



KnightLine

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KnightWorks
20 Deer Run
Miami Springs, FL
33166

Office: 305. 888.1905
Cell: 305. 989.4815

E-mail:
raygknight@hotmail.com

We're on the Web!

www.rayknight.com

"A newsletter can provide useful and current information for your clients and prospects while also allowing you to promote new products/services; test offers on existing products; obtain valued feedback; recognize your clients, and measure the return of your invested time and effort through input, feedback and comments."

Newsletters-Do-It-Yourself Marketing Tool

by Ray Knight

*This is the fifth in the series of articles designed to help small and medium-sized businesses improve their marketing and sales by **cost-effectively** increasing awareness, protecting their customer base and attracting new business. In previous articles, KnightLine covered:*

- *Marketing-Reward Your Customers First*
- *Marketing Research Drives Results*
- *Referral Sales Make Dollars and Sense*
- *Brainstorming Can Build Your Business.*

One of the basic tools in your do-it-yourself marketing tool kit should be a newsletter. In a simple question and answer format, this article will help you understand why, how and when to employ a company newsletter as part of your marketing communications to clients and prospects alike.

Q: Why Should You Produce a Newsletter?

A: Newsletters have several benefits. A newsletter can provide useful and current information for your clients and prospects while also allowing you to promote new products/services; test offers on existing products; obtain valued feedback; recognize your clients, and measure the return of your invested time and effort through input, feedback and comments. The newsletter is a mechanism you can use to build a direct mail and email mailing list with clients, prospects and contacts. Content can be repurposed into brochures, flyers, advertisements or your own business website.

Q: What Content Can You Create?

A: Use it to educate your market on the features, benefits and unique selling points of your existing products, services and business and introduce new products or services. Add a Frequently Asked Questions section. Other ideas include:

- Communicate the progress/achievements/recognition or accolades that your business has earned to reinforce your company in your client's mindshare.
- Develop and test product/service promotions/offers prior to, or simultaneous to, promoting the offer in other tools and mediums.
- Get client involvement by using testimonials as credibility tools to demonstrate the quality of your business and presenting client ideas and suggestions to stimulate additional dialogue and demand.
- Use simple surveys to get valuable feedback you can use in your planning, policies and operations.

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- Present calendars/schedules of planned and scheduled promotions, events and demonstrations.
- Show your community involvement above and beyond your business by your support of certain causes, charities or organizations. Use it to promote your marketing partners products/services.
- Remember to provide all pertinent contact details of business logo, typeface, addresses, phone, facsimile, email, website, and mini-map/ directions should be included.

Q: How Often Do You Produce the Newsletter?

A: You could start with a minimum of quarterly issue to a maximum of monthly issues to insure this tool becomes an ongoing part of your marketing tool-kit. To decide on your frequency, consider the following factors:

- Type, relevancy and amount of content your business has to share with readers.
- Time you and/or your staff members can dedicate to develop and proof the content.
- Projected cost and plans for producing and distributing the newsletter.
- Quality of the response received.

Q: How Do You Create the Newsletter?

A: To simplify the content development process, you can start with a simple list, turn it into an outline of various topics and then create simple bulleted points to describe the relevant content. Thereafter, from a detailed outline you can easily create the sentences and paragraphs.

Once the content is produced, you can opt for a simple 1-page or 1-page two-sided version as an inexpensive starting point. Higher quality paper and a laser jet printer can kick up the appearance and impact. So would the use of a freelance graphic designer to spruce it up with enhanced graphics/color/design and typography.

You can create the content and produce the newsletter using time-saving word processing software and templates already designed and available. Programs such as Word for Windows enable you to simply cut and paste text into the template with a minimum degree of word processing skill.

Q: How Do You Distribute the Newsletter?

A: Use as many of the following ways as possible.

- The least inexpensive is to hand-it to your customers and prospects while in and outside of your store.
- Place printed copies on your counter or drop them into the sales bag.
- Mail it as a self-mailer or as an insert with a letter or as part of your company brochure.
- Email it to your customers and prospects that have requested to be kept up-to-

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date and have subscribed.

- Create an Adobe Acrobat online brochure version.
- Post in on your website.

From experience we have learned that you don't need to spend a lot of money for a public relations professional or advertising agency to write, develop and distribute your company newsletter. You can use a company newsletter as a project to collect the best ideas about your business, your products, services and clients and watch your brand awareness and cash receipts grow in the process.

Ray Knight, CEO of *KnightWorks*, has over 25 years of marketing research, marketing, business development and sales experience gained internationally and domestically as both a corporate executive and an entrepreneur in a variety of industries. Much of the content included in KnightLine incorporates strategies and tactics he has personally applied to growing his and clients' businesses. Ray lives and works in Miami Springs and can be reached at 305-888-1905 or by email at raygknight@hotmail.com. Read past articles and learn more techniques at www.rayknight.com
