

Keep Your Company Newsletter Out of the Circular File

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By Jessica Albon

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You spend a considerable amount of time and money on your print newsletter and the only way your investment pays off is if your readers actually interact with your newsletter in a positive way. Unfortunately, most company newsletters don't do a very good job of encouraging any such interaction.

How can you make sure your newsletter's one of the successful few? Here we have the five key questions your newsletter must answer to leave a lasting impression on your readers.

Who's it from?
How's it relevant?
Is it interesting?
Why read it now?
Why keep it?

Who's it from? You wouldn't believe the number of companies that neglect to make it obvious who the newsletter's from. It's often not enough to include your company name on the newsletter somewhere. Rather, consider each newsletter an opportunity to introduce your business to people who've never heard of it before. Your mailing label should include your company's slogan (and a bit about what you do if it's not obvious) and logo. Ask someone who's unfamiliar with your company to take a look at your newsletter and guess who it's from and what they do. If they can't, perhaps it's time to make some changes.

How's it relevant? Your readers don't have much time. Clearly they don't want to spend what little time they have reading something that's not going to apply to their lives. You might prove your newsletter's relevance by putting a table of contents near the mailing label (don't list article by title, rather list them by benefit). You'll find some great examples of proving relevance at the newsstand. Take a look at the

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magazines available and see how they convince readers that's what's inside is worth reading.

Is it interesting? After you've proved to the reader it's relevant, you still have to prove that it's interesting. Interest is typically a matter of tone and depth. Some readers prefer formal newsletters with articles that examine each facet of a limited topic, while others want a more general approach with a more playful tone. Get it right and your readers will wait by the mailbox for your newsletter.

Why read it now? Make sure your readers see the information as applicable right now. What's applicable will depend on your readers, but in general, if you have information that's in some way timely (safety features, for instance), promote it up front. You can also offer your readers special discounts and promotions.

Why keep it? Not all company newsletters should be kept, and you'll need to determine whether or not yours should. If you decide you do want readers to keep the newsletter, you can add value to your publication in the form of reference articles or collections of resources. If you want to make sure readers can always find your newsletter, perhaps you could start new subscriptions with a manila folder to keep all the issues in (or a binder, if you prefer). An alternative is to offer something they can keep from each issue—an index card of important phone numbers, for instance—that they'd cut out or remove from the newsletter before throwing it away or passing it along.

When your newsletter answers these questions, your readers will see more value in it. While you simply can't get everyone to read your newsletter the moment it arrives in their mailbox, you can encourage readers to look forward to receiving your newsletter.

Is it your job to increase company profits? The Write Exposure offers the resources you need to do just that at <http://www.designdoodles.com>

Yours Truly, Anonymous

By Joe Reinbold

Yours Truly, Anonymous by Joe Reinbold

How many times today have you gotten an email message with an offer in it for a money making deal or some type of service?

Probably many times! And, how many of those messages had no individuals name or contact information, just a web site URL?

Again, probably many!

I received one a couple of hours ago that had a pretty good offer in it, one that I at least was willing to check out further.

It was a network marketing program that was in Pre-Launch and I had not heard of it before, so it appeared to be pretty new.

The email had no name on it either in the body or in the "From"

line. All it had was a URL to the web site.

So off I went to the web site. The home page was well done and it described a typical network marketing program. There was no identification on the home page as to who the sponsor was nor was there any specific information about the company other than its name. I spotted a link entitled "About Us" and clicked on that.

Nothing there either in respect to the name of the individuals running the business, where it was located or how to contact them. You would think that on a page titled "About Us" you would see that type of information. But all this page had on it was a description of a network marketing company, in generic terms.

So I checked out the page "Terms of Membership" and that page was also void of any contact information. I did note that the company was probably in Texas since part of the agreement indicated thatwould be governed by the laws of the State of Texas.

I checked out every page and they were all void of any identification of the people running the program. Even the "Contact Us" page had a input form to send them a message rather than listing an actual email address.

One of the first things I want, and you should want, before doing business with a company is to know who they are, where they are and whether I would be able to contact them by email and telephone if necessary. I want to be able to have some trust in the people

I do business with just as I want to create that trust with my customers. I want to know that there is a real live person there to talk to.

It worries me that some people doing business online are afraid to identify themselves fully or even partially in some cases. It worries me that some people will surf up to that site and other sites like it, read it, like it, charge a considerable amount of money to their credit card and they don't know anything about the company.

It also bothers me that people try to market products by email without identifying themselves (other than their email address and sometimes that is false) and expect to be successful. It

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reminds me of when I used to do a lot of snail mailings and the response mailings would be very similar. No return address, no name and address inside the envelope other than the promotion company's address and an ID number on a circular. I know a lot of you have gotten those! And in most cases they went right in the circular file. Well now you have a button that you can use to put them in the circular file!

The company you should want to deal with is the one that makes full disclosure of who they are, has a privacy statement that spells out what they are going to do or not do with your personal information, and provides accurate information about their products and services. You don't want to deal with someone who appears to be hiding behind a web page, they may be here today but gone tomorrow!

Do you use "Yours truly, Anonymous" as your signature file?

Joe Reinbold, owner of The Entrepreneur's Home BusinessLink publishes a free weekly email newsletter "Home IncomeQuarterly E-dition" which is dedicated to assisting onlinemarketers. For a free subscription [justmailto:subscribe@homebizlink.com](mailto:subscribe@homebizlink.com) or visit his site at <http://www.homebizlink.com>



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