Creating Newsletters

Developed by: Beth Gibbs
Steps in Organizing Newsletter

- Plan layout and content
- Write and format the copy
- Design the layout
- Add graphics
- Produce the newsletter
Introduction

- Keep in touch with parents
- Inform and educate
- Reinforce learning activities
- Publicize an organization
- Attract volunteers and members
- Boost donations
- Recruit new supporters
- Unify a community of readers
- Network with community leaders
Criteria for Effectiveness

- Targeted audience - Newsletters work best when created for people with a common interest.
- Targeted content - Newsletters are effective when the content is narrow in focus.
- Valuable information - Newsletters should provide readers with information they can use.
- Trustworthy - Readers want information from a source they can trust.
- Personal - Readers want to know who is created the newsletter and who wrote the articles.
What Readers Like:

- Interesting topics
- Short articles
- Attractive graphics
- Easy-to-skim designs
- Bulleted lists
- Clear organization
- Calendars
- Offers, benefits
What Readers Don’t Like:

- Intimidating pages
- Disorganized information
- Long, continuing articles
- Irrelevant content
- Impersonal tone
- Chaotic page design
- Too many pages
Purpose for Newsletters

- Marketing - intended to sell ideas, products, or services
- Public Relations - focus on attitudes instead of actions
- Internal Relations - give information about people, places and ideas that may already be familiar, and about upcoming events
- Profit - commercial newsletters that exist to make money for their publishers and editors. "Newsletters for profit usually reach individuals by mail."
Planning Newsletter

- Select a name for your newsletter
- Develop an outline of content
- List possible story themes
- Collect information
- Select the fonts you will use
Types of Content

- Many different types of content can be used in newsletters. You should create a list of the content you want to include in your newsletter.

- The number of articles and types of content that will be needed will vary. It will depend on the length of your newsletter and the length of individual articles.
Story Themes

- Ask the expert
- Awards
- School Board
- Computers
- Construction
- Cutting costs
- Departments services
- Drugs
- Emergencies
- Energy savings
- Ethics
- Evaluation
- Growth
- Health
- Legislation
- Neighbors
- New personnel
- New technology
- Organizations
- Profiles
- Resources
- Safety
- Scholarships
Typography

- Select a font (or typeface)
- Choose a font size
- Decide how much space to allow between lines of type
- Determine how much contrast to add between headlines and text
- Typography can be used to create personality and feeling on a page
- A typeface refers to an entire family of letters of a particular design
Principles of Typography

- Type size
- Weight
- Style
- Leading
- Alignment
- Color
Writing

- Objectives in Newsletter Writing
  - Clarity
  - Conciseness
  - Proper Image
  - Cost Efficiency
Five Steps for Effective Writing

- Consider your audience for the proper angle
- Anticipate special problems in your reader's reaction
- Outline your message functionally
- Develop the first draft
- Edit for content, grammar, clarity, conciseness, and style
Evaluate Readability

- Flesch Reading Ease Score
- Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Score
- To make text more readable (and decrease grade level scores)
- To make text more difficult to comprehend (and increase grade level scores)
Formatting Copy

- Typeface
- Type Size
- Leading
- Alignment
- Type Styles
- Paragraph Formatting
- Other Specifications for Body Copy
Type Size/Alignment

- 10 to 12 point type is normally used for text
- Make headlines and subhead significantly larger
- A decision must be made about whether to set type flush left/ragged right or justified.
- Alignment affects appearance and readability.
- Culturally, we are accustomed to seeing "serious" communications (newspapers, and magazines) set in justified type.
- Studies have shown that flush left/ragged right type is more readable
- More importantly, in flush left/ragged right copy, word spacing is tighter, leaving less white space between words and more white space at the ends of lines. The resulting larger areas of white space produce a stronger effect and greater impact as a design element.
Other Formatting

- Paragraph
- Column endings
- Sentence spacing
Designing Newsletter Layouts

- Decide on the newsletter size
- Choose an appropriate grid
  - Select a grid that is appropriate to your newsletter
  - Establish page margins
- Design the nameplate
  - Choose the right title and subtitle
  - Isolate important words
  - Choose the right type for the words
  - Carefully select a size and position
- Add reader cues
  - Headlines
  - Subheads
  - Pull-quotes
- Add visual images
- Evaluate for possible design problems and correct any that are found
Design Graphics

- Analyze the audience
- Consider the purpose of your message
- Establish goals
- Choose an appropriate format, grid and layout
- Select appropriate typefaces, type sizes, type styles, and spacing
- Add and manipulate graphics
- Organize text and graphics
- ProofreadRefine and fine-tune.
Creating Effective Layouts

Successful layouts have:

- Simplicity
- Structure
- Eye flow
- Proportion
- Spreads
Grids

- Two-column
- Three-column

Organizing Layouts - Good layouts are easy to follow and provide clear reader cues to help readers easily find their way through a publication, presentation, or web page.
Guidelines for Organizing Layouts:

- Use different sizes of type for different elements.
- Establish a hierarchy of type sizes
- Make the most important element you want your readers to see the largest
- Use rules (lines) to separate information into groups
- Use different weights of type.
- Use white space for design purposes in your publication
- Position important information in the upper left corner. The upper left corner is usually read first
- Place a box around important information
- Call attention to lists of items by placing bullets in front of them
- Use colored or reversed type (white type on a dark background) to separate or emphasize.
Capturing Readers’ Attention

- Enlarge a graphic or photo of something small
- Tilt an image or a block of type at an angle
- Surround a small element, such as a block of type or a graphic, with lots of white space
- Use bright colors for publications, presentations, or web sites that will be viewed in dark or gray environments
- Use a solid black area or a large white area in your design
- Crop an image in an unusual way
- Set important information in an atypical way, such as in a distinctive font.
Newsletter Nameplates

Typically nameplates include:

- Newsletter Name
- Subtitle
- Publication Information
  - Issue
  - Date
  - Volume (the year in the series--first year would be Volume 1)
  - Number (the number in the volume--the first of the year would be Number 1)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements to Consider with Nameplate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Typeface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Type Size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Type Style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Alignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Graphic Accents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Artwork-- logo or symbol associated with firm or group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Headlines

- Size
- Typeface
- Weight
- Style
- Case
- Alignment
- Spacing
- Shading color
- Backgrounds
- Graphic accents
Types of Visual Images

- Sidebars
- Charts and graphs
- Fast facts lists
- Bio boxes
- Lists (top ten, indexes, glossaries, etc.)
- Checklists
- Q and As

- Quizzes
- Surveys and Polls
- Tables
- Ratings
- Timelines
- Step-by-step guides
- Diagrams
- Maps
Graphics for Newsletters

- Graphic images
- Photos
- Scanned images
- Graphic accents
- Logos
- Infographics
Sources for Graphic Images

- Online Sources
- Software Clip Art/Image Galleries
- Graphics Software Programs
- Charts and Graphs from Other Software Programs
- Digital Cameras
- Scanners
- Clip Art CDs
- Screen Captures
- Character Fonts
Types of Graphics

- TIFF Files
- BMP Files
- JPRG Files
- Gif Files
- PNG Files
Photos

- Every photo should have a clean, clear center of interest. Photos should be easy to read and clearly focused.

- Every photo should look natural. Whenever possible shoot photos of real people doing real things, not looking stiff and unnatural.

- Every photo should have a cutline. A cutline is a label for a photo. Identify everything including faces, places, and activities.

- Every photo should have a border. Frame each photo with a small border. Plain, thin, 1-point rules (lines) are commonly used.

- Every photo should be relevant. All images should have a direct connection to the content of an article.

- Photos should provide information, not decoration.
Images From Scanners

- Keep the glass of the scanner clean
- Handle art and photographs carefully
- Use glossy photographs when possible
- Keep the top of the scanner down while scanning
- Avoid vibrations and motion while scanning
Graphic Accents

Accents include:

• Rules
• Boxes
• Screens
• Symbols
• Oversized Letters
Logos

Types

- Descriptive
- Abstract
- Typographic
Production

- Proofread and proofread again
- Ask someone else to proofread
- If you want to print your newsletter:
  - Select printing process
  - Select paper
  - Write printing specifications, if using a quick copy service or commercial printer and choose printer
- If you want to distribute your newsletter electronically, prepare it for distribution
- Distribute your newsletter
Proofreading

- Take your time. Don't be careless because of a deadline
- Make a list of individual features to check, then check those features throughout the newsletter. For example, go through once to check headlines, then again to check subheads, rules, borders, etc.
- Check all photos to make sure you have the right images in the right place.
- Check all captions to make sure photos are labeled properly.
- Boldly circle every mistake or anything else that looks wrong.
- Double-check any corrections you have previously made.
Electronic Distribution

Converting Commonly Used Software Files to PDF Format

1. Open the document that you want to convert to PDF format in the software where it was originally created (Word, Excel, etc.).

2. Choose File, then Print.

3. Click the small arrow beside Printer: Name and select Acrobat Distiller from the list of printers. Click Print or OK.

4. Acrobat Distiller should ask you to designate a location to save the .pdf file. If it does not, you may change Distiller preferences. (1) Specify the drive and/or folder. (2) Type in a file name. (3) Save the file.

5. Adobe Distiller converts the file to PDF format and adds the extension .pdf.
PDF Files

- Once a file has been converted to PDF format, it may be attached to e-mails or posted on a web page.
  - If you want to send it by e-mail, you might want to create an e-mail distribution list of those you want to receive the newsletter. You can easily use the distribution list any time you want to send a newsletter.

- To post a PDF file on a web site, just add a hyperlink that links to the PDF file. This is another very simple way to distribute a newsletter.