

RESTART & REFINE

How to write newsletters people want to read



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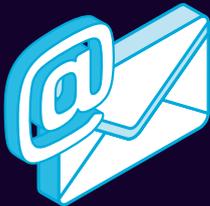
The email experts at dotdigital have noticed an alarming trend in many brands' email marketing tactics. We have witnessed the steady decline of the newsletter.

Instead, we're seeing brands opt for "sell, sell, sell" tactics. Newsletters have been pushed aside and inboxes are flooded with sale emails. The result? Customer loyalty is harder to achieve. Shoppers are fickle, choosing the brand that offers the lowest price over the best service because they have nothing to drive their loyalty.

Why newsletters should be a part of your email marketing

There are so many benefits to sending newsletters, it's surprising to see them falling by the wayside.

1



Build your brand

At the core of your branding is the need to be instantly recognized by customers and prospects. Newsletters help improve brand recognition and strengthen brand affinity by conveying your brand story.

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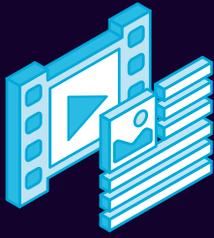


Communicate your value proposition

Especially important for business-to-business (B2B) brands, you want your customers to know you'll deliver a valuable service. B2B brands typically have a longer buying cycle and more invested stakeholders, that means you need to quickly communicate your value proposition. A well-planned newsletter will ensure you achieve this.

For ecommerce brands, you need to differentiate yourself from the competition. Customers have more choice than ever before. The result is a strange combination of fickleness and loyalty. If you give your readers a reason to keep choosing your brand because you stand out from the crowd, then you're more likely to gain their loyalty.

3



Establish credibility

To establish your brand as an industry leader, you need to deliver quality content that communicates this. Educational content to enhance post-purchase experiences or insight into market trends ensures your brand is thought of with the highest regard.

4



Strengthen relationships

Engaging, insightful, and helpful newsletters help keep you at the top of the reader's mind, no matter where they go. That means they'll keep coming back to your website, because they trust your brand more than any alternative they find on the net.

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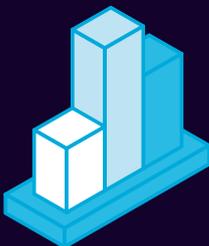


Increase website traffic

Whether you're an ecommerce brand or not, the bulk of our business happens online today. B2B brands or services who have to explain their proposition need subscribers to visit their websites to discover their value. Ecommerce brands want to drive readers to view products online.

Using your newsletter content as a springboard, you can help launch readers onto your site and drive sales ready conversions.

6



Two-way conversations

When used correctly, newsletters are a great tool to start two-way conversations with your audience. Don't just fire messages at subscribers. Invite them to take part in the conversation using competitions and social media. Customers are more likely to return to a brand when they feel valued. Asking for feedback and opinions is a great way to make a customer feel 100% committed to your brand.

How to write newsletters people want to read

Newsletters are a combination of email and content marketing. That's how readers are going to feel an affinity with your brand and become loyal customers.

It's time to step back and take a fresh look at your newsletter. Has yours, like so many others out there, ended up as yet another sale email? Maybe your content is in need of a refresh. Are your readers dropping off and open rates taking a dive?

This is our top advice for creating a newsletter that audiences really want to read.

1. Understand your audience

As with most of your marketing, understanding your audience is essential. What motivates them? Why did they sign up to receive your email marketing and what do they expect to get out of it?

Understanding this will help you meet their needs. And the more you meet their needs, the stronger the relationship you'll have with them.

2. Set your intention

What do you want to get out of your newsletter campaign?

Think beyond open rates, they're guaranteed to increase once you improve your content. With a well-planned and expertly executed newsletter, you can show readers what sets you apart from your competition. Educational content can demonstrate your standing as an industry leader, while giving helpful hints and tips will give subscribers an experience no other brand offers.

If you have a clear goal for your newsletter, it will be easier to decide the type of content you need to create.

3. Plan your content

It's time to think about the type of content you need to create.

Quick-win content is at your fingertips. No one knows your business like you, so put your industry knowledge by crafting engaging copy to fill your email. Blogs are also great content to include in your newsletter, especially as linking out to them can help drive traffic to your website.

If you're interested in sending informative but engaging content, nothing beats video content. 90% of modern shoppers say that video helps them make decisions. By integrating videos into your newsletters, you're likely to enjoy higher open rates and increase sales, all without sending a 'sell, sell, sell' email.

4. Utilize your website

You don't want your newsletter to be too long. A long email, especially for mobile openers, is a big turn-off. Too much scrolling and readers will quickly lose interest.

Where you can, link through to your website. This has a wide range of benefits. Not only will it increase traffic to your site, but the additional, regular traffic can boost your SEO results as your domain authority improves.

5. Start conversations

Inviting readers to be part of the conversation is essential. Engaging them in two-way conversations helps customers feel more invested in your brand. Use your newsletter to promote competitions on social media. This will help them become advocates for your brand if they're required to tag friends or share posts in order to enter.

You can also use newsletters to regularly gather feedback from customers. Either run regular survey check-ins or follow-up product launches a call for feedback on your new products and features. By instigating these conversations, customers will have a direct influence over your brand, making them feel more connected to your business.

6. Test, test, test

Testing is the only way you'll create consistent, high-performing email marketing content. And your newsletter is the one campaign you should never forget to test.

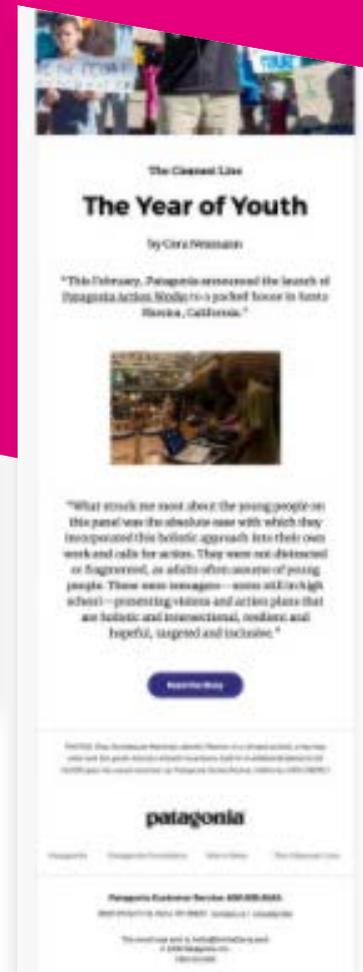
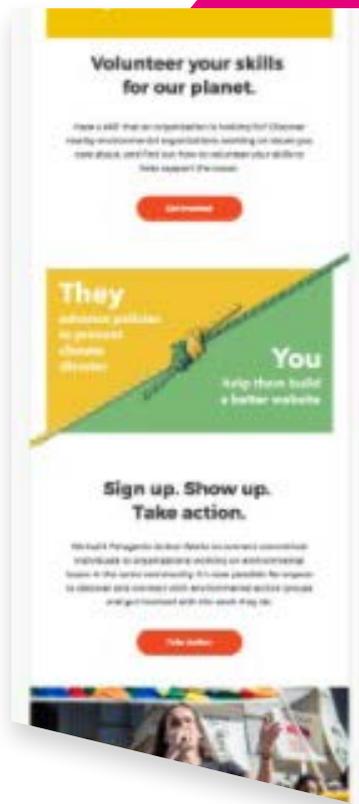
As you begin to rethink your newsletters, it's essential that you test what works for your audience. Never forget that testing goes far beyond basic A/B testing of your subject lines. Images, layout, and content can all be tested to give you a clearer understanding of what engages your customers.

Examples of newsletters we love to read

Patagonia

Patagonia know their customers and their customers know what they stand for. The outdoor clothing company is well-known for its environmental activism. It establishes it very early on in its relationship with a new customer.

So, when it uses its newsletter to drive its audiences into action its widely welcomed by recipients. Patagonia engages customers with its mission, creating a stronger relationship with readers as they work together to change the world.



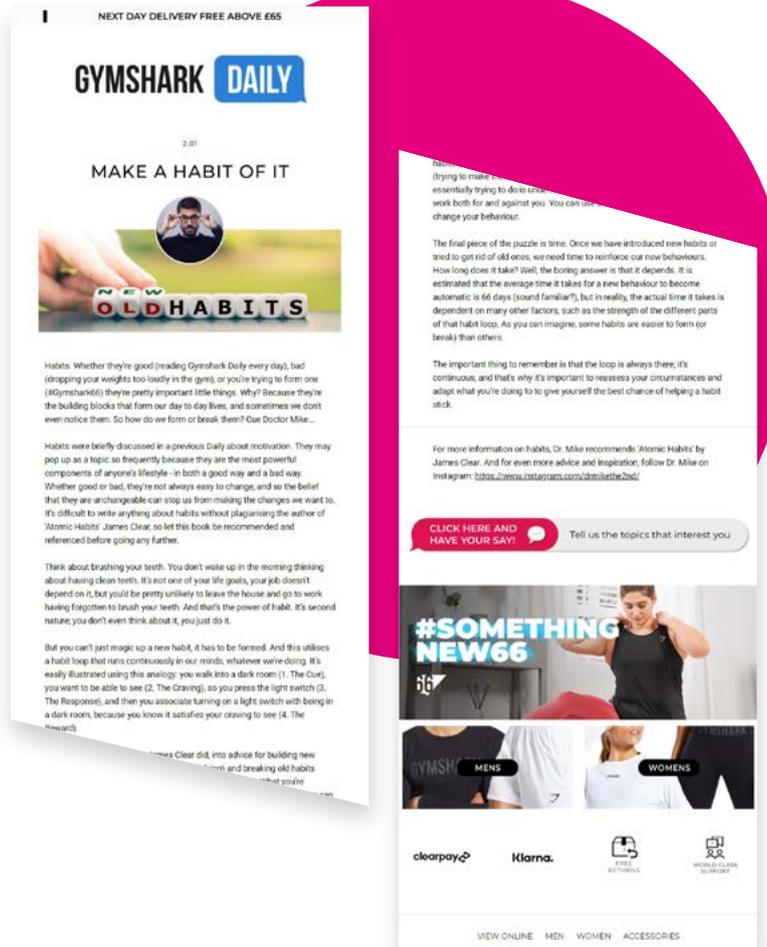
Grammarly

Grammarly uses its newsletter to educate subscribers, while also establishing itself as an authority on copywriting. The overall affect is engaging email that keeps readers hooked and primes them for conversion.

Gymshark

Athleisure brand, Gymshark, regularly send educational content to its email newsletter subscribers. Having a clear understanding of its customers goals and interest keeps subscribers tuned in for their daily installment of health and fitness advice.

The only links the brand include in its newsletter campaign come at the very end of the email. While conversion and sales are always at the heart of all marketing activity, this brand understands that engaging readers on topics of interest will keep the brand at the forefront of shoppers' minds when they're deciding where to turn for their next piece of gym kit.



ME to WE

Non-profit organization, ME to WE use its newsletter to drive website traffic by including articles about its work to engage audiences. The charity directly demonstrates the impact of its work to drive more donations. This is the perfect way for not-for-profit organizations to connect with donors and fundraisers as it serves as a constant reminder that their input has a clear impact of the lives of those in need.

Rethinking your newsletter

Newsletters are an essential part of every email marketing strategy.

There is no better way to maintain consistent engagement from your audiences. Whether you're a B2B, ecommerce, or NFP brand, your newsletter keeps readers connected to your brand.

The more brands opt for "sell, sell, sell" tactics over genuine engagement, the easier it will be for customers to switch their loyalty for a cheaper price or free shipping. Newsletters add value to your relationship. They can be educational and inspirational, and drive longer-lasting relationship with readers.

So, it's time for a rethink. How are you going to improve your newsletter?



No matter if you're in Tokyo, Nashville, or Brussels, we have you covered.
Thanks to our global office network you can ask us anything, anytime.

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