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Ezines 101: How To Get Started, Get Content, Get Subscribers & Get Sales!

By Julie Ann Waid

Online newsletters! We hear a lot of buzz about what a great marketing tool they are for business,

but how do you put one together? Weekly or monthly? How on earth do you find content? And most of all, how do you get the all-important subscribers?

Never fear! Answers are here! Here is a brief tutorial on starting an e-zine, filling it with great content, and most of all, how to get subscribers. Happy publishing!

GETTING STARTED

1) What to use: Use an online e-zine/newsletter service. It's a lot easier than trying to manage the templates, subscriber info, etc. yourself. Trust me on this! I use Constant Contact (

www.constantcontact.com

) but there are several others out there that are good. Do a search and shop

around to find one that suits your style and preferences. Another good way to see what's out there is to look at the e-zines you already subscribe to. If a zine is done by a service, there will be a "published by" or something to that effect near the end of the issue.

2) When to publish: Decide when you want to publish. It can be once a month, once a week, biweekly, etc. Just remember that your audience gets inundated with email. You want to be in front of them just enough to remind them that you're there, that you're an expert in your field, and that you're available to help them. That's all the frequency they need. Also, the more you publish, the more time you'll have to spend creating the newsletter. That's time away from other marketing activities and working with clients!

GETTING CONTENT

1) Write your own: This is where all the little daily lessons we learn come into play. If you've ever read any of copywriting guru Bob Bly's stuff, you know he encourages writing tipsheets and brief articles for just this purpose (as well as sharing with other pubs, selling/offering as premiums, etc.). This is what you put in your newsletter. For example, as a copywriter, I've done pieces on how to write a good press release, the secret to holiday marketing, the importance of proofreading a business document, etc.

This is a tactic that any businessperson can adopt. Just sit down and start making "How To..." lists based on what you do in your writing and/or marketing. Then do a few paragraphs and you're done. (Even this little tutorial I'm writing right now could be considered such a piece! To learn more about writing tipsheets, [click here](#))

The thing to remember is to keep promotional information about you to a minimum. People want information, not a commercial. I usually stick to articles, trivia, and maybe one promotion in addition to my bio information. That's it. Keep it simple, and keep it about your customers and their interests.

2) Use other writers' articles: Using other writers' established material is also good. I've

consented to my articles being published in a few other newsletters, and am perfectly happy to put other writers' material in the Communique. Most other newsletter authors are happy for the chance to get their name and expertise in front of another group of readers, so don't hesitate to ask them (make sure you get permission before you run someone else's article).

3) Use your clients and readers: Ask your clients and subscribers to contribute. These folks are fellow businesspeople, and have many success stories to contribute. Ask for them. The goodwill you've just earned is tremendous (everyone likes to be published) and advantageous (you didn't have to write it, so that's a story off your to do list).

GETTING SUBSCRIBERS

1) Ask: Ask your existing clients and prospects if they'd like to receive your free e-zine. While many may not have a need for your services right this minute, many often will say "Sure", especially if your area of expertise interests them. Anytime you collect business cards, or contact information, send a friendly email and ask if they'd be interested in subscribing. Keep it personal, to the point, respectful, and tell them briefly why you think they'd be interested. Everyone you meet, ask if they'd like to subscribe. You never know where it might get forwarded to later!

2) Advertise: You can advertise your free newsletter in other e-zines, newsletters, etc. If you stress that it's free, you'll attract interest and subscribers. That's basic, human nature. Advertising by itself isn't free, but fortunately, many newsletter and e-zine rates are quite reasonable. Check for rates by contacting editors and publishers of newsletters your target audience reads.

3) Appearing in other e-zines: Back to the theme of contributing writers, except you're the

contributor now. Take some of your back articles and submit them to other e-zine publishers. Many will be happy to take the work (remember, its material they didn't have to write!), and most will put your contact information with your article, including the info about your own e-zine. If not, they usually include your website, which leads to it.

4) Have subscription information prominent on your homepage: Make sure one of the first things people see when they land on your homepage is info about your newsletter and how to subscribe. Mine is in the upper-right hand corner of the page, and includes a subscription box where people can directly input their email address to subscribe instantly (another plug for Constant Contact for making that handy subscription feature standard in their service).

If you can, have a page on your website for archived articles. This is good because it gives prospective subscribers a chance to see what kind of material you publish and it reinforces that your e-zine is a good thing for them. My archives are on a page titled Free Stuff. J

LAST.

Remember to always proofread your newsletter. That's self-explanatory!

Happy publishing!

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Julie Ann Waid is a copywriter and editor specializing in marketing communications. Sign-up for her free newsletter full of marketing, publicity and business writing tips at

www.waidwrites.com

Zoom in on Ezines

By Scott F. Geld

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Do you know how to really increase your sales & profits online? A guaranteed route to success used by many Internet marketers who turn a profit is to incorporate ezines & newsletters into their marketing strategy. Ezines and newsletters are a genuinely useful tool in the Internet marketer's armory. They serve as a platform to communicate products & services to subscribers who have a qualified interest in a certain field or subject - either through advertising, product endorsement or articles and content. Some ezines offer free advertising – especially to new subscribers – whilst others grant advertising for a small fee. You can even purchase advertising space through auctions such as at <http://www.ezineadauction.com/>.

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There are several thousand ezines up & running on the web, so you are sure to find a bunch that have subscribers who match your target criteria. If direct advertising in the ezine is not an option, then contact the owner/webmaster and offer to write content in exchange for insertion of your tagline or URL, and - hey presto! - free advertising! Many owners are only too glad to receive help developing fresh content.

More success can be gained if you start up your own ezine or newsletter. Not only will you be able to advertise your products & services to your own subscriber base, but you can turn it into a profit center all of its own by offering advertising space to others! As recognition of ezines & newsletters as a valuable marketing tool increases, then you will find escalating opportunities to sell advertising space to people and companies clamoring to get on board and gain access to your subscribers.

A quick tip - A good way to add subscribers to your ezine is to advertise it in other related ezines and newsletters - this will build up your subscriber base real quick!



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