

Does Your Business Need a Newsletter?

By Cody Moya

If you are not yet using a newsletter as a part of your marketing efforts then you are missing out on potential and existing customers becoming valuable long-term buyers.

Newsletters provide an effective tool for collecting interested visitors' email addresses and converting them into buyers. They also are a great vehicle for keeping in touch with your most valued contact - previous customers. How?

NEWSLETTERS KEEP CUSTOMERS

When you have a customer buy from you, but no newsletter to follow up, than you are virtually handing him or her back to your competitors. Of course, if the service was good and the product memorable they may come back, but what if you have a new product that your existing customer may wish to buy and they do not know about it? What if they lose your website address? What if they just forget about you? A newsletter will prevent these things from happening.

HOW OFTEN?

That depends on various factors. Some businesses contact their subscribers as often as every day, others as infrequently as several times per year. What works for you depends a lot on what you are selling, what information you can give them, how often your subscribers will want to hear from you, etc.

A good rule of thumb for many businesses is once per week. Twice a month if you really feel that is the most you can do. More often and the customer may unsubscribe or routinely delete your messages. Less often and you're allowing your competition the chance to win over your potential customer.

WHAT DO I WRITE ABOUT?

Are you very informed on the product or service? Do you have a lot of contacts? Can you point out related products or services they might be interested in?

You do not need a long newsletter. A sale alert or announcement of a new service or product can do just as well for some businesses, while others find a tips format more suitable. Industry news or 'How to...' and 'Top 5...' topics are a good idea and always try to make a connection between the newsletter and your product or service. Subscribe to several competitors' newsletters (they will surely be subscribing to yours). Use a free email account to subscribe and see what they are providing their customers.

KEEP IT CONSISTENT

It's amazing the amount of newsletters that abound online. Because of this subscribers can forget which ones are legitimate and which are spam.

Keep your format consistent so your newsletter becomes visibly familiar. Also indicate that the subscriber requested the information and provide an unsubscribe link on EVERY issue. You must do this if you want to limit complaints or spam reports.

Your newsletter deserves time and attention - it is the voice of you and your business and will help you to build relationships with your customers (and potential customers) in a way that no other tool can.

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