

Before you begin reading ... PRINT the report out on paper. I assure you that you'll receive much more benefit from studying over the information, rather than simply browsing through it on your computer screen. So, I encourage you to print the report out before you read it.

#####

How to Create Successful Email Newsletter



Email newsletter has become a main means of communication between an online marketer and subscribers. After you setup a blog or website where you will regularly post new articles and stories, the next thing to think about is the creation of a good email newsletter..

By Julia Gulevich,
www.glocksoft.com

Why send email newsletters? For a couple of reasons:

- The cost of creating and sending email messages is minimal. So, after your [bulk email program](#) is in place, you can create a template and start communicating with your online subscribers with the lowest expenses.
- You can quickly test new offers on your customers and understand how your list is responsive on the next day or earlier.

- You can stay connected with your customers and maintain your credibility. With many companies going out of business, people want to know who is still "afloat". Your email newsletter is a proof that you're here and still in business.

However, the creation of an email newsletter is only a part of a general email marketing program that should also include your signup process, email newsletter delivery, unsubscribe process, email campaign performance tracking, managing of bounced emails and spam complaints. You should carefully think about how each of these steps will be accomplished because any of them can be a decisive factor of whether you will succeed with your email marketing program or fail.

Arranging Your Subscribe and Unsubscribe Process

It's crucial to start sending an email newsletter only after you get a list of verified opt-in subscribers who expressed their interest in receiving your mailings. You should build your list organically rather than buying third party lists. You can heavily hurt your brand and marketer reputation if you add people to your list and send them without their permission. And after all, outside mailing lists get lower response rates.

The best way to gather subscribers is to put a signup form on your website or blog and let people signup using a [double opt-in method](#). A double opt-in subscription method is a little more complicated than a single opt-in process and requires an extra step from the subscribers but it allows you prevent malicious subscriptions and build a list of people who are really interested in your newsletters.

I'm almost sure you know how a double opt-in process is handled. So, I just want you to note that if you take some time and make your

subscription process a little different, you can start [generating profits from the signup process](#) itself. On my opinion, there is nothing wrong with including your special offer, promotion, discount coupons or any other offer on your “Thank you” page, or in your welcome message to your subscribers. They have just expressed their interest in your website and newsletter, so why not give them a bonus in return for their subscription?

Similarly to your signup process, you should also think about how your opt-out procedure will be handled. Remember that an unsubscribe request is not always the end of your relationship with the customer. By providing a well-thought opt-out procedure you can consolidate your reputation of a good marketer and make people stay your customers for years even if they are not your subscribers anymore.

Here are the things to think of when setting your unsubscribe process up:

- The opt-out process should be easy and clear for the subscriber. You can handle your opt-out process either via email or online. The practice when a recipient must click on a link and send you an email with the “Take me off” or “Remove me” in the Subject is no longer common but it still takes place.

Most companies handle the unsubscribe process online. Each of your newsletter should include a link to the unsubscribe page or preference page. The customer’s email address should be passed from the unsubscribe link to the unsubscribe web page in order to pre-fill the unsubscribe email address field and you should make sure that the customer is able to change the pre-filled email address.

However, even if your opt-out process is handled online, some recipients may still send you an email with an unsubscribe request. You should not ignore such requests even if sending an email is not stated as an opt-out option.

- The opt-out request should be complied with as soon as possible after it is submitted by the recipient. If you are not sure whether the recipient is removed immediately or not, notify them either on your unsubscribe page or in your confirmation email that it can take a few days for the opt-out to take effect and thus, they may still receive some emails from you.

Otherwise, some recipients will most likely click on “Report Spam” button thinking that your opt-out process is broken if they continue receiving emails. It’s important to complete the subscriber’s opt-out request and stop sending them within 10 days as required by CAN-SPAM law.

- Provide your subscribers with the option to change their email address and preferences on the unsubscribe page even if you already have the preference page setup. Some people may decide to unsubscribe only because they got a new email address that is not in your database, or because they changed their mind about your newsletters frequency. Giving them the ability to update their email address and preferences will keep them within your list.
- Provide a quick 2 or 3 question survey on your opt-out page to ask your subscribers why they want to leave. Did they lose the interest in your newsletters? Do they want less email? Or, have they never found your emails to be relevant to their expectations? Knowing the reason why people unsubscribe will

help you better understand your customers and adjust your email marketing program in order to strengthen your email relationships with existing and future subscribers.

- Should you send an unsubscribe confirmation email to the customer? Yes and no because some customers may find it annoying to get any email from you after they unsubscribed, but others may like to get a confirmation that their request is completed. Anyway, on my opinion there is nothing wrong with sending an unsubscribe confirmation message only *if it arrives instantly* after the unsubscribe fact takes place. This way you will ensure the unsubscribe request is not done by mistake, especially if your newsletter includes a “Forward-to-a-friend” option so another person may unintentionally unsubscribe the original recipient.

Designing Your Email Newsletter

Email newsletters often determine the success of your online business. Whilst a well written newsletter brings you more readers and, thus, can result in more sales and profits, a bad newsletter can spoil your reputation and turn the readers off your website.

So, before you get straight to your newsletter design, ask yourself the questions: What do I want to tell my readers with my newsletter? How often will I send it? Will it give my readers the information they expect? Answering these questions will help you create your newsletter content, decide on the newsletter frequency, design and layout.

Define the purpose of your newsletter

Clearly setting the goals you want to achieve with your email newsletter is what you should start from. Do you want to get people to your website? Do you want to share with them some tips and tricks? Do you want to make money by promoting any products in your newsletter? Or maybe something else? We all have different goals and that's why our newsletters are different.

For example, my main goal is to tell my subscribers about fresh content on my blog and engage them into a conversation regarding the issues I touch upon in my posts. I know that not all my subscribers use RSS (and probably many of them don't even know what RSS feeds are) so my primary newsletter is a way to tell them what is happening on my blog. On the other hand I sometimes send newsletters including exclusive offers and discounts available for my subscribers only in the hope to generate some sales. This is a bit different type of an email newsletter.

Well, whatever the goal of your email newsletter is, define it beforehand because it will determine the overall look and feel of your newsletter. You can set several goals for your newsletter but keep your primary goal as the main focus.

Follow your subscribers' expectations

Once you decided on your newsletter goal, think about whether it matches your subscribers' expectations. If your opt-in form says that you will send news, tips and tricks once a week/month, your subscribers are definitely not expecting being bombarded with advertising and promotional content every day.

There is nothing wrong with including some offers and promotional material into your newsletter. In this case you should mention about this during your signup process so your subscribers could also expect commercial offers in your newsletter. Better if you get fewer subscribers who are interested in what you will be sending to them instead of getting many unsubscribe requests over time from people who will find you simply tricked them to get into your list.

Provide valuable content

In the same way that you should provide a good reason for people to subscribe to your list, you should give them an incentive to stay subscribed. People won't likely to stay on your list if they don't receive any unique content.

Even if your newsletter is a simple list of new posts on your blog or website, or a list of new features of your product, consider including some exclusive content into your newsletter at least once a month. It could be a download available for subscribers only, or any discount coupon, bonus, or any other unique and exclusive material that cannot be found on your website. Giving something of value to your subscribers is a kind of rewarding them for their trust and interest to your website and newsletter. In addition, this provides your subscribers with an extra incentive to stay subscribed to your email newsletter and can make some people to change their mind if someone decided to unsubscribe.

Write as you speak

Although there are no strict rules how to write an email newsletter, better if your newsletter voice does not differ much from your blog or website voice. Your subscribers are used to your website tone so they

will enjoy your newsletter if it is written in the similar manner. Try to find the most appropriate voice for your newsletter and be consistent with it over time.

One thing that I would not definitely recommend you is writing in a hyped style. People are quite suspicious about such emails these days. Use your email newsletter primarily to build relationships with your subscribers and write it in a personal tone as if you were speaking to them.

Think over your newsletter content and layout

As you give a title to every post or article on your website, you should also write a title for your email newsletter. In emails the Subject line usually plays a role of a title. The Subject is one of the main factors that make the readers to either open the email or delete it. In one of my previous articles I shared the tips on [how to write a Subject line to get better email open rate](#). But I'm still learning to create Subject lines and I experiment with each new newsletter. And I would recommend that you do the same. Test different approaches to your newsletter Subject to find which one works better for your subscribers.

Another thing that should not be overlooked is your newsletter format. It's important to compose your newsletter in the way that it can be easily read and understood. Remember that your subscribers are busy like you and me, so value their time. The experience shows that most people don't actually read emails. They scan the message until something grabs their attention.

Keeping this in mind, you should format your newsletter text so that the most important information can be easily found. If you send your email newsletter in the HTML format, highlight the most important text with color, bold, or italics. Use a bulleted list of items and include

images if appropriate. But don't overdo. Use HTML effects within reasonable limits to just draw the subscriber's attention to the most important information in your newsletter. In plain text email newsletters, consider splitting your text into paragraphs, using CAPS for titles, and various symbols to catch the reader's attention.

It's important to note that whatever you place at the top of your email newsletter usually gets a higher recipient's attention and a better conversion rate - the text you write at the beginning of your newsletter will be read more attentively, the links you include into your first paragraphs will be clicked more. So, try to put your most valuable and important information into the first part of your email.

Measuring Subscriber's Interest into Your Newsletter

Besides finding reliable [email marketing software](#) for sending your newsletter, you should think about the capability to track how people are acting upon your message. There are numerous [email tracking services](#) out there. Some will provide you with more detailed reports than others but all of them will at least let you know how many subscribers opened your newsletter and which links in your message were clicked on.

Studying email tracking metrics is a useful and productive process. Not only does it help you with creating more appealing Subject lines and email content in general, it also reveals you what parts of your newsletter interest your readers more, which links and offers are more attractive, and what topics people like best.

Speaking again about the newsletter content, I would advise that you do not stuff each newsletter with your promotional offers, affiliate links or any other calls to purchase something from. Your subscribers will most likely be quickly annoyed by such sales messages and at best

they will ignore them. At worse, they will click on "This is spam!" button or unsubscribe. You don't want to lose subscribers so make each newsletter unique and informative to entice people to open it.

What is nice about email tracking is that you can do a split test on your subscribers and find out which approach works best for you. By saying this, I mean that you can create 2 or 3 copies of your newsletter that slightly differ from each other (they may have slightly different Subjects, layouts, formats), split your mailing list into 2 or 3 parts and send each copy to each segment. Then study your email tracking metrics to find out which copy was more responsive. Think why and work in that direction when preparing your future email campaigns.

With [G-Lock Analytics email tracking service](#) you can clearly understand how many recipients opened your message and clicked on the links within the message, you can also [send a follow-up email to those recipients who didn't act upon your first message](#), and much more.

So, as you see a good email marketing program consists of a series of stages all of which should be well thought, set and coordinated.

Remember that your relationships with the subscriber begin when they fill in your opt-in form. Once you are engaged into email marketing relationships, you'll want to provide your subscribers with a positive experience throughout their stay with you.

As always, you are welcome to share your thoughts in comments below the [online version](#) of the report.

Free bonuses from G-Lock Software:

WordPress Double Opt-In Subscription Plugin

This WordPress email list management plugin allows the visitors of your blog subscribe to your mailing list using a double opt-in method. The signup form (Email, Name and other fields) is placed on the WordPress blog sidebar. After a user fills in the form and clicks "Subscribe", WP double opt-in plugin sends an email with the subscription confirmation link to the user. You can also use the plugin to convert your blog RSS feed into an email newsletter and send it out to your subscribers. You can design the style and content of your email newsletter yourself and you can schedule your email broadcast weekly, monthly or as soon as you add a certain number of new posts to your blog.

Ultimate Email Marketing Guide

From this guide you can learn how to build large responsive opt-in lists, design personalized HTML email newsletters, achieve higher email deliverability, measure your email campaigns performance and monitor email tracking metrics. You can read the book online absolutely free, or download it in the PDF format for a small fee.