

# **Electronic Newsletters: The New Way to Target Your Customers**

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Creating an electronic newsletter with interesting, relevant articles is an economical way to add customers to your business and direct them to your Web site. Having people sign up to receive your e-newsletter ensures that they are interested in what you have to say and, by virtue of this, interested in your product or service. This benefits both you and the customer; it keeps your name in front of your clients and they get a reliable resource for information. They choose to receive your newsletters so you know it is information they want and not just a nuisance found in their e-mail.

An e-newsletter establishes your credibility in your field and helps to develop a relationship of trust between you and your client. It provides an avenue in which to inform them of new products and services you offer. Your newsletter can easily be forwarded to others and give you an even broader customer base. In addition, your readers can ask questions in which you or a guest expert can answer to keep the topics relevant and useful.

An electronic newsletter is a terrific way to collect information about your readers by having them provide information when registering. Your newsletter can generate income by selling advertising space for relevant products or services that might be useful to your customers. If your subscription is large, advertisers will be more than happy to pay for space in a medium where targeted customers are sure to look.

In order for your newsletter to be successful, you must make sure the content is valuable to your readers and not just an online flyer for your product or service. If your readers find the content useful, they will be more inclined to pass it onto others and want to continue to receive it themselves. To keep your newsletter interesting, you might consider asking your readers to

submit questions and then you answer them. This will keep the topics new and relevant. You might also want to invite them to submit articles of their own. Keeping your readers abreast of the latest industry news is critical to maintaining interest in your newsletter. You can have recognized experts in the field contribute articles and then compensate them by linking back to their Web site. Another idea to keep your customers interested is to create a survey or poll; people love to offer their opinions. Have the results published in the next issue so they will be looking for them. Run contests and list the winners; people also love to see their names in print. By writing a review of a book relevant to your industry, you will maintain your readers' interest as well. Also include a quote, inspirational message or cartoon to elevate their day. Making it easy to subscribe to (as well as decline) your newsletter offers your customers superior service; then give them incentives (such as discounts or samples) to subscribe or refer others. It will be necessary to include links to your newsletter so that you can track the results. You will want to know how successful the newsletter is and how people found out about it.

Electronic newsletters are easy, efficient ways to attract customers and retain those you already have. There are templates built into many software packages such as Microsoft Office suite's Publisher and Adobe Pagemaker or Indesign. You can also purchase software such as Constant Contact, which allows you to design, send and track your newsletter. It also provides reports that tell you how many e-mails bounced, how many were opened and how many people clicked on the links. This is all valuable information that reflects the efficiency of your e-newsletter. With this program your subscribers can sign up or be removed from the list automatically, which is very important to maintain good customer relations.

By taking the time to develop an electronic newsletter, you can easily expand your client base and continue to make your products and services available to your clients. You will be providing

a venue for offering new products and services to a target audience. If you want an easy, effective and economical way to gain and retain customers, try publishing an electronic newsletter.