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Why You Need a Newsletter

By Stephen Earley Jordan, II

Why You Need a Newsletter

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If you're a small business owner you definitely need promotion. And, if you're a freelancer—you ARE the product—so you'll ultimately need self-promotion. Newsletters can not only inform your customers of future events, discounts, and services, but can serve as a helpful source of information for you to analyze the growth and success of your business.

Newsletters can be published and distributed according to individual business needs (weekly, bimonthly, quarterly, and annually, etc.). Printing costs can be kept to a minimum with black & white printing; or if your budget is a bit more expendable, capture your reader's attention with a vibrant-colored logo, text and graphics. Whether you use b&w or color printing, adding a newsletter into your budget keeps and attracts new clients! Let's see the different types of newsletters and discover which best suits your needs. Newsletters can range from In the Office (ITO) Newsletters to Out of the Office (OOTO) Newsletters. More importantly, each one serves its own separate purpose.

Inter-Office (ITO) Newsletters. ITO Newsletters may be somewhat casual generated simply for the purpose of notifying those with whom you work. Educate employees by placing this type of newsletter in their office mailbox or on their desk.

New Procedures, Policies and Guidelines. Rules and regulations change within a company without a moment's notice. Give employees no excuse for claiming the e-mail was never received regarding the new methods in which the office may be run. Eliminate constant runs to Human Resources.

Promotions, Employment Announcements. Assist employees in celebrating their joy by introducing the new employees, the latest promotions, the latest job openings and even the continued growth of the company.

Miscellaneous (Birth Announcements, Retirement Parties, etc.). Allow your employees to be a part of the family and feel at-home while in the office by listing personal, yet instructive, data regarding their

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lives. Better still, inform the employees of the holiday parties.

Out of the Office (OOTO) Newsletters. OOTO Newsletters are a bit more formal. Here's your chance to win, gain and retain customers. Think of this as a promotional tool sent out via postal mail or distributed face-to-face.

Press Releases. Here, you can inform people of your new (or already established) business and why your services are so innovative.

Latest Discounts. Often businesses will offer discounts or coupons to be redeemed during the holiday season or perhaps you want to offer a referral discount to those who recommend your services. If this is the case, a newsletter is the place to inform the customers of the price cut.

Latest Services. During the past few months you've built-up your business to the point where you're

comfortable adding new services. Here's the chance to explain how these services can best assist their needs, and how this addition is merely a fulfillment of the customers' requests.

Ingenious tips. Why else should people use your services? Well, because you're always filled with wonderful tips regarding your products and services. Share some of your wonderful ideas with customers to allow them to feel even more confident in your services. Keep them coming by offering an insider's tip in each issue.

Keep the number of pages to a minimum. After all, this is a newsletter, not a magazine or newspaper. Newsletters are best if designed to be read in one sitting.

Stephen Jordan has five years experience within the educational publishing industry. Stephen was a freelance editor with such educational foundations as Princeton Review, The College Board, New York University, and Columbia University. Away from the office, Stephen promotes his creative writing with his home-freelance business OutStretch Publications and his artwork. Stephen holds two Bachelor of Arts degrees in writing and literature from Alderson-Broadus College of Philippi, West Virginia

What A Newsletter Can Do For Your Business

By Claire Cunningham

Newsletters are often thought of as easy, do-it-yourself communications projects. The reality is different...and that can be discouraging.

Developing a good newsletter concept can be difficult and time-consuming. It takes market intelligence -- and maybe research -- to find out what people will read. Then it takes careful planning, discipline and skill to crank out something worthwhile on a schedule.

Why bother? Because the rewards are there for those who enter the newsletter game.

Why You Need a Newsletter

1. Build loyalty: Send out a regular newsletter to your customers to build loyalty. Better informed customers are better customers.
2. Educate: A regular newsletter can educate distributors, sales reps, or even prospects.
3. Boost credibility: Publishing a newsletter is a way to send out great information with your name on it.
4. Stay in touch: Advertising not in your budget? Exhausted your public relations options? A newsletter can keep your name in front of a small, well-defined audience.
5. Repeat your message: Repetition is an important facet of a successful communications program. A newsletter is another way to deliver your message.
6. Control. Control. Control: Audience. Message. Timing. You control it all with a newsletter.
7. Cost efficiency: Send out an electronic newsletter, and you can save on time, printing and postage. Plus you can use it as content on your web site.

Claire Cunningham, president of Clairvoyant Communications, Inc., has 20+ years' experience developing and implementing successful business-to-business marketing and communications programs. Sign up for Claire's monthly newsletter, *Communique*, at

. Claire can be reached at 763-479-3499 or e-mail to

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