EFFECTIVE EMAIL MARKETING

We all hate getting spam mail so it's hard to admit that email advertising is effective, but study after study show that it's a low-cost method of obtaining new customers and generating repeat clients. According to SalesForce.com, the average return on investment for every $1 devoted to an email-marketing campaign is $44.25.

That's a very revealing statistic considering that sending an email is absolutely free. Unlike physical mailers, radio ads, print media and every other popular form of marketing, email advertising is readily available to small businesses.

Here are some other recent statistics that demonstrate the value of email advertising:

- 44 percent of people who received targeted emails acknowledged buying at least one item because of a promotional message.

- 58 percent of emails with less than 10 characters in the subject line are opened.

- 70 percent of people state they have used coupons or discounts that were sent to them from a marketing message.

- 72 percent of business-to-business (B2B) companies prefer email as a method of sharing useful content.

- In a recent online poll, 27 percent of small business owners surveyed stated that they think they should invest more money into email marketing.

- 40 percent of B2B marketing professionals ranked the leads produced from email campaigns as exceptional.

- 82 percent of a business' customer base will open emails from that business.

- 64 percent of the people in charge of financial decisions in households open emails on smartphones or tablets.

- Approximately 50 percent of recipients that voluntarily sign up on an email list will open the messages that they receive.

- In 2012, profits from email advertising reached $156 million.

This last statistic may be the most amazing of all. Recent year statistics are not available but I can only imagine the profit increase. When you consider the low investment required to start an email-advertising strategy, the high ROI makes sense.

If you're interested in adding email marketing to your strategy, here are a few tips for developing an email list:

- Newsletter signups on your website
- Add an email-address text field to online contact forms with opt-in check-box
- Ask customers for email addresses every opportunity you get
- Offer an incentive for signing up, such as product discounts or coupons

If you're not tech savvy or if you need help developing an effective email-marketing campaign, consider outsourcing to an email marketing company. They can help design effective templates and recommend strategies that work best.