



SPI Podcast Session #159 – The Best Practices for Increasing Sales With Your Autoresponder Email Series

Show notes: www.smartpassiveincome.com/session159

This is the Smart Passive Income podcast with Pat Flynn, Session #159.

Intro: Welcome to the Smart Passive Income podcast, where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later. And now your host, he's the crash test dummy of online business, Pat Flynn!

Pat: What's up everybody? Thank you for joining me today. This is Episode 159 of the Smart Passive Income podcast, and today I'm really excited because we're going to be talking about email marketing and your autoresponder series. A lot of people just don't pay attention to this type of thing in their business.

This episode can make a huge impact on your business and how you are relating and sending messages to your audience, and not only that but how much money you're making too.

We're talking with Dan Faggella from CLVBoost.com. CLV stands for Customer Lifetime Value, and of course boosting that is one of the best things you can do.

You might not know this, but Dan was actually the person who gave advice to Steve Chou in [Episode 143](#). Steve is the person from Stanford. A lot of people know that. He and I have this sort of fun little rivalry going because I went to Cal and he went to Stanford and those are rival schools. Anyway, on Episode 143 of the SPI podcast Steve came on and he talked about how he 3X'd his revenue by simply making some quick changes to his autoresponder series.

He talked about a guy on that episode who helped him, and that is Dan who's on our episode today. Steve actually recommended we get Dan on the episode today to talk even more and even deeper about best practices for email marketing and using your autoresponder series, so you're going to get a lot out of this episode.

Of course, hopefully you have an email service provider that you're using and, if you do, this is going to help you take that to the next level. So here we go. This is Dan Faggella from CLVBoost.com.



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Pat: What's up, SPI community? I'm so so stoked today to welcome Dan Faggella from CLVBoost.com to the show. What's up, Dan? How are you?

Dan: I'm doing well, brother. I'm glad to be here.

Pat: We got introduced actually through Steve, who was a guest in Episode 143, where if you remember we were talking about actionable email marketing strategies and how Steve 3X'd his revenue using a specific strategy for his autoresponder.

He emailed me after and he was like, "You've got to talk to Dan because he was the one who told me how to do this. He's a wealth of knowledge and he's going to help your entire audience with conversions and email marketing, and you just have to have him on," so here you are.

Dan: Yes indeed. I remember the interview with Steve, actually. It's funny because at the end of our call we were just chatting very casually. "Oh yeah, what are your open rates, yada yada, and how many emails do you have?" I think he had 6 emails in his autoresponder and I was like, "What? Man, present some different offers and lengthen that thing alone. You don't even have to test it and you're going to make more money."

Then he was on your show and dropped the shout-out and I've never been so honored, so it's cool that we have a shared friend in Steve. I really like that guy.

Pat: Yeah, even though he's from Stanford he's still a good guy. I just had to throw that in there.

Dan: Despite that, yes.

Pat: We've been doing Photoshop wars. He Photoshopped me wearing all this Stanford stuff and I Photoshopped him with all this Cal gear. For those of you who don't know, there's a huge rivalry between Stanford and Cal, but anyway that's another topic.

Dan: Yeah, that rivalry can have its own podcast.



Pat: Oh yeah, absolutely. There's a huge history there, but anyway let's talk about you. How did you get started in what you do? How did you become this expert in email marketing? Then we'll get into some strategies and stuff like that.

Dan: Certainly, Pat. A lot of people only know me for basically talking about email marketing and CLVBoost, which stands for Customer Lifetime Value Boost. That's the name of my consultancy, CLV Boost.

I definitely didn't start off consulting on making money with email for start-ups and online businesses. I definitely did not start there. I started, Pat, in a martial arts gym in a town of 8,000 people. I wanted to be involved in a business around my passion. I did not want to go to work and sell insurance like my buddies, or deliver pizzas, so to pay for graduate school I decided, "Why don't I just fight?"

I was driving back and forth from the University of Pennsylvania for my graduate degree in psychology and I was running a gym in a town where I realized with 8,000 people in this town I was going to run out of human leads. In other words, no matter how good your SEO is, in a town of 8,000 people your maximum list size is like 8,000 people. That became a pretty evident problem for me early on, Pat.

So instead of focusing on SEO or paid advertising, I focused on building in-depth relationships with individual subscribers by segmenting and automating my email marketing so it was highly relevant based on the goal, the program, the gender etc of the lead, and really maximizing how many people who showed interest showed up and took a class. That was my conversion metric. It was dialing in conversion, not just dialing in traffic.

That very neurotic skill of focusing on customer lifetime value and conversion with email scaled up to our ecommerce site in the martial arts world, which is now a \$60,000/month business basically selling martial arts DVDs and programs in ecommerce. So I did it in service, did it in ecommerce, and only then did I get into consulting with CLVBoost.com. So my start was in small biz, Pat.

Pat: I love that. There's a lot of people out there who try to teach this kind of stuff and they're learning from other people, but here you are using your own experience in these other industries. That's the way it should be done, I feel.

Dan: Yeah, learning the hard way.



Pat: Exactly. So let's get right into it. We're going to talk about different kinds of best practices for email marketing. I think a lot of us know how important email marketing is. Let's just hear from you when people come to you and say, "Dan, social media is growing, podcasting is huge, email marketing is dying."

Dan: One thing I'll say, Pat, is I don't have my ego tied to email. We've done stuff with start-up companies in texts and through other digital messaging channels, but I'll say this. First, Amazon, Wayfair, Hubspot, and billion-dollar companies selling software products etc continue to use email on a daily basis as they did 10 years ago, to drive oodles of sales.

As many folks have found out – and Pat, you might be able to attest to this yourself – Facebook is probably not the best place to link to your sales page, unless you really like angry comments. Facebook and Twitter are awesome for community. In fact, I'm a fan of both. I'm on Facebook pretty darn often and I'm on Twitter from time to time.

In terms of a business purpose, most people will have a better success rate turning those folks into subscribers or into email readers than they will into customers immediately. When they're in the email channel, now you own the relationship.

If Facebook all the sudden says something like, "I'm not going to let your organic reach take you anywhere, and no one's going to see your stuff anymore," – which by the way happened, right? – if Facebook says that, you still can push a magic button, which you might call the money button, and send out emails to thousands of people and get them to purchase products.

So no matter what Facebook and Twitter decide about what your sales page needs to look like or how much reach you're going to get, you own the relationship when you own the email address. And selling through email, even if it's soft, no matter how you're selling, is accepted and acceptable, much more so than linking to a sales page in Facebook.

Social, I agree, is growing. It's a beautiful thing. It's a useful thing. I love it for building my list because when I post on Facebook about a new DVD or about a \$15,000 consulting gig or a landing page redesign program I'm doing or something, people aren't going to pull out their credit card from Facebook, but when they're on my email list and they learn about these best practices and they get involved and get pulled in through gradual education via email, I can present an offer without resistance.



I'm not saying social is bad, Pat. I'm not saying I'm married to email. But I will say, by golly, if you like making money on the internet, it's really tough to say it's not a help.

Pat: Thank you for that. So hopefully by now everybody is convinced that email is something that's very important, and a lot of people who are listening to this already have started their email lists, which is great. That's the first step, just getting started with that. We'll have resources and stuff in terms of step-by-steps and walkthroughs on how to set up an account on an email service provider, but after that I think a lot of people get lost.

"Okay, I'm collecting emails." They know about the front-end stuff and giving away lead magnets and all those sorts of things, but then the other side of the coin gets forgotten. What happens when people subscribe? How do we think about that? What's the best way to figure that out? What happens to a subscriber after they subscribe?

Dan: I love it, Pat. I like thinking about it this way, because you're right. There's 1,000 blog posts about how to create an ebook and get an AWeber account and whatever else, but then shucks, what do you do?

What most people do is they remember once every four months that they have an AWeber account and they begrudgingly write something and then click Send. That's a real shame. What I prefer folks do is think about it this way.

First and foremost, Pat, one place where folks often will go wrong is they'll create an ebook – and I know this because I've done it; I learned all my lessons the hard way, basically – so they'll create an ebook or a free guide or a video course that doesn't quite relate to the main program they'd like to sell.

We could use an example of a business. I'll have you come up with one, somebody who recently asked you a question via email or somebody you recently interviewed who has a certain business model. What's something people could sell online, just to use an example here?

Pat: Let's do transcription services.

Dan: Okay, they sell transcription services. People send in an audio and then they'll send back the actual text for some money there?

Pat: Right.



Dan: Perfect, a relatively common business. If you have a transcription service, sometimes people create ebooks on things that maybe don't quite correlate to the value proposition, such as how to do transcribing yourself, or transcribing in different languages, or maybe something about hiring people on Odesk or something general, something that they feel like people looking for transcription might be interested in, as opposed to what they're ultimately going to end up selling.

The real congruence that needs to exist is does what you're getting them to opt in for by itself already indicate that they're a potential good customer for your product?

A real flub that I saw recently, Pat, is I know somebody who's selling supplements online. These are supplements geared towards focus and concentration for athletes, so it's kind of all-natural stuff and that's what they're selling.

The guy that they were sending people to had a free ebook on how to boost your focus and concentration as an athlete. They market towards combat athletes, so a free guide for a combat athlete.

My question is, what percentage of people that opt in for a free guide on being more focused from Facebook are in the market – and I like the term "in the market" for this – are in the market to eat a pill that get that benefit? I don't actually know, and I would suppose it's much less than half. The people that want to get an ebook to read an article about that are not the same people that might want to eat a pill to get the same benefit.

Now, it's not as far off the mark as you can get, but what you're doing is you're collecting a bunch of leads, and the first product you're going to sell them is something that they don't inherently have an interest in. It would have been better if that e-guide was something like a combat sports supplement review. They could point out the flaws or benefits of various supplements and highlight their own.

They could have talked about natural supplement ingredients for combat athletes that can help naturally boost blankety-blank, and they could have talked about vitamin B and ginseng or whatever they're talking about.

Then conveniently somewhere in the ebook they could say, "By the way, we've tried to pack all these nutrients into one simple supplement and we'll send you your first bottle just for the price of shipping." That would have been a more coherent optin.



If you opt in to learn about natural ingredients that you can eat that will help improve your focus and concentration, I have a good chance of selling you pills. If you're interested in reading about focus for being an athlete, maybe 1 in 3 or 1 in 4 of those folks are even in the market. Does that make sense?

Pat: Right. So for the people who are downloading this lead magnet and reading these articles on focus, then likely a course or some sort of video program might work better, as opposed to a pill.

Going back to the transcription thing, I was thinking maybe a good lead magnet for that would be a quick guide like "10 things you could do with a transcription to increase conversions on your site" or increase SEO. "10 different things you could do with a transcription that you could get from us."

Dan: That's a good one. That would indicate that you know your market is marketers, for example. If that is the case, in other words if you sell transcription to marketers, like let's say the audience that listens to your show, then yes, we would talk about internet marketing things. However, if that's 10% of your search traffic, that wouldn't quite pan out. But if it was your search traffic that would work out.

I hate to say it's a little bit more bland in a service business, but it is. Often what's done in a service business – for some reason it still generically works, which is interesting to me – is something like "7 keys to choosing the right transcription service for your business," or "How to not get ripped off with transcription." It's niche agnostic, you know what I mean?

Yours would have been very good if you sell transcription to marketers, period. You don't do academic. You don't do multilingual. You don't do anything else but you sell to marketers and WordPress business people, then yes, give them great money-making ideas to use transcription.

But if $\frac{3}{4}$ of your traffic is coming from college kids that don't want to write their paper, they want to record it on their iPhone and have you transcribe it, then you would need something more generic to capture generic traffic.

Regardless, your optin magnet needs to match not only the traffic that's landing on your site, but the first thing that you're going to sell them. But yes, I think you had the idea there as well.



Pat: I gave you a tough example with the transcription.

Dan: It's fine, though. I had to go a little bit deeper to explain it, but hopefully I still got the point across.

Pat: No, it's good. So basically make sure you match the giveaway with what they're eventually going to be able to buy from you. Now how does that convert that person?

Dan: For the folks out there tuned in, if you've got a marker and a napkin, uncap it and here we go. Think to yourself, "If somebody opts in for ____" – so put a little square on the left-hand side and write the optin magnet title. Let's say we're selling something about marketing. "7 tips to grow your sales with Facebook" or whatever, something arbitrary.

You ultimately sell Facebook marketing products and Facebook marketing services. You manage paid advertising spend. You do Facebook graphic design, and you also sell ebooks and video courses in that niche, which is a tough niche honestly because Facebook changes every 4 days, so services are almost more viable than products, which isn't my favorite, but regardless. Let's say that's your circumstance.

Put your optin guide on the left-hand side in a box and then ask yourself, in an ideal world, given how much traffic you're getting, what would be the next logical thing that you would sell to that person once they have a little bit of a relationship with you?

Next, if they did not buy the first thing that you thought would be most relevant, most useful, most helpful to them and most profitable to you – if they don't buy that, what should you then present to them that they can still buy?

Steve was nice enough to give me a little shout-out on your show, but when I first talked to Steve he had 5 content emails, 1 email that asked for a sale and then it went black.

Pat: Like, "Oops, sorry, guess you're not somebody who's going to buy ever."

Dan: Here's the thing. Email #6 probably has like a 15% open rate, so if 1 out of every 6 people gets only one chance to buy, what are the flipping odds anybody's going to buy? My goodness. You get 60 optins, you're only getting 10 people even on the



page in the first place, or people even seeing the email, never mind clicking through. That is rough.

I'm not saying hit them with sales email after sales email for 6 months. No, no, no. That's not what I'm saying at all. I'm saying once you've introduced yourself and educated them and you've presented Product A, which you believe is most relevant for them, what's the next thing that you could offer them? Once that one's over, if you have another thing maybe you can present that.

With the Facebook example I've got my little square on the left there on my piece of paper. It says "7 tips to boost your sales with Facebook." I'd like to sell more products and services because I'm trying to scale and I'm trying to live the laptop lifestyle and be able to be like Pat Flynn and be all cool and stuff, so the next product I'm trying to sell is a \$97 full-blown video course on the basics of Facebook ads – determining your target markets, targeting your ads, yada yada, a complete video course.

That's the first thing we want to sell. That's our flagship product. We believe that that's going to be the most relevant thing for this person, so let's present that. Pat, in a second I'll talk about how to craft the emails to actually sell that, very basic strategies to craft those emails, but right now we're just looking at overall strategy.

Most people would say, "Man, you know what? We sent them like 3 or 4 emails about that \$97 thing and they didn't buy. I guess they're just not a buyer. I guess I'll just go home." In my opinion that's just horrendously wrong.

Again, people can listen to Steve Chou's interview if they don't agree with that one, but lengthening this process a little bit on the aggregate is going to be very, very helpful for customer lifetime value and sales.

Next up we should ask is there something maybe a little bit less expensive that would be still of interest to these folks and still be useful? Don't we have that \$27 PDF and audio course on mastering Facebook engagement, building an engaging community, sharing posts, how to find the right kind of pictures and all that kind of stuff? Don't we have a \$27 product? Let's go present that. Let's address the fact that maybe the \$97 wasn't for them just yet, and let's go after the \$27.

And if they don't buy that, we can put them into our general broadcast newsletter bucket, but we can maybe send a couple emails that say something like, "Hey, in addition to just learning digitally and learning from our free videos and some of our



courses online, some folks really do want to work one-on-one with us. Every month we take on a limited number of clients to manage their Facebook advertising. You can see some great case studies and success stories here, and you can apply to work with us right here.”

If you throw out 3 or 4 of those emails at the end of the sequence you’ll scoop up a certain percentage of people that frankly don’t want to buy your stuff, they want it done for them. Maybe that’s a third thing that we can present, and let’s structure that.

So the exercise for someone with a napkin and a marker is draw your optin and then what is the sequence of products or services that you would want to sell in an ideal order, that you believe would convert at the highest rate and be most helpful for your prospects.

In terms of what to sell and in terms of being persistent about selling, i.e. more than one product, I would have anybody and everybody map it out that way. If you like I can also go into sort of how to sell with those emails too.

Pat: Yeah, I was going to ask about that, but just to recap you have your lead magnet, which is related to all the things you’re going to sell, and you have your flagship product as the first product. Again we’re just mapping out the actual points of sales. It doesn’t mean that that’s the next email that’s coming out, right?

Dan: It just means that’s the first product you’ll pitch coming up maybe after some education.

Pat: It’s important to think about that, and I think a lot of people don’t think about that. They just write email after email after email. There’s no path. There’s no thought to, “Okay, where is this actually going?” Each email is kind of individual instead of part of a bigger sequence here.

So 1-2-3 I like the idea of the flagship product, then a less expensive one, then “Hey, if you don’t want a product then maybe you want it done for you.” That’s where the coaching programs or consultations come into play. I think that’s fantastic.

Let’s fill in the gaps. What goes in-between each of those emails?

Dan: Let’s totally rock and roll. First and foremost I’m going to throw in a little bit of a disclaimer and say not everybody needs to sell a product before a service. Let’s just



say, Pat, that I'm that same Facebook guy, but at the end of the day I like to sell my service and I'll sell a product afterwards.

Most of my money is made selling my service, and I have a team that can adapt and can take on new clients quickly, and I'm interested in selling services. What I could do then is I would put the service first and then I'd sell the products afterwards.

Really the order is not like, "Oh, high ticket, low ticket, then service. Oh my goodness, it's magic." No, no, no, that's not what I'm saying. I'm saying what's going to be ideal for your business model, what's most likely to convert, and what's the kind of business you want to build?

If you want to be on the phone closing and making most of your money that way then you'll prioritize that. If you want to be pushing the Buy Now button and having more of a hands-off sort of a product business, then you want to build it the other way. Make sense?

Pat: Yes, makes absolute sense. Just to clarify, if somebody purchases in that first sale email, they are taken off that list.

Dan: Yes. Well, you could do a few things, Pat, and it depends on your email functionality. Frankly I'm a fan of tools like Active Campaign, Get Drip, and at the higher level Infusionsoft and Ontraport. I really believe a lot of newer businesses could and should use Ontraport if they want to take email seriously, but Active Campaign is pretty darn cheap and it has some functionality.

A lot of folks out there are probably using MailChimp or AWeber. I'm not religiously opposed to MailChimp or AWeber, but it's really not going to allow for tailored automation that could really boost sales.

Oftentimes one potential circumstance here is if the person buys the first product you would move them immediately into selling service. "Hey, thanks for buying our product." They would be pulled right away from products and you would now say, "Man, if you want us to help you implement these principles in your own business, you can come to us yada yada." We might have 6 specific emails for all buyers of product X. Does that make sense too?



Pat: Sure, so it's like "If the person buys this product, then they will be offered this." If they're offered this other product then they might get put somewhere else, so there's these little buckets.

Dan: If/then scenarios. If you're just using Aweber you could just think about it the way that we were just talking about here, Pat. If you have a more robust system such as Infusionsoft, Ontraport, or Active Campaign, then you could start to not just map linearly like what you and I just did in terms of offer order, but you could think about if/thens.

"Okay, for everybody that purchases this \$97, what am I doing with them? Everybody that doesn't purchase it but buys the \$27, what am I doing with them? And everybody that becomes a client for my service, what am I doing with them now? Should I put them on an email sequence that encourages referrals for other businesses that want their Facebook managed?"

You know what I mean? We can be thinking at deeper higher levels. In general most people don't even have an initial autoresponder though.

If you'd like here, Pat, I could just go into some general guidelines around forming your first autoresponder.

Pat: Let's do it, please. Thank you.

Dan: I will say this. I'm not dogmatic about any of this with respect to email. I've just seen a lot fail and I've seen a lot of people make 5 figures a month starting from absolute scratch, so I've seen a lot succeed and I've done the same thing myself.

Our Jiu-jitsu business started off making zero, and it took us quite a number of months to get to break \$50,000 to \$60,000 a month, but we learned a lot of hard lessons in email to get there and there's a lot of simple stuff to be implemented for the folks who are tuned in today.

This is a big one for me, an absolute takeaway for anybody who's tuned in right now, is your first email when somebody opts in for your thing, whatever your thing is. Your first email matters a lot because if someone doesn't open your first email, the likelihood of them opening the rest of your emails is pretty gruesome, so we really want to encourage opening the first email.



"Dan, how do I do that?" Well, I prefer a first email to really not be very what we would call whiz-bang or promotional. In other words, if your first email says, like for the Facebook guide we just talked about, "Awesome Facebook Marketing Right Here!!" – if you use exclamation points and caps in your first email, the spam filter might think that you are spam and everything else you send will be called spam, so I avoid exclamation points and all caps in the first email.

I like a professional title that exactly mentions the exact optin widget that they got, the exact lead bait that you got them in for, something like "Your 7 Facebook Sales Boosters Inside, or "Hey Bill, your 7 Facebook sales boosters inside." It's like you're acknowledging they just asked for this and you're providing it. How darn professional of you.

They know exactly what to expect. This is not a pitch. They expressed interest and you're giving it to them right then and there. Really not screwing up the first subject line is huge for long-term aggregate readership, so that's good initial advice.

Now what's inside of this first email? These are important tenets to bear in mind. If you have an autoresponder, think about how you could paint these into it. If you do not have an autoresponder, please be aware of these tenets as you start to create it.

First and foremost you want to thank them for their download and subscribing, and you want to provide what you promised. If you have a second email that eventually gives them the ebook that they wanted, you're sort of breaking from their expectations. They entered their email because they wanted to hear from you, yes, but they wanted the thing that they got, so it has to be evident that you're delivering. You're doing what you said you would. You're building trust. You're anchoring trust and you're giving value right away.

I see a lot of folks where it's like their second email has the thing that the people asked for, or maybe they don't even deliver it and they haven't realized that it doesn't deliver, or it's at the very bottom of the email. "P.S. Oh, by the way, I know you opted in for this. Here it is." It's like what the heck, man? That's not exactly how you do it. You wouldn't treat somebody like that in a physical restaurant. You don't want to treat them like that on the internet. Right away thank them for getting in on the thing, opting in. Provide them what they ask for.



Then I highly recommend, particularly for a newer online business, paint a little bit of the story in your business or your personality. If you're a business and not a personality, then just talk about the business.

If you can be a personality, which in my martial arts business, for example, I am, then I speak as that personality. "Hey, thanks so much for getting in on these 7 Facebook guides. My name is Chad O'Harris. I'm creator of WinningFacebookStrategies.com, and I've been marketing on Facebook for over 5 years. Like you, I yada yada yada."

"I struggled a lot with Facebook, and I learned from some of the absolute best and was able to sell my first business about three years ago, and I've been full-time helping other struggling business owners just like yourself to learn the fundamentals of Facebook and to be able to make a lot more money online." You explain who the heck you are and why they should pay attention to you.

If you're just like, "Hey, here's the ebook you wanted" and then they download it and then you email them the next day, what are they thinking, Pat? "Who's this guy? You gave me the thing already. Chill out. Who are you?" So tell them who you are and a little bit of your story.

Next up would be anchoring them short-term to pre-frame value, and anchor them long-term to pre-frame value. If your first email just delivers an ebook and cuts off, and you're not telling them why your emails are valuable and what amazing things you're going to teach them, they're not motivated to keep opening.

If you say, "Hey, here's the ebook you wanted. Thanks so much. I really appreciate it. Hey, catch you later. From Chad," it's like, "What? Why are you emailing me again, Chad? I don't understand this."

After Chad's whole breakdown of who he is and how he became successful and started helping others, he would say something like, "I'm glad you're now a subscriber to my Facebook Sales Boosters Insider Club" or whatever you want to call it. You don't have to come up with a name for it, I'm just inventing that.

"I know you just downloaded my free guide, and in the next few weeks I'm going to be sharing with you step-by-step video lessons on boosting Facebook engagement, setting up your Facebook paid campaign and driving more traffic and sales using Facebook marketing, without having a technical marketing background" blah blah blah.



Then say, "This newsletter is where I share my absolute best strategies on such-and-such, and I look forward to having you along for the journey and hearing of your success."

So we pre-frame what we're about to teach you and why it's going to be so great to hang out with us in the next few weeks, and then we're pre-framing long-term why you want to hang out with me, why you want to keep opening these emails, why I'm a guy that you want to welcome into your inbox, not why I'm a guy that you'd want to kick out. Does that make sense too?

Pat: Yeah, absolutely.

Dan: Cool, so pre-frame the short-term benefit – why you want to open the next email – and pre-frame long-term. We might wrap up the email with something like, "If you look inside the e-guide that I just gave you, the first Facebook sales booster that we talk about is a few of the easiest ways to improve Facebook engagement and be able to drive more traffic and sales with Facebook without even using paid advertising."

"Tomorrow I'll be breaking down this concept in a simple 3-minute video that I know for a fact is going to be helpful. Feel free to email me anytime if you have questions, and thanks so much for being a subscriber. Enjoy the ebook and talk to you soon. From Chad."

Now I've given what I said (I'm building trust). I'm introducing myself (why do they care about me, what's my story, why am I credible). I'm pre-framing short-term benefits (why you want to open my emails all week long this week or even tomorrow). And I'm pre-framing long-term benefits. At the same time I'm welcoming you, I'm nice, I'm cordial.

Most first emails, Pat, you've experienced are probably missing the vast majority of those elements.

Pat: I love this, and this is so critical because if you don't do this right they're not going to open every other email you've worked on, including your broadcast emails that will come out eventually.

Dan: Yeah, if your readership tanks within your first 3 because you mess up your expectations, because you don't give them a reason to open, because your subject lines are not appealing or they're too scary and markety right away too early, if your



readership tanks in the first 3 emails, just like you said, you're going to be sending out broadcasts two years from now and you wish that Billy was still with you reading every single email, but you have a huge percentage of people that are long gone.

That's a lot of potential revenue, a lot of eyeballs, a lot of clicks that could have gained something from your service or products, but now they won't because you turned them off.

Pat: I like that. I do a lot of those things right, but there's also a lot of things I could improve as well, so right after we hang up I'm going to go check my email service provider and see how I'm doing. It's been a while.

Dan: I very rarely do an interview without hearing something like that, which is always somewhat affirming.

I can talk a little bit about driving sales without being salesy, because I think this is everybody else's concern, Pat. After you've introduced yourself, how do you sell without being a nuisance?

Pat: Yeah, let's talk about that, but real quick you mentioned the first email. I think people are like, "Okay, how many emails do I send before the sale email? How many in-between the \$97 and the \$27 product? What do I put in those emails?" Do you have any thoughts on that really quick?

Dan: Here's what I'll give you. First and foremost, the template I just provided is very much not like "Fit your business into my template." What I talked about was principles and tenets that are going to encourage engagement and sales. That's it.

I'm not telling anybody, "Oh, here's exactly how you structure it." I'm saying, "Here's some general things to bear in mind. You've got to build trust. You've got to give them their stuff. You've got to give them short-term and long-term reasons to hang out, and they have to know why the heck they're learning from you and not the next dude that's got 50 emails coming in their inbox too." It's just basic principles, but I put it in a format that was like a template for the ease of use of the audience.

I'm not a dogmatic person with marketing. I'm data driven, split testing all sorts of elements of email. I'm just talking about in general what seems to be conducive to winning, to engagement, to readership. Now let's do the same with sales.



You asked some great questions. How many emails before the sale? It's potentially wildly different from business to business, but in general if you're selling ecommerce I normally will prefer to have 2-3 emails that are mostly introductory education and trust-building before I go overt sale into the inbox.

That's me licking my finger and putting it up in the air. That's me kind of getting a feel. I've done a lot of email campaigns. I've coached a lot of people through email campaigns. I've seen people start from nothing and go to \$30,000/month selling their hobby online or video courses or service or whatever, and I've seen some stuff tank and some stuff not tank. In general I prefer that.

In some instances selling off the bat is going to be fine, and I would prefer coming off too strong as to coming off weak because I like paying bills. I'm big on that. Electricity is huge. Otherwise I wouldn't be able to Skype with you, know what I mean? It'd be really hard to Skype with you if I didn't have electricity.

What happens when you do 12 emails before you give anybody an opportunity to buy is your open rate percentage on email 13, 14, 15, and 16 when you're trying to sell is much lower than it is in your first half a dozen emails, much lower. If you're counting on those emails really lifting the revenue needle, you're in trouble.

So in general I prefer 2-3 emails of education before I go into overt selling of products, but let me explain something. What I never, never, never do is slam the door shut on money. I don't slam the door shut on money.

Here's how you slam the door shut on money. Your first email leads to a YouTube video, which might be your YouTube video but it's just a YouTube video. In other words, there's no Buy Now link, there's nothing to purchase on the side, there's videos of Katy Perry on the right-hand side that are way cooler than your video, and you're just sending them to a web property.

Here's the way I imagine it, Pat. If you imagine every click in your first 6 emails – because some of them are these clicks, and these are the clicks that pay your bills and people forget about this – if you imagine that every click (as a mental experiment) that comes through your first 6 emails, that person has got a credit card burning a hole in their pocket. It's burning. They've got to buy what you have. They need to learn. They need this in their life. If you give them no opportunity to purchase, you're doing yourself a disservice because they're going to go buy elsewhere.



So what I prefer to do is let's say my first educational email like I just said in this Facebook example is about increasing engagement, so guess where I'm not going to link? YouTube, because I have no control over YouTube. I don't want their ads because their ads ain't for me. Their ad's for somebody else. I've got bills to pay.

I put my video on my website, and underneath that video I'll have a breakdown, some bullet points, yada yada, and maybe at the bottom of that blog post I'll have a link to my \$97 course where they could buy more if they wanted. But am I throttling it down their throat? No. I'm just leaving the door open to sales.

Or when the video is in the middle on this blog post, there's a big long description, very useful, very fruitful information, on the right-hand side. I have a nice illustrious little box that says, "Click here to see some of the successful case studies of my Facebook marketing clients." Am I throttling it down their throat? Am I shoving my services down their gullet? No, no, I'm not, but I'm leaving the sales door open. Does that make sense?

Pat: Yeah, absolutely.

Dan: In other words, never link to something where someone who's superhot couldn't buy if they wanted to. If you want to educate them for 3 emails, bless you. Go ahead and do it. But at the bottom of your post on the right-hand side underneath the video in a little box on the upper right, make it clear that you're not pushy, but if they wanted to buy the door's still open.

Those first 3 emails are going to make you money if you let them make you money. If you close the door on sales, they'll go buy somewhere else.

Pat: So you wouldn't recommend ever having an email that doesn't have a link in it?

Dan: I'm very much not about emails that don't have links in them. If you have a particular example of an instance where you'd want to do that, just lay it on me and I'll talk about what else could be done, or maybe it's a good example that I wouldn't argue with, but let me know when you would have an email without a link.

Pat: In my email campaign, or at least in my current autoresponder, most of my emails don't have links. Maybe it's a special unique case for me because I'm in the internet marketing space where everybody's getting bombarded with offers and links all



the time and that's my way of standing out. For me it does work because people respond and they go, "Wow, you're not selling anything. That's awesome."

Dan: Yes, I think people do like you for that, and I'll admit I like you for that. I think that's cool. You're very much like a regular dude, totally not a pro-salesman guy, and actually I think that is part of why people like the Pat Flynn show and why people actually trust you a lot. It's tough to say that it works unless we split-tested it. We could say that it works, but unless we split-tested it we can't say that.

I'm going to use an example, and you tell me if it's a reasonable example. Email #4 in the Pat Flynn sequence just talks about your first struggles. It's like 400-500 words and talks about your struggles starting online and how you learned about tying a business to your passion would really be what led to success, and you would advise other people do the same. Then you tell them about what's coming up tomorrow and you sign off.

Pat: It's very similar – motivational, doing something like that.

Dan: The purpose of that email, Pat, is to encourage trust, encourage engagement and relationship with you. They relate to you.

Let's think, is it possible to have a link that would detract from all of that? If you had a big link at the bottom that said, "Buy Jeff Walker's new Product Launch Formula, you schmucks," that would probably sort of hurt your relationship thing that you were talking about.

But maybe you said, "I actually took some embarrassing photos of my first online work space when I got laid off. If you see the difference between then and now, it's positively amazing, and if anything it's proof that absolutely anybody can succeed online. I think you guys will like these goofy photos. Check it out," and then it goes into a little bit of your story. It has a younger Pat Flynn with his laptop in his boxer shorts or something, and then it's got your new place and how you came up just like them.

Those pictures, in my personal opinion, wouldn't make them say, "Screw you, Pat Flynn. I see that relationship you're trying to build. I hate you." I would actually suppose that those might help a bit.

If on the right-hand side there was a list of your podcasts, maybe also something about Aweber, just a random thing on your side about Aweber, and because you have a lot of subscribers let's say you pump X number of thousands of humans through, and in email



2 and 3, which currently have no links, you continue to relationship-build but a few of them sign up for Aweber, I know for a fact that affiliate commissions on Aweber and hosting is sort of a big part of your shebang, so a couple more of those on recurring ain't bad.

I'm not telling you to change, by the way, Pat.

Pat: This is why I love doing the podcast. I'm learning as I go. I don't know all the answers and that's why I have you here.

Dan: I didn't show up to be like, "Oh man, I can't wait till I tell Pat Flynn what to do."

Pat: But it would also be cool to put some of this to the test.

Dan: All day long. Steve Chou did and that's why he gave me some props, and that's probably why I'm even on the show in the first place.

Pat: I love this. I love when people tell me what I'm doing wrong or what I could do to improve. This is what it's all about. Hopefully everybody out there can see you don't have to be perfect. I'm not saying I'm wrong, but I'm also not saying that I'm completely right either.

Dan: We're just juggling ideas.

Pat: Yeah, this is cool. I love this.

Dan: We're just presenting reasonable marketing ideas, and some of them are new and cool. Honestly, Pat, if I had a podcast show, or whatever my show was, and I interviewed you, you would teach me 400 things in the first 20 minutes, so I very much hope that at least something is useful here.

My supposition is that if you read me any of your emails that had a deep purpose – this is relationship, this is trust, this is motivation, fill in the blank, this is basics of marketing and positioning, whatever it is – but there's no link, I would ask, "Is it possible to put together a great video?" or probably link to an existing one so you don't even have to recreate new stuff, hint hint.



“Is it possible to put up a video, some pictures, or a short blog post that does not for one fragment of a second take away from that purpose?” It gets people used to clicking and used to continuing to build a relationship with you.

And is it reasonable to say that of the tens of thousands of people who land on your website, we wouldn't get a few more folks to buy some Aweber and a few more folks to sign up for Blue Host if it's at the bottom of that blog from email 3, or the sidebar of that blog of email 6? You see what I mean?

Pat: Yeah. I do that already in some of the emails, where I link to a post that relates to the email. I should probably implement that a little bit more. You said something that I think is really, really important – getting people used to clicking.

Dan: Get them used to it. You're driving clicks. Eyeballs on offers. Pat, you're not a hard salesman and that's a beautiful thing. I think it's a wonderful thing. I think that's why people are listening, but you do not have to be a hard salesman to have your products or your affiliate products on the right-hand side of a blog post that builds that relationship, builds the picture of Pat in his boxer shorts. People love Pat and they want to be like Pat and they see themselves in their boxer shorts.

I think any purpose you want to enhance, we could do so with content that takes them to a place where, hypothetically, if they had a credit card and it was literally burning a hole in their pocket, that they could spend money somehow.

You better believe that a lot of your readers on email 4, 5, or 6 are hungry to buy something. They're hungry to solve their problem. You do not have to hard-sell them. You don't even have to mention a sale. My supposition is might it be worth encouraging clicks to get them used to that habit, but giving them more and more opportunities to traffic your site and be around your affiliate stuff.

To be frank, if it means 10 or 15 more Awebers a month, or 10 or 15 more Blue Hosts a month, I don't know, man. I like the sound of that.

Pat: So would you say to everybody out there that you should include links in every single email?

Dan: Yup, 8 days a week. Let me give you a little bit of a tip on links as well. There's a lot of potential strategies and, like I said, Pat, I'm not dogmatic. I talk about principles, I implement principles, and I split test my pants off.



One facet that I tend to dig in terms of best practices for linking is ask yourself this question. For folks who are tuned in, ask yourself this question. If someone reading your email only read the blue stuff, would they want to click and be excited about what they were going to see?

Pat: The blue stuff being the links.

Dan: The blue stuff being the links, because just like with a sales page, you know how there's kind of the multiple readership pass. Some people are only going to read your sub-heads. They have a bunch of sub-heads going down the page. Same thing with emails.

Anybody out there right now who has a way of proving that everybody's reading all their emails, I'm leaving Boston and I'm moving somewhere really close to you because you must be like a wizard of some kind. You must command a literal kind of deity-level marketing capacity, because people don't. People are eating Cheetos and watching Die Hard while they're reading your email, or they're in their car while eating Cheetos and watching Die Hard.

That's just tough. You don't have their whole attention, especially when they're in stop and go traffic. They've got to look up from the movie. They've got to eat the Cheetos. So at the end of the day a lot of times people are just going to read what's around the link and particularly the link itself.

If the only links in your emails are "Click here" or "Watch it now" or just a link like [Billysmarketingblog/article6](#), if those are the only kind of links and none of them by themselves are a benefit-driven interesting supposition to go receive more cool free content or a product, then you may be in trouble because there's a large segment of your email following that ain't reading your words, pal. They're just looking at what's bold. They're looking at what pops out, and they're clicking and going back to the inbox.

Pat: So when you link to something in your emails, make sure that the entire link text describes what it is that the person is going to get.

Dan: It's a decent best practice. I'm not going to say it should be dogmatic, but if you had let's say 15 autoresponders and the only things you linked to were [Billysmarketingblog.com/article6/facebook-ads-mastery](#) or



Billysmarketingblog.com/freewebinar or Billysmarketingblog.com/video7-ppc-basics – if that’s all you had, or you had links that said “Boost your Facebook sales now” or “Let me help you boost your Facebook sales on this free webinar” or “Free Facebook marketing webinar live with Bill Stevens” or whoever the guy is, arrow arrow or in brackets, however you want to segment the link –

If you could take the first 12 emails that had links that were only Billysmarketingblog.com/ and they were just literal URLs, and then you split tested that against 12 emails that said the main value prop and the reason for clicking and what exactly they’re going to get when they click in the actual blue text, I would literally put my mother’s IRA on the latter. Does that make sense?

Pat: Yeah.

Dan: I would put my mother’s IRA on that, like my mom’s money, like it’s a big deal.

I’m not saying you should do it every time, but if you’re looking for a best practice as to how to link in general, adhere to the fact that you do not command godly attention from the humans who read your emails. Many of them just want to know if this is worth clicking.

The only way they know is by you setting proper expectations and presenting benefits in the link text itself. “Click here to see my 3 favorite takedowns for competition” or “Click here for my 3 best healthy dessert recipes” as opposed to dawnsdesserts.net/blahblahblah.

If you’re looking for a general best practice I would adhere to the latter. I see too many people saying linking “Click here” or “Read this” or just putting URLs. In general I would recommend what I just mentioned.

Pat: Nice. That’s a great tip. As we finish up here I want to go back to something that you said we were going to talk about that’s very important – how to not come across too salesy in email – that I know a lot of people are about.

Now, I’ll go back to Derek Halpern and Social Triggers, and he said this on my show that he doesn’t sell often, but when he does he sells and he sells hard because he wants to make sure that people get the value that he’s providing. He’s doing his audience a disservice if he doesn’t convince them to get the product.



I believe that but I also know that people struggle with that. Selling hard isn't easy and comfortable, and can be a turnoff for some people as well. What are your thoughts on this? How do we craft this email to best present the product that we want the person to buy?

Dan: A couple things. I'll talk a little bit philosophy-level. First and foremost, if you're too afraid of selling I actually submit there's a legitimate problem. I think that's sort of beyond business. If you're too afraid of selling, either you are selling something that you don't believe in and this feels wrong because you're not doing any good – and by golly, get out of that business – or you have a limiting fear that's an actual problem that likely extends well beyond business.

I believe that it's like a sin committed against your own human potential, like you're doing bad things by holding that fear if you have no reason to have it, because you're going to hold yourself back in business. You might not bring up difficult conversations with people you love.

Having some fear about anything without a reason behind it – in my opinion if you're going to be an entrepreneur you've got to be tough, so I don't have too much sympathy, but what I will tell you is this. If you don't believe in what you're selling, stop selling it and sell something else.

Sell something you believe in, something that you believe serves benefit, that you believe is useful, that you believe is beneficial, that you believe in in terms of a product, because by golly you don't want to have your soul sucked away by your job.

If you're really intimidated by sales in general, take some sales classes, get used to it, and be in business, because if you sell nothing you'll be out of business really quick and then that will be tough because you'll need to pay your bills. You'll need to be on Skype like me and Pat are, and that will be very hard if you're not able to pay your bills.

That's like over-arching. I very much think that if anybody is trepidatious about selling in any way, shape, or form, check yourself.

Pat: That's absolutely huge. A lot of people need to hear that, so thank you.

Dan: You want to be an entrepreneur? I'm not playing games. Check yourself. I'm not going to open up about that one, but regardless let me move on.



Next up in terms of emails, I think that you can have your emails be a little bit of a representation of some of your own style. Some folks, like yourself, Pat, for example, you are not a hard sales guy and you don't really come across like a hard sales guy in life. You're a nice dude and that's also part of your differentiation. That's a little bit of what sets you apart, so that's part of your positioning. Playing it soft I think might serve you, especially because you've built your positioning around it.

What I will say is some people feel like hard selling is always a bad thing. What I'll say is there are companies like Oracle, which some people may have heard of, which is sort of in existence because people sold things hard. I don't know much about Ellison and I'm not going to judge his character, but I don't believe Oracle is like an entity of evil per se. I don't know, for all I know they're burning villages in Ghana or something, but from what I know they actually sell a useful service there. For database stuff they were some of the first in the game.

It's good stuff. A lot of businesses run on that, but they wouldn't run on that unless some dudes had the chutzpah to run up a bunch of flights of stairs and knock on doors until their knuckles bled. So selling by itself is not a bad thing.

Some people feel like if you're overt about selling it's poor. What I will say is do this. Here's what I would recommend to the folks tuned in, Pat, and I'll give one little quick tip on this as well. Subscribe to a bunch of folks. If you're not already subscribed to Pat, subscribe, but subscribe to other people too. Find other people in information marketing. Find other people in your niche. Find other online marketers and get a feel for how other people sell.

I could explain six different non-super salesy ways to sell, and I will talk about a few, but to be honest you'll get a great feel for how Jeff Walker sells, or Ryan Deiss has so many different web properties, so how they soft- and/or hard-sell there, and how Pat communicates, or folks like Andrew Warner or John Lee Dumas.

I was with him in October on his show, and the way that he writes copy in general is sort of unique to him. It's very much representative of his personality. Tune in to other people and get a feel for, "Who do I want to sell like, and what would be coherent to my brand?"

I would not tell anybody in your audience, Pat, that they should be a hard-seller or should be a soft-seller. I will tell them not to have fears, because you're an



entrepreneur and a grown-up, but what I will tell them to do is to tune into others and get a feel for what's genuine and true and what might work best for their business.

In terms of non-salesy ways to sell, I'll give you a couple quick ones anybody in the audience can use, and I know they work because these work in my business and the folks that we coach as well.

One is take your highest-converting sales page, or maybe it's an appointment-setting page – whatever your conversion page is – and put a content video above the conversion page and a good solid description of that video on the right-hand side of the video. Put a little headline above the video and then your best sales page right below it, and have the sales page related to the video content.

Let me give you an example in the fitness space. I have a fellow who works with me now who's on Infusionsoft and we sort of convinced him. He's doing 5 figures a month here selling fitness stuff and he sells sort of hard-core fitness.

Some of his list doesn't want to get thrown at the same sales page 500 times, so instead of doing that he took a video about let's say tire-flipping or using a sledgehammer for building explosive power, and he put that video above the sales page, with its own unique headline and a good solid description with some good bullet points about how to use this as a workout tool to build explosive power.

Right underneath that was the sales page, but in his email he did not talk about the sales page, and if people didn't want to buy they were not interrupted. They just watched the video and that's it. But the people who were curious scrolled down a little bit, maybe they scrolled down some more, and a percentage of them would buy.

He found that although it was a slightly lower percentage than an overt sale, he's still getting a good number of sales by simply linking to content, and he was getting no angry messages back.

I've seen that from niche to niche to niche. Take whatever is highest converting, throw great and related content right above it (preferably video), and send people to the video and talk only about the video in your email. You'll still drive a phenomenal number of sales if your sales page is good.

Pat: Love that. That's a good one. Thank you. Man, we've talked about a lot of stuff. I can smell the smoke from people's notes that they're taking right now. Dude, this has



been awesome. Thank you so much. I'm definitely going to implement a lot of these things. I'm considering using some higher-level email marketing solutions in the future as well, so we'll have to talk about that at some point as well.

Why don't you let everybody know where they can find out more about you and what you're up to.

Dan: Yeah, big time. It's CLVBoost.com. It stands for Customer Lifetime Value. Folks that want to learn more from me can go to CLVBoost.com. We've got our blog and everything else, but importantly we have a white paper right on the main page of CLVBoost.com, which involves some of our conversion strategies for doubling your purchases or appointments from email marketing.

These are basic principles and tenets that you can plug into any email marketing strategy, whether you have one in place or not. Again that's at CLVBoost.com, the main page. You can grab the white paper even if you want nothing more from me but just some more tips to implement for yourself.

If people want to reach out to me directly, go ahead and hit me at dan@clvboost.com and let me know that you came from Pat, just so I know, because I get a lot of emails, and I will be way more than happy to say hello, answer questions, hang out and respond to folks from there. So you can grab the white paper at CLVBoost.com or just hit me up myself. I'll be happy to hear from you if you came from Pat.

Pat: Man, you rock. Thank you so much.

Dan: Thank you, Pat. Glad to be here, brother.

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I hope you enjoyed that interview with Dan from CLVBoost.com – a lot of great information, and of course he talked about that white paper that he's giving away to help you capture and convert even more subscribers. It's a free PDF you can get on the home page at CLVBoost.com.

Thank you, Dan, for all the great advice. Perhaps by the time this goes live I will have already implemented a lot of what you talked about, some very actionable straightforward strategies to help all of us out with our email marketing and



autoresponders and to help us increase our sales. Hopefully you'll put some of that into action as well.

If you'd like to leave a comment on this episode, check out the transcript, or check out all the links and resources mentioned in this episode, quickly head on over to SmartPassiveIncome.com/session159.

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Thank you again as always for listening in. I really appreciate you, and I appreciate all the love on iTunes as well with the ratings, reviews, and comments. Thank you. I love



you guys and I look forward to serving you next week in Episode 160 of the SPI podcast. Thanks so much, take care, and have an amazing week. Cheers!

Outro: Thanks for listening to the Smart Passive Income podcast at www.SmartPassiveIncome.com.

Links and Resources Mentioned in This Episode:

Dan Faggella's links:

CLVBoost.com

Email: dan@clvboost.com

Other Resources:

[Smart Passive Income Podcast Episode 143](#): Actionable Email Marketing Strategies

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