

# Segment It and Forget It

*Focus: Email Marketing*

Email marketing is easily one of the most powerful tools in your marketing toolkit. For tourism businesses, a well-oiled email marketing program can mean the difference between empty rooms and a fully booked season. However, as your subscriber list grows beyond about 1,000 contacts, managing and effectively using your email list becomes more complex and much more important to do right. That's where segmentation, flows, and automation come into play. In this guide, we'll walk you through how to build a scalable, user-centric email marketing program that grows with your business.

Whether you're running a boutique hotel, a tour company, winery, or a vacation rental property, if you who want to make the most of your email marketing efforts without getting bogged down in technical jargon or complex strategies, this guide is for you. If you have an email list of over 1,000 subscribers and are looking for ways to grow your bookings, retain loyal customers, and increase engagement, this guide is for you.

A well-structured email marketing program allows you to reach your ideal audience, deliver personalized messages at scale, and turn potential customers into repeat visitors. By learning how to segment your audience, automate communications, and build impactful email flows, you'll save time, increase revenue, and create memorable experiences for your guests — all while staying focused on what you do best: delivering exceptional service.

## Why Segmentation Matters

Segmentation is the process of dividing your email list into smaller, more targeted groups based on shared characteristics. This is not just about organizing your contacts; it's about delivering the right message to the right audience at the right time.

### Why Should You Segment?

- **Improved Open and Click Rates:** Sending emails that feel personal and relevant increases the likelihood that recipients will engage with your content.
- **Reduced Unsubscribes:** When your audience feels like your emails speak directly to them, they're less likely to hit the dreaded "unsubscribe" button.
- **Better Conversion Rates:** Targeted campaigns are far more effective at driving bookings, ticket sales, or other actions you want your audience to take.

### Example

Imagine you run a boutique hotel that offers family-friendly packages as well as romantic getaway packages. By segmenting your audience into "families" and "couples," you can ensure that families receive information about your kid-friendly amenities, while couples hear about your spa deals and candlelit dinners.

## The Power of Flows and Automations

Once your segments are set up, it's time to implement email flows and automations to nurture your audience and drive conversions. These are pre-built, automated email series that are triggered by specific actions or events, such as signing up for your newsletter, abandoning a booking, or checking out your website.

## Essential Flows for Your Business

### 1. Welcome Series

- **Who Gets It:** All new subscribers upon sign-up.
- **What It Is:** A series of emails sent to new subscribers to introduce your business and build rapport.
- **Why It's Important:** A warm welcome can make a lasting impression and set the stage for future engagement.
- **Example:** If someone signs up for your newsletter, you might send a series of three emails:
  - Email 1: A welcome message with a discount code for their first booking.
  - Email 2: Highlights of your top attractions or services.
  - Email 3: Testimonials or stories from happy customers.

### 2. Abandoned Booking Recovery

- **Who Gets It:** Subscribers who added items to their cart but did not complete the purchase.
- **What It Is:** An email series that nudges potential customers who started but didn't complete a booking.
- **Why It's Important:** Recapturing abandoned bookings can significantly boost your revenue.
- **Examples:**
  - Email 1: "We noticed you didn't finish booking your stay! Here's 10% off to help you decide."

- Email 2: A reminder of your limited availability or upcoming peak season.

### 3. Post-Visit or Post-Purchase Follow-Up

- **What It Is:** A flow to thank guests for their visit or checkout (retail or online) and encourage them to return or leave a review.
- **Why It's Important:** Happy customers are your best marketing asset.
- **Example:** Send an email with a special offer for their next stay, or ask them to leave a review on TripAdvisor or your website or Google Business listing.

## More Examples of Powerful Segments To Use

1. **New Subscribers:** People who joined your list in the last 30 days.
2. **High-Value Customers:** Subscribers who have spent above a certain amount on your products/services.
3. **Repeat Buyers:** Customers who have made more than one purchase.

## Best Practices for Flows

1. Personalize your automated emails based on subscriber data and behavior.
2. Monitor and optimize your flows to improve performance and engagement.
3. Test different email variations within your flows to determine the most effective content.
4. Use relevant criteria to create targeted segments (e.g., geographic location, purchase history, engagement).
5. Keep segment names descriptive and consistent to keep your email marketing account organized.

6. Regularly review and update segments based on subscriber behavior and preferences.
7. Test and refine your segment criteria to optimize email performance.
8. Ensure full compliance with relevant privacy regulations, such as CAN-SPAM or CASL.

## Managing a Growing Subscriber List

When your email list surpasses 1,000 subscribers, managing it efficiently becomes critical. Here are some strategies:

### Clean Your List Regularly

Email lists naturally decay over time. People change jobs, switch email addresses, or lose interest. Cleaning your list helps maintain high deliverability rates.

- **How To Do It:** Use a re-engagement campaign to target inactive subscribers. If they don't respond, remove them from your list.
- **Example:** Send an email saying, "We miss you! Click here to stay on our list," and remove those who don't engage.

### Use Preference Centers

Allow subscribers to choose what type of content they want to receive. For example, let them opt into newsletters about seasonal deals, family packages, or local events.

- **Why It Works:** It puts control in the hands of your audience, ensuring they only receive emails that interest them.

## Tools of the Trade

Several email marketing platforms make segmentation and automation easy, even for non-technical users. Here are a few popular options:

1. **Mailchimp:** Great for beginners, with user-friendly segmentation and automation features.
2. **Klaviyo:** Ideal for businesses looking for advanced segmentation and data-driven insights. Great native integration with website tools like Shopify.
3. **Constant Contact:** Excellent for small businesses with intuitive drag-and-drop design features.

By segmenting your audience, building tailored email flows, and leveraging automations, you can create a scalable email marketing program that grows with your tourism business. The result? More bookings, happier customers, and less time spent managing your emails.

Start small, focus on your audience's needs, and watch as your efforts turn into measurable results. With segmentation and automation, you can truly "Segment It and Forget It"—while reaping the rewards of a smarter email marketing strategy.

Disclaimer: This article is for informational purposes only and does not guarantee compliance, accuracy, or specific results. Please check with your email marketing platform provider for further assistance and guidance on the most up-to-date information to ensure you follow best practices.

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