

# Creating Effective Customer Newsletters

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## The 17 Points That Every Newsletter Should Have

1. Good Headlines - Readership is everything when sending a newsletter. The first thing people are going to scan are your headlines. They need to be engaging, intriguing, and entertaining enough to pull the reader into the article. Questions are a good way to make a headline.

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2. Use Pictures Appropriately - Most people will not believe I am saying this, but, yes, you should use pictures and illustrations in your newsletter. People like them. However, it should not be full of pictures. You need to use them appropriately - when they make sense. When you use a picture it should be relevant to the article or message you're trying to convey. You should have a minimum of one picture per page, or one cartoon, etc.

3. Not Being All About What You Sell - People are more interested in celebrities, things that will make them look smarter in from of their peers, and odd and interesting trivia. If you talk about what you sell, it will bore most people to tears. Keep it light.

You can have some information about your store, however, the majority of the newsletter should not be about your products and services - it should be entertaining for the reader.

4. Jokes and Quotes - You need to keep it entertaining with a good joke and some useful quotes. Remember it is about readership. The better put together your newsletter, the more they read your newsletter, the more they will build emotional connection with you.

Ask yourself this: How many retailers in your area send out a monthly newsletter? None!. That is why it's a quick way to differentiate YOU from the competition. Your next step is to make sure it gets read so people will start to build a stronger relationship with YOU!

5. Mindless Trivia and Facts - Does anyone really care how old the Earth is? Some do . . . others don't - but it is sure interesting to read. Why do so many people like Jeopardy and other trivia games? Because knowing trivia makes you look smarter in front of your family and friends. Put trivia and facts in your newsletter and mention how reading them will help make them look smarter.

6. Content Articles to Educate - Some customers will read your newsletter for the good content. People want to know things like: The 5 Ways To Save On Your Car Insurance, or How To Dress For a Spring Wedding. First of all notice the good headlines. Now you must keep the article short and sweet, with good content to help the reader. You can find many articles that you can use on the Internet. Just make sure the articles are not copyrighted. You can also buy article and cartoons.

7. Keep It Simple - Don't get too technical! Not everyone knows big words. You don't want to lose your reader because you make it too difficult to understand. Give your newsletter to a 12 year old and see if she understands your newsletter. If she doesn't, then it is probably too difficult to understand.

8. Interaction - One of the best ways to increase readership is through interaction with your customer. Have them do things. You can have contests where they call or go somewhere to answer a question. The point is to get the customer to interact with you through your newsletter. Why? Because studies show that the more your customers interact with you through your newsletter, the more they will bond with you and BUY from you. Cross-word puzzles work well here.

9. Personality - A business owner or marketer's number one sin is being BORING. Don't be boring. Also people don't want to do business with faceless organizations. They want to do business with people. Be that person they do business with. Put your personality in your marketing.

If you are going to tell a story about the store or your family, make sure it has a point. The point should be to create a strong relationship with your customer and get them to come into the store more often to buy from you.

10. Your Picture - Yes you DO need to put your picture in the newsletter. It helps with readership, and also helps the reader feel they know you better. IF you are worried about using a picture, have someone draw up a cartoon about you. Your picture or cartoon drawing of you on the Masthead gives your Store Newsletter an identity.

11. USP - This is your Unique Selling Proposition. Put this right in your newsletter under your picture. When people read this they will know what makes you different than your competition. If you are having a hard time coming up with one, we can help YOU! Any store slogans go under your store name on the Masthead.

12. Referral Corner - 50% of people do business with someone because of relationship. For example, if your car breaks down you probably know who you would take it to. It is about Relationships.

Another 25% will do business with someone because of a referral from family or friends. Most people think just having good products and services will generate the word of mouth they need. What they really need is a system to help stimulate word of mouth and referrals - a newsletter is a great way to do this. Have a section in your newsletter where you encourage - even entice - your customers to give you referrals. Give them both a \$20 dollar gift certificate with no strings attached (or something else very meaningful.. Don't skimp here.)

13. Customer Celebrity Status - Be a name-dropper! Oh sure, I know - your competition will read the newsletter and start calling all your customers. Well, if you've done a good job keeping said customers happy, there's no problem. And we've found that customers are like everyone else they love to see their names in print. It helps build loyalty and loyalty is hard to buy these days. A A Customer of the Month section is entertaining. Make sure you get permission to use their name though.

Make them feel like a celebrity and your customers will reward you handsomely. Make it so your customers want to be in your newsletter. Then you know you're onto something!

14. Establish a regular publishing schedule and stick to it! People appreciate stability and regularity - and if you do a good job with a newsletter, you'll find your audience starts to look forward to them.

15. Have a call to action! Never EVER send out anything be it a letter, a rate card, a refrigerator magnet or a newsletter without asking for your customer to come into the store some way. You don't have to hit them over the head with salesy promotions each time. Many times you can give them a call to action in a softer way, making it easy for prospects to respond to you. Otherwise, you're just wasting money. Always include a sales offer in your newsletter. If you don't, it may not pay for itself. And, while we're on that thought . . . .

16. Make yourself accessible! Include a way for your customers to get in touch with you. Having a store website creates confidence in your store. Have your E-Mail address mentioned in your Masthead. Make sure you have your phone number listed too.

17. Give them away to everyone you know! It does you no good to print a few thousand newsletters to take up room in the store.. Give em to your friends, your family, your clients, your clients, friends, your kids; mail copies to your best customers and those you want to build a stronger relationship with. If you have a customer list of high end customers, mail to them first. Hand out any extra's at your store to other customers & friends.

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