

Insider secrets for successful newsletter campaigns

Whether you already have a client newsletter, or are thinking about one, here are some special insights from FX Marketing to help you get the most of these campaigns.

To email or to print?

Whether you communicate by email or print will depend primarily on your client base: if your customers are mostly aged 50 years plus, then it's a futile exercise to send them an email newsletter (despite the media telling us how many "silver surfers" there are out there). So in this scenario print makes sense, though it is more expensive than an email exercise.



One of the other benefits of email campaigns, other than the lower cost, is that you get some measurability of how it's doing. FX Marketing's email newsletter system can track how many people open your emails, and how many people click on the links through to your website.

We'll even track all of your campaigns in one document, so you get an at-a-glance view of how your different campaigns have performed. Plus there's an explanation to help you put the results into context.

It's also a great idea to test and measure different Subject lines. This part of the email is absolutely vital, as people will judge whether to open it or delete it depending on whether the subject line resonates with them. So consider sending the identical email but with different subject lines for one half of the database as to the other, and see which get the best open rate. That'll give you a valuable learning for the next campaign.

Help, I'm stuck on finding content for my newsletter...

Remember, a newsletter's purpose is as a client retention exercise: it's about making the most of your existing client base (who may enjoy your newsletter so much that they'll recommend your business to their friends). So the best kind of content involves:

- **Adding value** through relevant articles that are interesting to read.
- **Introducing** your range of products/services.
- **Interesting news** and developments in your business or industry.
- **Establishing** your business as the expert in your industry with articles giving advice.
- **Articles** that are unrelated to your business, but are interesting for your clientele: this works particularly well if you're in the business of offering "feel good" services such as beauty or hair services.
- **Some special offers** and other incentives: these could be "subscriber only" to give your loyal customers an extra reason to do business with you, and make them feel valued.



Why it's important to understand what motivates your customers

Your newsletter should address the needs and concerns of your unique customer base, so it's essential that you know why your customers buy from you, rather than your competitor.

Is it because of your great service? Or is it out of convenience? Or are they buying on price?

If you're not sure (and remember, that your perception may be very different to your customers' perceptions) then it's a good idea to do a customer survey to gauge their opinions. We'd love to help you with your customer survey, as the quality of the survey directly impacts on the quality of responses that you get, and we've got some handy hints on how to get as many people as possible to complete and return the survey. Drop us an email to get started.

Why is the response to the special offers in my newsletters often low?

Newsletters are a "soft" marketing tool, so it's common for responses to offers to be low. That's absolutely normal and probably why they're called "news" letters and not "sales letters": a short, sharp sales offer is quite different to a newsletter in style and content. It's direct, to the point, and must follow the AIDA rule: read more about AIDA here.

Your newsletter will achieve the best result when you team it up with other sales and marketing activities. So be sure to give your clients sales messages at other opportunities: when you're on the phone to your clients; when they're visiting your premises; or in the mail. This combination of activities will start generating real synergies – and real results.

If it's immediate sales you want, or a direct response, then a more direct approach is needed – and your best opportunity to do that is when your client is with you in person or on the phone. That's the time to give them your carefully constructed sales pitch, and be sure to ask for the sale: if your sales pitch is vague, then the response will most likely be vague too!

So how do I measure the response to my newsletters?

Don't measure your newsletter's success on how many responses you get to it: remember, it's a customer retention exercise, and the ways of measuring this are more subtle than the direct responses you receive and a good customer database is vital.

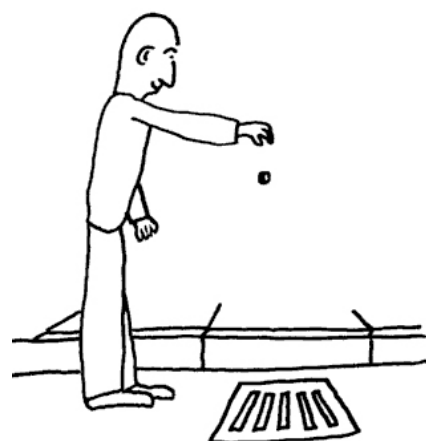
To measure customer retention campaigns, you'll need to analyse two key factors:

1. Latency

This is the number of days between purchases. If this number decreases, it's because your customers are buying from you more often, and could be as a result of your hard work.

2. Average dollar sale

Track the trends to see if your customers are spending more with you.



If your marketing feels like this, then you need to start measuring!

It may be helpful to put this into context by keeping track of economic factors too, such as inflation, interest rates, and so on. If the economy is suffering this may well be impacting your business – but just think of how much worse things would be if you weren't doing any marketing!

Why customer retention is so important to your business

A study in the Harvard Business Review proved that a 5% increase in customer retention can increase your profits between 25% and 85%, depending on your industry.

So if you want to increase your profits, work on your customer retention rates first and foremost... and a newsletter can certainly help you work towards this.

There are plenty of other customer retention strategies too - just contact us if you'd like some fresh ideas.

Do Unsubscribers make you unhappy?

Does your blood pressure start to rise when you spot an “Unsubscribe”? Does it make you feel angry or unappreciated or even make you wonder why you bother?

Here's a more positive view on the matter. Rather than taking the “glass is half empty” approach, focus instead on all the clients that are **HAPPY** to receive your newsletter.



Unsubscribers are likely to be either freeloaders (who ended up on your database because they were offered something for free), or they've realised that they're not your target audience. So don't waste any more emotions on these people, focus instead on all your loyal clients who are happy to receive your marketing messages – and may even buy something! **FX**