



Email Newsletters

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INTRODUCTION

An email newsletter (*a.k.a. e-newsletter, e-zine*) is a newsletter that is delivered via email, and a form of electronic marketing.

Email marketing enables you to **proactively** communicate with your existing customers instead of passively waiting for them to come into your bookstore or visit your website. It is a highly effective way to increase sales, drive website or store traffic, and develop loyalty, and appropriate for stores all ALL sizes.

- It's Inexpensive
- It's Effective
- It's Immediate
- It's Targeted
- It's Easy
- It's Personal

Email newsletters can...

- Build relationships with customers, increasing customer retention
- Increase exposure for your bookstore
- Reinforce how your bookstore adds value to community
- Continue your bookstore's identity
- Increase store and website traffic
- Provide practical information such as a service, courtesy, or education
- Build credibility or perceived expertise

Push vs. pull marketing

- Email newsletters arrive without the customer having to do anything, as opposed to getting themselves into your bookstore, going to your website for information or to place an order, etc.

Highly emotional

- Readers have highly emotional reactions to newsletters, which feel much more personal than websites.
- The positive emotional aspect of newsletters is that they can create a bond between the customer and the bookstore.

AlertBox.com Study

- 23% of emails read thoroughly
- 27% not opened
- 10% held for "later"
- 57% skimmed

PLANNING

- Include in marketing plan and budget
- Subscribe to and read other email newsletters
- Identify audience
- Survey customers
- Review competition
- Determine theme, look, frequency, staff
- Collect content
- Collect email addresses
- Research email newsletter companies (Constant Contact, Topica, etc.)

APPEARANCE

- Use an engaging layout that is visually appealing
- Keep them short; use short words and short sentences
- Make it easy to scan and skim
- Use a lot of white space, thus drawing the reader's eye to your main points
- Have easy-to-find links
- Use bullets or numbered lists
- Use the same layout for each email newsletter
- If using a text-only layout, be sure to use section separators (***** or +++++)
- Make sure it's consistent with other marketing materials

CONTENT

- Make it personal!
- Particularly for email, writing should be at a 6th grade reading level
- Make sure the information flows
- Content is abundant; you don't have to write everything. Check out BookWeb.org, *Bookselling This Week*, any publisher's website, NPR.org, or even just a simple Google search
- Provide shortcuts to larger amounts of information
- Make sure contact information is included and easy to find
- Include newsletter sign-up info on every page
- Keep a "Newsletter Ideas" list
- *Other suggestion on handout*

SUBJECT LINES

- Shorter works better than longer (40 – 60 characters, including spaces is recommended)
- Readers tend to give emails only about 2 seconds to determine whether or not they'll open and read them
- Avoid using certain words that have become major filter triggers, such as "free"

- Include bookstore name to immediately identify yourself

SENDING

What's the best day to send an email newsletter?

- In general, don't send emails on Monday. People are inundated on Monday mornings with a lot of SPAM that came in over the weekend
- Rule of thumb: Send on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays
- Use the newsletter to ask readers when they prefer to receive it

FREQUENCY

- Monthly is the most common, plus special targeted emails for special events or promotion
- Finding the right balance is the trick. Too often and you're SPAM. Not often enough and you're not recognized. Don't be shy about asking your customers!

COLLECTING EMAIL ADDRESSES

- Sign-up sheets at cash register and all events
- Ask for email addresses in monthly billing statement
- Hold a contest with the entry being an email address
- Share mailing lists with other independent businesses in your community

OTHER TIPS

- DON'T send it out the minute you write it. Review a while later to make sure it simple, clear and compelling
- Use co-op to pay for them
- Respond to customers within 24 hours
- Measure the results of your email newsletters to determine how to improve them in the future
- Poorly presented newsletter can have a damaging impact on the bookseller's relationship with the customer

EMAIL MARKETING SERVICES

- Immediate, measurable results
- Easy to create, manage, and track
- Inexpensive
- Constant Contact, MyEmma.com, Topica, Exact Target, Microsoft List Builder

CONCLUSION

Effective email newsletters are:

- Simple
- Useful
- Easy
- Timely
- Personal
- Visually pleasing