

7 Ways To Maximize Your Marketing Newsletter Program

Newsletters are a cost-effective way to increase awareness of your services, generate leads and build client relationships. Here are some suggestions for boosting the effectiveness of your PDI Global newsletter as a marketing and communications tool.

1 Use the mail to your advantage

Using an envelope to mail your newsletter not only protects it from damage but also enables you to make a more professional presentation. Even more important, mailing in an envelope allows you to enclose a cover letter, so you can:

- Direct a personal or special message to the recipient
- Highlight information in the current issue you think might be of particular interest
- Make special offers or announcements
- Provide other information about your organization and the services you offer

Even if people merely skim the newsletter, they'll probably read the letter, which allows you to reach them with a message they otherwise might not hear. For each newsletter issue, PDI Global provides pre-written cover letters for you to edit as you like, run on your letterhead and enclose with the newsletter to clients and prospects, referral sources and media contacts.

Another key benefit of using an envelope is the flexibility to include other items with the cover letter that are designed to elicit a response or get the recipient to take a certain action. A seminar invitation, survey form, flyer, special offer or press article clipping are just a few ideas. An envelope also provides space for a targeted message and leaves the back page of your newsletter available for a custom article or information highlighting your firm's personnel, services and specialties.

For a nominal charge, PDI Global can produce envelopes, reply cards and other inserts, and even manage the mailing for you.

2 *Make your customization count*

PDI Global newsletters give you an outstanding opportunity to communicate information about your firm to clients and prospects. All available space should be customized with an ad, seminar invitation, survey, custom article or information about your firm and its partners.

Take the time to develop interesting copy, use photographs or graphics to add visual appeal, and change the information frequently to keep it interesting to readers. Partner profiles, success stories, special offers and news about the firm will help build rapport and increase interest in the newsletter articles, leading to more calls for information and ultimately more clients. Many firms develop two or three different customizations that they rotate to keep a fresh look.

Ask your Client Relationship Manager for detailed information about how PDI Global's creative team can assist you in preparing effective customization.

3 *Refine your mailing list*

The quality of your mailing list is perhaps the single most important factor in the success of your newsletter marketing program. Top firms pay great attention to this. They never simply mail the newsletter to names they have in their database, with little attention to the recipients. They know that if they want to generate new leads, they can't mail the newsletter only to existing clients. Instead, it must be sent to a carefully targeted list of prospects, referral sources and media contacts.

To develop your list, you can ask members of your firm to supply the names of prospects they know about, and ask your professional network to suggest people you might contact. You can also look through local chamber of commerce directories, the Yellow Pages, and various business directories at your local library. Many trade associations and publications will sell lists of their members or subscribers. These sources, as well as list brokers, can provide a quick way to develop prospect lists targeted at specific niches. The Member Resources section of PDI Global's Web site presents information about list sources, trade associations, and publications that can help you develop targeted lists of prospects and media contacts.

Remember, though, that even if you buy a targeted list, you must maintain the information. It's easy for a list to become out of date and, therefore, ineffective. You will have more success sending newsletters to 500 accurate names than to 1,000 that are no longer up to date.

Mailing to clients is a good way to enhance your relationship with the client by informing them regularly about topics of interest. But the newsletter should not be your only means of communicating with existing clients. To develop more business with them, you'll want to proactively telephone or meet with your contacts often to identify other ways you can be of service.

Also, make sure you include all possible referral sources — accountants, attorneys, bankers, financial planners, real estate agents and other professionals who might know of people who need your services. Network with these contacts regularly to develop win-win relationships in which you trade referrals. And include the names of local editors and other media contacts in your list. Doing so can help build relationships that lead to increased publicity for your firm.

4 **Extend your reach**

Placing an electronic version of the newsletter on your Web site or e-mailing it to those who would like to receive it electronically can leverage your newsletter's reach, drive readers to your Web site, meet their delivery preferences, and encourage their response. Increasingly, firms are using both print and electronic versions of their newsletter to maximize readership and effectiveness. PDI Global offers three electronic options to easily and cost-effectively do this:

- **Noncustomized PDF** — Available free to PDI Global newsletter subscribers, this version essentially gives you the print newsletter in electronic format. It has the same full-color look as the printed version, but without your logo or other customization. We e-mail a noncustomized PDF file of each issue to you, and you post it on your Web site. If you like, you can then send an e-mail to clients, prospects, referral sources and the media informing them that a new issue has been posted and including a link that takes them to the newsletter on your site. Recipients must have Adobe® Acrobat® software to read the PDF.
- **PDF link** — This option gives you a fully customized PDF version of your newsletter (it has the same customization as the front and back of the print version) to post on your Web site. You also get a formatted text e-mail with the newsletter title, brief summaries of the articles, and a link directing the reader to the newsletter on your Web site.

We recommend e-mailing the link, rather than attaching the PDF file, because the file is large and may cause the e-mail to overload the recipient's mailbox or be blocked by spam filters. While there are no graphics or customization copy in the e-mail, you can edit it to add or change information as you like. We send both the text e-mail and the PDF file for each issue to you via e-mail.

- **Newsletter link** — This HTML version provides a link to put on your Web site that connects with a newsletter front page (located on a blind Web site) containing brief summaries of the articles, with links to full-story pages. The front page, as well as the full-story pages, looks slightly different from the print newsletter (there are no graphics other than the masthead) but includes space at the bottom to customize with your logo and contact information.

Since with this option we automatically update the pages for each issue, you don't have to do anything after you put the link on your site, unless you choose to send an e-mail announcing that a new issue is posted. Alternatively, for each issue you can e-mail the front page to your distribution list.

To see how the different options compare, visit www.pdiglobal.com. Whichever you choose, you'll get a way to both enhance your Web site and leverage the reach of your print newsletter. For more information about our e-newsletter options, or to sign up for one, please call or e-mail your PDI Global Client Relationship Manager.

Another way to capitalize on the newsletter is to submit articles for publication under your byline in local newspapers, association newsletters and other publications. When an article you submit is published, be sure to get a clipping or reprint that shows the name of the publication in which it appeared. You can then include a copy of the clipping in other mailings to help position your firm as a source of expert information.

