

Harnessing WordPress, WooCommerce and email marketing to sell more products

Effective email marketing is the one tool you can use to dramatically increase your sales that you're probably not utilizing. It's something that the majority of companies know the value of: email generates more than 10% of sales for 55% of companies, and 42% of businesses say email is one of their most effective lead generation channels (studies 2014 and 2012 [respectively](#)).

Email is an essential tool in the toolbox of any online business.

The good news is if you're rocking WordPress and WooCommerce, it's straightforward to making use of email and put a rocket booster under your sales.

The even better news is in this lesson we'll equip you with the tools you need to get going. We'll start off by covering the best ways of capturing email signups with signup boxes and then move on to look at how you can integrate with your WooCommerce installation.

Capturing email signups

The basic tenet of email marketing with WordPress is capturing email signups. You need signups so you have an email list to market to. For this you'll need an external service such as MailChimp ([free](#)) or ConvertKit ([expensive](#)). It's important to use an external service so the emails you send definitely arrive (if you do it yourself they may get stuck in spam filters). If you don't already have an account with one of these services, sign up for one now.

The easiest way of capturing signups is through signup boxes. There are two easy ways to add these to your WordPress site:

- Signup form widgets
- Signup form shortcodes (with a custom plugin)

We'll work through each of these to equip you with versatile solutions.

Using signup form widgets

Widgets are perfect for adding signup forms. Sadly there's no free, do-it-all email form solution. This means you need to be flexible: there are some good free plugins for specific email providers or a straightforward DIY solution (which can draw on some customisation knowledge from earlier in the course).

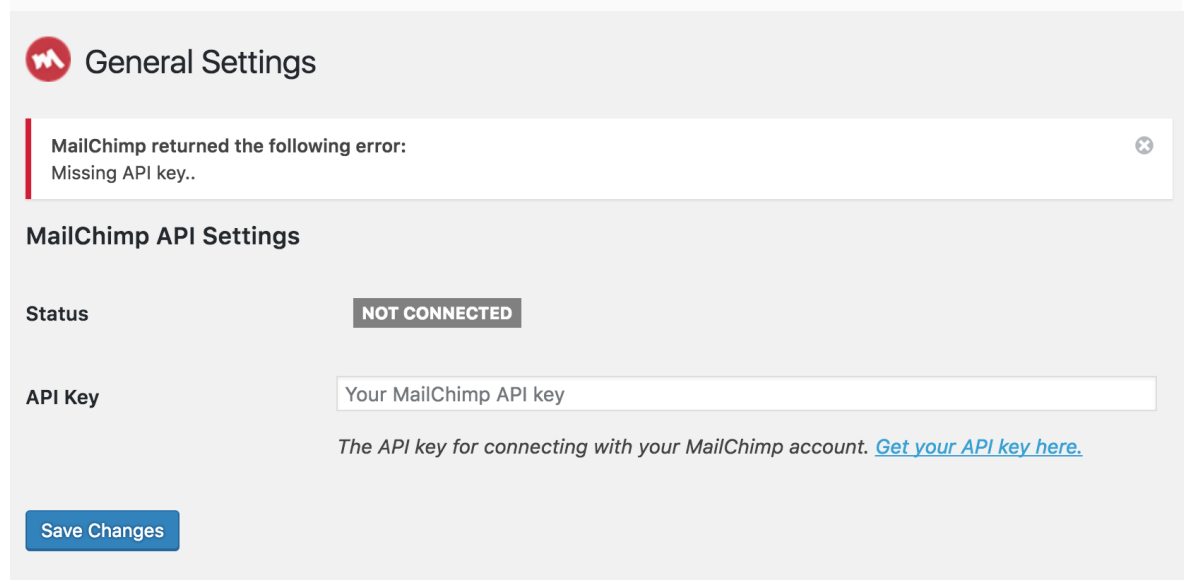
If your theme has a signup form built in then this should be your preference as the design will fit tightly with the rest of the theme. Moving forwards we'll assume that you either don't have an option built in to your theme or aren't using it.

Free signup form plugins

Plugins are the easiest way to add signup widgets (and hence forms) to your site. There are a couple of free plugins which can add a widget for you. You'll want to find one which works with your email provider and has the design options you want. These are ones we like:

- [MailChimp for WordPress](#): despite the name, not an official plugin. Generally regarded as the best signup option if you're using Mailchimp. Some addons available but the premium options below are better.
- [WP Subscribe](#): supports Mailchimp (but the above is better), Aweber and Feedburner. Minimal customisation options but the widget looks pretty good.
- [Newsletter Sign-Up](#): the predecessor to MailChimp for WordPress, this plugin works with CampaignMonitor, ConstantContact, YMLP, Aweber, iContact, PHPList and Feedblitz. If you're using any of those services (bar Aweber) this is your best free option.

All these plugins are free so try them out and see which works best for you. You can install any of these straight from your WordPress Dashboard by heading to Plugins → Add New and searching for the plugin name. Install and activate!



General Settings

MailChimp returned the following error:
Missing API key..

MailChimp API Settings

Status **NOT CONNECTED**

API Key

The API key for connecting with your MailChimp account. [Get your API key here.](#)

Save Changes

You'll then need to add connect your account. For MailChimp for WordPress and Newsletter Sign-Up you'll have a new menu item added. Head to the general settings and connect your account by creating a new API key. You'll also want to check out the other settings to connect the plugin to a specific email list. For WP Subscribe you can connect your account on the widget.

You can use any of these new widgets by heading to Appearance → Widgets. You'll find a new widget added; drag and drop to any widget area to try it out.

Customize options as you want them, save and you're done!

Final step is to look at your site and enjoy the lovely new email signup form :)

Premium signup form plugins

Customer conversion is big business and there are a lot of premium plugins available which promise various levels of signup utopia.

Just be aware that these are marketing products and the most successful options are generally run by people really good at marketing. Bear in mind it may be possible they're overstating the benefits.

These premium options generally get you extra features such as exit-intent popup boxes (the ones that show up when you're about to leave the page), more design options (so you can better customize) and A/B testing (test two versions of your signup boxes and see which gets better results).

If you're selling a product or acquiring signups has a decent monetary value to you then these plugins are probably worthwhile.

There are a ton of these to choose from, but you'll find the best options below (pricing is for mid-level traffic website with comparable features you'd want at annual cost):

- [OptinMonster](#) (\$99): decent option and the admin panel is well laid out, but limited design customisation options and can get expensive if you need to upgrade.
- [SumoMe](#) (\$468): feature rich but gets very expensive very quickly (seriously it's so expensive compared to other options). A lot is available on the free plan, but you'll need to pay to remove branding. Probably not worth it.
- [ThriveLeads](#) (\$67): can be quite difficult to use but if you can deal with that, offers decent selection of features at a reasonable price.
- [Ninja Popups](#) (\$32.50): we've not used this, but it deserves a mention as a cheap option with plentiful designs to choose from. Worth taking a look at.

The competitive nature of the premium signup plugin business means all these options (except Ninja Popups) offer money-back guarantees, so there's no harm in trying out different options and sending back if they're not for you.

All come with extensive documentation and support for installation.

Easy build your own signup form!

There's a final option which doesn't involve any plugins. WordPress has a text widget which allows you to enter your own HTML to any widget area. If you're using an email service offering pre-designed signup boxes such as [ConvertKit](#) you can

just copy the box code and paste into a text widget. Save the widget and you'll have it on your site immediately.

There'll likely be a line of code to load a stylesheet or some inline styles so the box looks nice. You might want to copy these styles into one of the custom CSS solutions we discussed in the lesson on customization (Jetpack's CSS Editor is easiest). Having fewer CSS files to load will make your site load faster. Once you've copied the CSS over, delete the reference in your text widget to stop the styling loading twice.

Customizing your widgets

Nearly all the plugins we've looked at so far utilise widgets. Widgets are perfect for adding signup forms to a site. Most themes have lots of widget areas, so you can get your signup boxes displaying where you want and by default they should look pretty good too!

The *WordPress Master* obviously wants to do more, though. It'd be really handy to only display signup boxes on specific pages. For example:

- Display a sidebar signup widget everywhere but posts.
- Display an after-post signup widget.
- Hide all signup widgets on the contact page.

This is easy to do (and you may remember we've mentioned this in a previous lesson – this is a practical implementation). The trick here is **conditional widget display**. This is another feature built in to the [Jetpack plugin](#). We've talked about Jetpack so much we'll assume you've got it installed by now; you activate by going to Jetpack → Settings and activating Widget Visibility.

Now when adding widgets (under Appearance → Widgets) you're going to find an extra button: Visibility. Press this and you'll have the option to add conditionality for how your widget is displaying. You can choose to "show" or "hide" depending on the parameters you set. You can chain variables by pressing "Add".

The screenshot shows the 'Show if:' configuration for a widget's visibility. It features two rows of conditions separated by an 'or' label. The first row shows 'Page' selected from a dropdown, followed by 'is', and 'Post' selected from another dropdown, with 'Delete | Add' links. The second row shows 'Page' selected from a dropdown, followed by 'is', and 'Page' selected from another dropdown, also with 'Delete | Add' links. At the bottom left are 'Delete | Close' links, and at the bottom right are 'Visibility' and 'Save' buttons.

Note confusingly you'll find posts under "pages". For some reason the terminology is different here to the rest of WordPress.

Integrating email marketing with WooCommerce

Collecting emails throughout your site is one part of the email marketing puzzle. Once you've got emails you can start sending out notifications of new products, updates and promotions.

You should see some positive results straight away, but you'll get even better results if you can personalize your emails more. You want to be able to do things such as:

- Offer exclusive discounts to existing customers.
- Entice those who have signed up but not purchased with their own sales emails.
- Make sure you're not pitching to customers who've already purchased the product you're talking about.

With WordPress and WooCommerce all this is possible and pretty straightforward. You're only wanting to do a couple of things:

1. Add customers to your email list.
2. Make sure your email list knows what was purchased.
3. Segment purchases and customers on your email platform so you can send different emails to each.

This means you just need to connect WooCommerce and your email marketing platform. Again, there are a number of plugins which will let you do this and they're straightforward to use.

[Google Analytics](#) | [ShareThis](#) | [ShareYourCart](#) | **MailChimp**

MailChimp

Enter your MailChimp settings below to control how WooCommerce integrates with your mailchimp lists.

Enable/Disable

☒ Enable MailChimp

Event Occurs

Order Completed ▾

When will customers be added to lists?

API Key

[Login to mailchimp](#) to look up your api key.

Main List

Select a list... ▾

All customers will be added to this list.

Group Name

Optional: Enter the name of the group. Learn more about [Groups](#)

Groups

Optional: Comma delimited list of interest groups to add the email to.

Double Opt-In

☐ Enable Double Opt-In

If enabled, customers will receive an email prompting them to confirm their subscription to the list above.

Save changes

The informatively named [WooCommerce MailChimp plugin](#) is the best option if you're using MailChimp. This unofficial plugin is free and lets you have full and deep integration between the two platforms. As with the widgets, installation is straightforward but requires you create an API key. Make sure you set up interest groups so you can segment customers in MailChimp.

Other email marketing services typically have a similar plugin available. A search for WooCommerce + email service name will typically find you the plugin to use.

Once you've integrated purchases with email, you're in a position to massively extend what you can do with your email list – and the potential to generate revenue.

Going further with email

We're not quite done yet. You also have the option to go a lot further, but this involves more setup and paid products. These are some ideas to get you thinking

about what else you can do with email and WooCommerce:

- Reduce cart abandonment: automatically contact customers who've entered their email but failed to complete a purchase. This can [retain a huge number of sales](#) you would otherwise lose.
- Retain inactive customers: if and when customers go a long time without a purchase, get in touch and offer them the right deal to get them buying again.
- Make full usage of receipts: these are emails with huge open rates. Start using them as an opportunity to sell again to customers.

Take a look at [Receiptful](#), [AutomateWoo](#) and [ReMarketly](#) for the advanced options.

Bonus: build your own signup form shortcode plugin

If you're using your own code in a text widget there's a useful bonus you can apply: building your own custom shortcode plugin so you can drop a signup form into any post or page.

Building a simple custom plugin is actually really easy. For this you'll need FTP access to your site. You'll be able to get this from your hosting provider.

Log into to your FTP app and navigate to /wp-content/plugins/. Create a new file and call it signup.php. Edit this file and paste in the code below, adding in your form code where marked:

```
<?php
/*
 * Plugin Name: Signup shortcode
 * Version: 1.0
 * Author: masterwp.co
 */

function form_creation(){
?>

<!-- paste your form HTML here -->

<?php
}
add_shortcode(signup, 'form_creation');
?>
```

Save the file and navigate to Plugins on your WordPress Dashboard. You'll see the new plugin Signup shortcode is available to activate – do that, and you're done! You'll now be able to use the shortcode [signup] to drop your form into any post

or page. This is really useful for creating contextual signup forms which can increase your conversion rate.

One final tweak here: you may want to customise the styling of your in-post form. You can do this using the CSS customisation techniques we discussed in a previous lesson (see it [here](#) if you missed it). Setting width: 100%; and text-align: center; will probably do the job here.

Collecting so many emails

The techniques we've discussed here offer some powerful ways of connecting with visitors and turning them into loyal readers and subscribers. Especially with the premium plugins we looked at and the A/B testing they offer, there's scope to be exceptionally effective at this.

Being really good at email marketing is a hugely valuable skill and these are the tools which can get you 80% of the way there with 20% of the work. Put these into practice and there'll be a huge help on your journey to Mastering WordPress.