



OPT-IN GAME

How Gamifying Your Opt-In Can
Up Your User Engagement

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What is gamification?

Gamification is the process of creating engagement and interaction through progress bars, challenges, and rewards in exchange for the action of the user, customer, lead, or prospect.

Human nature, according to The Zeigarnik Effect, requires closure. Humans have a hard time focusing on things when there is unfinished work to do or unfinished business of any sort. Gamification seeks to interrupt this fact by making your brain feel as if it has accomplished something before it's really finished. An example of closure is the actual closing of the rings on the Apple Watch as you hit the personal goals you set ([you can learn more about that here](#)) or a progress bar telling you you've accomplished a portion of a quiz or task.

Three Ingredients to Gamification

There are three essential ingredients of gamification to remember: motivation, mastery, and triggers. You'll need to know what motivates your audience to take the actions that you want them to accomplish. Plus, the system must enable the participant to master or learn the material without too much struggle while also knowing how to trigger the action taken by your user by giving them the ability to succeed.

In this guide, you'll learn why gamification works to incentivize action, how gamification increases your bottom line, and more specifically, how you can easily gamify your opt-in without using any new technology unless you really want to.

That means this starts with creating an opt-in for your audience to build your email list, boost engagement, and make more sales. Your opt-in can be something you've already established that you modify for this purpose, or you can create a brand new one by writing it from scratch or using private label rights content.

But first, let's learn about why turning your opt-in into a game is a good idea.



Why Turning Your Opt-In into a Game is a Good Idea

Gamification makes learning easier for your brain because it increases engagement, makes learning something new interactive and fun, makes it easier to remember what you learned, and so much more. However, most importantly, gamification fills a human need for finishing, results, and closure that has been shown to increase conversions by up to 5 times.

Building a solid email list is essential to the success and survival of your online business. In fact, it's necessary for all businesses today. Whether you're online or offline or sell physical or digital products, an email list is imperative to the growth and survival of your business.

Building a Responsive List

Building a responsive email list is challenging. It takes time and effort. Your audience must trust you enough to provide private information to you and know that you won't misuse it. Then you also must follow up and provide value to your subscribers to keep them on the list. This requires a lot of dedication and perseverance.



Collect More Data

You can also collect more information about their likes and dislikes through gamification. Over time, you'll learn more about their preferences and be able to create even better opt-ins that attract more of your ideal audience so that you fill your list with people who are truly ready for your offers.

Email List Building is Ongoing

Email list building is all about the long game and is an ongoing part of your business model. You don't just build your list once and then move on to something else. You will always be building your email list throughout the lifetime of your business. Most of the time, you'll do it with some form of opt-in.

Audiences Become Blind to (or afraid of) Marketing

The problem is that as time moves forward, internet marketing becomes standard. At one time, TV and Radio were new too. But we got used to it. Just like with television or radio commercials, audiences become more educated and sometimes more fearful about providing their information to online business owners.

Because of the fear and distrust, it starts to get harder to grow your list. In other words, you must become more creative in your efforts to keep building your list. Using gamification will increase conversions, engagement, and satisfaction because it engages the user's mind in a new way.

Gamification Satisfies an Innate Need

Gamification is a way to engage your audience while satisfying their innate need to experience immediate gratification and rewards for their efforts. Gamification elicits positive emotions from your audience because it creates anticipation for "what's next" and may even make them feel like a valued part of your community.

Tap into Your Audience's Behavior

By adding features to your opt-in pages that feel like a game to your audience, you can tap into what makes your audience tick. You start getting more information about their behavior, which can help you create more compelling content and information for them.

Keep Your Audience's Attention

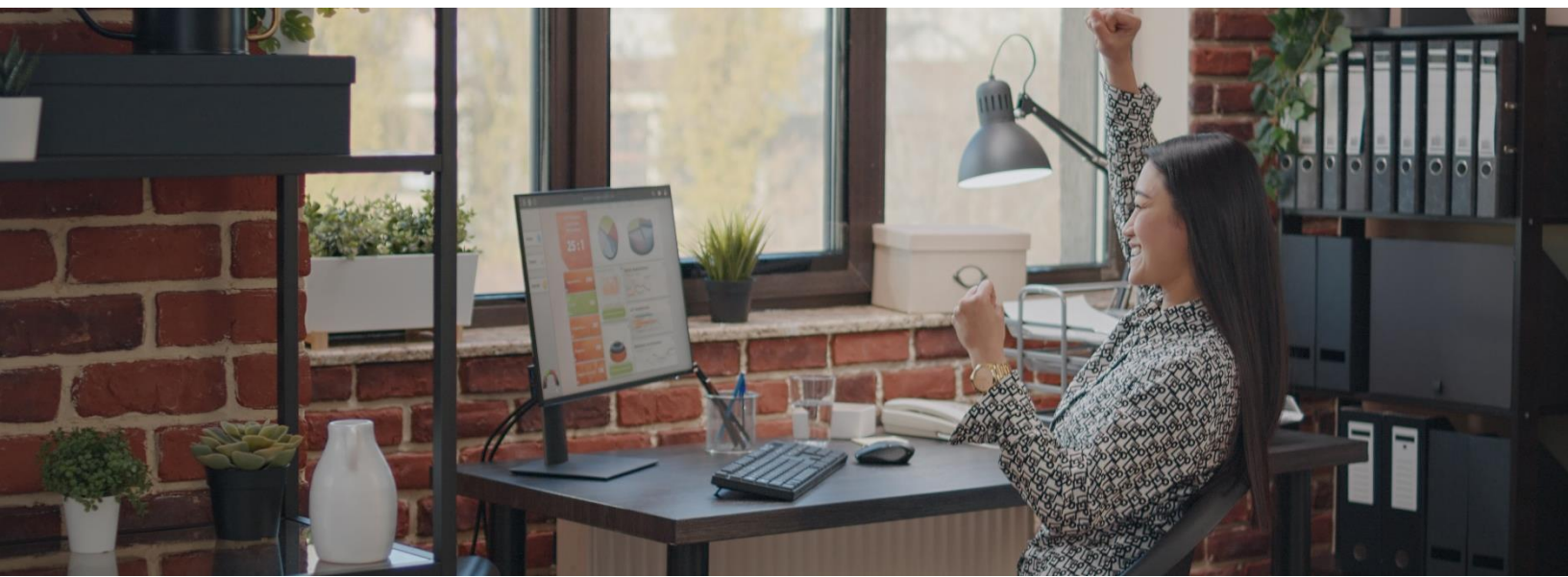
Giving your audience contests, tests, quizzes, discount wheel pop-ups, and other fun options as they click through to your landing pages and sales pages will encourage your audience to give you their information in a way that feels less intrusive to them. Even an easy-to-understand progress bar can go far in helping you keep your audience's attention.

Make Your Audience Feel Like VIPs

Suppose you quiz the landing page visitor, and that quiz sends them to a specialized version of your product that showcases the product in a customized way they will be more likely to understand. In this case, they will feel special and not as concerned about the information they gave you during the quiz experience.

Add Value to Your Audience's Life

They may even believe that it adds value to their life, which is good because, of course, that's what you want to do, right? Add value. But the fact is if you asked for the same information differently without the fun quiz and a promise of a unique solution based on their answers, you probably wouldn't have been as successful in getting the information. Hence, gamification helps covert while also adding value. One of the simplest things to gamify to get started on this process is to start with an opt-in. You can start with one you already have, or you can create a new one.



Choosing an Opt-In Topic and Content

It's relatively simple to come up with content that you can gamify. It's not any different than creating a short email course, interactive challenge, or series for your audience. In fact, all challenges are, by definition, "gamified." Almost any opt-in that you can create can be gamified easily.

Decide on the Opt-in Topic

All you need to do is come up with a topic and create the content. Remember, you can create your content from scratch, use private label rights content (PLR), or even use the content you already wrote and published, such as a short blog post series, for example, and organize it differently to use on the opt-in page.

Develop a Landing Page for the Opt-In

Landing pages and opt-in pages don't have to be the old-fashioned long-form sales page all in one. Instead, they can be made to allow for and even encourage interaction and engagement to help guide them toward purchasing or signing up for your list – whatever your call to action is.

Think Outside the Box

For example, organize a 7-post mini-course or miniseries of informational articles or blog posts that your audience members can view either after signing up via email or before signing up via email while watching their progress through a progress bar of some kind.

To signal progress and thus, gamify the content, you can add mini-quizzes after each module, a progress bar, a checkbox, or another indication that signifies to the customer that they're moving through and making progress by requiring engagement.

You can also build that old-fashioned sales page to sell the interactive course, or challenge, using easy-to-create content that starts with a burning question. It's totally up to you, but in general, questions work well to get attention and to help you get straight on the subject matter.

Your Audience Has to Care

If the topic of the opt-in is not something your audience cares about or wants to solve, it will not work. It must be something easy to do and understand so that they can make it work within days of consuming the product.



There Must Be Value in the Opt-in

What type of value does this opt-in provide to your audience? If you can assign a monetary value to the solution you're presenting here, it will mean a lot more to your audience if you describe it with real value that they understand before even buying or downloading. This is true even if it's a free opt-in and not an entry-level product.

The Opt-In Must Solve a Problem or Fill a Need

What need does your audience have that this opt-in will fill for them? If this is not a need that they're fully aware of, it will be hard to convince them they need it - even if it's free or low cost. It is much more complicated if it's a paid product because you must show them how it will fulfill their needs in a precise language.

The Solution Must Work Fast

The best opt-ins, especially if they're freebies, need to work fast to solve the problem or fill the need that the audience member had. They need to be able to implement the solution quickly without any extra help from you or additional purchases, although it's okay to provide various levels of solutions. For example, you can add progress bars manually using graphics and text (free), or you can use software that has a fee.

Often when business owners seek to come up with a product or service, it's essential to write down questions that your audience has. Those questions answered can become their own products or services, and yes, opt-ins and lead magnets.

Start with a Question or Burning Need

The easiest way to create content for your audience that they'd like to download as a lead magnet or opt-in is to address a burning need by making the solution available or by beginning with a question that grabs their attention and encourages them to sign up, join in, or buy.

Set a Time Frame

Once you set up the content, set up a time frame for them to finish by so that you can have a way to reward them for their efforts quickly while also making it more straightforward for you to create. For example, a 7-day mini-course or 3-post blog series is long enough for these purposes.

A side note here is that time frames can be mentioned even on a sales page or opt-in page. For example, you can tell your user that in just "three steps," they can start putting the solution to the test. You can then motivate them by adding indicators inside the solution about the steps left to complete, pages left to read, and so forth.

Set Up Activities

Gamification requires that you create tasks or actions for the audience or customer (or yourself) to complete that help them gain something. They may earn points or have visual indicators like progress bars filling in as they move through the activities you've created for them. For example, you can put progress bars on the process of obtaining the lead magnet or on the actual lead magnet as they work through the solution. Both help lead your customer through the process faster.

Provide Incentives

When you provide incentives for finishing something by a specific deadline or timeline, it will help them get it done faster, which will offer them a lot of value. When incentivizing them, provide indicators that activate the brain, such as points, badges, prizes, or progress bars to keep them moving forward.

Reward Participants

When people are participating and acting based on your directions, you will want to reward them publicly. When you do that, it'll signal to others that they're missing out, making the person who is achieving something feel good about themselves. The caution here is to ensure you've explained everything clearly, as some people may not like publicity.

Choosing the Right Technology

As you set up gamification in different areas of your business, especially the opt-in processes, you will want to ensure that you've picked the right technology. Many landing page options like Instapage.com and Leadpages.net offer gamification options that you may not even realize are available. One really excellent choice is OptinMonster.com which works with WordPress.

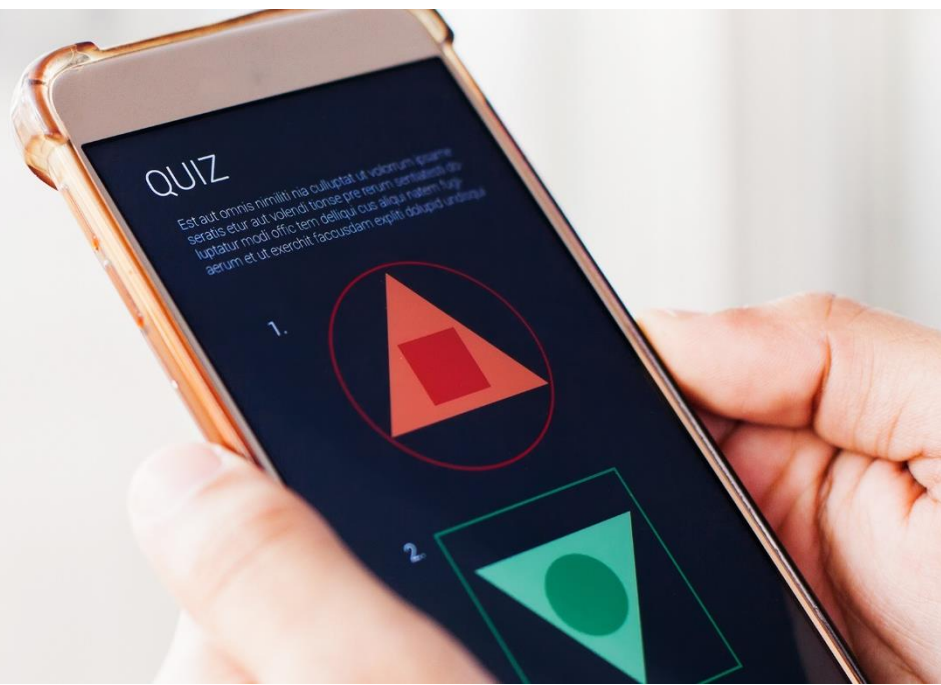
However, remember that you can add a lot of gamification signals to your opt-in pages and encourage actions elsewhere using graphics, progress bars, and the right text to signal progress even without using the higher-end technology that exists.

Make It Simple

You don't have to make it difficult to use gamification. All you must do is set a consequence or reward to an action or behavior and then track it. You can let them track themselves or use software to help.

It really is that simple. If you make it simple to set up, you'll be able to use this process fast to get more opt-ins. You might even be able to turn an opt-in you already have - whether it's PLR or something you created yourself - into the perfect gamified opt-in without recreating the wheel.

If you look around, you'll notice that many businesses take advantage of online and offline gamification. From Amazon's wish list to Starbucks rewards, companies everywhere are using gamification to engage customers and drive behavior. Whether products or services, digital or physical, there is a way to make it work for your opt-in page and your business.



Gamification Options for Your Opt-In

Most people hate keeping anything open-ended or unfinished. As mentioned before, this is called the Zeigarnik Effect. It means that people want closure. Human nature causes most humans to dislike any type of task that is left incomplete. Incompleteness can lead to stress and even problems making decisions. You can avoid this problem in your audience by making them feel as if they've completed something and giving them closure. When you provide them with closure, you can move them to the next step on the buying journey rather painlessly merely by using their natural tendencies. This is one reason marketers should study human psychology in-depth – it plays into everything you do and everything you want your audience to do.

Here are some gamification options you can add to your opt-in to encourage user engagement and completion of your call to action and some tips for implementing them.

Progress Bars

One effortless way to gamify your opt-in process is with a simple progress bar. You can do this both with and without technology, so there is no real reason this should not be done on every single sales page or opt-in you have now and in the future.

Check Your Email Marketing Software

Many email autoresponder software options either have an option for progress bars or a way that you can add them. Your email marketing software may already have templates and options that use progress bars, meaning you simply choose the right template or add-on, and then you're in business.

Check Your Landing Page Software

Landing page software is sometimes more advanced than stand-alone email marketing autoresponder software. Because of that, many options do offer progress bars on their opt-in templates. Leadpages.net offers a progress bar widget that you can add to your pages or as a pop-up. You can also get a lot of gamification features from the Optinmonster.com plugin.

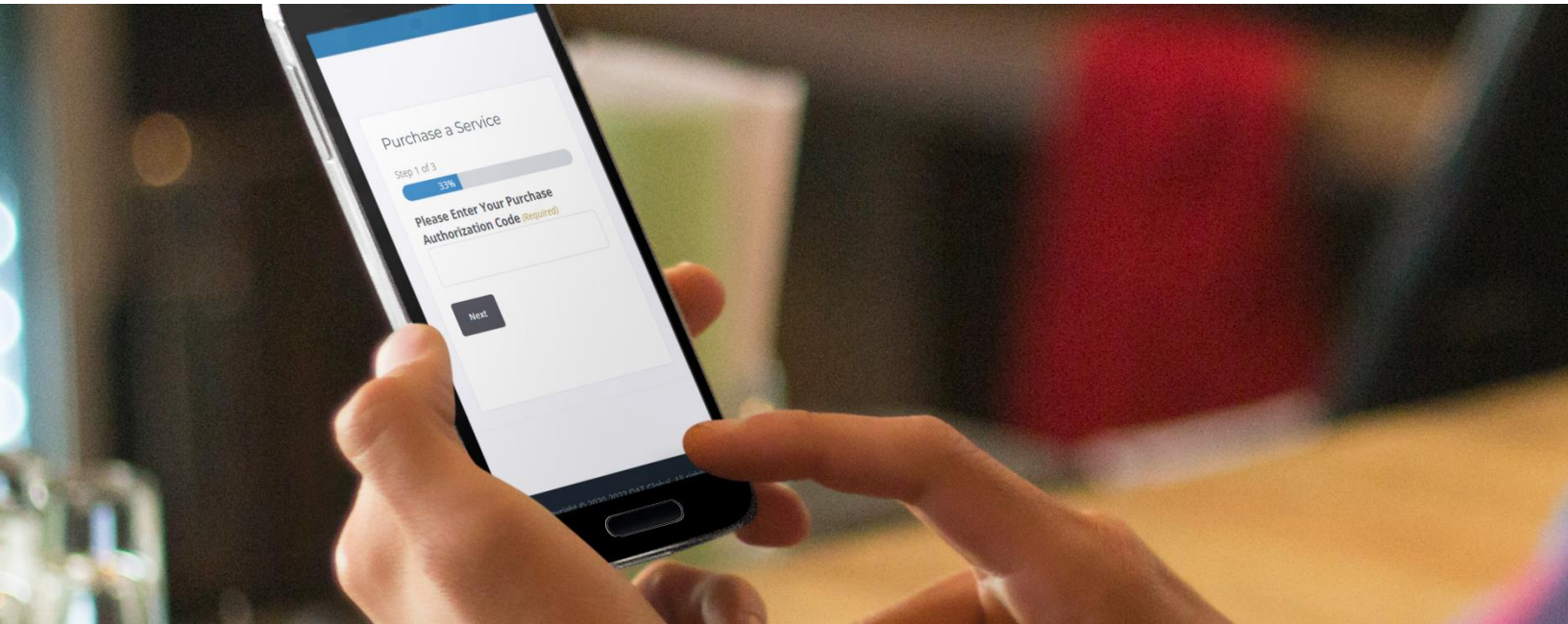
Look for Plugins and Add On Options

There are numerous plugin options for WordPress users as well as other website builders. The main reason this works is that people really want to have closure for everything they read and learn. It's called the Zeigarnik Effect. Web developers who create for people like you are way ahead of most people making behaviorally oriented options available to smart business owners.

Add Progress Indicators Manually

You can, of course, always add progress indicators manually. Creating a small graphic that looks like a progress bar that says something like 1 page of 3 completed or 33 percent of 100 percent completed on the page at the end before they click through is very helpful.

This is probably one of the simplest ways to gamify your opt-ins. You can do it with or without technology and make it super easy. Sometimes it helps to think outside of the box and realize that not everything has to be done using the newest and most expensive technology to make it work.



Point System and Badges

Another way to help create closure for your audience is to come up with a point system for any actions you desire your audience, whether prospects or customers, coaching clients or students, to take at any given time. For example, let's say there are 20 steps or actions your customer needs to take after downloading the opt-in. You'll indicate that on page one, provide a checklist, a link to badges, and all the rules. Then, your customer only needs to go through the 20 action steps, track it for themselves, and after each step, grab their badge to indicate the points won and the completion of each task. Even though they won't be done for 20 steps, they feel completed after each due to the prizes and points.

Know Your Objectives

Before you set points or even provide direction for tasks, you'll need to be clear about your objectives. For example, if you are building your list, your aim is to move leads to your email list so that they become prospects and eventually customers.

Make a list of the actions and the results (goals and objectives) you expect from those actions so that you can assign value. You can do this in two ways. You can do it on your sales page.

1. What actions does your user need to take to get to the end and download your opt-in?

- a. Click the Opt-in Page Link
- b. Read the Sales Page
- c. Fill Out the Information Required
- d. Go to the Download Page
- e. Download the Opt-In

2. What actions does your prospect need to take now that they've agreed to get the opt-in?

- a. Download the Opt-in
- b. Take Actions Required to Realize the Solution
- c. Compute Points
- d. Download Badges

Each of those actions needs to be described thoroughly and a value assigned, if any. For the sales page, it may be enough to add in the progress indicators simply. For the points and progress, achieving the results that the opt-in promises gamifies the process to ensure that people who download the opt-in or solution are more likely to put the solution into practice.

To gamify this action, you may want to include all the instructions about the game on the first page of the content while providing links to discussion groups, social media platforms, and where to download badges and how to compute points.

Set Points and Provide Value

Once you have a list of objectives, and each goal has a list of actions or tasks required to meet the target, you'll want to set points or rewards and value for those actions. Remember that your goal is to make this a valuable exercise for your audience. That means that your directions need to be clear, and the point value must signify importance to the customer, not just you.

When you set up the opt-in, it's crucial to think about what the point of this opt-in is in the first place. The point for you is to move these prospects through your product funnel and encourage them to make purchases of the solutions you provide. The point for the audience member who has signed up for this opt-in is simply to solve the problem or fill the need the opt-in promised.

Even though you have two different goals here (you want them to make a purchase, they want to solve their problem), you can incentivize and encourage completion that fills the prospect with joy and accomplishment. This will make it more likely for them to make another purchase.

For this reason, you want to incentivize their success because the more they experience success with you along for the ride, the more likely they are to invite you along again by purchasing more of your offers.

Create Badges

A fun thing to do is create badges for different points or even badges without points that your customer or audience can earn through their actions. For example, if you have different levels of membership, each can have its own badge. You can make a silver badge for your silver level or a sparkly badge for the superhero level. It's totally up to you. Plus, you can even let your customers make their own badges and share them. Have fun with your badges and levels.

If you host challenges for your audience, you can assign prizes that encourage finishing the challenge. For example, you can let each finisher earn a different badge to signify completing specific components or steps.



Depending on your budget, you can make badges on Canva.com, Makebadge.com, Fiverr.com, Accredible.com, and others. Some are just graphic design software options that let you make the graphic and download it for your use, other options include tracking of your badges using unique code, and that process offers a more hands-off way of running this program. However, if you cannot afford that option, it's okay to use the old-school way.

Determine How to Distribute Badges and Rewards

Once you have assigned value to the actions you want your audience and customers to take and created the badges and rewards you'll give out, figure out the best way to distribute the points and rewards.

Some people like to do it on honor so that it's fully self-ran, and others want to run a more formal program that requires contact with you or someone you appoint to keep track of points earned. You can track everything on a spreadsheet you update each evening manually, or you can hire someone to track it for you, such as a virtual assistant you give access to for this purpose.

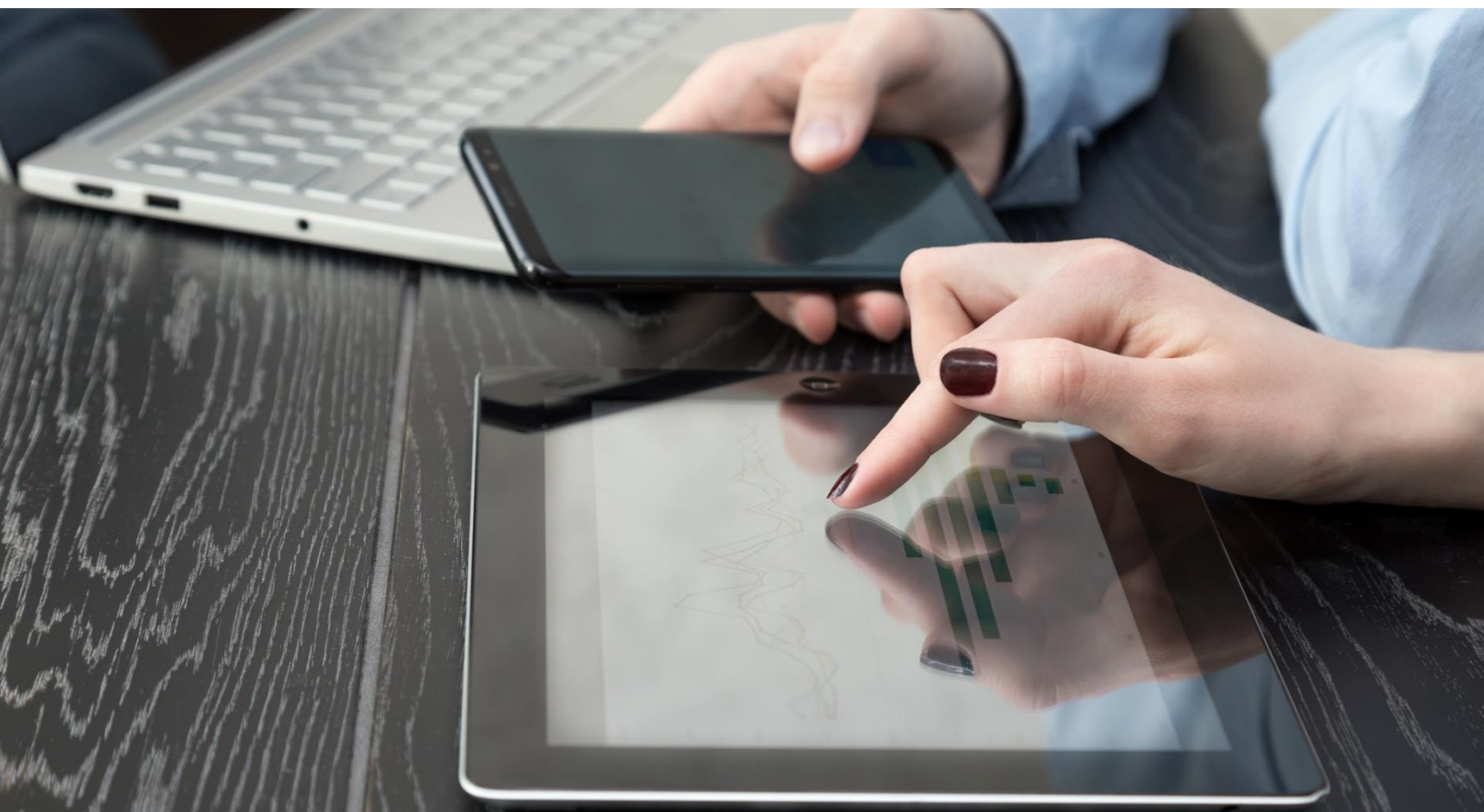
One way that really works is to do an honor system style situation. Once you set how many points you get for each action you want them to take, you can let them do it on the honor system. Just upload the graphics to a database that your audience can easily access and download on their own, along with clear instructions and directions.

Provide Clear Directions

You must provide clear instructions whenever you want your audience to follow directions and complete a task. This might take some practice. Do your best to make it clear, but accept and use feedback as questions come in so that you can perfect your directions over time.

You don't want it to be hard to get points, trade them for badges, or brag about your customers' success with their opt-in or lead magnet. In fact, the more you make it easy for them to brag, the more people will want to join.

As you design your point system and the badges that signify accomplishment and, more importantly, closure, you will start experiencing a lot more engagement from your audience. It may only be a few people initially, but as you add gamification to other aspects of your business, you'll see amazing results.



That increased engagement will advance trust and help you forge a closer connection with your audience. This connection will propel you faster than you may realize. You will boost engagement, conversation, and sales in surprising ways. In fact, by incorporating gamification, you're going to see a lot more people finishing so much more.

Keep It Simple and Fun

When it comes to gamification, you may be thinking that this is a lot of work. However, you can keep it simple and make it fun for you and for your audience if you give it some thought. Remember, there is no reason to make things harder than they need to be. The fact is, users can self-monitor points, download their own badges, you can use volunteers to help, and so much more.

Your Forums & Discussion Boards

If you're currently using any type of forum or discussion board, it probably has features that can help you make the process of getting points and downloading badges easy by starting a board just for badges and points.



Start a post that explains how many points you get for each action that can get points, what you earn for points, and upload the graphics for the badges there so that your audience can just right click and download the image without talking to you about it first.

When anyone wants to know the rules and how to get the points plus how to get the badges, you will simply let them know it's on their honor, and then provide the link to that area of your discussion forum.

Your Facebook Groups

It can be slightly harder to run a discussion group on Facebook due to how they thread the discussions. However, you can still use it, and since it's free, it's one of your most accessible options for helping your users and members gain access to points plus badges. When using Facebook groups, check out the "file" area. You can upload all kinds of files or even just upload a Word Document with Dropbox links that your audience can use to download the badges or to find out how to earn points.

The Member Area of Your Membership Site

If you don't have a place to discuss back and forth yet, you'll want to try to get one even if it's a free group like those on Facebook. But even if you don't have anything yet, if you have a membership component of your site, then you will have access to a member's area. Some shopping carts have this function too.

You can use that member's area to set up and explain the points system along with uploading the badges there so that they can download them if they want them. You may have to upload the badges as "products" that members have access to depending on the type of software you're using for your membership program.

The main thing is that you don't want to make this hard on yourself. Earning the points and badges should be fun and not something you take too seriously so that you're worried about someone "stealing" points and winning something they don't deserve. In most cases, you're genuinely not going to have to worry about that because you're going to design your products and services for your ideal audience. For this reason, setting it up so that they self-monitor and self-report periodically where they are in the challenge or contest will work perfectly - and create a more engaged and active community in the process.



Conclusion

Now that you understand the reasons for adding gamification to your business on sales pages, within products, and on social media and how to do it, you're going to notice how much your engagement and conversions increase. To see how well it works, start with adding it to two places.

Add gamification to your opt-in sales page, and within your opt-in download product or service. When you add gamification in these two places, you're going to find out that more visitors to your opt-in sales page convert to downloading the opt-in, and even more incredible, those who download the opt-in are going to be more likely to put it to use when you add gamification to the process. The best way to ensure your success is to start by creating or converting an opt-in that you already have to a gamified version of it - both on the sales page and in the downloaded product.

Make it simple by using easy gamification on the sales page, such as by using progress bars to indicate the steps taken and made that lead to downloading the opt-in offer. Then keep it easy by using simple gamification in the form of points and badges that reward the steps you take that the opt-in requires.

Keep it simple by letting your users self-manage their points and badges by creating directions and a download area in your forum, discussion group, members area, or shopping cart backend that spells out how it works. What are you waiting for? Do you have an opt-in ready for gamification?