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Need Ezine Content – Think Holidays

By Jane Tabachnick

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Publishing an ezine certainly has its benefits and rewards, but even the most prolific publishers often need more content ideas, topics and graphics.

One of the best resources for newsletter and ezine publishers is holidays; they are a true gift because they can provide an overall theme, a topic, graphics, as well as content. They can add a little spice to your usual, consistent branded newsletter. The best part is that most of the holiday content is free, and it doesn't have to be in your industry or on your specific newsletter topic.

There are countless holidays to choose from, with varying lengths– Mother's Day, Book Week, American Heart Month.

A common holiday theme is Halloween, which many publishers use as an excuse to add a fun graphic to their ezine. It's an easy one because Halloween images exist in most clip art collections, many can be found online for free as well as for purchase; custom graphics are always an option. Halloween is a fun holiday that brings out the kid in all of us, and is universal enough that no one would question its appearance in an ezine on almost any subject.

Stepping out of the box, when it comes to use of a holiday theme, American Heart Month provides a good example. This holiday is an obvious choice for a fitness trainer or nutritionist, but can be a great topic for other businesses like an accounting firm.

A few ways in which our sample holiday can provide newsletter content: Graphics: a heart association logo*; a heart shape; a heartbeat image Themes/topics: healthy heart/lifestyle, recognizing symptoms of heart problems Tips: diet, exercise/ lifestyle, checkups, recipes Public Service: Raise awareness, learn cpr, donate

A business like our accounting firm can provide a public service announcement and they can customize the information to their expertise by providing answers to the following questions:

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If you join a health club, is that a tax–deductible expense? A nutritionist? Is installing a gym on site for your employees tax deductible? Did you know improving your health can translate to lower premiums on life insurance?

Questions like these can also be formatted into tips, which can then be offered to other publishers as content, increasing their exposure and further establishing themselves as experts. Can't find a holiday to suit your business goals? Create one! All you need to do is come up with a theme and a name, and declare it! Who knows, maybe one day Hallmark will immortalize it with a line of cards to send out for your holiday. In any event, have fun and keep those ezines full of celebrations and great content.

Everyone loves an excuse to celebrate so why not be the inviter; the business that follows is an added benefit to the good will you inspire.

*Please make sure you have necessary permission before using an image or content.

Jane Tabachnick is an e–marketer and email virtuoso. She is the author of Plain Jane's Promotional Planner 2004

, the ultimate resource guide for marketers, retailers,

ezine publishers, fundraisers and anyone who needs to generate more business; it contains over 2000 holidays and events– each one a promotional opportunity. She is also co creator of Email Virtuoso, dynamic email templates and how to books

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Ask Mr. D – Ezine Circulation

By Bill Daugherty

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Dear Mr. D,

Recently I started a new weekly ezine, which I publish every Wednesday. I'm using a list management company that automatically handle the subscribe and unsubscribe requests.

Here's my question: Initially my circulation was growing nicely, but all of a sudden it has started to shrink. What's going on? How can I turn this thing

around.

Sincerely,

Shrinking list

Dear Shrinking List,

You will lose some subscribers through normal attrition. Some will just lose interest in the subject material of your publication. Some will change email address, but forget to notify you, etc. There's not much you can do about these types of lost subscribers. You just have to market your ezine enough to make up for these dropouts.

But, there are several other reasons why a subscriber chooses to unsubscribe from an ezine that you can prevent by taking a good objective look at your publication. Check out these subscriber killers.

1. More ads than content.
2. Boring content.
3. Poorly written content.
4. Content not targeted to your subscriber base.
5. Poorly formatted – visually hard to read.

You need to check your ezine for these subscriber turnoffs and correct any that apply. Above all keep marketing your publication. That should turn your situation around.

Best wishes,

Mr. D

Bill Daugherty. Do you have an advertising or marketing question you'd like to see published in this column? Send it to <mailto:MrD@epm.zzn.com> You can visit Mr. D's website at: <http://www.freeadsgalore.com>

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