

Email Newsletters

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The creative use of email newsletters can enhance your reputation and that of your business.

Our e-Business Advisers offer this advice on using email newsletters to promote news and discussion.

1. What are the benefits?

You probably already subscribe to an email newsletter.

If you want to stay in touch with customers, newsletters often do a better job than web sites, whilst providing an effective way of directing customers to further resources available at your company's web site.

Simple in concept, email newsletters were once tricky to set up and manage.

Now anyone can run a newsletter for low cost, whether you're a design expert looking to update clients on your latest projects, or a manufacturer announcing product releases.

Many businesses use email newsletters creatively to stay in touch with customers. Newsletters have the special advantage of being "viral"; if you give information that's useful, your customers may pass it on to colleagues, spreading the word about your business.

Retailers often have a weekly newsletter, updating customers on specials, (sometimes offered only to newsletter subscribers).

This provides an incentive for customers to subscribe, along with a way to highlight specific products.

Consultants, freelancers and others often use email newsletters to provide information of interest to their clients and customers.

An illustrator, for instance, might update clients on current work, an IT systems developer about new ways to optimise their systems.

If you're thinking about developing your own list, a number of companies now offer free, web-based software for managing email newsletters & subscriber lists.

You should also look at other newsletters to see what tactics they use to gain and retain your attention.

2. What are the downsides?

You need to be careful that your email newsletter is really wanted - otherwise, it's "spam", and guaranteed to annoy recipients who don't want it, as well as downgrade their image of your firm.

Only send one when you have something interesting and relevant to say - don't commit yourself to something you won't have time to deliver.

To make sure that your newsletter really is wanted, always make sure that your web site has an "opt-in" mechanism, not an "opt-out" - i.e. subscribers have to positively sign up for your newsletter, not just opt-out if they don't want to



Fact Sheet

receive one.

This is now a legal requirement in this country.

It's also important to have an easy "unsubscribe" mechanism - and it's considered good form to send a last email - saying they have been unsubscribed and you won't contact them again.

Also, as there is legislation relevant to email marketing, we suggest you read our Fact Sheet on "Electronic Commerce (EC Directive) Regulations - The Ecommerce Directive" in this series

3. Useful Links

www.bcentral.com - type "newsletter" in the search box

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