

## **Troubleshooting a Cold, Unresponsive List**

One day you're looking at your mailing list data and it hits you: your list isn't all that responsive. Maybe it was at one time, but it's now grown cold. Or maybe you realize it's never been that responsive and it's never really been the moneymaker that you hoped for.

At this point, a lot of list owners start a re-engagement campaign, where they send out a series of emails designed to get people opening and reading your emails again. The underlying idea is good, and you should send out a re-engagement campaign. However, before you do this, you need to troubleshoot your list to understand WHY it's grown cold. Because once you know the reason it's unresponsive, then you can create a campaign that addresses that reason.

Let's take a look at some common reasons a list may grow cold. Ask yourself these questions...

### ***Are you emailing the list regularly?***

One common reason for a list to grow cold is simply because the list owner doesn't stay in frequent touch with the subscribers. Ideally, you should set up an autoresponder sequence to welcome new members with emails that go out every one to three days. After that initial sequence is over in a couple weeks, then subscribers should get emails at least once per week – either through an autoresponder, in the form of live broadcasts, or some combination.

As such, you need to commit to emailing your list on a weekly basis. If you're unable to do this, then load evergreen content to your autoresponder to keep your name and content in front of your audience. Simply put, it's "out of sight, out of mind" when it comes to your list. And if you wait too long between mailings, you not only lose the "top of mind" awareness, but you might even lose subscribers who either unsubscribe or hit the "spam" button.

What should you do if you suspect your list is cold because you haven't emailed them enough? Send out a multipart re-engagement sequence with

some very special content. This might be a valuable freemium such as an in-demand video, membership, report or course. Be sure to pay special attention to your subject lines to get people to open your emails.

Secondly, if you're unable to re-engage a portion of your list, then send out a "last chance" email to them. If this portion of your list isn't even opening your emails despite multiple attempts over time, then you may choose to remove them entirely. Doing so not only lets you focus on the responsive portion of your list, it also saves money in cases where you pay per subscriber.

### ***Are you meeting your subscribers' expectations?***

The next thing to consider is whether you've repurposed your list or are otherwise not meeting their expectations. Specifically:

- What does your lead page tell prospective subscribers?
- What does your initial autoresponder series tell new subscribers?
- Is your list's purpose and content different from what subscribers expect?

For example, maybe your lead page and initial emails told subscribers they'd get weekly tips and strategies, but all you send out are promotions. Or maybe you told them they'd get special discounts and perks, but you tend to promote items at full price.

If you've veered away from the purpose of your list, then you need to do one of two things:

Option 1: Return to doing what you promised. This is the preferred method. You may want to send out a special re-engagement campaign that focuses on your list's original intent. (E.G., if you promised tips and strategies, then send out a sequence with tips and strategies.)

Option 2: Set new expectations. If you can't return to doing what you promised, then you need to officially change your list's purpose. This means changing your lead page, changing your autoresponder

sequences, and sending out a new series of emails explaining what's changing and how these changes benefit the reader.

You may lose subscribers during this process, as people who joined to get something specific are going to be disappointed that they'll no longer receive that specific benefit. However, going forward you'll have a higher conversion rate as you begin rebuilding your list since all your new subscribers are arriving with the correct set of expectations.

Next...

### ***Are you sending content that your audience wants?***

Another big reason why a list can grow cold is because you're not sending in-demand content or offers. For example, maybe you set expectations that you'd send weekly featured products with exclusive discounts, and you've been doing that. But if no one is buying, it might be because no one really wants the offer.

Sometimes you'll see a normal or high email open rate (which shows your list is engaged), but no sales. This suggests your audience may not want what you're selling.

The solution? Do your market research to find out what your audience is already buying on sites like ClickBank.com, Udemy.com and Amazon.com. You can also ask your audience what they want, but keep in mind that what people say they want and what they actually buy can be two different things, so finding out what they're already buying is the best predictor of what they'll buy from you.

You can also start testing products to see what your audience wants. For example, use your autoresponder's split-testing tool to send two identical emails (Email A goes to half your list, and Email B goes to the other half), with the ONLY difference being the product you're promoting from within the email.

### **Conclusion**

A cold list doesn't mean you should immediately send a re-engagement campaign. Instead, you need to diagnose your list first to determine the problem, and THEN send out a re-engagement campaign that addresses the problem.



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