



Lead
NURTURING



Lead Nurturing

Lead nurturing is the core of any marketing technology. It is the best way to convert an interested person (a lead) into a customer. This material will tell you who should be considered a lead, why, what kind of approach will work, and the ways to nurture your leads.

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What is lead nurturing?

Lead nurturing, also known as drip marketing, is a series of processes used to build effective relationships with leads before converting them into valuable customers. For leads to grow into successful customers, they must be nurtured through various marketing strategies.

For example, your website may be a wonderful platform that provides downloadable eBooks, but it does not mean that every person downloading eBooks will become a prospect or customer.

A report from Gleanster Research says that around half of the leads interested in buying do not commit immediately. To remedy this, you could contact them through your sales executives and pressure them into buying. However, this strategy is likely to be counterproductive and could result in losing the customer.

Here is where lead nurturing comes into the picture to keep your leads happy throughout their buying journey. Lead nurturing is all about understanding the needs and behaviors of potential buyers, providing them with solutions to streamline their needs, and finally, making them customers.

“Treat leads like future customers because that is what they are.”

Who is your lead?

Marketers, sales executives, and other business competitors have different opinions on the term “lead”. How you choose your lead is totally up to you. Maybe your lead is a person who just filled out a form at your trade show or someone who recently subscribed to your newsletter. Your lead may even be an active visitor of your website who knows a lot about your product.

More ways to build your leads

You can select your leads from the lists of contacts you had saved for previous campaigns, import a set of contacts from CRM software, or sync your site with Google Analytics or another automation technique that tracks visitors and their activities. You can also embed your sign-up form in your website and social media, send SMS and newsletters to leads, or add referral and subscribe options to all the campaigns you send. Functions like the “like” and “comment” buttons on social media can also help you find leads.

More leads, more referrals, more customers.

Why is lead nurturing crucial?

“Lead nurturing provides effective ways to cause good performance by communicating with customers on a sophisticated level, creating and maintaining relationships over time by following your leads’ activities.”

A B2B buying cycle is a complex endeavor that could last several months or longer. B2B buyers often have a high level of concern about making or failing to make an appropriate buying decision. However, there is always a chance that your best efforts will get the person interested.

Lead nurturing is the best way of achieving this.

“Every lead needs to be nurtured to build a healthy customer relationship.”

Build trust; build relationships

“You are promising enough that the buyer chooses you right away when (s)he is in need.”

The days of a buyer being “carried away” by a sales person’s pitch and making an immediate purchase are over. The internet makes it easy for prospective customers to shop around and research a product before they buy. Customers tend to engage with companies they know well and trust. Lead nurturing can help you turn today’s casual website visitors into tomorrow’s prospects, building communication and trust to convince a potential buyer that you can deliver on your promise. In fact, nurtured leads make 47 percent larger purchases than non- nurtured leads (The Annuitas Group).

Engaging with your customers

It’s never easy to find out what is going through a potential buyer’s mind, or which of your products they are most interested in. The only way to discover this is to engage with your customers. Asking relevant questions can help identify the requirements of the buyers, and meaningful conversations will tell you which of your leads is most likely to buy.

Emotions make a difference

A good purchase may or may not reward the buyers, but a bad purchase affects your reputation. Effective lead nurturing involves emotional understanding and responsive acting.

Your communications should make the buyer believe you are capable of understanding his or her problems and solving them, ultimately boosting the chances of consideration and purchase decisions.

Segmenting is easier

Sending every campaign to all three million leads in your list is cumbersome and ineffective. Segmenting helps you customize your email to target specific leads. Consider criteria like location, needs, interests and behaviors when segmenting your list.

Mass emails vs automated emails

Mass email lacks the impact of well-timed response. It offers the same deals and discounts to all recipients, regardless of their particular interests.

Automated campaigns are scheduled based on your lead's activities and response to former messages. Targeted messages at the right time show that you understand the buyer's needs. When a potential customer responds to an email with clicks and downloads, that is the moment to engage them. They're interested in your brand and you should act accordingly.

The marketing automation feature has made lead nurturing more modern, personalized, and adaptive, letting you listen and react to buyer behavior in real time.

Optimize your lead nurturing strategy

About 79% of the marketing-qualified leads do not convert to sales (Source: MarketingSherpa), and the reason for such poor performance is the lack of lead nurturing. Adopting the right lead nurturing strategy increases the chances of lead engagement.

The best lead nurturing strategy is the one that is consistently revised. Analyze what worked well, where you've missed out, and what elements you can add to improve your system.

The main objective of any lead nurturing strategy is to bring the leads to sales. Here are a few things to consider when you're refining your approach.



Ideal lead profile

A lead persona is the most effective tool you have to qualify your incoming leads. Sales and marketing should revisit and update the information that an ideal profile contains to take advantage of current trends.

Website

Your website is the first place all leads go, and thus it is the best platform for your marketing. Make sure you provide personalized content, images, and blogs that will engage the website visitors.

Email communication

Analyze the type of content that most engages your leads. Include links, highlight important content, and summarize why and how your product will benefit the buyer. Keep your email content concise and relevant to appeal to the reader.

Social media

Social media engagement adds value to lead nurturing. Fine-tune your posts and analyze the response. Actively responding to tweets, comments, and messages on platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn builds stronger relationships with your leads.

Personal message

Consider offering a phone call or a personal email message to a lead who does not show progress through the buying cycle. The communication should focus on why and how the product benefits them rather than what the product is.

Content

“Your content is your brand’s voice.”

Powerful content is the most necessary component of lead nurturing. Your content needs to be relevant and convincing to influence the buyers’ mind when they are ready to purchase.

What type of content invites buyers?

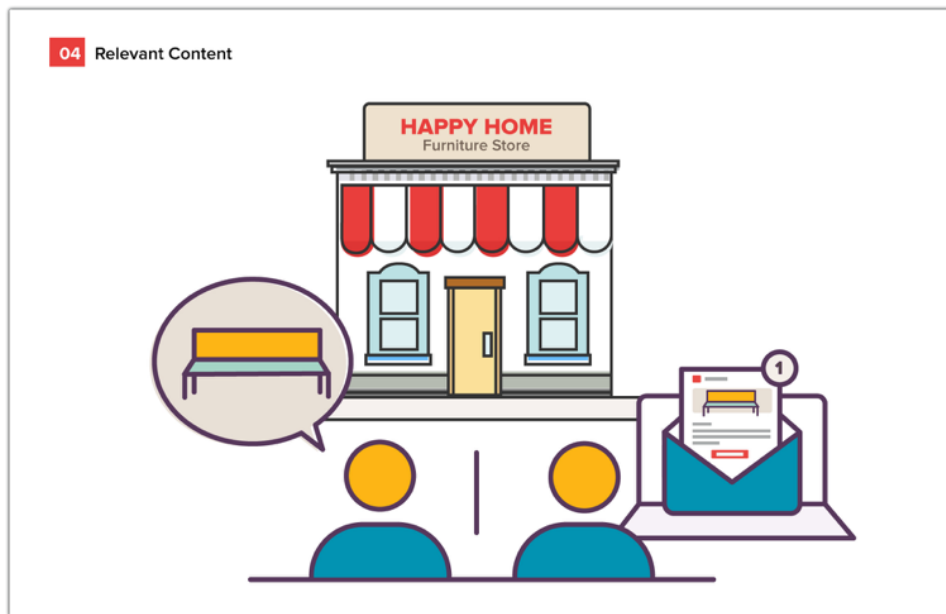
Informative: Know the questions your customers ask and create content to address them. Enhance your message with lists of links and resources to related websites and blogs. If the lead trusts you, finds your content informative, and likes your approach, they are likely to buy from you.

Relevant: Email marketing is most effective when you have relevant content. Segment buyers as much as possible to send out meaningful campaigns. Customized email drives 18 times more revenue than broadcast email.

“Say right things to the right person at the right time”

Conversational: Consider your every move and let the lead respond to you. Taking their response into consideration will help you design better content for your next email.

Visual: Remember, your buyers are busy professionals who might not have time to read your entire message. Understand the types of visual content that works best to describe your product. Pictures can have a significant influence on a reader’s emotions. Keep your text brief, use bullet points and keywords, and let the images tell the story.



"Be creative about your design, topic, and format."

Video marketing: Follow your prospects at every stage of their buying journey. Adding video content to your campaigns to show prospects how your product works and how it can serve their needs is especially effective when they are at the buying stage.

Multiple messages: Design a variety of messages for a single email campaign. This will help you determine what type of content the leads engage with most. Having that information makes working on future campaigns easier.

Exit criteria: You gain the best results out of lead nurturing when you nurture the right leads. A lead who is very much ready to purchase from you can be immediately pushed to sales, while further nurturing is needed for warm leads.

We at Zoho Campaigns have a practice of applying a stop condition to lead nurturing campaigns. When a set of automated campaigns are scheduled, the stop condition is defined as well.



Monitoring the success of lead nurturing

How will you know you're doing a good job of nurturing your leads? Reports on sent campaigns help you analyze how your campaigns are performing. They give data about which leads are interested, when they open your email, and what type of content interests them.

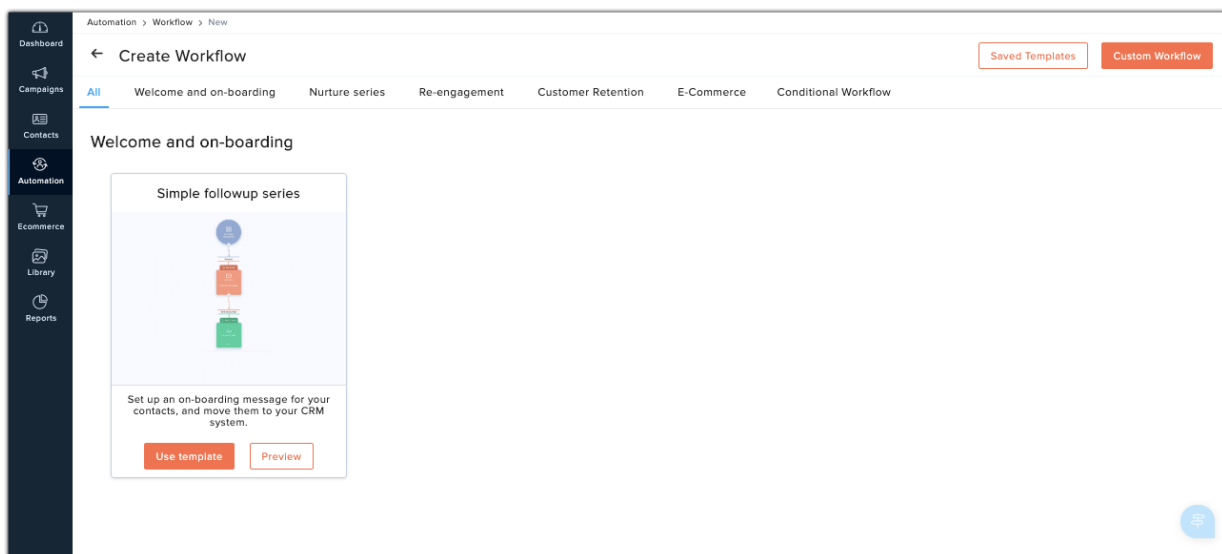


Learn how Zoho Campaigns does it.

Create a custom workflow

1. From the Navigation toolbar, select Automation and choose Workflows.
2. Click Custom workflow from the top-right corner.
3. Give your Workflow a name for future reference and click Create.

Alternatively, you can choose from a set of pre-designed workflow templates that matches your exact needs.



Set up process

Build a complete workflow for your contacts under the process section; create email series, define actions, and set rules to separate paths based on contacts' behavior and information. The following is a list of all that you can do under the process section:

Send email

- 1) Send an email to your contacts when they reach this stage of the workflow.
- 2) To configure:
 - a) Drag and drop Send email component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas.
 - b) Click Configure in the message block.
 - c) Add the message's basic info and content.
 - d) Click Send for review to send your message to our compliance team for review.
- 3) Your reviewed message will be sent out as per schedule once you activate the workflow. Messages, by default, will be sent one day after the previous action was performed. However, you can edit the message's schedule.

Send SMS

Send SMS messages to your leads when they reach this stage of the journey.

- 1) Drag and drop Send SMS component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas.
- 2) Click the Configure in the message block.
- 3) Add the message's basic info and content.
- 4) Click Send for review to send your message to our compliance team for review.

Your reviewed message will be sent out as per schedule once you activate the journey. Messages, by default, will be sent one day after the previous action was performed. However, you can edit ([link to schedule](#)) the message's schedule.

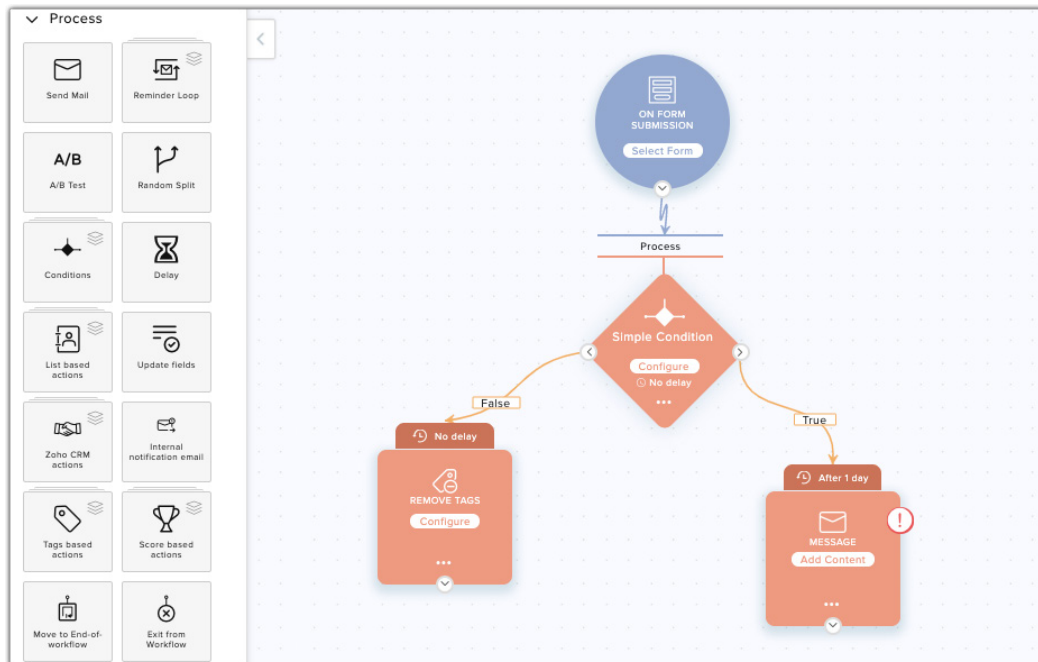
Set reminders

- 1) To open: When contacts who do not open your email
- 2) To click: When contacts do not click any links in the email
- 3) To click specific link: When contacts do not click a specific link in the email
- 4) To complete survey: When contacts don't complete a survey
- 5) Custom: Create your own condition

Click Reminder loops component from the Process section of the left panel and drag and drop the desired loop into the canvas. You will then need to do the following:

- a) Connect this component to an email. However, you can only connect the survey reminders to a survey email.
- b) Create the reminder emails and set the time period between each email. You can create a maximum of three emails.
- c) Define a path for those who match the reminder criteria. As soon as contacts match the criteria, they will take this path.

d) Define a path for those who do not match the reminder criteria. contacts who do not match the criteria in spite of your reminder emails will take this path.



With this component you can AB test two versions of your campaign. Send these two versions to a small group of your contacts and decide the winner based on their performance. Once the winning version is decided, it will be sent to the remaining contacts. Drag and drop the AB test component from the process section of the left panel into canvas. Click Configure in the action block. Fill in the following information:

AB test

1) Size of the test group: Enter the number of contacts who should receive these test versions. 50% of the selected number will receive version A and the remaining 50% will receive version B.

- 2) Select how the winner should be decided. You can choose to decide based on open rate or click rate, or decide the winner manually once the test is complete, based on their reports.
- 3) Test duration: Select the time duration for which the test should run. The test will start after the versions have been sent to the selected test group.
- 4) Select which version should be sent in case of uncertainty. The following are the cases of uncertainty:
 - a) When there is a tie after the test.
 - b) When a contact reaches this stage after the versions have been sent to the test group and while the test is still running.

After the test is complete the winning version will be decided. contacts who enter after the selected test duration will take the path that follows the winning version.

Split the path of the workflow randomly to two group of contacts. Drag and drop the Random split component into the canvas. Click Configure and select the percentage for each group. When contacts reach this stage, they will be randomly put into each path.

Random split

Set conditions based on contact information and behavior and branch out the path. When contacts reach this stage in the process they will be checked for whether they meet the criteria or not, and will take the corresponding path. There are three types of conditions:

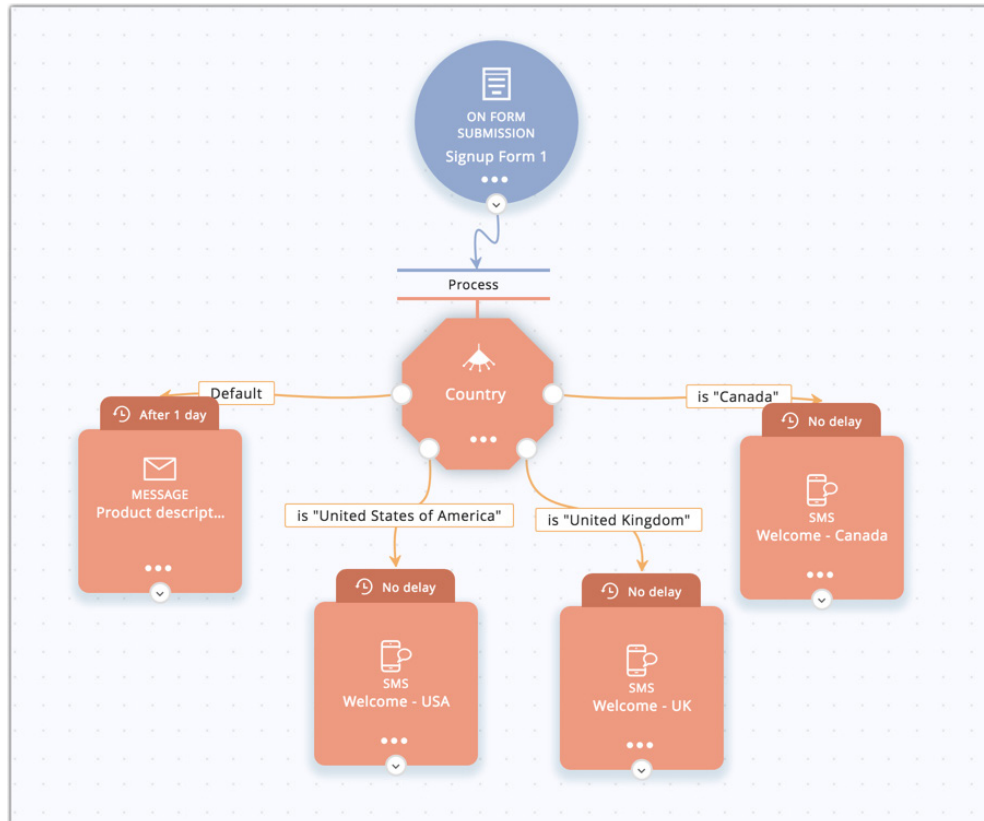
Set conditions

- 1) Simple criteria
- 2) Set up a criteria based on either contact information or recipient activity. Split the workflow here for contacts who satisfy the criteria and for those who don't.
- 3) Three way
- 4) Segment your contacts based on their field value and create separate paths for each segment. You need to provide two different values for the field you select. You will create two paths for these two values and a third path where both these conditions are false.

Multi way

Segment your contacts based on their field value and create separate paths for each segment. You can provide a maximum of six values for the field you select. You will create as many paths for as many values you provide, and another path where all these conditions are false.

Click the Condition component from the Process section of the left panel and drag and drop the desired condition into the canvas and configure it to suit your requirements.



Merge

Use this component if you need to merge two or more paths into one. Drag and drop the Merge component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas and make the connections as required. You cannot connect the end node of the merge component with an end-of-workflow action.

Assign tag

Assign tags to contacts when they reach this stage of the workflow. Drag and drop the Assign tags component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas. Click Configure in the action block and select your intended tag from the list.

Remove tags

Remove tags from contacts when they reach this stage of the workflow. Drag and drop the Remove tags component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas. Click Configure in the action block and select your intended tag from the list.

Add to list

Add contacts to a list when they reach this stage of the workflow. Drag and drop the Add to list component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas. Click Configure in the action block and select your intended mailing list.

Remove from list

Remove contacts from a list when they reach this stage of the workflow. Drag and drop the Remove from list component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas. Click Configure in the action block and select your intended mailing list.

Add contact score

Add score to your contacts when they reach this stage of the workflow. Drag and drop the Add score component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas. Click Configure in the action block and select the score to be added.

Subtract contact score

Subtract score from your contacts when they reach this stage of the workflow. Drag and drop the Subtract score component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas. Click Configure in the action block and select the score to be subtracted.

Update field

Update the value of your contacts' field when they reach this stage of the workflow. Drag and drop the Update field component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas. Click Configure in the action block and select the intended field and the value to be updated.

Push to Zoho CRM:

1) Push your contacts' data into Zoho CRM when they reach this stage of the workflow. Drag and drop the Push to Zoho CRM component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas. Click Configure in the action block. Fill in the following information:

a) Select from the following two options: you can either push the Zoho Campaigns-related information of all contacts to Zoho CRM (new records will be created for contacts new to Zoho CRM) or update just the data of contacts already existing in Zoho CRM (new records will not be created for contacts new to Zoho CRM).

b) Select the Zoho CRM module that you want to push your contacts into.

c) Map Zoho Campaigns fields with the respective Zoho CRM field.

2) Click Save.

Create tasks in Zoho CRM for contacts who've reached this stage.

To create tasks:

Create task in Zoho CRM:

1) Drag and drop the Create task in Zoho CRM component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas.

2) Click Configure in the action block.

3) Select from the following two options: you can either create tasks for all contacts entering this component (new records will be created for contacts new to Zoho CRM) or create only for contacts already existing in Zoho CRM (new records will not be created for contacts new to Zoho CRM).

4) Click Map fields and map Zoho Campaigns fields with Zoho CRM fields.

5) Click Create task.

7) Fill in the following information:

a) Subject - Enter your task subject.

b) Status - Select the status you want to give your task.

c) Priority - Select the priority of the task.

d) Owner allocation - Allot owner for tasks being created in CRM. You

can select from the following options:

e) Assign all tasks to one owner

- f) Select owner by round robin method for each task

8) Click Save.

Send internal notification-process

Set up emails to notify your organization members when contacts pass a particular stage in the workflow. Drag and drop the Internal notification email component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas. Add subject, email content and select email addresses.

Move to end-of-workflow

Remove contacts from the process and move them to end-of-workflow when they reach this stage of the workflow. Drag and drop the Move to end-of-workflow component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas.

Exit from workflow

- 1) Remove contacts from the workflow when they reach this stage of the workflow. Drag and drop the Exit from workflow component from the Process section of the left panel into the canvas.

- 2) After configuring the actions to be performed under process, connect the actions in your desired sequence and set the delay between them.

Configure component skip criteria

Decide who the process actions should or should not be performed for by setting up a criteria based on contact information or recipient activity. The contact that meets the criteria will skip that component and proceed to the next component. To configure component skip criteria, click the More icon in the component, select the Skip criteria option, and set the criteria that fits your requirements.

Define end-of-workflow actions

End-of-workflow actions are performed once the contact has exited the process.

Drag and drop action components from the End-of-workflow action section of the left panel into the workflow canvas and configure them. Listed below are the actions that can be performed:

- 1) Add to another list
- 2) Remove from list
- 3) Add contact score
- 4) Subtract contact score
- 5) Update field
- 6) Push to Zoho CRM

After configuring the actions to be performed after process, connect them with each others in your desired sequence and set the delay between them. Note that having end-of-workflow actions is not mandatory.

Set delay between end-of-workflow components

The default delay between the actions is one hour. However, you can edit the delay to suit your requirements. Mouse over the delay section above the actions and click the Edit icon to change the delay. The delay for the first action is based on the time the contact exits the process. The delay for the other actions is based on the previous action.

Configure action skip criteria

Decide who the actions should or should not be performed on by setting up a criteria based on contact information or recipient activity. The contacts that meet the criteria will skip that action and proceed to the next action. To configure action skip criteria, click the More icon in the action block, select the Skip Criteria option, and set the criteria that fits your requirements.

Configure eject criteria

Set up criteria based on contact information or recipient activity to remove contacts from the workflow or process. Find the Eject criteria icon in the top-right corner. Set the criteria that fits your requirements and choose whether the contact meeting the criteria should be ejected from the process or the workflow.

Activate the workflow

After you've built up your workflow you need to activate it. Find the Activate button in the top-right corner. Once activated, your workflow is all set. Before activating a workflow:

- 1) Trigger and all components in the canvas should be configured.
- 2) All components in the canvas should be connected.
- 3) All end nodes of conditions should be connected.
- 4) All email content should have been reviewed.

Conclusion

Lead nurturing is the best strategy to engage your customers and to build credibility. Building your leads, designing the right content for the right people, delivering emails at the right time, active interactions— all these make your marketing more effective.



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