John McIntyre: Hey, it’s John McIntyre, the Autoresponder Guy. It’s time for episode 75 of the McMethod Email Marketing Podcast where you’ll discover one simple thing... How to make money every time you send an email to your list, which is a pretty freaking awesome skill to have... I bet a lot of people who wish they had that. Now, today we’ll be talking to Rob Wine, but I just want to mention just quickly it’s episode 75. I want to just give myself just a quick little pat on the back. That’s pretty awesome. I hope you’ve enjoyed the podcast. We’re three-quarters of the way to one hundred episodes, to a century, and maybe I’ll do something special when we hit 100. I’m not sure what that will be, but that just popped into my head, that idea, but anyway... Episode 75, so if you’ve listened to every episode, you can give yourself a pat on the back too, Give nd even you could try to do this, tap you head and rub your stomach. Have you ever tried to do that? It’s pretty tricky.

 Anyway, today we’ll be talking to Rob Wine, Rob is a friend of mine. He’s big in the software business service, start-up I suppose. Well, software as a start-up. SAS Apps, software as a service, that’s what I meant to say. So, he’s launched a new one. He’s had this email autoresponse service, like AOL or whatever, I guess it’s targeting that part of the market. And it’s been fine. I haven’t been using it, but I have heard that he’s added some marketing automation features, so think about AW Pro Tools or MailChimp but plug in the automations, so plug in with AW Pro Tools add some automation features. Now you might be wondering, what is automation. Now, you can say, if Joe or whoever clicks the link in email 3 and that link went to a site about Oprah, now that will send them 3 automation email responses about Oprah and why they should buy an offer form of Oprah’s products. So it allows you to customize, you know. It’s marketing automation and automates the whole process so you have the right email going to the right people which improves your deliverability, improves your conversion rates, and you don’t piss people off by sending them stuff they don’t want to hear about because if they don’t click on a link to an Oprah article you can be pretty damn sure they don’t want to hear more about Oprah, okay?

 Now, so Rob has this great little autorespondant software, great user interface and is really easy to use. He built it from the ground up and added market automation features into that. So, anyway, I thought I would get him on the show today to talk about how to set up an automated marketing campaign because he has data based on what his customers are doing and what he’s doing. So today I wanted to talk to him about the different ways you can set it up instead of just having one straight email sequences what are the different ways? Once you get some of these advanced features, whether you use his software Drip or whether you use another one. What are some good sequences to send out? What are some ideas on how to do this? And we are also going to talk about what

 are the problems with AW Pro Tools and MailChimp. Like I said, MailChimp just release some new automation stuff, and according to Rob and I think Rob has a pretty good argument there that it’s not ideal the way they’ve done it, and that if you do some automation stuff, you’re gonna be better going with a software that was built from the ground up, and that might be Drip, like Rob’s software. There’s another one called Active Campaign, Infusionsoft or Entrepot, something like that. So, we’ll get into that in a minute. Now to get the ... for this episode of the Email Marketing Podcast, got to the McMethod.come/75, I like that that url there.

 Now, for today’s insider of the week is accountability. Now, I’ve noticed recently with the coaches I work and also the people I’m working with inside McMasters is that accountability is huge. You could have great information, you could know all the stuff that you are supposed to do, you could have money, you could have time. You could everything that you need to get something done, but if you are not accountable to someone... If I’m not accountable to someone, people think I’m a hustler. If I’m not accountable to someone, I don’t get shit done either. If I spend too much time on Facebook, I’m not getting anything done, I’m just wasting time online. So, we need to be accountable. And I know when I have a coach or a friend or someone keeping me accountable, whether it’s in business or in some other area of life like fitness or relationships, I just do so much better. And that’s why this is the McMasters Insider of the Week, is that we have an accountability forum inside the community, and when someone joins they fill out an accountability form. And that’s where they just jump in there and fill out a few things that they’re going to do that week. And if they don’t do them, then I’m gonna go find them and ask them what happened. They are going to get in trouble. They are going to get the angry stare from John through the internet. Anyway, so that’s the accountability thing. So, whether you join McMasters or whether you go find a friend or mentor or coach or whoever, you need to have some accountability in your life if you’re gonna be successful. And that applies if you’re just getting started or you’re a CEO of a million dollar company.

 Okay, so McMasters, just quickly, is my private community. You can say it’s a training community, it’s a bit of a mastermind. It’s all of the above. There are training products like the McIntyre method on how to write emails, how to create an autoresponse, how to tell good stories, how to create a good landing area to really convert from a copyright perspective, not a design. And what I’m really excited about right not is the templates. We have just been developing some fill-in-the-blank templates, and that’s for people inside McMasters and you can go in there, grab a template, fill in the blanks, and you just drop it into the AWeb or drop it into the autoresponse software. So, instead of having to fight writer’s block, instead of trying to having to do training, you can just get set up an hour,

 grab a couple templates, and put them into your autoresponse sequence. It’s that simple. So, anyway I have been finding the templates work really well for people, and people just love templates. So, if you want templates, go join McMasters, the information: themcmethod.com/mcmasters. That is the sales page that will give you all the information you need to make a decision. Now, let’s get into this interview with Mr. Rob Wine.

 It’s John McIntyre, here, the autorespondant guy. I’m here with Rob Wine. Now Rob came on the podcast about 6 months ago... 8 months ago to talk about Drip, which is a neat bit of software that makes creating autoresponses really easy. And it actually had a cool feature where you give them a few blog posts and they turn those blog posts into 5-day mini sort of course for your email thing. So in that podcast we talked about some of his foot-test results he had noticed from having all these different customers, opt-in rates, conversion rates and what sort of businesses these courses worked with. But I haven’t actually spoken to Rob in a while, but he came back under my radar recently because I got an email from his company, or maybe someone told me about it. They have updated the software, Drip, to include some lightweight marketing ... so you’ve got Infusionsoft and Entrepot which is really quite expensive, number one. They are like 300 bucks a month to get started and this is a setup fee. And they can do some advanced stuff, but they are quite expensive and are not the best to get started with. So then you’ve got this middle layer where people who are on AWeb or MailChimp and then want marketing automation, but aren’t ready or don’t have the budget for it or they just don’t need all the extra features that Infusionsoft and Entrepot have. And there’s not many serving that market yet. So, I got an email from Rob about this to talk about some of the updates they have made to his software Drip because now they have made ... from the ground up and they have added some really cool marketing automation stuff. So, with that in mind, I thought we’d get him back on the podcast and talk about marketing automation, what sort of ... it offers to customers he’s got, and talk about why Drip is really one of the ... players out there in the market at this point of time. So, we’ll get into that. Hey, Rob. How’s it going man?

Rob Walling: It’s going great. It’s my pleasure to be on the show again.

John McIntyre: It’s good to have you back man. It’s actually really interesting thing, you know, this podcast has been going on since, I think episode 80 or around about. And it’s cool looking back and seeing what happened a year ago and bringing someone else back like yourself and seeing what’s new and what’s changed and sort of get a sense that stuff does change over time. Stuff takes a long, long time to change and we all want it to happen faster, but it does change, and it’s cool to see that isn’t it?

Rob Walling: Yeah, it always feels like it takes so much longer than I want it to, for sure.

John McIntyre: So, before we get into sort of marketing automation stuff that we’re chatting about, give our listeners who might not know who you are or what you are thinking, sort of a background about what you do.

Rob Walling: Yeah, sure. So, I’m a software entrepreneur. I live in California, in the United States, and I have been starting software companies for about 12 years, 10-12 years. But I think what I am most known for is kind of sharing how I do it, and what I do, and trying to give away as much of the information that helps me, I try to give that away to people. So, I have a podcast called Start-ups for the Rest of Us. I started a blog called Software by Rob. And then I’ve had a number of different software successes and failures, ranging from invoice, a software called ASP.NET Invoicing System, a software called HitTail that I bought and then revamped. And then most recently, as you mentioned, built Drip which I built from scratch with a developer I know. And the team is now 5 people, but we’re on bootstrap, have never taken funding. And yeah, that’s where I am 10 years later.

John McIntyre: That sounds good too. I get the vibe from you. You really love doing software. This isn’t just you trying to make a buck. Software is your bread and butter and you love it.

Rob Walling: Yeah, I mean I am a software developer. I started writing code when I was 8 years old. So this was 1970... I’m sorry I mean 1982, and I loved code first. And I first learned to code basic and then came up in college and got a computer engineering degree, but code wasn’t cool in the 80s and 90s, right you were kind of the nerd to do it. So, I got into sports at that point. And then in the late 90s when the .com boom hit the Bay area, which is where I’m from, if you had a pulse you could get a job coding for someone, and I realized that I had a love. So, the software has always been the primary thing for me. Like I love building gorgeous software, and the fact that it’s now a valued skill and I can build a successful business on it is kind of like a cherry on top of my sundae.

John McIntyre: It’s cool too, like now you’re getting into... you seem to build marketing tools. So a lot of software developers and coders they’re very much interested in the coding, and that’s just programming, like that’s all they care about. But it seems like with the direction you are going, and it seems like with Drip, you’ve got the coding and that’s what’s up, but you’re also bringing in the marketing to sort of make something more powerful.

Rob Walling: Yeah, you know, in the beginning, I was a developer’s developer, and some of the first tools I built were for other developers, as most of us do. But pretty quickly, my first success was because the marketing was better, not because the code or software was better than my competitors. And that’s when it clicked for me. I was like Oh man, I gotta learn this marketing stuff. I gotta learn copyrighting. I gotta learn some SEO, learn some paid acquisition, learn some content marketing, that sort of stuff. And this was around 2005, so about 9 years ago. Once I realized that then I really dove in and I started consuming a ton of marketing content, and I think it naturally led me down this path of you know looking at... because you know what’s interesting is if you’re a marketer and you try to build software you’re software doesn’t tend to be that good. You know, like you see a lot of examples of really crumby software that’s built for marketers because it’s built by marketers. So, I tried to merge those worlds as best as I can and take my marketing knowledge plus my software knowledge and built better tools for marketers.

John McIntyre: Hmm, I think that’s what I was really trying to get at, is how marketers, you know marketers build software and they’re not developers, they’re not coders, that’s not even their passion. They just want to build software to make some money and help marketers do something that’s not the most elegant software.

Rob Walling: Sure. Yeah and there are a lot of examples, and I wouldn’t name names. I think all of us know them, where you use the software, and you’re like, you know, I understand this does some really good things but, good God the user interface is hard to use and it feels dated even though it was built like a year ago, it feels like it’s 10 years old already.

John McIntyre: Yeah, yep. Alright then, well let’s start getting into some of these marketing automation stuff, and I’ll open it up right now. I’m currently using it; however, I’ve used Data ... and Pro Tools before and I didn’t really get it setup properly, partly because I was lazy and partly because I thought it was just... well mostly just lazy. It’s easy to just send out a bunch of emails and just brainstorm on the architecture of what I’m going to do with the different segments of the audience, but that’s changing and that’s sort of why your email caught my eye. You know, I know I’ve gotta change things over to a platform, but I haven’t decided which one yet. So,I know enough about email automation through this podcast, but I just haven’t done it yet. But, one belief that I have or had is that it’s actually quite complicated, and what you started to say before we recorded is that it’s really not that complicated.

Rob Walling: Yeah, I was in the same boat probably just a year ago. I was looking at marketing automation was this massive enterprise thing that you needed to pay $2000 a month for and there are tools like Marketo and Tool Dot and HubSpot that I kept hearing the names of and I would go to try to research them and you can’t even tell really what they do because the furbage on their website is so eye-level. It’s painful to read, so it’s like, you know, this is not a tool for me, right. But then I started digging in there are tools like InfusionSoft and Entrepot which used to be Office Autopilot and there’s Active Campaign, and now there’s Drip, the tool that I own. And I’ve realized that market automation is way less complicated than I had really thought, and it really is kind of the natural next step once you feel you have outgrown MailChimp and AOL Webber, which these days I kind of consider solid tools. I actually know Ben Chestnut, the founder of MailChimp, he’s a great guy and it’s fantastic. But it’s getting older and is a static email newsletter tool, that’s what I think of it as. And it bolts it on autoresponder, but it wasn’t built natively and there are some issues with that, and a lot of people that I’m talking to feel like they’ve outgrown MailChimp. Like they want tagging. They want to be able to tag the prospects of their customers or trial users. They want to be able to move people in and out of features...not do a ton of fancy stuff, not have to design some big flow chart, but maybe just have some additional features. You know be able to do something beyond just send very basic broadcasts and very basic autoresponders. And that’s what I’m calling light-weight market automation. So, it’s not the $2,000 a month tool, maybe its $50 or $100 a month, instead of $20 that MailChimp is. But it’s just the basic MailChimp or AWeber with just some automation rules built onto that.

John McIntyre: Right, right. And so when we say automation, maybe the listener doesn’t know what automation is. Give me a couple of examples of what this sort of automation rules that you might set up.

Rob Walling: Yeah, that’s a really good question. So, if you think about automation in terms of triggers and actions. Okay, so a trigger might be someone subscribing to your campaign, to an autoresponder campaign or maybe that user clicks a link in that email that you sent. Where maybe you sent the email that said “Hey, would you like to hear more about SEO? Click this link”. And when they click that, then you can take an action. And that action might be to apply a tag and a tag is just a label, so now that SEO.

Rob Walling: So now anytime someone who is tagged with SEO, so when they are done with the core sequence, funnel them into this other sequence about SEO that I’ve written. And it’s just going to speak more to their interests. Or even right away an action can be I’m going to remove me from this campaign and put them into another one. Or another trigger I’m thinking of, someone could perform a custom event, so say you have someone selling an eBook and they buy your eBook. Well that can be an event. So even you can put in one line of Javascript to call that an event when they purchase it or you can integrate, like Drip integrates with Stripe and McCurley and Gumroad and DPD and PayPal and all those things so that any of those will then recognize purchase an event and will then... that customer and then you can say anyone who made a purchase from me, tag them as a customer. So then you can just go in and you can just report. You can say, give me all my customers, I want to send them all an email right now... much more like a CRM, you know like a singular view of your people, whereas an email address represents a person. Rather than MailChimp which has a list, an email can be on three different lists and you kind of have one person represented three different times. So, I went a little off the reservation on that rules thing there, but that’s the basic concept of it.

John McIntyre: Right, and I think one of the cool parts is that you’ve integrated those so you’ve just got one email address for each person instead of same email address three times for one person. You can actually go look at someone’s email address and say, alright there on this sequence to register for SEO and copyrighting and bought these three products. So, then you go in, like I love it because it allows you to go in and see a much more granular look of your subscribers. You know, I can go on PayPal and see who’s bought what and I can go on AWeber and I can set it up this way on different lists which is clunky but it works, but I can’t really go on AWeber and pull up someone. I have to go through manual filing and see well what’s this email address, are they on this list are they on the prospect list, or are they on this list, did they buy this product, instead of just having this one, very quick one look that tells you everything about them.

Rob Walling: Right, and that’s done with tags, that’s done with events, I mean there’s custom fields as well, but I’m on Drip right now looking at some customers, and I see their entire activity feed. So, I can see when they first visited my website, from where they were referred, that they subscribed to my prospect, my lead nurturing campaign.

John McIntyre: So, you could put the Drip track on your site and that’s going to tell what source, what website, what referral it was before they signed up? That’s pretty epic.

Rob Walling: Yeah, it’s cool. I can trace them all the way back to that, and can see if they signed up for a trial.

John McIntyre: So, you could, for example, this is something I have as a campaign on Facebook, you know, I have a bunch of UTM codes and scanning google stuff like campaign... and stuff in the URL. I don’t know if this gets into that Drip, but if it does, is there a way, say someone signs up on the list and they buy say product 1, 2, and 3 later down the line on day 30, day 45 or whatever, that I can bring them up and say, well this person came on Facebook, but did this campaign, opened these terms, this content, and bought these three products.

Rob Walling: Yes, except for the UTM stuff we aren’t parsing yet, but it is on our feature list. We can do everything else though. We can get the refer and we can do everything else you just said. And yeah, the UTM stuff is a no brainer because I use it all the time as well. It’s pretty crazy, yeah.

John McIntyre: One thing that I thought, thinking the last few months with the marketing stuff when I thought you know I setup, and I talked to Russell Bronson last night doing the podcasting there in what he had set up. And I don’t know if you know Dan Figel, he’s another guy doing something similar, but you have different funnels for your business. So you know you might be I have an email marketing landing page, a copyrighting marketing landing page, a page about landing pages, each page with three different landing pages and one of them speaking to a different people who want to be good copyrighters and want to speak to email marketing and sort of gives them a different report on email marketing. And each one has its own email opt-in form. And then what happens is as each one signs up they get sort of custom email autoresponses in one to two weeks which is sort of going to ... if they’re interested in copyrighting or email marketing. But after that two weeks they get moved to a house list and that’s where they get pitched and everyone gets emails sent out to them. So it might be sign up on email marketing or copyrighting, but it’s ends up funneling them to the house list or main list after that sequence, and then they get all the broadcast like that. And I’ve heard of a few people doing that, so instead of having the mailing list first and then singling people off, what Russell Bronson and this guy, Dan, is doing is starting with the second tier and finding out what people are interested in first, they are bringing them so it’s sort of more relevant and then putting them on the house list and then sending out their offers and their products to everyone on that list.

Rob Walling: Yep. And what I like about that is it’s just not that complicated. What you described, you know, makes total sense as a marketer that a) that’s going to resonate more with them, you’re going to close more sales and you don’t need that much extra content to do that. And that’s where the marketing automation doesn’t have to be that difficult. And that’s like I said a year ago I thought it had to be more complicated than that, but even taking that step is a challenge, you know with a static newsletter, and to do that with AWeber would be not impossible, but it would be pretty heavy to do that. So that’s where we are talking about these tools to do that is just much easier because it’s just one click. It’s a complete no-brainer to do it with them.

John McIntyre: You know one thing I worry about when we talk about marketing automaton is just that if I go into do that strategy I was just talking about, you know, going in on that second tier or SEO or copyright email marketing, then instead of writing one email a day, sent out to different segments, then I have to write out three emails. So that’s why I really love that strategy I just mentioned because you can have 5 emails, 10 emails for each segment but then they are on that house list. You still know what they are interested in, you know segmentation wise, but they are still on that house list. They can just write one email, you know you can sort of just hit one button. And in an ideal world it may seem like you have different emails for each segment, but you know that’s just too much work at the end of the day.

Rob Walling: Yeah, no I agree with you.You know, you keep the work load low and you still get better results by say just using a straight autoresponder. Yeah, it’s much easier because you have so much targeting.

John McIntyre: Okay, so let’s talk about you mentioned one thing we were talking about before the call about some of the different ways you can split up, so you’ve got customers, you’ve got prospects. You can also split your prospects up into people who are ready to buy and people who sort of have no idea who you are yet. So, what have you seen and what sort of ways have you seen to split your audience up that you’re using right now?

Rob Walling: Yeah, there’s kind of four different target markets that are using the information that I’ve been focusing on, you know kind of the light-weight sets, people who have SAS apps, people who are wordpress plug-ins, people who are selling consulting services and then people who are selling info products, like eBooks and membership websites, and those are the ones that I am really focused on because that’s kind of my market, the one that I most really understand. And what I am seeing is that the four stages of the funnel that people are focusing on and it’s prospects, leads, trials and customers. And you know wordpress plug-ins don’t have trials and SAS may not have leads, you know it’s just kind of the prospect or trial. But those are really the main four segments and you have to parse out which one applies to you. But what I’m seeing is that people are... the difference is, if you sign up on MailChimp, you have maybe one big list with maybe some merge fields and tread people in between them. But if you set up with marketing automation, what you get is a different forum that you hopefully want to appear on every form of your website to try to get people into that prospect list. And that leads to more traffic but more cold leads to people who don’t have much interest in your product, they just are probably very light pitches and you are just trying to educate them about some stuff. It’s really more content marketing at that point with a PS here and there. Then, as they express more interest, if they engage, if they click some links, you move them more into the lead mode where you can tag them as a lead and you can kind of start talking more about your product a little more because now they have expressed a little more interest. You know, maybe I would like to use your software, or maybe I would like to use your consulting services. And then you start selling a bit more to try to push them towards a sale while you are still educating, but you are doing a little more selling. Then, if you have a trial or a demo that someone tries that out and downloads the demo, then you probably know that right? Because they have probably entered their email to use it, so you can tag them as a demo or trial user and that’s really when you say, hey you just downloaded this now here’s an onboard thing. Because now they have taken the bait and you really want to help them get the most value out of that trial or demo that they can. And so that’s when you cut to a really honed sequence of maybe 4-7 emails where you are just like, here are the steps to do it and I’ve noticed you haven’t done this. Because you can easily have an API hooked in there to say, hey this person hasn’t created their first project or whatever. So then you kind of hound them about it, you know, hey you aren’t going to get anything out of this if you don’t create a project. And then, I found that just that alone gets a lot of people on board. And that converts people to customers and then you can tag them as customers and run upgrade specials now and again and communicate with customers to refer people and that sort of stuff. So, it comes back to really segmenting, tagging each phase of the funnel and being able to communicate what’s relevant to them at that point so that you aren’t sending customers that really early contact marketing because that isn’t helpful to them. It’s just not as relevant.

John McIntyre: Okay, so it seems very similar to the other strategy I just mentioned where you’ve kind of got to bring someone in with a prospect funneling which might be SEO or marketing or whatever and then after that, whether you do it automatically or you do it another matter or choice say whether they open at least three emails or whatever, then you then put them on that mail list, which is probably your lead list where you get more aggressive with the pitches. And now whether you have a trial stage is just dependent on what your business is and now you can put them in the customer phase and even up-sales after that and start tagging them to say, hey you haven’t bought this add-on to the product, let’s send them a sequence based on that. You could, and I think that why it seems so complicated, is because you could get so deep into this.

Rob Walling: Yeah, you can, but you don’t have to is probably the message that I want to get across today. You know, I kept thinking you have to write a hundred of emails and have a different email for everyone depending on what they are doing, and you really don’t need to do that. Most of the niches I talked about, SaaS... and Info Portal, they really only have three phases, each of them, one of them has four, but most really only has three phases and those phases don’t have to be that long. You know, if you’re posting blog posts and you can summarize those and do a teaser, then you have the prospect content that you need, right, for your cold prospects. And then if you have a nice even four email sequence about getting someone to use or download your demo or trial, then you’re done with the trail sequence. And then you only need a few customer emails to get people to send referrals and take other actions that you want them to take. And if you just do that, you totally get the value out of it that you are paying for, whether you are paying someone to write it or you are paying for the tool, you will get so much return on that money, even if you are just doing the basics. The tuning and high optimization of it, some people love that, and yes you can get more out of it, but it’s kind of an 80/20 thing that if you just get the basics done it will work wonders for you over sending purchase static content to everybody.

John McIntyre: And I guess the primary option and goal is to get it set up and running to get that basic setup running through 80/20. But you know, if you plan on being in business for two years, five years or however many years, sign up where each month you can add five emails or ten more emails or ten more triggers. And it’s just you can continue to optimize and refine it. You don’t have to continue to erase this more like a marathon, but it’s kind of like a wheel you are trying to gradually improve.

Rob Walling: Exactly, and that’s the thing, is you are building this fly wheel. It’s not like you write this email once and it goes away. These are all sequences that will repeat over and over and over so you are building assets over time. So, I like the way you put it; if you’re gonna be in business for two years, five years, ten years, you’re gonna take the slow road and build this fly wheel over time and it’s just basically elevate your conversion rates across all the stages of your funnel.

John McIntyre: I love this. This is from Perry Marshall and he talks about breaking the sales funnel into pieces by distinguishing each piece and by doing that you are improving it by tweaking it. And what happens is, you don’t get very far over a few weeks, but over time when you tweak this, you tweak that, 20% here, 7% here, 10% here, 5% here, you have just compounded interest. When you read some email about making a million dollars in three months, that’s not really how it works. You know if you are doing it for 2 years and you get 10% in a month, you know on a step sequence of 2 years or 5 years or even 10 years, business explodes just because that’s what the compound of interest does.

Rob Walling: Yeah, that’s right. That’s what truly building a sustainable business is. Even the big start-ups. You know you hear about Y Combinator start-ups and if they’re growing 10% a month, that’s nice, you know growing 10% a month, but if you do that for a year or two you’re in big business. You get big quick. So between 10 and 20% growth is what we’re looking at, and that’s what this is. It’s just building that fly wheel.

John McIntyre: Alright, now let’s talk about, because I know you’ve got Drip, before we talk about Drip, let’s talk about, let’s say you wanted to do this MailChimp or AW Pro Tools, you mentioned before about how that works if you wanted to hack onto it. So some people have heard about MailChimp or heard about AW Pro Tools and they want to do it that way, but it sounds like that’s not the best way to do it.

Rob Walling: Well, it depends on what best is for you. It’s like if it works for you, if you use AW Pro Tools and it works for you and it doesn’t feel hacky and it doesn’t break and it’s good enough for your scenario, then I would say stick with it. There’s no reason not to, same with MailChimp. They just added, two days before this interview, some automation tools. And I know they have had a quest for this forever, and they are a big company, so it’s hard to just bolt something on real quick. But you know if it works, I have been telling people to stay with it. But my guess is that if you do automation, if you have any type of complexity or any type of expansion that you want to do, you are going to outgrow it pretty soon, and when that time comes, that’s when you need to start looking at something like an Active Campaign or Drip or Entrepot.

John McIntyre: So by the sound of it, what it sounds like the problem is that when you go to the database, essentially all that AW Pro Tools or MailChimp are, the database has been built or organized in a certain way for the last 10 years, and it’s been built for them to be just a straight user or straight autoresponse thing. So when you tag on marketing automation or because it’s not built from the ground up, you can’t do as much, they can’t do everything with the data. They have to work within the rules they already have, unlike say, Active Campaign, Entrepot, Drip or any of these other ones, that’s because they’re built from the ground-up. They have a lot more flexibility, and I’m guessing they’re a lot more reliable as well, too.

Rob Walling: Yeah, that’s right. I mean the number of scenarios that you can cover with automation rules in say Drip or Active Campaign, is definitely a lot more than you can do with MailChimp or AW Pro Tools. There are just a lot more cases you can cover. We spent like two months just moving data around to make this possible because when we built Drip a year ago, we didn’t build it with automation rules and so we stepped back and spent two months moving data all over the place in order to make this possible to build it really from the ground up. You know, MailChimp couldn’t do that. They literally have too much data for that to be possible, so they would have to bolt-on, that’s the phrase we use in software. It’s like bolting something onto the side of a car or bolting it onto the side of a building. You kind of have to bolt it on and work around your limitations. And so they do have automation, but the further you dig into it... I started looking and I was like, well I can’t do this. Like there are some very basic things, like you still can’t view a subscriber, one email address does not equal a person in MailChimp and that still fundamental thing that I really want if you’re gonna do this. You know you don’t want that email address to show up on three different lists and that to look like three different people.

John McIntyre: And an element too where someone might be thinking about, well, I’ll just go on MailChimp for the next two or so months or I’ll just go on AWeber for the next two or so months and then I’ll switch later on, but I think the downside of this is that I know that once I switch... I mean I know it’s gonna be a pain in the ass just to move from AWeber anywhere, so now I’m thinking well if I want to do this marketing automation stuff, I don’t want to go from one place and say well this didn’t really work, let’s go here and do it again. I really want to get something that’s going to grow with me for the next 1, 2, 5 years.

Rob Walling: Yeah, that’s right. Because doing it once and then repeating it would be kind of a pain. And at this point, the pricing difference used to be more but it’s not actually that much if you look at it. MailChimp and AWeber start around $15-20 a month and Active Campaign and Drip are right at $30-50 a month, just to start. So, it’s like if you are going to move into that, it’s not like it used to be where Marketo and ... are $800 a month to start and InfusionSoft are $200 and $300 a month to start. But now, there’s people who are like us who are coming down and making these a lot easier to kind of get into that.

John McIntyre: Let’s talk about Drip then. You’ve mentioned Drip, and we’ve learned a little bit about Drip so far, so let’s wrap it up on the content and hear what you can do with Drip.

Rob Walling: Yeah, so Drip is a light-weight marketing automation that doesn’t suck. I mean that’s kind of the headline that I’m using on the website right now, and to be honest I took that headline from a customer who told us about 6 months ago, he was trying to tell me about all the features he wanted. He was telling me, I want an email address to represent a person, I want to be able to move someone around the list with a click, and then he kind of got flustered and he was like can you just build a marketing automation software that doesn’t suck? And that was the thing. And I was like, that is a headline, right there. So that is literally the headline on the homepage right now, and Drip allows you to basically do everything we talked about here. It allows you to tag customers or prospects or leads as prospects, customers and leads. It integrates with Stripe and Gumroad and McCurley and Chargify and PayPal and DPD and we are rolling out like one or two more a week so that any payment provider, we want you to not have to write any code and for it to just call into Drip and you can say, Boom, this person made a purchase, tag them as a customer, move them into your customer campaign. We are integrated with Unbounce and Leap Pages and we’re adding some more landing page folks so you can easily have landing pages and send folks straight into Drip. Drip still has a pretty cool widget where you just add some JavaScript in website footer and in every page of your website you can instantly have an email capture form. It’s a little toaster pop-up, kind of like the chat widows in Olark chat and it will collect these emails for every page of your site without you having to go in with HML, it just works. And so that’s how you get that prospect list started. And, I can’t tell you the number of people who come in, and they install that footer and I keep thinking to myself, boy once they make the first sale they’re gonna be happy, but they get 5 subscriber their first day, and they email us just this roar like, I can’t believe I have 5 people on the email list already. And I have forgotten the joy of that when you’re just building your list, how hard it is to get people on your email list and it’s really cool just to get a handful of folks on it.

John McIntyre: I think what’s really cool, is I haven’t tried to get any of this across yet, but I’m on the back end of drip right now and the interface looks beautiful. It looks real good.

Rob Walling: Yeah, we spent, like we talked about earlier, I’m a software guy. And so when I use software that isn’t easy to use or it isn’t well designed, it pains me and I’m pretty picky about it. So we spent an enormous amount of time, and I hired a couple of guys who are quite expensive to do this design and then the user interface and then the user experience to try to make it so that you don’t have to click 20 times to try to get somewhere. You don’t have a whole bunch of pop-ups that interrupt you. And we really think through the phases of if you want to get from here to there for the quickest click path, and we look at it, and it’s more of a science than an art, you know building software. There’s a lot of rules and patterns that we follow to try to make it simple for folks to get started with it.

John McIntyre: Yeah, cool. Alright, well let’s wrap it up here then. If people want to learn more about you or about Drip or about anything else, where’s the best place for them to go?

Rob Walling: Sure, well Drip is at Getdrip.com or it’s at, actually the number result for the word in Google right now for the word Drip, and I don’t know how long that will be, but it’s been that way for a couple of months, that is kind of cool. And then they can follow me on Twitter @RobWalling and then I have a podcast called Start-ups for the Rest of Us where I talk a lot about starting software companies and marketing them

John McIntyre: Cool, well I’ll have links to all those sites in the show notes at the McMethod.com. Rob, thanks for coming on the show.

Rob Walling: It was absolutely my pleasure. It was great to be back on, John.