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“You can transform your life and business in just seven minutes a day.” If that statement makes you want to read on, consider yourself hooked.

A newsletter is competing against a lot of distractions for the reader’s attention, so it’s important that the first one or two sentences of an article hook the reader. And since that hook creates an expectation, the article needs to justify the use of the hook, or the reader will feel manipulated.

Along with the hook, the article needs a headline that is brief, active, and clear in its purpose. Beyond these essential characteristics, a headline attracts attention if it is highly relevant, inspires curiosity, or has some other irresistible quality.

Newsletters are short on space and their readers are short on time, so the articles must be well focused, aiming to make one major point. The making of this point can be achieved through two to five (or so) sub-points. These points must have as their primary aim the benefit of the reader, who should be able to point out this benefit. It can be new knowledge or insight, an idea about how to improve business, or better, how your business can improve the reader The article should clarify, inspire, encourage, enthuse, provoke thought, satisfy—it should elicit a positive response. And the best response of all, of course, is that the reader decides that your products or services provide the solutions they need.

To sum it up, grab the reader’s attention through an effective headline and hook, and then reward the reader for following through by giving them something they didn’t have before. In addition, keep the article brief and well focused, and if appropriate, demonstrate how your products and services address the issues raised in the article. By doing so, you stand a good chance of keeping the readers you have, and gaining new readers with every issue.

# Writing Great Newsletter Articles

By Author Name

By Author Name

The purpose of a newsletter is to provide specialized information to a targeted audience. To help you achieve this goal, this template offers suggestions that you can also find in the article in the Task Pane titled “Creating a Newsletter.” You may also be interested in reading “Printing a Newsletter,” which describes different printing options, such as using large paper to print your newsletter as a folded booklet. In addition to these template Help articles, the Task Pane contains links to Help topics related to the Microsoft Word features used in this template, such as text boxes. As an added help, before you begin replacing this content with your own, you may want to print this template to have the benefit of its instructions. *Inside This Issue* lists articles designed to help you write an effective newsletter.

When you create a newsletter, first determine the audience. This could be anyone who might benefit from it, such as those interested in a product.

You can compile a mailing list from business reply cards, customer information sheets, business cards collected at trade shows, or membership lists. You might consider purchasing a mailing list from a company that serves your target customer.

Next, establish how much time and money you can spend on your newsletter. These factors help determine the length of your newsletter and how frequently you will publish it.

Newsletter Title

Newsletter Date

Volume 1, Issue 1

Graphic of leaves and fruit.

Company Name, Street Address, City, ST ZIP Code

Web site address   E-mail address   Phone number

# Getting Started

Please see *Great Articles* on page 4

“To catch the reader’s attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from the story here.”

food

A caption is a sentence describing a picture or graphic.

# Inserting Your Own Art

You can replace the pictures in this template with your company’s art. To do so, click where you want to insert the picture. On the **Insert** menu, point to **Picture**, and then click **From File**. Locate the picture you want to insert, and then click it. Next, click the arrow to the right of the **Insert** button, and then click either **Insert** to place a copy of the picture into the newsletter, **Link to File** to display the picture without actually inserting a copy, or **Insert and Link**. Since **Insert** embeds a copy, the picture is always visible, but it may greatly increase the size (in bytes) of your newsletter depending on how large the picture is. In contrast, **Link to File** does not increase the size, and if you make changes to the original picture, they automatically show up in the newsletter. But the picture won’t be displayed if viewed from a computer that can’t link to the original. **Insert and Link** inserts a copy so that the image is always available, and also automatically updates changes to the original.

By Author Name

# Drawing Readers to Other Articles

A caption describes the picture or graphic.

Please see *Drawing Readers* on page 5

breads

If you take the time to create a newsletter, you certainly want your readers to read as much of it as possible. You can help achieve this by drawing readers to other articles.

One way to do this is with the table of contents. A table of contents that has descriptive and enticing headlines will go a long way toward getting the reader beyond the articles on the front page.

You can also draw readers into your newsletter by placing an interesting article with broad appeal on the front page, and then continuing that story on another page, where yet another article awaits the reader once he or she finishes. This can also be an effective way to lead the reader to a sales pitch or an order form.

You can have an article go from one page to another by using linked text boxes. Everything in this newsletter template is contained in a series of text boxes. These words are contained in a text box, as is the graphic on this page, with its caption in yet another. A text box offers a flexible way of displaying text and graphics; it’s basically a container. You can move a text box around, positioning it just where you want it; you can resize it into a tall narrow column or into a short wide column, or even rotate it so that the text reads sideways. By linking a text box on one page with a text box on another, your article automatically flows from one page to another. For information on how to link text boxes, click **Continue a story elsewhere with linked text boxes** in the Task Pane.

You can also draw readers into reading other articles by using what’s called a pull quote. A pull quote is a phrase or sentence taken from the article that appears in large letters on the page, often within a box to set it apart from the article. One appears on this page and begins with the text, “To catch the reader’s attention….” The text of a pull quote comes from the article and should be engaging and irresistible. When a reader flips through your newsletter looking for an excuse to read an article, a pull quote can provide that excuse.

You probably won’t able to get all your readers to read all your articles. But by using these journalistic devices you can draw more readers into your newsletter.

By Author Name

Page 2

Newsletter Title

bowl of fruit

A caption is a sentence describing a picture or graphic.

By Author Name

By Author Name

So you have space for one more article in your newsletter and one of your experts out in the field is writing the article. How can you determine how long the article should be?

As in newspapers, the length of a newsletter article can be thought of in terms of how many “column inches” are available for the article. A column inch is a measure of space, namely an area on a page one column wide and one inch deep, used to measure the amount of type that would fill that space. This will vary from newsletter to newsletter depending on the font you are using, its size, the column width and the amount of space between lines and between paragraphs. By knowing how many words on average fit into a column inch in your newsletter, and then by measuring how many column inches are available for the article, you can tell the writer how many words an article can have. Let’s take this scenario one step at a time.

1. Fill up at least 10 inches of column with actual article text, then print out the page and use a ruler to measure how many inches of column your text takes up.
2. Count the number of words in the text.
3. Divide the number of words in the article by the number of inches the text takes up. For example, let’s say you have 456 words in 12 inches of column: 456 ÷ 12 = 38. That’s your magic number for how many words fit in an inch of column in your newsletter. But you’re not finished yet.
4. Measure how many column inches you have available for the article. For example, we’ll say it’s 7 inches.
5. Multiply your magic number by the number of column inches available for the article, which in this case would be: 38 x 7 = 266. This is the maximum length that the article can be.
6. To give yourself some room to fudge, tell the writer to write an article between 250 and 260 words. Once you get the article back and edit it, you can add or remove words here and there to get the article to the right length.

Over time, you will get used to this approach, and it won’t be long before you become a pro at writing and editing articles that are not only helpful to your readers, but perfect in length as well.

Please see *Tight Space* on page 4

Please see *Everyone* on page 4

# Fitting an Article into a Tight Space

# An Article for Everyone

Newsletter Title

Page 3

Who reads your newsletters, and what are their responsibilities? What segments of your industry are they concerned about? And do you have evidence to back up your assumptions? Being able to answer these questions is critical, because only then will you be able to provide the kind of content that readers will be drawn to.

Not everyone within a business or industry is concerned with the same issues. By understanding readers and their concerns, you can ensure that every issue of your newsletter has something to interest as many types of people as possible. A newsletter about technology in education may have articles relevant to administrators and what they need to know logistically to get technology into their schools, to teachers and how they can integrate technology into their classrooms, to parents and how they can introduce technology at home, and to the students themselves and how they can use technology to aid their learning.

The danger, of course, is that if you try to appeal to every type of audience you may make the focus of your newsletter too broad. In our example, we would not want the newsletter to include articles about how to develop software for the education market. When you write articles for an audience that is too far afield of the newsletter’s core purpose or that are too broad in their intent, readers are not able to quickly determine whether the newsletter is of use to them, and they lose interest.

So the issue is of balance: Within the scope of your business and industry, you want to provide something in each newsletter that will be of interest to all the major players in your audience. By doing so, you will ensure that all your readers will continue to return to your newsletter, edition after edition, to find that relevant article that they know is waiting for them.

“To catch the reader’s attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from the story here.”

*Tight Space* from page 3

Newsletter Title

Page 4

*Great Articles* from page 1

*Everyone* from page 3

In the course of adapting this template to suit your needs, you will see a number of different newsletter elements. The following is a list of many of the elements, accompanied by a brief definition.

**Body text.**   The text of your articles.

**Byline.**  A line of text listing the name of the author of the article.

**Caption text.**  Text that describes a graphic. A caption should be a short but descriptive full sentence. For photos, it ought to explain what’s happening without being insultingly obvious. It should also add to the reader’s understanding of the photo by, for example, explaining prominent or unusual objects.

**“Continued from” line.** A line of text indicating the page an article is continuing from.

**“Continued on” line.**  A line of text indicating the page on which an article will be continued.

**Date.**  Either the date of publication or the date you expect the newsletter to be at the height of its circulation.

**Graphic.**  A photograph, piece of art, chart, diagram, or other visual element.

**Header.**  Text at the top of each page indicating the name of the newsletter and the page number.

**Headline.**  The title of an article. A headline needs to be clear in its purpose, brief, and active, and should attract attention by being relevant, inspiring curiosity, or having some other irresistible quality.

**Newsletter title.**  The title of the newsletter.

**Pull quote.**  A phrase or sentence taken from an article that appears in large letters on the page, often within a box to set it apart from the article.

**Volume and issue.**  Volume refers to the number of years a newsletter has been in circulation. Issue refers to the number of newsletters published so far in the year. The ninth newsletter in its fifth year of circulation would be Volume 5, Issue 9.

# The Eeents of a Newsletter

A caption is a sentence describing a picture or graphic.

Asian food

By Author Name

Newsletter Title

Please see *Elements* on page 6

Page 5

*Drawing Readers* from page 2

“To catch the reader’s attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from the story here.”

Motto

**Company Name**

Street Address

City, ST ZIP Code

**Phone:**

Phone number

**Fax:**

Fax number

**E-Mail:**

E-mail address

*Elements* from page 5

Company Name

Street Address

City, ST ZIP Code

Customer Name

Street Address

City, ST ZIP Code

*We’re on the Web!*

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