

7 Reasons to Start an Email Newsletter

An email newsletter is the sharpest tool in your Web marketing toolbox. If you're not sending one out you're missing a great opportunity to connect with your customers and prospects.



1. It complements your Web site like white wine to fish.

While you may believe that the world waits with bated breath for your next article and will return to your Web site unprompted each and every month to read it, this is not always the case. Most people spend more time reading and answering emails than surfing the Web. With an email newsletter you can get in front of them on a regular basis. Don't worry whether your content is delivered via a Web page or an email as long as you have an effective medium to reach your audience.

2. Email newsletters are more cost-effective than print newsletters.

The cost of distributing 500 printed newsletters costs approximately \$350. The printing costs, including freight, come to \$700. Postage, address labels and "mailing seals" cost another \$200. Since creating content is the same for either print or email let's table that cost. This works out to approximately \$2.50 per subscriber.

To send out an e-newsletter to the same size group the cost would be fifteen cents per subscriber. This covers both setup time and the cost of some nifty software used to manage subscribers, handle expired emails and send out HTML newsletters that look like Web pages in your mailbox.

When subscriptions go up ten fold to 5,000 it will cost only 1.5 cents per subscriber. As circulation grows past a certain size you'll be hit with small fees to handle the increased subscriber base; however, the cost per subscriber will continue to decrease. Also, no matter how many colors or pages our e-newsletter is, or where in the world we send it, n-newsletter costs stay relatively fixed.

Although there are benefits to hard copy newsletters e-newsletters give your clients something they can touch. You may want to consider reducing the size or frequency of your print newsletter if you can't abandon it completely.

3. E-newsletters are interactive.

In a printed newsletter you can refer to your Web site but you have to hope that your readers don't mistype that URL when they go to their browser...assuming they even will. With an e-newsletter you can make sure your site (or a PDF, or a sound clip, or any document available on the Web) is just a click away.

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4. You can test its effectiveness.

Depending on the sophistication of the program you're using to send out your newsletters you can track which links in your newsletter are being clicked on and which are being ignored.

5. E-newsletters encourage word-of-mouth advertising.

It's easy for your subscribers to forward your email to a friend or associate, especially with a friendly reminder from you at the end of each issue. It's also a great way to build your subscriber base and market your services to people you might not have reached any other way.

6. You're preaching to the choir.

Your subscribers have signed up to receive your e-newsletters. These are your best customers! They want to know when your next book is coming out, when you'll be speaking in their town, or when you're bringing a new product to market. So be sure to promote your offerings in the newsletter.

7. Starting today will help build your subscriber base.

Now that e-newsletter can contain formatted text, embedded images and even polls and surveys you're no longer limited to boring plain text to get your message across. Soon you'll be able to include forms, multi-media, and other marketing tools that you can deliver to your subscribers' mailboxes. (With their permission, of course.) The best way to grow your subscriber base and take advantage of these new tools is to start right away.