

# 3 Easy Ways to Spice Up Your Newsletter This Year

Who has time for a newsletter? If you want more sales and a more loyal audience, you need to find the time. The magic of newsletters is that they are a way to distribute your content on a regular basis straight to someone's email inbox or phone. It creates a privileged communication when you do it correctly. But when done poorly, it can feel like a boring monologue of self-promotion.

If you don't have a newsletter, it's time to start building a list of emails and creating a newsletter. Whether you've been a longtime newsletter publisher or one just starting, here are a few ideas to spice it up.



## A/B Testing

For good open rates on your newsletter, you must provide valuable information from the reader's perspective. To do this, you must get to know your reader. You'll want to know what kind of content they like, in what media they prefer to consume it, whether they respond to buttons or links to increase click-rates, and whether colors make a difference in driving action. All of these things can only be determined by testing, segmenting your audience, providing two different versions and then analyzing results.

It sounds like a lot of work, but it yields valuable information that will save you time in the future when you know exactly what they want and what they'll respond to.

## Images

Depending on your business, a newsletter doesn't have to remind you of your high school newspaper with lengthy articles. It can be mainly images—if that fits your business. For instance, if you're a retail store, flower shop, photographer, car dealership, or a host of other visual businesses, an impactful image with a punchy line can intrigue your audience.

If you're not sure if your audience prefers text or images, try some A/B testing or a social media vote on format. People enjoy being asked their opinion. And they'll likely open your newsletters if they feel they contributed to the new style.

## Decoder Rings

This past Christmas, I watched the iconic Christmas Story movie. In it, there's a scene about a young boy saving up proofs of purchase to order a secret decoder ring. He was lured in to doing so by the promise of being able to unlock a secret in his favorite radio serial.

While that turned out to be a bit of a bust, the marketing premise was smart. Customers do enjoy feeling like they are in a VIP relationship with you. They want to be part of a group and be in the know. Show them something in your newsletter that they can't get elsewhere such as special discounts, flash sales, new rollouts of products or services, or coupon codes.

But it doesn't have to be completely secret like the decoder ring in the movie. Instead, be clear that if people join your newsletter list, they will receive discounts or special invitations. That disclosure will often drive signups.

Never let an opportunity to connect with your target market slip by. Newsletters not only help you grow a loyal following, but they keep your business top of mind for recipients. Newsletters can be used whether you have a short or long sales cycle but—when done right—they're effective in keeping your customers and potential customers connected to your business and offerings.

*[Christina R. Metcalf](#) (formerly Green) is a marketer who enjoys using the power of story and refuses to believe meaningful copy can be written by bots. She helps chamber and small business professionals find the right words when they don't have the time or interest to do so. Christina hates exclamation points and loves road trips. Say hi on [Twitter](#) or reach out on [Facebook](#).*