

5 Ways to Engage Your Clients (That Aren't Boring Emails)

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For the last 20-plus years, email has become the standard form of communication for reaching out to clients. Ask any marketer for the last 10 years in particular, and they'll say one of the top things a business should focus on is building their (email) list.

Snail mail is just too slow, and this increasingly-fast paced world makes a classic phone call unrealistic – what, are you going to call each person individually on your list? Or worse, are you going to have an automated bot interrupt their day with a phone call that is devoid of actual communication?

But now, email too is reaching a ceiling. Is your email going to their SPAM folder? Is it going to their “junk” email address that they use to sign up for all the mailing lists? Is it getting lost between an advertisement from their favorite clothing store and a digital copy of their phone bill?

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I don't think it's time for us to throw away email entirely – especially not when it comes to communicating information to your warm audience – but if you're really trying to maintain contact with your existing customers, you might want to try one of these increasingly popular options.

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Slack

Everyone in the B2B world knows about Slack by now – and for a good reason. Slack's no-nonsense interface is perfect for communicating with all your clients at once, or sending messages to people in specific groups by sorting them into different Channels. If you love the flexibility of list segmentation, you'll appreciate the functionality of Slack.

I personally like using Slack as my general hub for connecting with my mastermind clients. We have different Channels for asking questions, for sharing wins, and for my team to make announcements that everyone needs to see. I've also created private Channels for each member to have direct access to me and my team, for scheduling calls and sharing documents that don't need to be shared with the whole group.

Even better? Slack can be used three ways: In your browser, in a Desktop app, or with a mobile app.

Facebook Groups

This one has its pros and cons, but it's definitely a contender worth discussing! While most people choose to use Facebook Groups as a strategy for growing a free community of warm leads – you could just as easily use a Facebook Group as the home of your paid community.

On the plus side, a Facebook Group offers you a lot of different ways to communicate with the people inside your community. Live videos, photos, GIFs, polls, posts – your options are nearly limitless. And with Facebook giving you the ability to create modules and lessons inside Groups, you could easily sell and host an entire group program or online course

inside a Facebook Group (saving you hundreds, even thousands, a year in course hosting fees using a system like Teachable or Thinkific).

Of course, the obvious downside of this option is that you have to have a Facebook account in order to join a Group, and your clients may not have a Facebook account. (Give “people leaving Facebook” a quick search – there’s a lot of movement away from the platform right now.)

Telegram and Voxer

These two apps are nearly identical in terms of functionality: They’re both messenger apps that give you the ability to send and receive voice messages in real time, like a walkie-talkie. You can use these like a classic one-to-one personal message, or you can create a group message that includes everyone on one thread.

While Voxer is more basic in its very orange UI, Telegram is going to be the prime choice for creatives and millennials who value personalization and expression.

I personally like using these kinds of apps for communicating with my top-level clients, who get more intimate, personal access to me. They love getting to hear my “off the cuff” thoughts on different things that they’re encountering in their business without having to wait for a formal group call or one-on-one session, and I love getting to share my insights in a quick, efficient way that can also benefit the other clients in this group who may have the same struggles or questions.

Instagram Close Friends

This one might be a surprising choice, but it’s growing in popularity as an alternative to Facebook Groups. You won’t be

able to host a course for free on Instagram like you can with a Facebook Group, but you can still create a fun, exclusive place for your customers to stay in the loop.

I've seen this strategy work best for digital creators, in particular, such as podcasters or YouTubers. Using something like Patreon to collect membership fees from your audience, you can have each user fill out a quick Google form to get their Instagram handle upon signing up to get access to your exclusive content. After that, you'll go to your Instagram Settings, tap on "Close Friends," and from there you can hit the + to add new accounts to your Close Friends list. You don't even have to follow an account to add them to your list!

This is a fun way to take something you're already doing (creating content) for an audience who is already there consuming it, and monetizing it!

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