

BUILDING CUSTOMER CONNECTIONS - VIA GREAT NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters are an excellent 'touch point' opportunity with your clients or potential clients, so it's important that you ensure they are engaging and informative.

But how do you write a newsletter to your clients or prospects that won't go straight in the rubbish bin or deleted items box?

Newsletters can be a very cost-effective way to keep your brand front-of-mind with customers, but only if they get opened and absorbed. So what makes people want to read your newsletter?

We are often asked by chamber members how best to engage customers when writing a newsletter. Here's what we have found motivates them:

- **An engaging headline.**

Your headline should be attention grabbing – luring your reader in, to find out more. "August Newsletter" just won't cut it! The headline needs to be engaging enough to get them to read on NOW – not later. 90% of people who think "I'll read that later"...don't. Think about it from your customers perspective – what would they find interesting?

- **Content worth reading.**

It seems obvious, but too many newsletters read like an advert. No matter how entertaining or witty an advert may be - nobody switches on a TV to watch an advert! Their reason to tune in, is for the content of the actual TV programme. Similarly it is important for you to focus on content that your customer will find interesting and engaging...and intersperse your call to action more subtly throughout.

- **Keep it real.**

Steer clear of industry jargon. Write for your audience. You may be an expert in your industry, but chances are your customer is not - so keep your writing style and explanations in words that your customer will understand and relate to.

- **Tone.**

Keep the tone and attitude of your newsletter personal and casual. A newsletter is a great opportunity to "bring your business to life" – to add some personality to it. Obviously the content needs to be knowledgeable and informative, but let your corporate mask drop a little, to reveal the personality

behind your brand. By default it will tend to add to the trust your customer feels for your company, and for you. Similarly, if you engage a professional writer to write your content – ensure you get a writer who's style best portrays your brand. Then try to keep the same writer, so that your tone is consistent.

- **Self-interest.**

There has to be something in it for them. And you've figured out what this is by putting yourself in the customer's shoes and seeing through their eyes. For example, you might want to tell them about a new person who's joined your team... but they'll only be interested if it means a benefit for them. Maybe the new person has special talents or knowledge that will improve the customer service they experience? Let benefits be your focus.

- **Education.**

Share your expert knowledge about your sector with readers, but remember rule number one – self interest. The knowledge must come with benefits attached for that customer.

- **Tips.**

Bullet-pointed tips are irresistible. Think of stuff you know that others would find useful. For example, give them your best tips for stress relief, time management or for staying ahead of the competition. Ideally you need these tips to be usable for the majority of your customers – don't go too niche.

- **Real-life stories.**

People are naturally nosy, so feed their curiosity with problem-solution stories involving other customers. You may be able to use real names (always ask permission), or you can make the stories anonymous.

- **A prize.**

One of the best ways to get your newsletter opened is to run a competition. Ask a couple of questions that have answers buried within the stories and offer a popular prize (wine, book, discount, voucher). "Your chance to win XXX." The easiest mode of entry is email – it's instant and no hassle at all for the customer.

This resource has been kindly provided by

energise
& ASSOCIATES

If you have any questions, please call 0800 CHAMBER (0800 242 623).

DATE: AUGUST 2015

The Auckland Chamber of Commerce and the provider of this resource make all reasonable efforts to ensure that the information published in this resource is accurate and up-to-date. However the matters covered are subject to regular review and no warranty or representation can be provided regarding the accuracy of such information. The Auckland Chamber of Commerce and the provider do not accept liability for any losses or damage arising directly or indirectly from reliance on the information. www.aucklandchamber.co.nz

JOIN US

- Benefits of Membership
- Join Now

BUSINESS SUPPORT

- Find Staff
- Business Support
- Mentoring

GLOBAL

- Import and Export Services

EVENTS & TRAINING

- Event Calendar
- Event Profiles

BUSINESS CONNECT

- News
- Chamber Social Media

• **Pictures.**

Bring your stories to life with eye-catching images. Text heavy newsletters are not ideal. Once again, think about the benefit. For example, if you're promoting a new service or product that saves time, show a clock sliding into a piggy bank or an hour-glass full of money. There are millions of free images on the internet – go hunting.

• **Keep it short.**

These days many people are time poor. Keep what you say interesting, but brief. As a general rule, the more frequent your newsletter, the shorter it should be. There is a plethora of potential information to fill your newsletter with, but you don't need to put it all into your first one! Around three articles is a good guideline (four, if you include a competition) Perhaps think in terms of one long article (eg case study or industry relevant trend information) and two short (eg top tips for X, a competition, bullet points of industry related knowledge, frequently asked questions, or even a new staff announcement - but remember to write it from the perspective of the customer).

• **Keep it regular.**

Once you've established your newsletter customer base – keep them updated on a regular basis. Too many per year and they will switch off or become annoyed by the barrage. Too few and they may have forgotten you. It's a balancing act to get just the right number of newsletters out to your customers.

• **Analyse.**

These days many newsletter email campaign packages offer statistical analytics with their package. What percentage of people opened your email? How many unsubscribed? These statistics and information is invaluable in guiding you as to how interesting your customers are finding your newsletters. Be guided by the information they offer and adjust your content if your open rates are low, or unsubscribe rates particularly high.

The benefits of working through these tips and incorporating them into your newsletter communications are numerous. They can result in benefits such as:

1. Increased dialogue with your clients – by maximising client 'touch points' and therefore building rapport and trust
2. Newsletters acting as a trigger for potential prospects to contact you
3. Real life case study scenarios can prompt clients to reassess their own situation and make changes that can save them time or money
4. Those who have included information in their newsletter about a new product or service often also receive enquiries as a direct result of the newsletter content

So focus on your newsletter content from your readers perspective, get brainstorming and get ready to reap the benefits in your business.

This resource has been kindly provided by

energise & ASSOCIATES

If you have any questions, please call 0800 CHAMBER (0800 242 623).

DATE: AUGUST 2015

The Auckland Chamber of Commerce and the provider of this resource make all reasonable efforts to ensure that the information published in this resource is accurate and up-to-date. However the matters covered are subject to regular review and no warranty or representation can be provided regarding the accuracy of such information. The Auckland Chamber of Commerce and the provider do not accept liability for any losses or damage arising directly or indirectly from reliance on the information. www.aucklandchamber.co.nz

➤ JOIN US

- Benefits of Membership
- Join Now

➤ BUSINESS SUPPORT

- Find Staff
- Business Support
- Mentoring

➤ GLOBAL

- Import and Export Services

➤ EVENTS & TRAINING

- Event Calendar
- Event Profiles

➤ BUSINESS CONNECT

- News
- Chamber Social Media