



# HOW TO MAKE EMAIL NEWSLETTERS WORK

For Your Fitness Business



## **Do you send an email newsletter to your members and prospective members?**

If the answer is yes, great! You'll see some great tips later on in this guide to get your email newsletters performing even better.

If the answer is no, what is the reason you're not sending an email newsletter? You probably get a few in your inbox on a regular basis if you subscribe to industry updates. Does the newsletter remind you of clutter? Do you have a love/hate relationship with these emails?

Sure, opinions and feelings vary about the use of email newsletters, but the question you need to ask yourself is: Is an email newsletter a good fit for my members and business?

**If you're running a fitness business, the answer is: YES!**

## WHY SEND AN EMAIL NEWSLETTER TO MEMBERS AND LEADS?

You can't expect prospects and members to look at your website or social media pages all the time. Email newsletters are a way for you to gather all your business' news, updates, and content in one place.

An email newsletter is also a way of engaging your connections. It directs readers to other places where they can engage with you and shows how you're active in your community. For example, if you put on events or run membership promotions, newsletters should be a key component in your email marketing strategy.

In fact, if you send a newsletter, you're more likely to see results elsewhere. Direct traffic drives value and leads. According to research done by Parse.ly, a data analytics company, The New York Times newsletter subscribers "consume twice as much content as those who don't get newsletters, and they're twice as likely to become paid subscribers."



# WHAT MAKES AN EMAIL NEWSLETTER EFFECTIVE?

## 1) Established goals and metrics

You're not going to know what's working if you haven't decided what success looks like. What do you want from sending a newsletter? Answers could look like any of these or more, depending on your business goals:

- a. X% increased member attendance to classes or events
- b. Y% more referrals
- c. Z% increase in appointments or paid trials

## 2) Consistent frequency

Stick to what's realistic for your business and time. This could be a weekly, monthly, quarterly, or another frequency for your newsletter that works for you. The most important element of your newsletter frequency is to commit to it. Your readers will learn to expect your name in their inboxes. If you need to dial your frequency back, communicate your new frequency to your readers. Ghosting — or disappearing without notice — won't go over well.

## 3) Subject lines

Email inboxes are harsh, competitive places, like a gladiator arena for a reader's attention. Good subject lines get your foot in the door. They're not a guarantee for readership, but getting someone to open your email is the first necessary step for your newsletter to get read.



#### 4) Valuable content

Any disgruntled comments that you hear about newsletters most likely come from readers not feeling satisfied about what they receive. The ideal ratio is 90 percent educational content to 10 percent promotional content. You want to make readers feel like your newsletter has added to their day, not subtracted from it. Test different kinds of content to see what your readers respond to the most. And don't be afraid to ask for feedback.

#### 5) Niche audiences

Your email newsletter isn't for everyone, so don't try to appeal to everyone. Be decisive about for whom the content is important. Members? Leads who came in for a trial membership but didn't return? Segmenting email lists in an email marketing software makes it easy to send specific content to designated audiences.

#### 6) Make it personal

Newsletters are for building relationships and community. These two pieces are crucial foundational elements to a successful business in fitness. Using a conversational tone, versus a formal one, will help you connect with your audience.



# WHAT DO FITNESS BUSINESSES NEED TO PUT IN AN EMAIL NEWSLETTER?

Remember, it's always best to do more of what's effective, even if that means including less content in your newsletter. Avoid focusing on your writing ability (make sure to check spelling and punctuation, of course) and instead focus on what provides value to your audience.

## **1) Recent blog articles**

Distribution of your blog articles is important to drive traffic to your website. Again, part of why newsletters are effective is for that reason. Blog articles don't need to be unique all the time — you can repurpose content so long as it's relevant and valuable.

## **2) Member highlights**

Orangetheory Fitness is a larger-scale example of a business that emphasizes community through member spotlights in its newsletters. Because you're in an industry that thrives through strong relationships, spotlights are an easy way to strengthen the relationships you already have and to market your community to prospective members.

## **3) Current and upcoming events**

It's important to show your members and prospects that you have an active, thriving community at your business for retention and lead generation. When done well, you can ride the line between educational and promotional without sounding pushy. Make the event value-driven — not salesy.

#### **4) Engaging, relevant videos**

You don't need high-production videos to be successful or to reap their benefits. Videos continue to engage audiences, on average, more than other forms of content. The camera on your mobile phone is sufficient to record expert tips from you, quick breakdowns of proper form, or glimpses into how great your community is.

#### **5) Industry or community news**

Is something big happening in the world of fitness or in your community that would interest your readers? Write a short summary about the news, why it's important, and link to the original source.

#### **6) Social media and website links**

Encourage your readers to continue to see updates elsewhere on your social media profiles, blog, and website. Include phrases like, "Follow us on Facebook to see more". Link your social media buttons within your newsletter template to your social media pages.



# HOW TO CREATE AN EMAIL NEWSLETTER WITH EMAIL MARKETING SOFTWARE

## **1) Pick an email marketing software**

Choose an easy-to-use email marketing software like MailChimp or Constant Contact.

## **2) Choose an email template for your newsletter**

Choose a template that is appropriate for your audience. Make it clean. More elaborate designs don't make emails more effective.

## **3) Insert Content**

Have a couple consistent sections. It's okay to experiment with what content works best. Some email marketing platforms give you the ability to A/B test. A/B testing is when you test two different subject lines, call-to-action buttons/links, or content pieces to figure out what your readers like the most. It's a data-driven way to find out what your audience wants.

## **4) Choose a subject line**

Make it conversational and attention-grabbing. Attention spans in email inboxes run thin. Make your subject line count. Keep it under 40 characters.



# MAKING NEWSLETTERS A PART OF YOUR EMAIL MARKETING STRATEGY

Newsletters continue to be an important part of engaging your community and attracting non-members to join. As you're creating the best email newsletter strategy for your needs, remember these three key points:

- Create your newsletter for your specific audience. It's not your job to appeal to everyone.
- Valuable content drives member loyalty and new leads.
- Make email newsletters easy-to-design and professional-looking with email marketing software.

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