

# NEWSLETTERS THAT TELL YOUR

# Story



OFFERED BY PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHURCHES

As churches seek to adjust to our changing world, written and electronic communications are only becoming more important. That monthly mailed newsletter might be the only connection some people have to their church community. It is precious and unique, a true blessing in the mailbox! On the other hand, emailed newsletters can easily get lost in the inbox overwhelm. Learn how to make sure your communications tell your story and God's story within your church community.



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 vibrant CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS

*Does your newsletter ever look like everyone just threw items in?*

**You're not alone.**

## WHAT IS YOUR PRIORITY?

### NAME WHAT MATTERS.

**By naming what matters, it helps you filter out what doesn't.**

1. **Connection** - the why + how of church life
2. **Information** - the who, what, when, where
3. **Formation** - teaching, sharing the faith

### PRIORITY: CONNECTION

#### Pros

- » Creates warm fuzzy feeling
- » Will hopefully lead to more engagement
- » Boosts knowledge of not only events, but people and ministries too

#### Cons

- » Takes longer to produce
- » People won't necessarily read it

### PRIORITY: INFORMATION

#### Pros

- » Brief and to the point.
- » Easy to skim for relevant details.

#### Cons

- » Easy to over-announce.
- » Doesn't engage the reader. Unless they're diligent, people can tune out.
- » Can look cluttered.

### PRIORITY: FORMATION

#### Pros

- » A way continue formation while distant.
- » Can be a lead-in for something bigger.
- » Can set up email series.

#### Cons

- » No two-way dialogue.
- » Takes a LOT of time to prepare.

# BOUNDARIES

- » **Due date**  
You have permission to not include items that are not turned in on time. Even if it makes people mad.
- » **Features**  
Such as pastor's corner, staff reports, calendar, worship information.
- » **Physical nature**  
A folded newsletter has a natural limit (8, 12, 16 pages).
- » **Rules**  
What's in and what's out based on your priority. The flip side is to know where things go if they're cut.
- » **Space**  
Assign space constraints to various sections.
- » **Length**  
Give individual contributors word amounts.

*Priority + Boundaries = A Plan*

# NEWSLETTER TYPES

1. **Magazine** - Used for connection and formation priorities.
2. **Upcoming Events** - Used for information priority.
3. **Hybrid** - Used for information and connection together, but be careful - it can look like the recycle bin at the beginning where everything is thrown in. Use your priorities and rules to give it shape.

# EMAILS

## WEEKLY EMAILS

- » What is your priority?
- » Set some boundaries.
- » Use a 3rd party service like MailChimp or Constant Contact.

## MONTHLY EMAILS

- » What is your priority?
- » Set some boundaries.
- » Repurpose the content in other places (blog, social media, etc.).
- » Think through how to reach those who aren't on email.

## HIGHLIGHT EMAILS

- » What is your priority?
- » What is the value it provides?
- » How often will you send it?
- » Think about email series.

# COMBINATIONS

## PRIORITY: CONNECTION

### Secondary Priority: Information

- » **Hybrid Newsletter** - Mailed and emailed monthly.
- » **Weekly Email** - Pastor's note and announcements.
- » **Highlight Email** - In depth articles.
- » **Blog + Social** - Stories of the congregation and community.

## PRIORITY: INFORMATION

### Secondary Priority: Connection

- » **Upcoming Events Newsletter** - Mailed and emailed monthly.
- » **Weekly Email** - Only announcements.
- » **Social** - Snapshots and upcoming events.

## PRIORITY: FORMATION

### Secondary Priority: Connection

- » **Magazine Newsletter** - Mailed and emailed periodically.
- » **Weekly Email** - Pastor's note and announcements.
- » **Highlight Email** - Email series.
- » **Blog + Social** - Curated content, content by ministry leaders (blog/video).

## *Bonus: Ministry Guides*

- » Comprehensive overview of what's happening at church.
- » Focuses on a specific period of time. Ex: fall, Advent, Lent, summer.
- » Reference tool for staff and congregation.
- » Primarily printed (digital is secondary).
- » Excellent to hand out to visitors.

## LINKS

Access all the newsletters referenced in the webinar at [vibrantchurchcommunications.com/newsletter-links](http://vibrantchurchcommunications.com/newsletter-links)