



## **E-mail vs. Print: What's the Better Newsletter?**

It's a debate that deserves to be solved. When it comes to newsletters, which delivery medium is best - e-mail or print? Before we can come to a reasonable conclusion, we must first understand the pros and cons of each so we can make a reasonable comparison.

Both e-mail and direct-mail newsletters contain informative articles and resources, opportunities and advertisements, and help you connect with your customers. So each type of newsletter needs a writer, a designer, and a mailing list. They differ in that print newsletters must be physically printed and mailed; while e-mail newsletters have to be distributed through a mail server. All other costs being equal, the cost to develop and distribute a print newsletter exceeds that of an e-mail newsletter.

### ***E-mail newsletters: Cheaper, easier to distribute***

Because e-mail newsletters are generally cheaper to distribute, they can be sent frequently. A daily print newsletter would not be efficient, but many companies send e-mail newsletters every day. This also makes it easy to target sub-niches with your e-mail newsletters. Since they're cheap to send, you can target specific groups as long as you develop relevant content for each. One caveat: E-mail newsletters are easy to ignore and delete; and just as easy to block. All it takes is one click for a would-be customer to stop receiving e-mail newsletters from your company forever.

### ***Print newsletters: Higher response rate***

Since it's so easy to ignore e-mail newsletters, print newsletters stand out as the more successful of the two in terms of response rate. A good direct mail newsletter might generate a 3 percent to 5 percent response rate; while a good e-mail newsletter might only get one-half of a percent. Print newsletters simply have more influence. Plus they're portable, meaning they're likely to make it to the "reading room."

To recap: Print newsletters have more influence but can only be sent periodically. Print newsletters are more expensive to produce; however, they tend to generate a better response rate. E-mail newsletters are cheaper to send and can be sent every day; but they are easy to ignore and tend to generate a lower response rate. And, when done right, both generate a good overall return on investment.

### ***Use both in tandem***



So which is better? For most companies, the answer is both. Since the delivery mediums are so different, and because each type of newsletter has its unique virtues, it's a good idea to take advantage of both print and e-mail newsletters. When you work them in tandem, you build powerful brand recognition. Your daily e-mail newsletters supplement your periodic print newsletters, which in turn lend credibility to your e-mail newsletters by letting customers know there's a real, grounded company behind them.

You can even use one newsletter to build hype for another. An online retailer, for example, could use an e-mail newsletter to tell customers to look for an incredible offer in the next print newsletter. And if e-mail newsletter subscribers are not getting the print newsletter, they could click a link to sign up for it so they can access the special offer. In this manner, you could generate more buzz, increase the size of your targeted mailing list, and motivate purchases in one cohesive multi-channel marketing campaign.

Newsletters are one of the most powerful ways to build lasting relationships with your customers. When you harness the power of both e-mail and print newsletters in tandem, you can boost brand recognition and profit margins exponentially.

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