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## Write an e-newsletter that will keep supporters engaged and interested in reading more!

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### Writing a great e-newsletter

Newsletters are a great way of keeping in touch with your donors, volunteers and supporters.

They allow you to:

- Add personal touches that enhance relationships with stakeholders
- Celebrate milestones and key fund raising achievements
- Hook potential new donors through the power of referral
- Establish your expertise enhancing your brand credibility

**Electronic newsletters** (E-newsletters, e-wires, e-news) follow the same principle. Rather than traditional paper and ink, e- newsletters can be emailed to subscribers and downloaded from your website.

### But...

How do you compete with other charities to ensure your charity e-newsletter is opened?

Around 80% of charity emails remain unopened and only 3.5% click through to a given website.

### Tips on writing a fantastic e-newsletter

1. Be **interesting!** Are you telling your supporters what they want to hear or what you think they should hear? Captivate your audience and invite contributions and feedback

- connotation with plenty of pictures and images of real people that they can relate to
3. Have clear **objectives** for each issue. Are you looking for greater donations? New volunteers? Are you looking for supporters to sign a petition? Or are you looking to capture updated contact details?
  4. **Don't start with 'Welcome to our Newsletter'!** Readers already know it is a newsletter so use a captivating headline that will grab attention. For example "How your donation has helped buy a minibus"
  5. Keep the e-newsletter **subject line short** as they tend to get cut off in the email browser. Try to keep the subject personal as this will increase your chances of getting the e-newsletter opened
  6. Have a **clear call to action** right at the start so supporters don't have to read all the e-newsletter to understand what you want them to do. Have a donate button at the beginning with a link through to your [Localgiving.com page](#) where the supporter can find out more information before donating
  7. Don't send an e-newsletter to someone who hasn't subscribed and make it easy to unsubscribe. Subscribe to e-newsletters yourself to get an understanding of what does and doesn't work well
  8. Consider signing up to **mailing services** such as [mailchimp.com](#) or [charityemail.co.uk](#). You can select from a variety of e-newsletter templates and you can segment your supporters according to their audience group (a supporter from Langley is more likely to volunteer at an event in Slough than a volunteer from Reading), their interest in a particular service you offer or their level of engagement (someone who donates regularly is more likely to attend a charity dinner than someone who has donated £5.00 once)
  9. **Time** the e-newsletter right, not too frequently that it becomes information overload or too infrequently so supporters forget about you. Between 3-6 week intervals is about right
  10. Don't forget to **monitor** feedback and e-newsletter results. How many e-newsletters were sent, how many were opened, how many bounced\*, how many supporters clicked on a link. At the end of the year look at all the statistics and identify which

- Produced a greater click through rate (CTR)
- Generated the most unsubscribes?
- Engaged with which target audience the most?
- Motivated a greater number of online donations?

\*A **bounce rate** refers to the amount of emails that were not received by the recipient. **Hard bounces** are those which are returned undelivered by the recipients' mail server (for example due to an incorrect email address) and **soft bounces** are emails that have been accepted by the recipients' mail server but have subsequently been returned (for example due to the server being temporarily unavailable)

To find out more about how an e-newsletter can form part of your online marketing strategy please contact [Carol Strachan](#) – Donor Marketing Officer Slough CVS on 01753 524176.