

# A Corporate Web- Based Newsletter is Within Reach



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## Introduction

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All successful businesses have in common the necessity of not only being in tune with their market, but also establishing a solid relationship with their clients. The effectiveness of this relationship helps to determine the business' success in obtaining new customers. In today's competitive marketplace, a company newsletter not only accomplishes a higher degree of mutual participation, but also establishes the presenting company as a knowledgeable and caring expert in the field. Unfortunately, development of a company e-Newsletter can be an arduous task often requiring too much of a consultant's time and outside their scope of expertise. Consequently outsourcing of this function is often the most cost-efficient and resource-saving option available

## Keep Business Alive and Thriving

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One of the most important marketing tools utilized in today's competitive marketplace is distribution of a corporate newsletter, yet the time restrictions imposed by developing a newsletter may be overwhelming and strain a consultant's resources-in terms of equipment, effort, creativity and expertise. Furthermore, a choice exists between selection of a hard-copy publication or an Internet-based system.

A web-based newsletter is superior in terms of cost and the ease of and time spent in preparation and distribution. With an online system, clients can keep track of specific customer reactions: exactly who has clicked on a special offer, which customer forwarded information to a new prospect and which content features are most popular. There are limitless possibilities never before afforded with traditional bulk mail and follow-up phone contacts. The end result is that less money is spent in order to gain the same in sales result and therefore a higher return-on- investment.

## Think Growth

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Through providing high-level customer service, quality services and continual communication, a client may not only serve existing customers, but also cultivate the client base. A company e-Newsletter functions to facilitate the aims of all three objectives. By providing timely and provocative information and interesting topical articles, the client is further distinguished as an authority in the field. The e-Newsletter is designed to enrich the existing customer relationship and to foster a prospect's interest in obtaining the client's products or services. In order for a business to remain effectively focused, outsourcing the corporate newsletter is often the most cost-effective and resource-saving measure.

## Bottom-line Aspects of e-Newsletter Outsourcing

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First, if carried out in-house, the production of an e-Newsletter requires initial equipment outlay and realignment of personnel resources: software, a dedicated server, researchers, writers and content producers, designer and programmer. An existing support staff would probably require more training or education in order to carry out all of the new functions, limiting the company's current ability and perhaps even require addition of new staff members.

The next aspect to consider is Internet marketing expertise. As with traditional marketing, the skills employed are more focused and specific than simply sending e-mails to customers and prospects. Hiring a firm that is experienced and knowledgeable in building Internet relationships prevents companies from needing to "reinvent the wheel."

Outsourcing the e-Newsletter satisfies your client's desire for marketing expansion, while allowing the core function of their business to remain specifically in serving their customers. Likewise, this is accomplished in a fraction of the time that would be spent as an in-house project.

### The Five Stages of Innovation

1. People deny that the innovation is required.
2. People deny that the innovation is important.
3. People deny that the innovation is effective.
4. People deny that the innovation will justify the effort required to adopt it.
5. People accept and adopt the innovation, enjoy its benefits, attribute it to the people other than the innovator, and deny the existence of stages 1 to 4.

*Alexander von Humbolt's Three Stages of Scientific Discovery.*

Also, consider effective communications and the cost to client in specific service tasks. People that receive e-Newsletters are overall more likely to communicate via e-mail. According to the Software Support Professionals Association, a single call to a customer service representative will cost an average of \$53, while answering an e-mail message about the same topic will cost only \$3.

Even more specifically, outsourcing companies are experienced professionals that are able to perform these tasks more quickly and efficiently, as well as more economically than a client company could retrain and reorganize a company's staff.

In fact, most outsourcing companies perform many more functions than the simple duties of organizing information and distributing it to customers and prospects. They also personalize the messages, collect data and compile reports on user preferences and help streamline and automate a client's customer service department- all resulting in greater savings of time and money.

## **e-Newsletters Facilitate Customer Relationship Management (CRM)**

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The first and foremost focus of an e-Newsletter is to provide targeted and 100% original content to help stimulate a client's business. The foundation of the newsletter's focus is dissemination of relevant industry news, including educational, "how-to," investigative and interview-style articles to further the aims of your clients. By providing this erstwhile information, their business is established as an expert in the field.

Testimonials should also play an important role in content; statistically, they can enhance sales up to 250%, but they also further strengthen working relationships by demonstrating practical and specific ways in which the organization has been invaluable to others. Client participation should be encouraged through surveys, polls and letters; this will help

determine what issues and facets of business are pertinent and relative to clients, so a company can further hone its customer focus.

Last but certainly not least, the content should entertain readers by providing humor through trade and industry related jokes, anecdotes and personal stories. There's nothing like sharing a joke around the water cooler. Showing a lighter side will help the company partner in fun as well. Humor goes a long way in building effective and lasting working relationships.

## How to Select an Outsourcing Company for e-Newsletters

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The e-Newsletter provider you choose should offer your clients options and choice. Select one that offers versatility and allows the client to select specific content, layout and frequency in which the newsletters are sent. Make sure that the e-Newsletter chosen does not require HTML programming experience, so clients will not need to learn a new skill.

All newsletters are not created equal; make sure the outsourcing company has a built-in collection of pertinent data, including real-time statistics, open rates, click-through rates, pages forwarded and member usage reports. This information can further be used to refine e-Newsletter material to more specifically target a client's audience. Make sure the outsourcing company can guarantee that competitors can't send identical messages to existing clients.

## Define Objectives of the e-Newsletter

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Find outsourcing companies experienced and/or partnered in a variety of areas. Strategic planning will help maximize the client's return-on-investment. Choose a company that can provide help in offering positive sales management solutions, including aspects of lead allocation, fulfillment materials, sales monitoring and progress. Use a provider that will help

you exploit the interactive aspects of the Internet and viral functionality built into the e-Newsletter. Experience in lead generation is a definite plus and make sure the provider's data and analysis system is straightforward and provides assistance in identification of qualified leads, as well as tracking successful campaigns.

## About weBranding

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weBranding is a small marketing and interactive virtual consulting firm based outside St. Louis, MO. Our primary focus is helping small to mid-sized organizations harness the Internet and emerging technologies to generate leads and build brand awareness. Feel free to contact Tommy Young at 618-566-0034 or via email with any questions or to set-up a short initial "sourcing" meeting to talk about your requirements and how we'd approach meeting your needs on time and on budget.

