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<p><u>100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment</u> Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!</p>	

Your "E-zine 13" -- A Formatting Checklist

By Alexandria K. Brown

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If you're not already publishing an e-mail newsletter or "e-zine," then you should! E-zines are a simple, inexpensive, and VERY effective way to promote your business, attract new customers, and encourage repeat sales. While sending out a text e-zine may seem like a piece of cake, there's more to it than you may think. *Good formatting* is the name of the game.

Here's a handy checklist I use to make sure each of my issues is in great shape BEFORE I send it out. Please be my guest and use it for yourself!

1. Are all lines 65 characters or less?

More than that and your missive may come through looking messy to many subscribers. End each line with a hard return by pressing the "enter" key.

2. Have you made sure there's no auto-formatting, such as bolding, italics, or underlining?

These features don't translate well in e-mail and can come out looking mighty strange on the other end. Instead, emphasize words or phrases with *asterisks,* "quotation marks," or ALL CAPS ... sparingly. While words in all-caps make an impact when used occasionally, they're extremely hard to read and can come across as "screaming" to your readers -- not a good thing.

3. Are all sections neatly separated?

Use underscores (____), asterisks (*****), another nifty symbol (\$\$\$\$\$, %%%%, @@@@), or a combination thereof (>) to help define each area and help your readers skim your issue more easily.

4. Do all Web links include "http://" before them?

Some e-mail programs won't automatically hyperlink a URL in your text without this prefix. So don't take a chance -- make it easy for your readers to click and link, especially to YOUR site!

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5. Do all e-mail links include "mailto:" before them?

Same idea here: Some e-mail programs won't automatically hyperlink an e-mail address in your text without it. Be sure to leave no space between the colon and the first character of the address.

6. Is your masthead at the very top?

The masthead, or "nameplate," typically features your e-zine name, your name, your e-mail address, your Web address, and the correct date, volume number, and issue number. Make it the **FIRST** thing your readers see. Do **NOT** put an ad first -- your readers may mistake your e-zine for spam.

7. Have you reminded your readers right away that this is a *subscription* publication?

Don't let them forget that they *asked* to receive this! Something like this right under your masthead will do: "You've received this e-zine because you subscribed to it! If you wish to unsubscribe, please scroll to the end for more information."

8. If you have a table of contents (TOC), do its listings match this issue's articles and features?

For example, if your TOC says your second feature in this issue is an article on Web site marketing, make sure it's right!

9. Have you included a copyright notice?

At the end of your content, before your contact info, post "(c)" immediately followed by the year and your name or your company's name. (For example, my copyright notice is (c) 2001 Alexandria K. Brown.) You should know that a copyright notice does not protect your ideas -- instead, it protects the way you express them.

10. Are the correct advertisements in place?

Keep track of all your ad swaps and purchases in one main document to make this easy to look up each time. I use an Excel spreadsheet, which works great for me. Along the top rule, I list each issue date. Down the left side, I list my ad spots, which are sponsor ad, ad 1, ad 2, and ad 3.

11. Do you give clear subscribe and unsubscribe instructions at the bottom?

The subscribe instructions are to help you virally grow your list. Your ezine will likely get passed on to others who'd like to receive it themselves. The unsubscribe instructions are just **BECAUSE** -- it's plain courtesy, and the law of the land. :)

12. Does your subject line include both the name of your e-zine and the issue topic?

By seeing your e-zine title, your recipients will know the e-mail is not spam. And by seeing the issue topic, they will know what's in store for this issue.

Example: "Sara's Cash Flow Tips: Increase Your Income Today!"

13. Have you sent a test of the issue to yourself or an associate?

Make sure it comes through reading well and looking great! (Check for any strange symbols that magically appear, odd breaks in the copy, inactive links, etc.) And this is a GREAT time to give it a final proofread.

Alexandria K. Brown, "The E-zine Queen," offers a FREE biweekly e-zine called "Tips from the E-zine Queen." Learn how to write, publish, and promote a dynamic E-ZINE that builds customer relationships and increases SALES. Subscribe now via <mailto:EzineQueen-On@lists.webvalence.com>

So, what's an e-zine?

By Maria Marsala

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Technically they're written e-zine (not ezine) although calling them an electronic newsletter e-news or Internet newsletter i-news clarifies what they are much better.

They were given the name e-zine (short for electronic magazine). Some people pronounce the e-zeen and others say e-zin - however way you write it or say it, an e-zine should be a special e-mail, sent to you because you requested it.

E-zines are one way to build communities and relationships with a potentially large number of people, for a minimal cost. Instead of sending out a business newsletter, via postal mail, you can send anyone who requests, your e-zine.

An e-zine can consist of one tip or they can include tips, articles, ad's, class information, suggestions, and more. They can be sent out daily, weekly or monthly. Quarterly e-zines are OK for organizations with paid memberships, but I don't recommend them otherwise. People who receive e-zines less than once a month are apt to forget they subscribed and may think you're S*pamming them. I know that you don't want to get accused of that!

Formatting your e-zine is up to you, so decide what's best for you and your clients before you start.

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