

Writing effective email newsletters

BUSINESS GUIDE

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Email newsletters can help you connect with people interested in your products and services. Cost-effective, personal and instant, they spread the word about your business at the touch of a button and are powerful lead generators.

However, effective email newsletters will do more than promote your brand, they will strengthen your relationship with recipients and convert them into loyal customers.

This guide will help you decide what to include in an email newsletter, how to write it and how to distribute it to the widest possible audience. All key ingredients of effective email marketing.

Research your target market

Ask yourself the questions, who are the people you want to connect with? What are their interests? How old are they? Where do they live? The answers will help you formulate newsletter content ideas that offer real value.

Informative marketing material is much more effective than pure advertising. If people think they are going to benefit from your email newsletter or read something that interests them, they will open it and connect with you.

For example, a cookery school may consider its target market to be men and women between the ages of 30 and 50 and live up to a 50-mile radius of the business. Their interests could be narrowed down to entertaining, baking and cooking with the children. Therefore, content that could be considered valuable to them may include making the most of seasonal ingredients or cost-effective meal plans for the family, all linked, of course, to services provided by the business.

If your target market is divided into distinct groups, send a different email newsletter to each one. By segmenting your email list, you can hone in on the specific interests of each group, making recipients much more likely to open your email.

Content should always be hyper-linked to a product, service or blog post on your website to convert recipients into customers. By doing this, you will also drive more traffic to your website and improve your ranking on search engines such as Google.

ANALYTICS

Keep track of your email marketing campaigns and see how they are performing



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TIP: Use free tools available from bulk email providers

"If people think they are going to benefit from your email newsletter or read something that interests them, they will open it and connect with you."

TOP TIP:

Keep an eye on emerging trends in your industry so you can be the first to tell your customers about it.

PERSONALISATION

Know your target market and make your newsletter content relevant to their interests



TIP: Write your newsletter in the second person, using 'you' and 'your' to instantly connect with readers

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Writing email newsletter content

Subject line or headline

Once you have chosen your topic, it is time to write an engaging subject line that is clear, concise and compelling. It has to tease the recipient into wanting to know more. Consider starting with something like 'How to...', 'The top 5...', 'Now's the time to...' or 'Learn how to...'. To be effective, subject lines should never contain more than 75 characters and they should always accurately sum up what the recipient will get once they open the email.

Calls to action, such as 'Get your free tips on preparing for the festive season here' or 'Don't miss our 2-for-1 offer with all cookery courses this January' are real attention-grabbers for those with a keen interest in cooking. Whatever subject line you choose, ensure it is relevant to the group you are targeting and, of course, your business.

Copywriting

Your newsletter content must be relevant to your audience - in exactly the same way as your subject line. It should be to the point, concise, engaging and, crucially, explain almost immediately what it is about. At the same time it should reflect the personality of your business, so that its style is unique to you. Write your newsletter in the second person, so that it addresses the reader in terms such as 'you' and 'your'.

Keep your email newsletter brief and use hyperlinks with calls to action to encourage recipients to find out more by visiting your website.

Distributing your email newsletter

Blasting your email newsletter to thousands of recipients in one go is made easy with bulk email tools such as [MailChimp](#). New businesses with up to 2,000 subscribers sending out less than 12,000 emails a month can use the service free. There is a price plan for those with more subscribers. (Insert graphic)

Bulk email tools allow you to easily create professional-looking newsletters that contain branding, images and hyperlinks. Importantly, they are mobile friendly - up to 55% of marketing emails are opened by someone using a mobile phone. What's more, bulk emails tools can help you build your subscriber list and even trigger welcome emails to new subscribers.

Some website companies, such as Wix, also offer a free email newsletter service, so it's worth checking if your website provider is one of them.

"Email newsletters are a cost-effective, personal and instant marketing tool."

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"They do more than promote your brand, they strengthen your relationship with recipients."

Top five subject lines to grab attention:

1. Urgency - 'Act now to...'
2. Curiosity - 'We think you might like...'
3. Offers - '2-for-1 offers on...'
4. Personalisation - 'Your ticket to...'
5. Relevance and timeliness - 'Feeling hungry?'



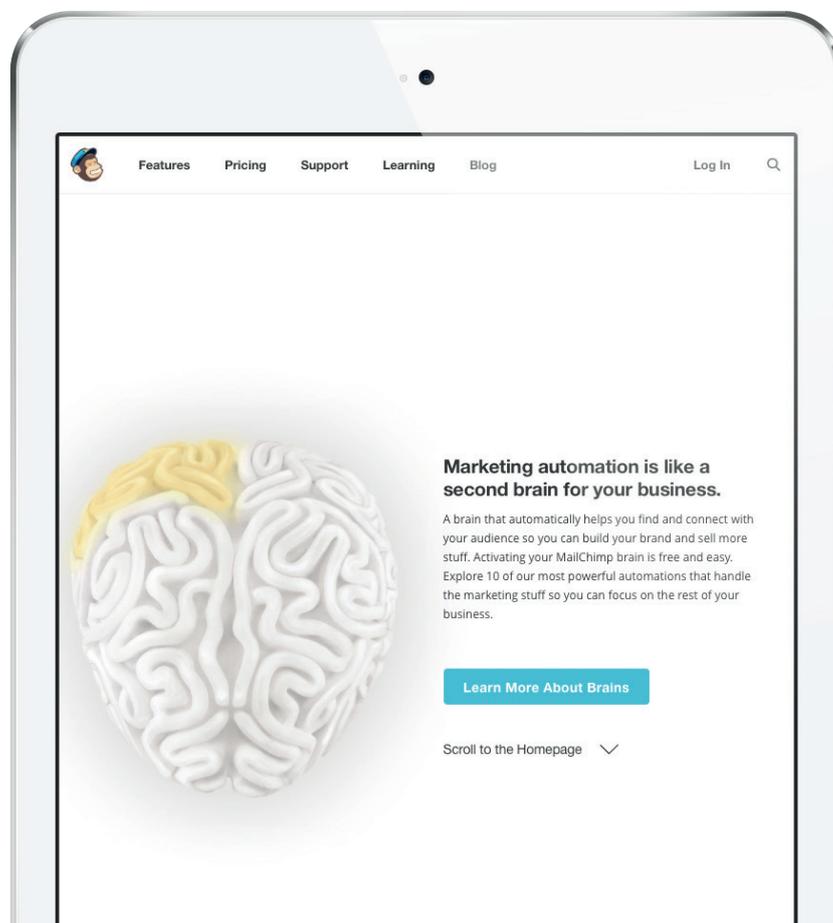
Assessing the success of your email newsletters

If orders start flowing in, you will know your emails are converting readers to customers. However, building a relationship with your target market is often a gradual and more complex process. Knowing how well your newsletter campaigns are performing is best explained through the use of analytics.

That is why you should use a bulk email tool that includes information about how your campaigns are performing. Some will even compare your results against industry averages, giving you a clear idea of what works - or doesn't work - for you.

According to the 2016 Email Marketing Metrics Benchmark Study, the average click through rate from opened emails is 3.42%. However, this figure varies considerably by industry, and is, of course, influenced by the content, how it is presented and who it is sent to.

Pay attention to all the guidelines above and your email marketing campaigns could well perform better than average.



"A call to action in the subject line is a real attention-grabber"

DID YOU KNOW?

Email marketing is 40 times more effective at acquiring new customers than social media*



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*Source: HIVE

Top links:

1. [Ideas for subject lines](#)
2. [Free or inexpensive bulk email tools](#)
3. [Top bulk email tools for 2017](#)