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**Newsletters: Your Readers and You**

**By Wild Bill Montgomery**

**Newsletters: Your Readers and You by /"Wild Bill/" Montgomery**

One of the Hottest Commodities on or off the Internet is "Information". In this age of technology people more than ever want to know and they want to learn. I imagine you yourself are reading this in hopes of clicking away with more than you started with. My job as a writer, publisher and editor is to see that you do.

Newsletters provide you with an outlet to a specific group of people, who subscribe and read your publication because they want to gain specific information. It could be Business, Humor or Travel, but nevertheless they are reading your words for a reason. Your job is to supply your readers with the information they are looking for. This my friend is sometimes a painstaking job, with little or no pay and long hours to boot!

This is not a venture to be entered into lightly. Newsletters are not overnight successes. It sometimes takes years to build a respectable subscriber base. Cash flow is almost non-existent at the beginning and for much of the time after that. Your newsletter is an investment in relationships, or better-called "networking". You must earn, gain and keep a certain amount of trust and loyalty from your readers.

Mistake: If you think that you own your newsletter, I here to tell you that you are wrong. Running a newsletter is much like being in a political office. You would not be there if you did not serve your constituents to their satisfaction. They will directly or indirectly dictate to you your requirements in serving them. If you fail so does your newsletter.

Hint: Live up to the responsibility you have taken on. When your readers bestow that trust in you, there is no better way to condemn your newsletter than to violate that trust.

## Newsletters: Your Readers and You

Your job is not necessarily to be liked, but to keep your content up to the standards that your subscribers have come to expect from you. Keep your information content high and your advertising and "noise" levels low. The subject of your newsletter will of course dictate the personality of your newsletter.

As for your Personality in your Newsletter, every newsletter will take on a life of its own. You must control the personality that it portrays. Be careful what personality traits you give your newsletter and how much personality you give it. Remember that your primary goal is to supply information. Save the bulk of your thoughts for welcome messages and

editorials. Be careful how you convey your personal thoughts in your newsletter. What could be meant as an editorial thought could be a disastrous mistake that costs you subscribers.

You will find that your readers will write to you with questions, comments, and often complaints. Don't forget now these are the same people that control the fate of your newsletter. Treat them as you would any life giving force. Your subscribers are (99%) intelligent, well-mannered people seeking the wisdom of your print. They will express their own ideas and desires. They will ask you for your input and thoughts. Often this may be impossible, but one of your top priorities should be to respond to your readers with honest, informative information with a touch of your thrown in. Keep in mind that for every 1 malcontented feedback message that you receive there are hundreds or thousands that are happy, but never write. Think about it. How many times do you write just to tell somebody they are doing a great job, as compared to how many times you have written to complain about a product or service? After your subscriber base becomes very large (that's assuming that it will), you will find that many of the questions will be similar. For this you can use a "replicated" or "canned" response. You can save these responses in a special text file as you create them, and call up the file when you need them.

In closing I would like to say that it's your job to get "their" newsletter out on schedule each and every time. Your subscribers will come to expect and yes, demand their newsletter on time and intact. Consider yourself a "Mailman". Neither rain nor shine, nor vacation or sickness shall deter you from your duty. If you are publishing a serious newsletter and are the sole person doing this insurmountable job, do yourself a favor and get a laptop if you haven't already. I myself have published from bed with a fever and all over the country, and you will too!

"Wild Bill" Montgomery <http://www.MakingProfit.com> We've Featured Over 110 Articles in only one issue of our newsletter. How many do you get in yours? Why Play With Puppies, When The Big Dog

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## **Keep Your Company Newsletter Out of the Circular File**

**By Jessica Albon**

### **Keep Your Company Newsletter Out of the Circular File 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 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

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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>

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