

ENGAGE & INSPIRE YOUR AUDIENCE WITH A

NEWSLETTER



A WHITE PAPER

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Engage and Inspire Your Audience with a Newsletter

Executive Summary: Spread Your Ideas, Create a Newsletter!

A newsletter can be the tent pole in your marketing plan, supporting a variety of other activities, or it can stand alone.

You Need to be Heard

Your business deserves attention from customers and employees alike, but in the fast-paced world we live in it is easy for your message to get lost in a sea of information. You need a way to deliver information to your audience in a way that allows them to take it in on their terms without interfering with your core message or communication goals.

Newsletters are Multi-Taskers

As you will see, creating a newsletter will encourage you to regularly produce articles, photos, and graphic images for the newsletter which can also be used in a variety of other ways to communicate your message. Regularly publishing a newsletter in print is a great way to reach your intended audience, deliver your message, and increase brand loyalty. There are many reasons to make a regular newsletter part of your business routine.

Do It on Your Terms

Newsletters are flexible and are easily molded to fit your specific business needs.

A newsletter can be the tent pole in your marketing plan, supporting a variety of other activities, or it can stand alone.

It can be as complex or as simple as you choose, and can be used in a variety of ways to convey your message. In this white paper you will learn about:

- The newsletter as a means of communication and reader engagement
- The challenges of connecting with your audience in today's environment
- How different styles of newsletters address different communication needs and audiences
- What part social media can play as you create new content
- Practical tips for creating a successful newsletter

A Newsletter is Your Company's Bullhorn

When you regularly publish content you reap many benefits.

Think of a newsletter as a bullhorn for broadcasting your ideas – a way for you to rise above the constant hum of everyday life. Whether your goal is to promote your business, deepen your relationship with employees, or present expert information to your audience, a newsletter is a reliable vehicle for conveying your message.

Getting the Word Out Can Be Challenging

You face a number of challenges in the business world as you attempt to share your message with intended audiences. Even an expert in their field who wishes to freely share valuable information with the world needs to establish trust and connect with their audience. People receive an overwhelming amount of information daily. To make an impression you need a multi-pronged approach that is memorable but also fulfills its primary role: to communicate your message. You need color and vibrancy in both the written word and the images displayed to make a lasting impression.

Newsletters are Powerful Communication Tools

Creating a newsletter is just shorthand for creating and publishing new content in a way that makes the most sense for your needs and can take on many forms. People enjoy new information and even if your message is not as exciting as today's headlines, there are always ways to engage your audience and inspire them to action.

When you regularly publish content you reap many benefits.

A newsletter allows you to:

- Market yourself and improve brand loyalty
- Inspire your audience to action
- Convey your message on your terms
- Increase customer business inquiries
- Capture audience attention
- Consistency and professionalism demonstrate your reliability

Engage Your Audience with a Regularly Published Newsletter

To inspire action, your information can't merely be presented. To make an impression on your audience you need a flexible, multi-faceted approach, and creating a newsletter is a powerful way to convey your message. While it may seem like a daunting project, by giving the newsletter concept some careful planning it can become easy to create and communicate important information that shows the personality of your business and leaves a lasting impression.

The Advantage of the Newsletter Format

To overcome the challenges you are facing when it comes to communicating your message, you need a solution that allows you to:

- Communicate your message clearly and effectively
- Engage the reader on their terms
- Easily create and publish fresh content in a variety of formats
- Create compelling content for your audience

The Newsletter Format Hits the Mark

The newsletter format overcomes the inherent challenges and allows you the freedom to create the content you need. A newsletter can be adapted to seamlessly integrate with social media or other technologies you deem appropriate. Your newsletter can be as simple or complex as you need it to be and can be presented in a variety of ways; you are only limited by your imagination.

Different Newsletters for Different Audiences

In the business world, we usually see newsletters used in the following ways:

- Promotional newsletters talking about products or services offered
- Relationship building newsletters, directed at employees, customers, or both
- Informational newsletters to share expert opinions and data

When you publish a newsletter you can tailor the design and tone to match your specific needs, and blend formats to communicate your message perfectly.

By planning and creating content of varying sizes, from feature length articles to Twitter-sized snippets, your readers will be able to digest your messages their way.

Newsletters Engage Your Audience on Their Terms

Whether it is digital or printed, the newsletter format is versatile and accommodating. The reader is presented with multiple topics like a buffet and they can pick and choose exactly what and how much they put on their plate. If the reader is interrupted, it is easy for them to pick back up and continue.

By publishing your content in a variety of formats, you can remind your readers that there is good information waiting for them in your newsletter. An email newsletter can consist of excerpts from a printed newsletter or can be a digital version in addition to the printed piece. Your newsletter may reference a company marketing website or blog, Twitter account, Facebook page, a Pinterest site or other social media, and ask the reader to take action in a variety of ways.

Creating Your Newsletter

The goal of your newsletter is to give value to the reader that is equal to or greater than the time they took to read it.

Creating a fresh, fun newsletter that engages your readers and communicates your message is a lot easier than it sounds. There are a few easy steps you can take to add a regularly published newsletter to your company's repertoire, impress your friends, and make your competition jealous.

- **Plan the Content:** Set your communication goals, tone, and publication frequency. Take time to understand your audience and their needs. Find the right person in your organization to spearhead this important project for your organization. Encourage them to work on the project a little bit daily or weekly, to avoid deadline panics and ensure timely publication.
- **Plan the Delivery:** Prepare for publishing, including online activities that supplement your printed piece or otherwise inform your audience. While the Internet Age is definitely upon us, a printed piece can be anywhere. A corporate newsletter can grab potential readers' attention in common areas or meeting rooms – places where there aren't always digital devices available.
- **Plan for the Future:** Remember that your newsletter is an extension of your brand. Making design changes once you begin publishing on a regular schedule can confuse your new readers. An easy way to avoid this and make producing a newsletter easier is to create a template to be used and stick to it.

The goal of your newsletter is to give value to the reader that is equal to or greater than the time they took to read it.

Newsletter Do's and Don'ts

Do...

- Remember that newsletters are relationship building. You establish credibility and rapport as you create relevant content and publish it. While the newsletter is your pulpit by definition, respecting your readers is the first step toward getting what you want from your publication.
- Break your information down for your audience. Using a layered approach allows the reader to assimilate information in pieces and retain it more effectively. Make your publication easy to skim as well as read completely, with frequent section breaks and short paragraphs.
- Create a mechanism for input from your readers, even if it's a simple email address. Pick a method that works for you but gives them a voice.

- Make your newsletter easy to share in multiple ways. Printed copies around the office, digital supplements, and tweeted feature articles are each powerful on their own, but a multi-pronged approach will maximize the impact of your newsletter.
- Be unique and stand out in the crowd. Position yourself as a trusted source of expert information in your market, and make an impression.

Don't...

- Include inflammatory or private content. Remember that with the power of the Internet anything you publish has the potential to be public.
- Miss your publishing deadlines. Once you've set reader expectations, stick to your commitment.
- Spam your audience. Allow for opting out of digital subscriptions and be mindful not to over-publish. Soliciting feedback from your audience can be a great way to avoid irritating the crowd.

Laying Out Your Newsletter

The masthead is the title of your newsletter and should carry your brand. You can include a tagline to clarify the goal of your newsletter and version information for your readers.

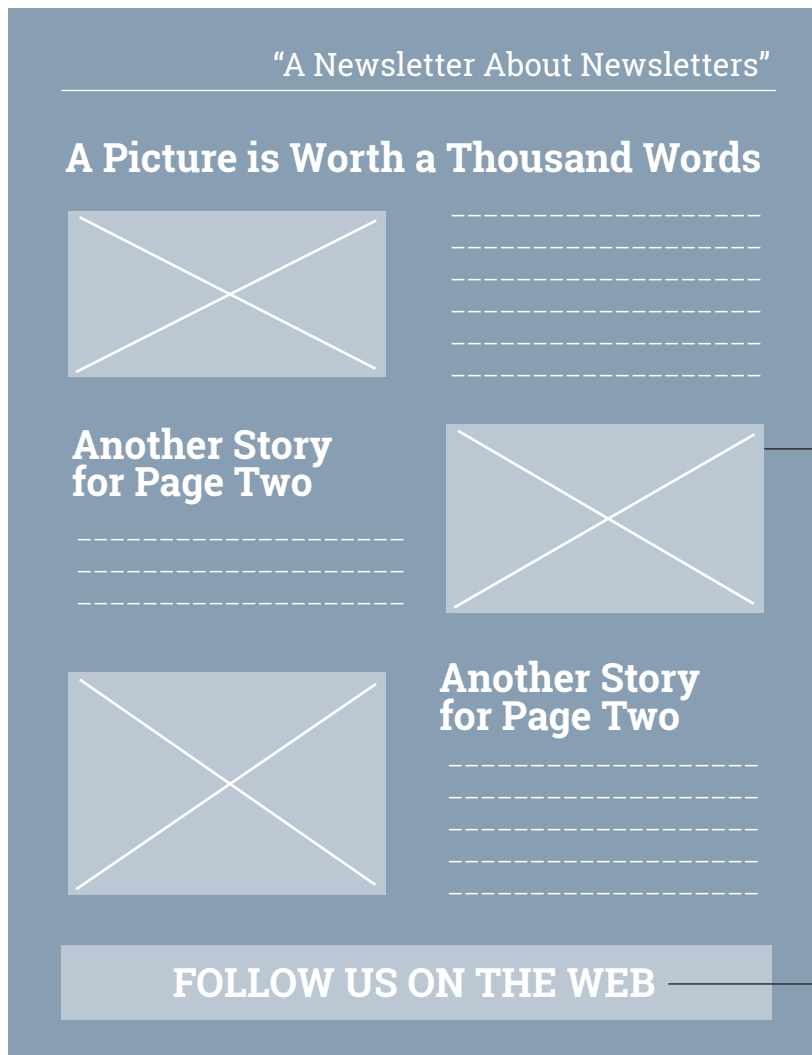
In layout terms **"the fold"** is the top half of the newsletter, the place the readers look to decide if they will continue to read. Use this area for your most important topics and most compelling content.

Include a guide for the reader. **An index** of sorts will allow your audience the ability to easily navigate and get the information they want on their terms.

The diagram illustrates a newsletter layout on a blue background. At the top, a white oval callout points to the masthead area, which contains the text 'THE MASTHEAD MATTERS', the tagline 'A Newsletter About Newsletters', and 'Volume 1 • Issue 1'. Below the masthead, a horizontal dashed line represents 'the fold'. To the left of this line, a white rectangular callout points to the content area above the fold, which includes the heading 'Most Readers Start Above the Fold' and several lines of placeholder text. To the right of the fold line, a white rectangular callout points to the content area below the fold, which is divided into two columns. The left column is titled 'Inside This Issue' and lists 'Page 2: The Power of Images', 'Page 3: Clean Layout is Key', and 'Page 4: Social Media Tie-In'. The right column is titled 'Another Story for Page One' and contains several lines of placeholder text. A large 'X' is drawn over a rectangular area on the right side of the newsletter, indicating a placeholder for an image or graphic.

Laying Out Your Newsletter

The **layout** of your newsletter matters, and you should strive to have a professional look and feel to your publication. Keep your font consistent in style and size. Ensure text lines up and margins are respected. A clean design is like a perfect staircase; it smoothly moves the reader through the story.



Don't forget **the power of images** to draw attention and convey information. Include visuals like photos, data visualizations or pull quotes to draw the reader's attention and highlight your most important points.

Your paper newsletter can have a **digital life** in a variety of ways. An email edition is an option, and you can publish individual articles using a variety of social media channels, with the goal of getting a casual reader to read more of the newsletter you've published.

Newsletters are a Powerful Way to Communicate Your Message

A regularly published, eye-catching newsletter is a great way to increase reader loyalty and spread important information. Your audience is exposed to an ever-increasing amount of information daily.

Producing a newsletter will help you to stand out in the marketplace, building your brand while making a lasting impression on your audience.

The Value of the Newsletter to Your Business

As we've discussed, there are many benefits that can be gained by regularly publishing a newsletter, including:

- Improving brand loyalty
- Inspiring action
- Communicating on your terms
- Demonstrating your reliability, and more

The Advantages of the Newsletter Format

Newsletters are flexible vehicles for your message, giving you control of your message and allowing you to decide how much time and energy to invest in the project. Your audience can browse your newsletter for articles of interest, or may skim through to get a general sense of what's going on with your company. Committing to a regularly published newsletter will encourage you to create fresh content that can be used in a variety of ways to inform and even entertain your audience.

Creating a Newsletter Can Be Simple

By setting up a template and consistently collecting information on topics, a monthly newsletter can be put together easily and quickly. We've talked about planning the content and delivery of your newsletter and covered some basic Do's and Don'ts. We've shown you some simple layout tips and demonstrated how you can get a newsletter started for yourself because...

Newsletters Get the Job Done!

A regularly published newsletter can convey the personality of your business while sharing vital information and inspiring your readers to action. Whatever your communication goal is, creating a newsletter is a great way to convey your message effectively to a wide audience.

About Your Sponsor

We've provided this paper about Newsletters because we have seen the value first hand, and after reading this white paper we hope you are beginning to see the value too. We have shown you how a newsletter can inspire your audience to action and inform your readers, increasing brand loyalty.

When you are ready to produce a newsletter or related content, we're ready to help you to look your best. Visual communications of all forms are our specialty, and we value the opportunity to assist you with your newsletter or related project. Contact us today to find out what we can do to help you get your message heard!

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