



The Value of a Newsletter

It's easy to underestimate the value of a newsletter. But a newsletter allows you to connect with your customers on an ongoing basis while selling your products through a subtle message.

Print newsletters require time and effort. These are the newsletters you send through the mail, offer at trade shows, hand out at other events, etc.

Your print newsletter can be in black and white or in full color. It really depends on your budget, personal preference and even the frequency of your publication.

For example, a full color newsletter for 100 people, distributed on a weekly basis is really a waste of money. Full color newsletters are nice if your budget allows but black and white versions are just as effective.

E-newsletters are the easiest, quickest and cheapest newsletters to produce. Each issue is produced electronically and you can send them to all of your subscribers through Email.

Getting subscribers is easy. You can ask for people's Email addresses on your order forms, your Web site, customer statements, at trade show events, etc. Let them know you have a newsletter and they can get the latest information about your products/services as well as other helpful info they can use.

The latter being the key focus of any newsletter - print or electronic. No matter which type of newsletter you choose to produce, you must make it worth your subscriber's time to read your publication. This means you have to leave out the sales hype and put in useful information for your customers.

Remember, a newsletter is not an advertisement. It is a way for you to sell your products and establish yourself with customers. But it's not a self-pat on the back. Too much you, you, you and your subscribers won't remain subscribers for long.

Good newsletter content is key to any publication's success. You offer your customers information as a service and you keep your company name on the top of their mind at the same time.

Let's say you're a real estate agent and you've decided to start a newsletter. Your publication could include tips on picking an agent, how to find the right property, what to look for when choosing a home inspector, even new real estate listings to hit the market. You could write a few stories per newsletter edition just as long as you don't overload your reader with too much information.

If you're producing an electronic newsletter and you have relevant links, by all means, include them. In the above example, you could easily write an article on how to find the right property. Post that article on your Web site.

When it's time to produce your newsletter, take a snippet from the article or write a brief description about the article and put that in your newsletter. Underneath that description, you would include a link to the full article (see the newsletter layout sample below). This method also helps drive traffic to your site.

A simple electronic issue of your newsletter might look like this in the body of an Email:

The Name of Your Newsletter

Brought To You By:
The Name of Your Company

The Date

In This Issue:

- Story 1
- Story 2
- Story 3

***** Story 1 *****

This is where the text for story 1 would go. Then you would use the same format for story 2 until your newsletter issue is complete.

Link to the Full Article

To find an electronic newsletter layout that fits your own style, subscribe to the many newsletters available on the Web. Tip: You may want to set up a free Email account with services such as yahoo.com or hotmail.com just for your newsletter subscriptions. Otherwise, your inbox will become quite full.

Churches and schools use a wide variety of newsletter layouts for print versions. Contact these organizations in your area and most will be happy to let you see past issues so you can get ideas for yourself. Or check out Newsletters, Brochures & More software for templates that are ready to go.

The value of having a newsletter can only be measured in future sales. People will come to trust you. They'll even begin to look forward to your newsletter arriving at their home or in their inbox.

Over time, you will build your credibility and, if you provide the reader with straight facts, you'll also build your sales.