the thinkers.

The fact that there was an action taken, that's what's more important to us because regardless of whether or not what they think their intention was, they added to cart. That's a micro

commitment. We might as well take advantage of that to at least follow up with them. This will depend on the specific type of services that are offered, but there's one that's actually a bit more stalker-ish and creepy and that's called a browse abandonment email.

Amazon also does this and that's when they... If you're a subscriber and you visit a webpage, they can track that and then send you that item back. It's based off the same principle pretty much as the abandoned cart, but that's not going to be as relevant for everyone. But if you have more of like a consumable product, that could be something that might be beneficial because you could be adding five to \$8,000 of revenue, your monthly email or even if you do that every year because you just call people at a good time. That's pretty cool.

Then actually probably one of the most overlooked automated email series is a post-purchase flow, so people actually have the highest engagement after they've made a purchase. This is a great time to solidify confidence in the purchase or upsell someone because if you reach out to them within that first 24 hours, you have a good chance that they are on a buyer's high either feeling extra committed or want to affirm their commitment to your brand.

A post-purchase series is probably one of the things that I see people not do the most, even though I've seen that have not only crazy high engagement, I've seen it produce fantastic sales for certain brands and it always decreases the likelihood of customer complaints and returns, basically.

Eric: I just recently had a conversation with Jack Born, the founder of Deadline Funnels. It was all about that strategically, the value of after somebody's purchased, giving them a limited time offer, a limited time offer that actually is a limited time offer, not just like a fake countdown timer for people who are interested. That's also a podcast that's out now that you could go check out. You're absolutely right. That's a super valuable time because there's also the saying that the people are most likely to spend money with you or the people already spent money with you.

Brennan: It's insane. It's like 50, 60% easier to convince someone to buy from you a second time than it is the first time. People want to follow through on their commitments and things like that. There's a lot of psychology behind it that's already been written about it and some pretty powerful books, but those are the main automated. Oh, I missed out. Oh my goodness. This would be, I might have to turn in my email marketing card, the win back series. This is also one of the things that gets to the wayside a lot of times. Basically, a targeted email series for people that are starting to lapse.

Basically, the sad fact is anywhere from 20 to 30% of email list will lapse in any given year. That's just kind of like the numbers. However, a poorly kept email list can lapse by as high as 50%. That's pretty substantial if there's a 20% chance or 20% of your list that might fall away just from lack of engagement. If we can stop that, we want to do everything that we can and so basically it's a timed email series that goes out anywhere really from 60 to 90 days depending or more I guess depending on the product that goes out, that basically is just like, "Hey are you

still there? Are you still interested?" And perhaps maybe it has some sort of incentive for people to reengage in return.

Eric: What is that based on? How are you determining the segment of people who receive that series?

Brennan: You can kind of play with it ultimately within your own email list, but it's basically if they haven't engaged with your brand after a certain period of time.

Eric: So, you would basically identify in your business what you consider engagement and then you would use that to add a tag to somebody's account, and then for people who don't have that tag, they would be considered the people you need to win back?

Brennan: Yes. If you really want to get technical, you could split that into people that have purchased and haven't purchased because the timelines would be different and then you could split that even further based off of if people have opened or clicked or purchased the product. A lot of things that I've seen with kind of the numbers, they're not specific to a person's brand and audience.

If you're selling some sort of health bar, if you sold them one bar and then they haven't bought another bar within six weeks, that's kind of a little interesting. For me, I would want to find out what's happened and same if you have some sort of lower tier product, if people drop off within the first three months, you want to try and find out what's going on there.

Now, if you're selling some sort of higher ticket product or something that has a longer use, I'm not buying a watch every three months and I would be pretty ticked personally if I got an email from three months after I bought a watch being like, "Hey, haven't seen you around in a while." I'd be like, "Well, no, duh. I just bought a watch three months ago."

Eric: It still works.

Brennan: Yeah, and that's what it does. The thing is there are ways to do that well for the people. A lot of it has to do more with the actual crafting of the message rather than the timing, but you want to take those types of things into consideration. People just be like blanket 90 days. That's when you need to start your win-back series and I'm like, "Well, if people stopped opening your emails six weeks in, you might need to adjust your time or add some other things in there," because 90 days they're long gone.

Eric: A lot of the people who may be following this podcast are working in membership sites, subscription businesses, et cetera. Do you see that there are unique techniques or a purchase to use in these types of businesses?

Brennan: Certainly, because I guess this is what the cool thing is about email is it's so customizable based off of what your specific offer is. But you have a bit more leeway in subscription type things because you can factor in your lifetime value and that gives you a bit more freedom to be able to engage people, maybe coax them to stay committed or come back because you know that you're going to have recurring or likely you're going to get some sort of recurring income for them for at least a few months hopefully.

But this would make the win back series even more effective because you want to hang on because if you get a customer back, it's not just a one-time purchase you're getting a customer for hopefully whatever your average lifetime value is. That's what you're hopefully getting and so you have a bit more leeway. If a customer falls by the wayside, you can think, "Well, new customers are six times more expensive, how much can I give to keep this person?" There's a lot of power with that.

I would say another thing is that your message could be a bit more different throughout the regular day to day and so with maybe a non-subscription based business, we're trying to subtly persuade people to buy from us, whereas with the subscription based business we're trying to persuade people to stay with us and affirm them in the decision that they've already made. So, the message would be a lot less of trying to sell them on whatever the offer is and a lot more on trying to remind them that what they have is really good and that they want to keep that.

So, customer stories highlights new ways that whatever your service can impact them this week or this month or whatever. So, essentially, you get to tailor your message a bit differently because ultimately, we're trying to keep them with you as long as possible.

Eric: That's great advice. We're close to wrapped up here. Is there anything that comes to mind to you that we haven't talked about that you think would be valuable for people to understand?

Brennan: I was thinking there is an addition to the automated emails, good practice is to email your list one to two times a week, bare minimum. But also depending on the type of offer you have, if you're regularly engaging with your list, don't be afraid to throw out a promotion sometimes because that could be highly effective. That's something if you can time that, especially in line with maybe some sort of holiday or something, odds are you'll get that kind of ego/bank account boosting results. There's a difference between always emailing out a coupon bed bath and beyond or whatever some people do and that being your brand rather than occasionally offering people the opportunity that have engaged with you for a while to take advantage at a discounted price. People just love discounts, basically.

So, that's something that you... I guess everybody's story's a little different. So, far I've seen that has been a positive boost to engagement because it does more than just gives people a chance to buy. It communicates actually a sense of care for where they may be at.

Eric: That makes sense. Final question for you, you mentioned earlier that you have an email marketing card. What is the process by which you come buy such a card?

Brennan: Yeah. To be honest, I couldn't really tell you. I was just mostly making good joke as a good email marketer that I hadn't talked about, the win back series.

Eric: It also seemed to indicate that there was some authoritative body that governs whether or not you can keep said card.

Brennan: There's some really good email marketers out there in the world and they tend to be friends, so I think that was mostly just me trying to cover myself in case someone-

Eric: Social maintenance.

Brennan: Yeah. I didn't want to subject myself to any more additional awkward messages. Get about a win back series.

Eric: I may not be the best judge because I'm not an expert, but I super appreciate all the information you shared. It's definitely been helpful for me to come to grips with certain things. I think you're well deserving of your email marketing card regardless of what any of your social context might say.

Brennan: Well, thank you. I really appreciate that. Eric, that's awesome. The overarching theme is just send emails, don't over think it and you can always course correct, but you can't adjust anything you're not doing. So, that's the big thing, and it often gets pushed to the wayside. I understand that there's a lot of things on our plate. If you can't manage it yourself, outsource, find someone that can help you.

But also, at the very least, everyone can take a small amount of time once a week in their day to put something together to send out. So, something is always better than nothing when it comes to this. But at the same time, when you're building a business, there's a bajillion things that always need your attention. So, don't overstress it, at the same time.

Eric: Final thing, where can our listeners go to learn more about you?

Brennan: Yeah, certainly. So, I do have a website which is Brennan, my first name, W, which is my middle initial, and then Hopkins, my last name dot com. So, brennanwhopkins.com and then I'm also on most social media platforms. So, feel free to connect with me. If you do connect on Facebook or LinkedIn, please send me a message as well so I can get some more context because I have people add me all the time and it's always great to kind of know some specifics so I can give more intentional direction but happy to connect there. Then I also have a kind of email marketing basics course as well, and that's emaildominationtactics.com.

Eric: Thank you so much for coming on the show today. It was a great conversation. Really appreciate you taking the time and sharing all this with us.

Brennan: Eric, thanks so much for having me on. It's been a pleasure and a privilege and I wish you all the best. Then all the people are listening, I hope they can crush it with email.

OUTRO:

Thank you so much for listening to this entire episode of The Subscription Entrepreneur Podcast. I hope you're walking away with some practical insights about email marketing that you're excited to implement in your business.

I'd also like to thank Brennan for coming on the show today and reminding us why email marketing is so important for online businesses.

To get links to all the resources we talked about in this episode, head on over to SubscriptionEntrepreneur.com/144. There you'll also find the show notes and a complete transcript of our conversation.

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Thanks for being here and we'll see you next time!