

Lesson 8 — Build an Audience You Own: Email Marketing

Absolutely. Lesson 8 is where students begin moving from “**I create content and hope people see it**” to “**I am building an audience I can continue to serve.**”

The NorthStar system emphasises building relationships and communities, creating feedback loops, and developing sustainable systems rather than relying on short-term activity. The Knowledge Base similarly highlights community engagement, user-centricity, and scalable systems.

For this lesson, I'd teach email as a **relationship and value channel**, not simply as a place to send affiliate links.

Lesson 8 — Build Your Email List & Your Own Audience

Lesson objective

By the end of this lesson, students will understand:

- Why building an email list can strengthen an affiliate business.
- The difference between an audience you reach and an audience you can communicate with directly.
- What a lead magnet is.
- How to create a simple lead magnet.
- How to create an opt-in.
- What happens after someone joins your list.
- How to write a simple welcome sequence.
- How to nurture an audience without constantly selling.
- How affiliate recommendations can naturally fit into emails.
- How to create their first simple email funnel.

1. Welcome to Lesson 8

So far, you've been learning how to attract people.

You've learned how to:

- Choose a niche.

- Understand your audience.
- Find relevant products.
- Create useful content.
- Validate your ideas.
- Generate affiliate clicks.

But there's a problem with relying entirely on social media.

You don't control:

- The algorithm.
- How often people see your content.
- What happens to your reach.
- Whether someone remembers you tomorrow.

That's why we want to start building something of our own:

A relationship with your audience.

One of the simplest ways to do that is through email.

2. What Is an Email List?

An email list is a group of people who have voluntarily given you permission to communicate with them by email.

For example:

Someone discovers your content.

↓

They find your free guide.

↓

They enter their email address.

↓

They receive the guide.

↓

You continue providing useful information.

This creates an ongoing relationship.

3. Audience vs Owned Relationship

Imagine you have:

10,000 followers on a social platform.

That's valuable.

But your ability to reach them depends partly on that platform.

Now imagine:

1,000 people have voluntarily joined your email list.

You have a direct communication channel with those people, subject to their consent and applicable email rules.

The lesson isn't:

“Social media is bad.”

It's:

Don't build your entire business on a platform you don't control.

Use platforms to discover people.

Then give interested people an opportunity to stay connected with you.

4. The Simple Audience Journey

Here's the model:

Social/content

↓

Helpful resource

↓

Email sign-up

↓

Welcome



Useful emails



Trust



Relevant recommendations



Potential affiliate commission

This is an extension of the customer journey you built in Lesson 7.

5. Why Would Someone Give You Their Email?

This is the question students need to ask.

Don't simply say:

“Give me your email.”

Give them a reason.

That reason is usually called a:

Lead Magnet

A lead magnet is a useful free resource offered in exchange for someone voluntarily joining your email list.

6. What Makes a Good Lead Magnet?

A good lead magnet should solve a **specific problem**.

Not:

“My Ultimate Guide to Everything.”

Instead:

“The Beginner's 10-Point Home Fitness Checklist.”

Specific.

Simple.

Useful.

Actionable.

7. Lead Magnet Examples

Depending on the niche, students could create:

Checklist

“10 Things to Check Before Buying Your First Camera.”

Guide

“The Beginner's Guide to Starting a Vegetable Garden.”

Cheat sheet

“The Beginner's Photography Settings Cheat Sheet.”

Comparison guide

“5 Home Fitness Equipment Options Compared.”

Planner

“30-Day Beginner Fitness Planner.”

Resource list

“25 Tools for Starting Your Online Business.”

Worksheet

“Choose Your First Home Gym Equipment Worksheet.”

8. The Best Lead Magnet Formula

Teach students:

Specific Audience + Specific Problem + Simple Solution

For example:

Audience

Beginner gardeners.

Problem

They don't know what to plant.

Lead magnet

“The Beginner's 10-Easy-Vegetables Planting Guide.”

That's much more compelling than:

“Join My Email List.”

9. Don't Overcomplicate the Lead Magnet

A common beginner mistake is spending three weeks creating a 100-page ebook.

You don't need that.

A useful five-page checklist can be more valuable than a 100-page document nobody reads.

Remember the NorthStar principle:

Start small, test, learn and improve.

Your first lead magnet is an experiment.

You can improve it later.

10. Your Lead Magnet Should Connect to Your Affiliate Products

This is where affiliate marketing becomes strategic.

Imagine your affiliate niche is:

Beginner photography.

Your lead magnet:

“The Beginner's Camera Buying Checklist.”

Your affiliate content:

“5 Beginner Cameras Compared.”

Your email content:

“How to choose the right camera.”

Now the journey makes sense.

The free resource helps them.

The content educates them.

The affiliate recommendation becomes a natural next step.

11. The Golden Rule

Teach students this:

Your free resource should be genuinely useful even if the person never buys anything from you.

Why?

Because that's how you build trust.

If your “free guide” is really just:

“Buy these five products.”

people will quickly recognise that.

Give them something useful first.

12. The Opt-In

An opt-in is the point where someone voluntarily subscribes to your email list.

A simple opt-in might say:

Headline

Get the Beginner's Home Fitness Checklist

Subheadline

Everything you need to choose your first pieces of home workout equipment.

Button

Get the Free Checklist

That's enough.

You don't need a complicated sales page to begin testing the idea.

13. The Opt-In Formula

Students can use:

Get [RESOURCE] so you can [DESIRED OUTCOME] without [COMMON PROBLEM].

Example:

Get the Beginner Photography Checklist so you can choose your first camera without wasting money on equipment you don't need.

14. What Happens After They Subscribe?

This is where many beginners make a mistake.

Someone joins your list.

Then...

Nothing.

Or they immediately receive:

"BUY THIS!"

Instead, create a simple welcome experience.

15. The Welcome Sequence

A welcome sequence is a series of emails sent to a new subscriber.

For this course, let's create a simple **5-email sequence**.

Email 1 — Deliver the Free Resource

Purpose:

Give them what they requested.

Example:

Subject: Here's your beginner's checklist

Hi [Name],

Thanks for joining.

Here's the checklist you requested:

[Resource]

I'd recommend starting with the first three steps today rather than trying to do everything at once.

Over the next few emails, I'll share some simple tips to help you get started.

Speak soon,

[Name]

Email 2 — Help Them With the Problem

Purpose:

Give immediate additional value.

Example:

Subject: The biggest beginner mistake

Explain one common mistake.

Then provide a simple solution.

No hard selling.

The goal is:

“This person is actually useful.”

Email 3 — Teach Something

Purpose:

Build expertise and trust.

For example:

Subject: How to choose the right equipment

Explain the key factors someone should consider.

You might mention product categories, but focus on helping them understand how to make a good decision.

Email 4 — Introduce a Relevant Solution

Now you can naturally introduce an affiliate recommendation.

For example:

Subject: A few options worth considering

Explain:

- What the product does.
- Who it's suitable for.
- Why it might be useful.
- Limitations.
- Alternatives.

Then provide the relevant affiliate link and appropriate disclosure.

Email 5 — Invite the Next Step

The final email could say:

Subject: What's your next step?

Summarise what they've learned.

Then invite them to:

- Read another guide.
- Watch a tutorial.
- Compare products.
- Explore a recommended solution.
- Reply with a question.

The objective is to continue the relationship.

16. The 80/20 Mindset

You can introduce a simple principle:

Most of your communication should create value; some should create commercial opportunities.

Don't turn your email list into a daily stream of affiliate promotions.

If every email says:

“Here's another product!”

your audience will quickly become less engaged.

Instead:

Teach.

Help.

Answer questions.

Share useful information.

Then occasionally:

Recommend something relevant.

17. Email Doesn't Have to Be Complicated

A beginner email can simply be:

One problem.

↓

One useful idea.

↓

One example.

↓

One next step.

That's it.

You don't need to write a magazine every week.

18. The One-Problem Email

Example:

Subject

Why beginners buy too much equipment

Problem

Beginners often think they need lots of equipment.

Insight

You actually need to start with the equipment that supports your specific goal.

Example

If your goal is basic strength training, you may not need a room full of machines.

CTA

“I've put together a simple beginner equipment guide here.”

That's a complete email.

19. Use Questions From Your Audience

Remember Lesson 5?

You created a list of audience questions.

Now your email list gives you another source of content.

If someone asks:

“Which camera should I buy?”

You could turn that into:

“How to choose your first camera.”

If five people ask the same question, that's even more interesting.

Your audience is telling you what to teach.

20. Encourage Replies

One of the simplest ways to create a feedback loop is to ask:

“What's the biggest challenge you're facing right now?”

Then invite them to reply.

Now you're not simply broadcasting.

You're listening.

That aligns strongly with the NorthStar emphasis on **feedback loops, community engagement and customer relationships**.

21. Your Email List Is Also a Research Tool

This is powerful.

Your email list isn't just:

A place to sell.

It's also:

A place to learn.

You can discover:

- What people struggle with.
- What they want to learn.
- What products they're considering.
- What language they use.
- What objections they have.
- What problems are most urgent.

That information can improve your entire affiliate business.

22. Turn Replies Into Content

Imagine three subscribers ask:

“What's the difference between these two products?”

You've just discovered a content opportunity.

Create:

“Product A vs Product B: Which Is Better?”

Then send it to your list.

Now your audience is helping you decide what to create.

That's the feedback loop:

Listen → Create → Share → Measure → Listen → Improve.

23. Email and Affiliate Recommendations

When you include an affiliate recommendation, make it relevant.

For example:

“Several people have asked what equipment I would recommend for beginners, so I put together a comparison of the options I think are worth considering.”

That's contextual.

Then explain:

- Why each option may be useful.
- Who it suits.
- Limitations.
- Relevant alternatives.

Don't pretend there's one universally perfect product.

24. Affiliate Disclosure in Email

Students should be transparent when they use affiliate links.

For example:

“Some of the links below are affiliate links, which means I may receive a commission if you make a qualifying purchase through them, at no additional cost to you.”

Again, the exact disclosure requirements depend on the applicable laws, regulations, platform and affiliate programme.

The principle is simple:

Be transparent.

25. Don't Spam Your List

Email marketing isn't:

“Send as many emails as possible.”

It's:

“Send useful emails that people actually want to receive.”

Respect:

- Consent
- Frequency expectations
- Unsubscribe requests
- Applicable email marketing laws
- Platform rules

A healthy list is more valuable than a huge list full of disengaged subscribers.

26. Quality Over Quantity

Imagine:

List A

10,000 subscribers.

Most don't open or engage.

List B

1,000 subscribers.

Many actively read, click and reply.

Which list would you rather have?

Potentially the second.

Again, the goal isn't simply:

More people.

It's:

More of the right people who value what you provide.

27. The Simple Email Content Plan

Students can use five types of emails.

1. Teach

“Here's how to...”

2. Solve

“Here's how to fix...”

3. Explain

“Here's what you need to know about...”

4. Share

“Here's something I discovered...”

5. Recommend

“Here are some options worth considering...”

This gives them an easy rotation.

28. A Simple Weekly Email Rhythm

For beginners, keep it manageable.

Email 1

Teach something useful.

Email 2

Answer a common question.

Email 3

Recommend something relevant.

They don't necessarily need to send three emails every week.

The principle is:

Choose a frequency you can maintain consistently without creating burnout.

That aligns with NorthStar's focus on sustainable systems and growth that supports rather than drains the person building the business.

29. Your Email Content Formula

Give students this:

Subject

Create curiosity around a real problem.

↓

Opening

Identify the problem.

↓

Value

Give one useful idea.

↓

Example

Make it practical.

↓

Recommendation

Only if relevant.

↓

CTA

Give one clear next step.

30. Subject Line Examples

Problem

“Still struggling with _____?”

Mistake

“The beginner mistake I see all the time”

Curiosity

“You probably don't need this...”

How-to

“How to choose your first _____”

Comparison

“A vs B: which should you choose?”

Recommendation

“3 options worth considering”

Keep them honest.

Don't use clickbait that doesn't deliver what the subject promises.

31. Your Simple Email Funnel

Now connect everything.

Traffic

Your content attracts someone.

↓

Lead magnet

You offer a useful resource.

↓

Opt-in

They voluntarily join your list.

↓

Welcome sequence

You provide value.



Ongoing emails

You continue educating.



Relevant affiliate recommendation

You help them evaluate a solution.



Affiliate click

They explore the offer.



Qualifying action

Potential commission.

32. Example: Gardening Affiliate Business

Let's put it into practice.

Niche

Beginner gardening.

Audience

People with small gardens.

Problem

They don't know what to plant.

Lead magnet

"10 Easy Vegetables for Small Gardens."

Email 1

Deliver the guide.

Email 2

"The biggest beginner gardening mistake."

Email 3

“How much sunlight do your plants need?”

Email 4

“5 beginner-friendly gardening tools.”

Email 5

“My simple small-garden starter setup.”

The affiliate recommendations now fit naturally into the customer's journey.

33. Example: Photography Affiliate Business

Content

“How to Choose Your First Camera.”

↓

Lead magnet

“**First Camera Buying Checklist.**”

↓

Email 1

Deliver checklist.

↓

Email 2

Explain camera basics.

↓

Email 3

Explain common beginner mistakes.

↓

Email 4

Compare three beginner cameras.

↓

Email 5

Help them choose based on their goals.

Now the email list becomes part of the education and decision-making journey.

34. Don't Build a Complicated Funnel Yet

Students may see complicated marketing funnels online.

Don't let that overwhelm them.

For this stage, they need:

One useful resource.

One opt-in.

One welcome sequence.

One relevant affiliate offer.

That's enough to learn from.

NorthStar's MVP approach supports building the smallest workable version, gathering feedback and iterating rather than overbuilding at the beginning.

35. The Lead Magnet Creation Exercise

Now let's build one.

Step 1 — Audience

I help:

Step 2 — Problem

They struggle with:

Step 3 — Desired outcome

They want:

Step 4 — Lead magnet

I could create:

Step 5 — Promise

“This resource will help you _____ without _____.”

36. Create Your Opt-In

Headline

Get Your Free _____

Subheadline

Learn how to _____ without _____.

Three benefits

By downloading this, you'll learn:

- _____
- _____
- _____

CTA

Get My Free Guide

37. Create Your Five Emails

Email 1

Purpose: Deliver the resource.

Subject:

Main value:

CTA:

Email 2

Purpose: Solve a problem.

Subject:

Problem:

Solution:

Email 3

Purpose: Teach.

Subject:

Lesson:

CTA:

Email 4

Purpose: Recommend.

Subject:

Product/solution:

Why it may help:

Who it's for:

Who it's not for:

CTA:

Email 5

Purpose: Continue the relationship.

Subject:

Question:

Next step:

38. Your Email List Feedback Loop

Once students have subscribers, teach them to watch for:

- Replies
- Questions
- Clicks
- Unsubscribes
- Which emails get read/engaged with, where their email platform provides that data
- Which topics generate responses
- Which recommendations get interest

Then ask:

“What is my audience telling me?”

That information should influence future content.

39. The Continue / Improve / Remove Framework

Every few weeks, review your emails.

Continue

What's clearly useful?

Improve

What gets some interest but could be better?

Remove

What's consistently irrelevant?

This keeps the email system lean.

40. Lesson 8 Quick Check

Question 1

What is a lead magnet?

- A. A paid advertisement
- B. A useful free resource offered in exchange for voluntary email sign-up
- C. An affiliate programme
- D. A social media algorithm

Answer: B

Question 2

What should happen after someone joins your email list?

- A. Immediately send them lots of sales messages
- B. Provide the promised resource and begin providing useful value
- C. Never email them
- D. Send unrelated offers

Answer: B

Question 3

Why can an email list be valuable?

- A. It guarantees sales
- B. It gives you a direct communication channel with people who have chosen to hear from you
- C. It eliminates the need for content
- D. It guarantees affiliate commissions

Answer: B

Question 4

Should every email contain an affiliate offer?

- A. Yes
- B. No

Answer: B

Question 5

What can subscriber replies tell you?

- A. Nothing useful
- B. What problems, questions and interests your audience has
- C. Only how many people opened the email
- D. Your affiliate commission rate

Answer: B

41. Lesson 8 Key Takeaways

Give students these five statements:

- 1. Don't just build an audience—build relationships.**
- 2. Give people a genuine reason to join your email list.**
- 3. Your lead magnet should solve a specific problem.**

4. Use email to educate and nurture, not just sell.

5. Listen to your subscribers because they can tell you what to create next.

The bigger lesson is:

Your email list isn't simply a sales channel. It's an audience relationship, a feedback system and a long-term business asset.

42. Lesson 8 Homework

Before moving to Lesson 9, students should:

- Define their target audience.
- Identify one specific problem.
- Create a simple lead magnet idea.
- Write their opt-in headline.
- Create a simple opt-in page/form.
- Write their 5-email welcome sequence.
- Include appropriate affiliate disclosure where relevant.
- Invite subscribers to reply with a question.
- Identify one relevant affiliate product to potentially recommend.
- Start collecting and reviewing audience feedback.

Final exercise:

My audience: _____

Their problem: _____

My free resource: _____

My opt-in promise: _____

My first email: _____

My affiliate recommendation: _____

My CTA: _____

The question I'll ask my subscribers: _____

The Bridge Into Lesson 9

Your students now have the foundations of a real affiliate marketing system:

Lesson 1 — Understand Affiliate Marketing

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Lesson 2 — Choose Your Niche & Audience

↓

Lesson 3 — Find Relevant Products

↓

Lesson 4 — Build Your Audience

↓

Lesson 5 — Create Content That Attracts

↓

Lesson 6 — Validate What People Want

↓

Lesson 7 — Turn Content Into Affiliate Sales

↓

Lesson 8 — Build Your Email List & Own Your Audience

Now the next question becomes:

“How do I make this system consistent, measure what's working, and grow it without creating more and more work for myself?”

That naturally leads into:

Lesson 9 — Create Your Affiliate Marketing System & Scale