marketing playbook

Table of Contents

You + Your Business

You + Your Business

→ ## Identify Your Target Audience

Why It's Important to Find a Niche

If you serve everyone, you compete with all of the providers and consultants that serve everyone. More importantly, the service you provide suffers.

When you try to serve everyone, you can't effectively serve anyone.

Serving a narrow target audience lets you own that audience—you can become the go-to expert for your niche, which makes it easier to get business and referrals.

What Criteria Do You Use to Niche?

You can slice up the total market for email and automation as many ways as you want. The important part is that you focus on a slice where you have a unique advantage.

Demographics are a common way to find a niche, but they are sometimes difficult to use for B2B services. Ultimately, everyone in your niche will share a common need—a need that you provide the solution to.

We recommend choosing a niche based on criteria like industry (e.g. "fitness"), business type (e.g. "ecommerce"), location, or company size.

Example niches include: "Solopreneurs who run subscription-based membership websites" or "small-to-medium-sized companies that sell music equipment."

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How Do You Know When You've Found a Good Target Audience?

A great target audience has three major characteristics.

- ✓ A serious and immediate need that needs solving
- ✓ Lack of major competitors serving that niche specifically
- ✓ Willingness and ability to pay for their problem to be solved

People without needs don't buy products. People who can't afford products don't buy products. And people who have a lot of products to choose from are less likely to buy your products.

As you look for your target audience, it's a good idea to look at your existing customers. *Is there a group of your customers that accounts for more revenue, or gets more value, or has lower churn?* It may make sense to put more resources into finding those types of customers.

→ Unique Selling Proposition

What is a USP?

A USP, or Unique Selling Proposition, is your advantage over your competitors. Put simply, it answers the question **"what can you offer that no one else can offer?"**

Why is a USP Important?

A Unique Selling Proposition helps your customers choose you over your competitors. When you can offer unique value that's hard to find elsewhere, you can capture more business and adjust your prices accordingly.

You + Your Business

What Could Your USP Be?

A Unique Selling Proposition can be just about anything not being offered by your competitors. Maybe you have incredible expertise and experience in a particular service. Maybe you can complete projects extremely quickly. Maybe you work with your clients more closely than other "hands-off" competitors.

A USP can be anything that provides value. Identifying an especially strong target audience can even be a USP in and of itself!

Here's a formula for defining your USP:

The benefit you offer

+   downsides you avoid

+   group of people you serve

=   your USP

How to Find Your USP

What benefits do you offer your customers? What key questions are going unanswered in your industry? Are there unmet needs that you could address?

Finding a USP can be difficult, but online market research makes it easier. We put together an article with 8 techniques you can use to get insights from your audience.

Developing a great USP usually takes direct customer conversations. This article has the exact customer research questions you should ask to uncover your customers' unmet needs. As a bonus, this research will make it much easier to write your marketing copy later on.

How to Reach People

How to Reach People

→ ## Organic Social Media

Choose Your Platform

Where does your audience hang out? For some niches, Twitter and LinkedIn are the best social platforms. For others, it's Facebook and Instagram. Pinterest can drive shocking amounts of traffic for the right target audience. Niche social sites and forums like ResearchGate may even be a good choice, depending on your audience.

When you look for your platform, look at where the conversations are happening. One niche may have a thriving subreddit and a quiet Twitter—another may use Twitter as its primary platform.

Focus on Engagement

For small business, organic social media is best used to make connections and highlight your unique voice.

Posting content to social media drives relatively low traffic to your website, and that traffic is relatively short-lived. Going viral is difficult and hard to repeat—and you may have difficulty keeping up with demand.

For that reason, focus on talking to your audience and connecting with influencers. Reply to their replies, ask them questions, and chime in on tweet chats or event hashtags
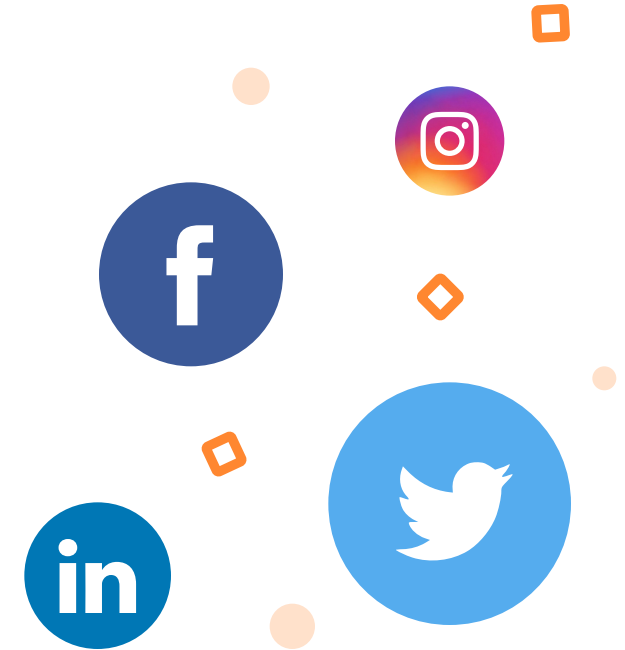
How to Reach People

Reach Influencers

Social media can be an effective way to get in touch with influencers. Platforms like Twitter make it unusually easy to tag influencers or comment on their work. Small businesses can get a lot of value out of connections with even one or two influencers.

Reach Businesses

In the same way that being active in the ActiveCampaign groups can help increase your profile, consider commenting on posts by companies you want to work with. This is a form of Account Based Marketing. Although it is a long-term strategy, it may help you stay top of mind.

How to Reach People

→ **SEO**

Why SEO?

Search engines drive massive amounts of traffic. Search engine optimization is the practice of increasing traffic to a website from search engines. Typically, you achieve this by ranking at the top of search results—and once you achieve a top result, you're likely to keep bringing in free traffic over the long term.

The effects of SEO can take weeks, months, or years. But unlike paid acquisition, SEO is a long-term, scalable marketing approach. Traffic potential from search engines is high, and lasts much longer than other approaches.

How to Reach People

The homepage is one of the most important pages. Homepages tend to get the most links, which makes them the most likely to show up in search engines.

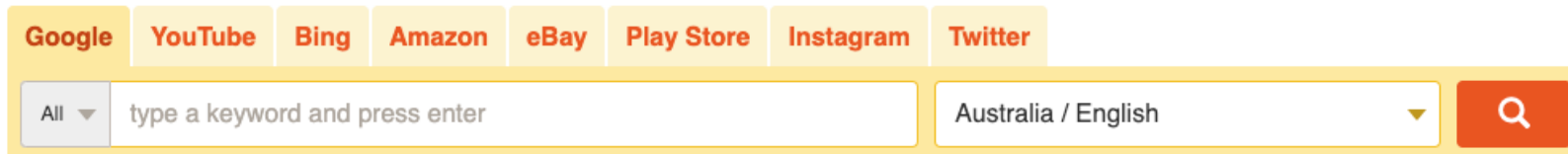For your homepage, be sure to pick a keyword that describes your business.

For example, a startup incubator in Brisbane could use:
Startup Incubator Brisbane in the title tag of their website, in their description tag as well as in the body text of the website.

To find the best keywords, try using the free Keyword Tool: www.KeywordTool.io

What services do you offer? Your website should have a separate page dedicated to each service.

Separating your services into multiple pages lets you do two things:

✓ You get to choose a separate keyword for each page, which gives you more opportunities to rank in Google

✓ Lack of major competitors serving that niche specifically

How to Reach People

SEO for Small Websites: Content

Sometimes, small websites have difficulty ranking for important, high-value phrases. If this is the case, content marketing (through either blog posts or long-form guides) can help you.

It's often easier to rank for key phrases using long-form content. Additionally, content marketing lets you rank for keywords that are relevant, but wouldn't make sense to include on your core service pages.

Content marketing and SEO go hand-in hand

Your content marketing program can be as complicated or as simple as you want it to be. The simplest approach for small websites is to create one piece of especially long, search-optimized, valuable content.

Then, within that content, embed a form that offers a lead magnet. This will get visitors from search to sign up for your email list.

You can learn more about how to make content SEO friendly in this blog post.

How to Reach People

→ ## Paid Social Media and Search

Why Use Paid Channels?

Paid social (especially Facebook ads) and search (especially Google) can be a great way to target your customers. These platforms have a unique ability to target very narrow groups of people—which is perfect once you've identified a clear niche.

Paid channels also make it extremely easy to test your funnel. Testing ads and landing pages against each other lets you see what messaging generates the highest conversion rates.
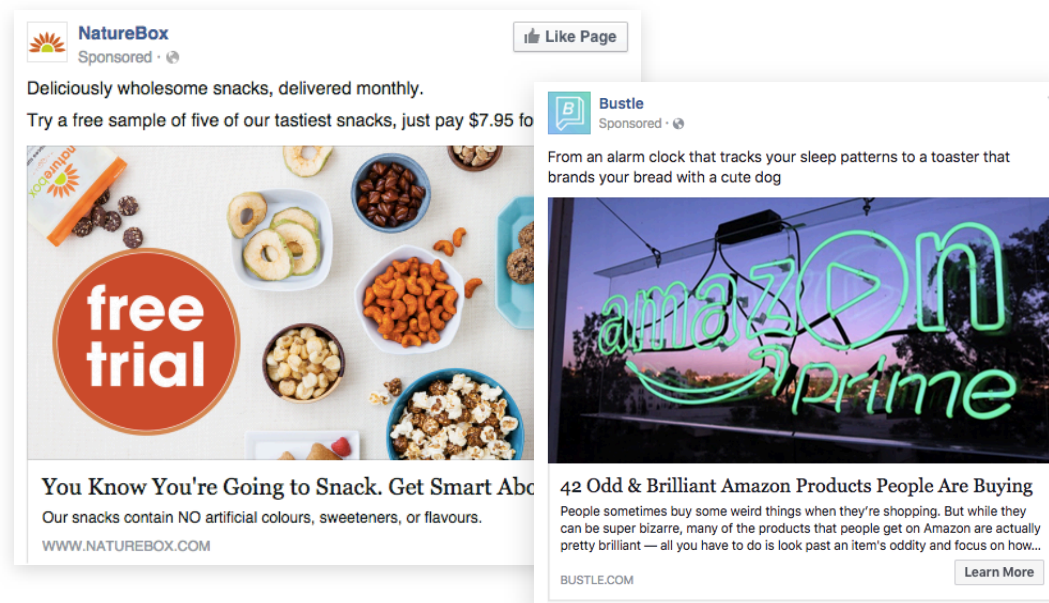
How to Reach People

What are the Dangers of Paid Channels?

Although paid search and social can be powerful, there are some risks. Both channels have a bit of a learning curve, which can be expensive—running poorly optimized campaigns can eat into your budget quickly.

There's also the danger of targeting an audience on the wrong platform.

If you target your audience in a channel that they don't use to make purchase decisions, your ads are less likely to be effective. *For example,* a study by Nature found that scientific researchers use Facebook, but tend not to use it professionally.

You can learn more about paid search and social in our blog posts on Google AdWords and Facebook Ads.

If you target a specialized niche, match the channel to the audience.

→ ## Local Events

Why Events?

There's no substitute for facetime. An in-person event lets you talk directly to your audience and build deeper relationships that are harder to get over the internet.

Events aren't necessarily a must-have, but they could be a strong option depending on your specific niche and sales cycle.

How to Reach People

What Kind of Event Should You Run?

Should you run events for leads or customers? There are arguments in both camps (and you could certainly do both).

Running an event for customers can help you build relationships, win repeat business/referrals, or upsell services.

Running an event for your audience helps you make new connections. Usually an event like this has broader subject matter and isn't explicitly about selling your services.

How to Promote Your Event

Use your existing audience to promote your event—your email list is your best friend. Beyond talking to existing customers and contacts, using sites like Meetup and Eventbrite (and similar sites that are more specific to your industry) can help you spread the word.

Do You Need to Run Your Own Event?

Not at all! Running an event can take a lot of time and energy, even if you stick to a bare bones approach. Simply attending a lot of in-person local events in your industry can help you build the relationships and connections you need to grow your business.

How to Turn People Into Customers

How to Turn People Into Customers

→ ## Lead Magnets

Why Lead Magnets?

If you can offer a downloadable guide, cheat sheet, checklist, or other useful PDF, you can collect email information and get more contacts.

"Subscribe to my newsletter" is a poor call to action. Nowadays, there are so many free newsletters that people aren't looking for more emails to delete. A lead magnet helps you collect more contact information, so you can stay in touch.

What Makes a Good Lead Magnet?

A good lead magnet solves a specific problem, is immediately usable, is featured prominently on your website, and is introduced with a clear value proposition.

Common lead magnets include: checklists, guides, ebooks, cheat sheets, spreadsheets, and email courses.

How Can You Offer a Lead Magnet?

You can offer a lead magnet by putting an ActiveCampaign form on your site. Completing the form can either take people directly to the page with the lead magnet, or can trigger an automation that delivers the lead magnet via email.

A good lead magnet solves a specific problem.

You can learn more and get more lead magnet ideas from our blog post on lead magnets.

How to Turn People Into Customers

→ ## Landing Pages

Why Landing Pages?

A landing page is the first page a visitor interacts with on your website. Usually, a "landing page" refers to a specific type of page, used to increase the conversion rate of website visitors coming from different sources of traffic.

If you run a paid search of Facebook ad, you should be directing traffic to a landing page specifically created for (or at least related to) that ad. The same goes for email promotions, listings, or links from guest posts and interviews.

The reason? Specific landing pages tend to convert much better than a general-purpose page on your website (especially your home page).

LOGO   Home   About us   Work   Info   Contact us

Rocket Company

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more info

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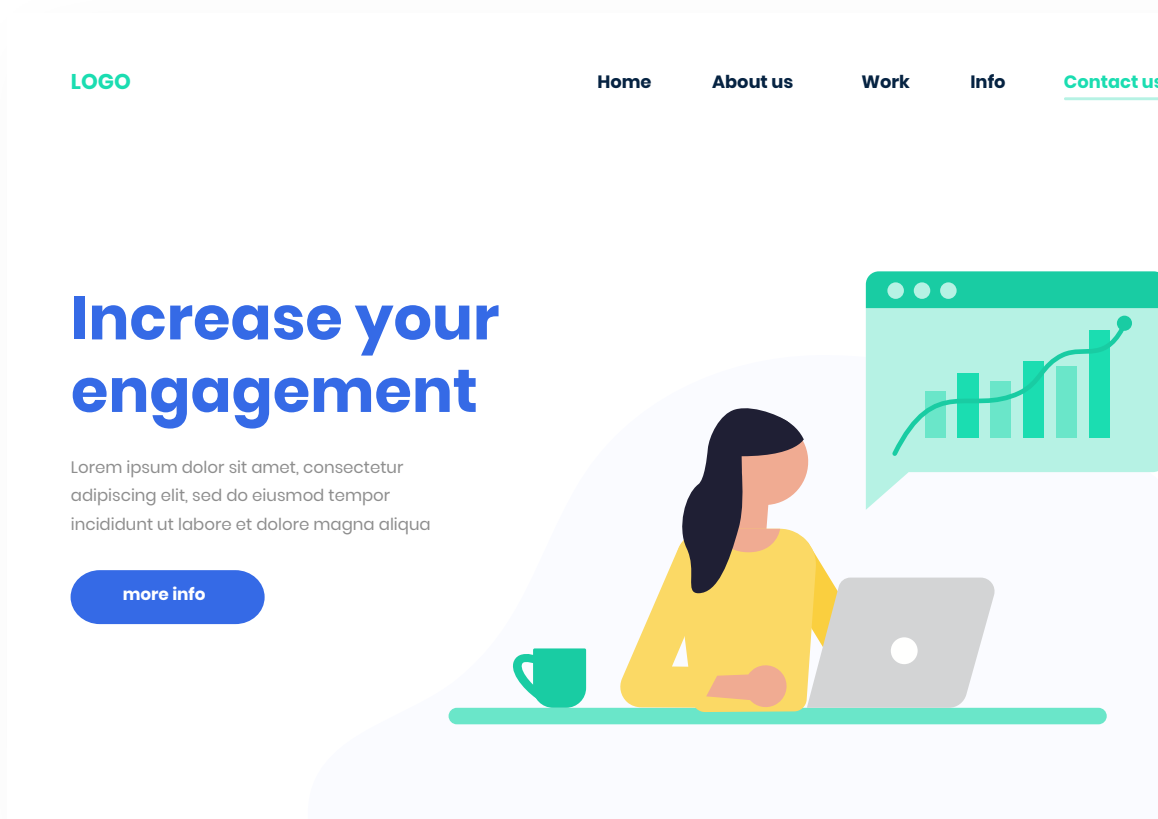
What Goes on Your Landing Page?

A great headline that matches the source of traffic. If your ad talks about email marketing services, that phrase or idea should appear at the top of your landing page.

The unique benefits of your offering. Why should people choose you over any of their other options?

The specific features or services you provide. Although people often buy based on benefits, they also want to know exactly what it is they get.

Social proof. Use a customer case study, video, or testimonial to show the results of your work and add authority to your claims.

Just one offer. Whether it's a direct purchase, a consultation, or a lead magnet, each landing page should have one offer. You can (and often should) use multiple calls to action on your page, but each CTA should drive readers to the same offer.

LOGO   Home   About us   Work   Info   Contact us

Increase your engagement

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How to Turn People Into Customers

→ ## Free Consultations and Demos

Why Consultations?

Free consultations are one of the best ways to turn an interested prospect into a customer. A consultation lets you speak directly to your prospect's pain points, demonstrate ActiveCampaign, and address concerns that would otherwise go unanswered.

How Can You Offer a Consultation?

The most common way to offer a consultation is via a form on your website. Consultations are usually free—although they take up some of your time, the return on your time investment is substantial. Consultations are often 30–60 minutes long, but the specific length may depend on your industry.

How Can You Demo ActiveCampaign?

Becoming certified with ActiveCampaign earns you a free, enterprise-level account that you can use to demonstrate the platform. This account has access to all features, allowing you to set up sample pipelines and automations that help your customers see the value in ActiveCampaign.

How to Turn People Into Customers

→ ## Referrals and Relationships

Why Use Relationships?

Referral and relationship-based marketing are powerful because they funnel leads in your direction—without requiring you to go out and actively find leads.

Sometimes, a business has requests for services it doesn't provide. Becoming the recommended partner of that business makes it easier to get clients for your services.

Make Referrals Easy

Referrals and affiliate links are the fastest, most scalable way to encourage your partners to share your business.

The easier it is for someone to make a referral, the more likely they are to refer. Provide referral links to your partners—when you acquire a new customer through these links, your referral partners receive a commission or other incentive.

Network

Would you send business to a company you didn't trust? Of course not.

Agency partnerships usually come about because of relationships. One agency has too many leads to handle, or attracts some leads who aren't the best fit, so it refers them to a partner.

Building those partnerships means building your network. Local events and social media can help you meet potential partners in your area—although referral links may be used by anyone, agency partnerships are usually fostered by face-to-face interactions.

How to Keep Customers

How to Keep Customers

→ **Onboarding Clients**

Why Onboard?

The faster your customers recognize the value in what you have to offer, the less likely they are to leave

The early days and week of working with a new customer are critical—provide a great experience and you'll be able to retain more customers.

Start with Quick Wins

ActiveCampaign is a platform with many features, and it's unlikely that your customers will get value from all of them in the first month.

Instead of broadly introducing customers to the platform, start with quick wins. What can you implement quickly to see an immediate benefit—whether it be increased engagement, time savings, or higher revenue?
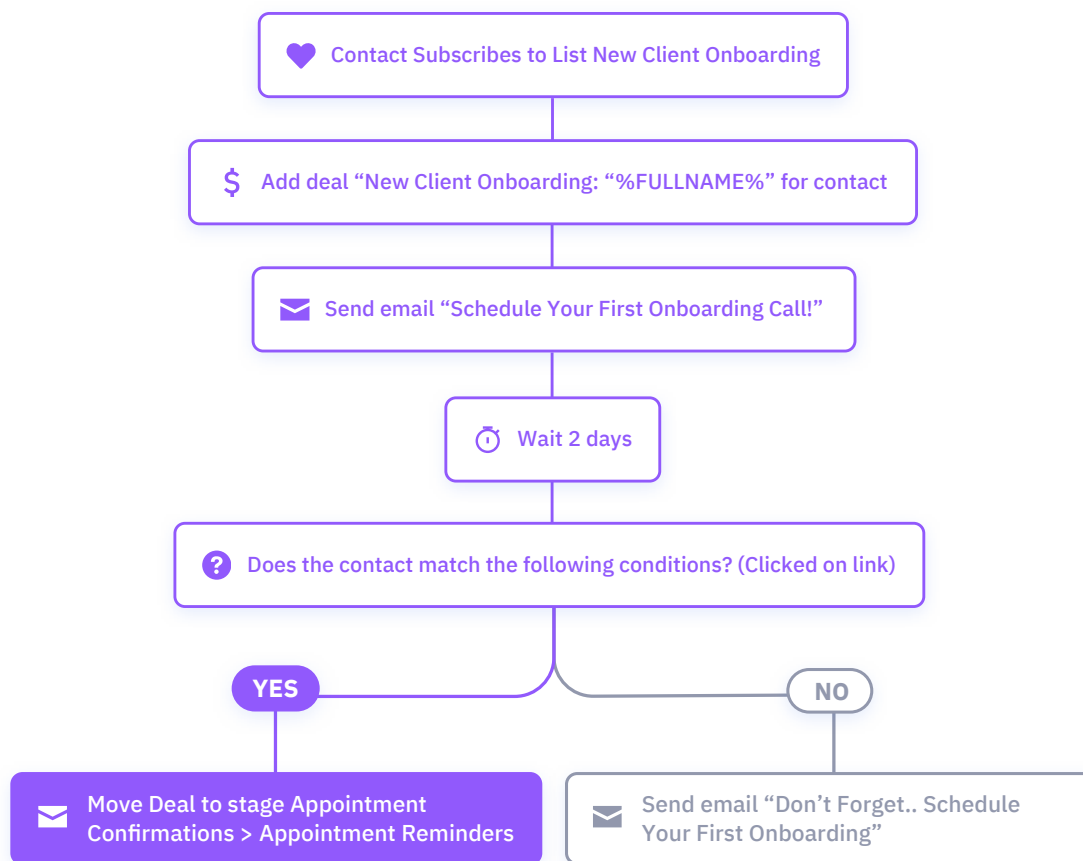
Site tracking, simple automations, and importing data from old tools are common examples of quick wins.

How to Keep Customers

Create an Onboarding Roadmap

When a new client signs up, it's easy for them to get overwhelmed. Give them a clearly defined plan for the first weeks and months, so that they can see exactly what's in store.

Be proactive, and schedule 6–8 initial onboarding calls. In these calls you can help your clients get started directly, as well as answer any questions they may have. Providing this level of aid upfront can help you identify any early challenges that may cause customers to leave.

♥ Contact Subscribes to List New Client Onboarding

$ Add deal "New Client Onboarding: "%FULLNAME%" for contact

✉ Send email "Schedule Your First Onboarding Call!"

⏱ Wait 2 days

? Does the contact match the following conditions? (Clicked on link)

YES **NO**

✉ Move Deal to stage Appointment Confirmations > Appointment Reminders

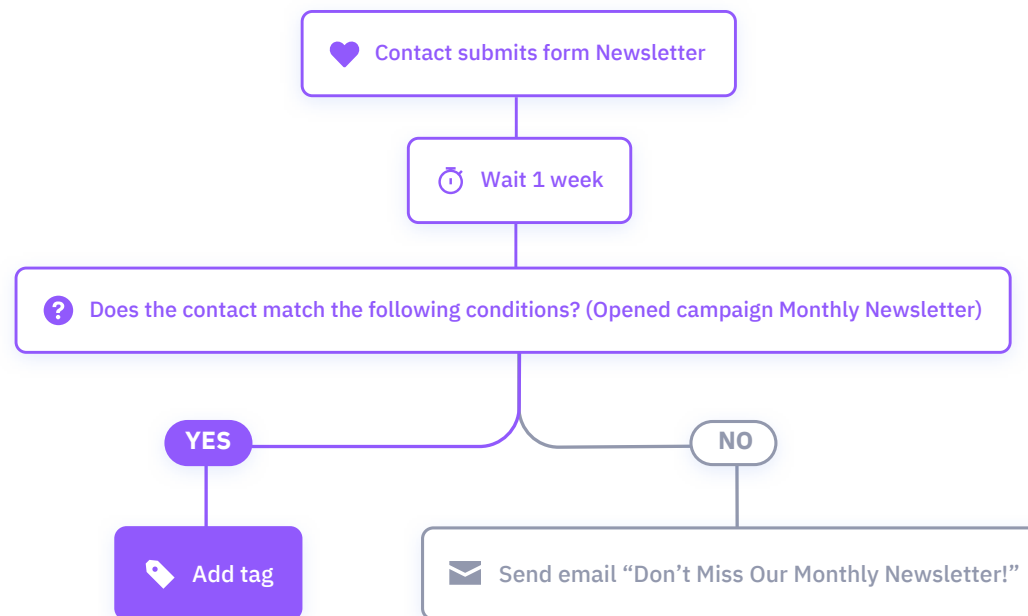✉ Send email "Don't Forget.. Schedule Your First Onboarding"

How to Keep Customers

Communicate Regularly

Even after your initial calls, it's important to stay in touch with your clients. A weekly or monthly email newsletters are a common tactic, as is periodically sending a personal email (a process you can automate).

You may also consider sending automated emails based on your clients' activity on your website, in the platform, and related to your emails.

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♥ Contact submits form Newsletter

⏱ Wait 1 week

? Does the contact match the following conditions? (Opened campaign Monthly Newsletter)

YES                              NO

🏷 Add tag          ✉ Send email "Don't Miss Our Monthly Newsletter!"
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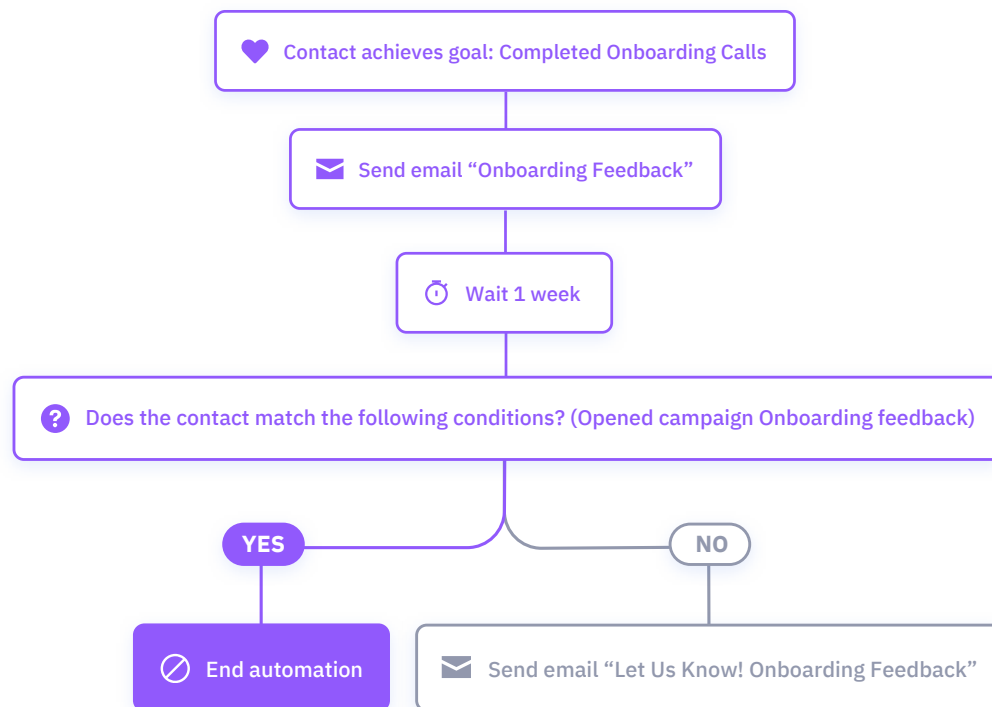
How to Keep Customers

Collect Feedback

How effective is your onboarding?

Collecting feedback from your customers is crucial, as it gives you valuable information you need to improve your services. The best times to collect feedback are typically:

✓ **Immediately after signing up a new client**

✓ **After the onboarding process**

✓ **When a client leaves**

These three times will give you a better picture of your customers' experiences.

♥ Contact achieves goal: Completed Onboarding Calls

✉ Send email "Onboarding Feedback"

⏱ Wait 1 week

? Does the contact match the following conditions? (Opened campaign Onboarding feedback)

YES   **NO**

⊘ End automation   ✉ Send email "Let Us Know! Onboarding Feedback"

How to Keep Customers

→ ## Diversify Your Services

Why Offer Different Services and Levels?

Your clients have a variety of different needs. If you offer only one service level, you may disqualify yourself from working with customers who either can't afford your main service or would be willing to pay more for greater service.

If you offer only one type of service, you limit the lifetime value of a customer. Offering more services allows you to better serve your customers—and get more business from your top clients.

How to Offer Levels and Additional Services

There are a variety of ways to offer different service levels. It's common to see service offerings in tiers (e.g. low, medium, and high) with each tier granting a higher level of service, as well as more access to you personally.

You can offer more services by expanding into related skills. If you're an email automation expert, you may be able to offer services related to landing page design, or ecommerce stores, or PPC ads. The specific services you offer will depend on your skill set and your customers' needs.

THE END

Thank you for reading!