



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

BRANDING AND IDENTITY GUIDELINES

QUICK TIPS

E-Newsletters

E-Newsletters

STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

Keep it Brief. Keeping e-newsletters brief and concise will help readers navigate the content easily. It will allow the audience to see what content is included and engage with the areas they are most interested in. Clearly designate the clickable areas, through design and language, so the reader can navigate the content easily and accessibly.

Writing stories for a two-minute read is a good goal to keep in mind.

Sections and Subheads. Dividing the e-newsletter into distinct sections will help to organize the information and keep the reader engaged. Examples of sections may include longer features, Q&As, quick facts or events, to name a few. Keeping the contents scannable and applicable will boost engagement and allow more information to reach the readers. Consider having three sections that are consistent across all e-newsletters so that readers know what to expect and how to engage with the content.

Templates. Once the sections have been decided, creating a template will make each subsequent issue easier to put together. It will also give the reader some consistency of structure so they know what to expect and where to find certain information they may find interesting.

Facts and Trivia. Including short facts or interesting trivia is one way of engaging the reader in a fun way, while breaking up more story-driven content.

Variety of Content. Research and student success stories are great areas of focus for many schools and units but including some content that departs from achievement can be engaging as well. Connecting with audiences by showing the more personal side of faculty, staff and students can also be successful, including features on pets, hobbies and related glimpses into people's lives outside of the University. Infusing helpful tips, how-to's and content that helps people do their jobs and achieve their own successes can also be effective.

Visuals. Images and graphics are a great way to highlight key information and add visual interest to the e-newsletter. When using visuals, keep in mind that most email clients do not automatically display images, so it is best to keep important information in the text portions only. As a general guideline, use visuals to support content, not replace it.

Social Media. Sharing the e-newsletter on social media will help with exposure and will give more people an opportunity to sign up to receive the e-newsletter.

Send Again. When the e-newsletter is first sent out, check the metrics to see how many people opened it, then make note of those who did not open the email. You may consider sending the exact same e-newsletter again a couple of weeks later to just the people who did not open it the first time. Revising the subject line to mention something along the lines of, "Here's what you missed" will hopefully catch people's attention and provide an opportunity for more engagement.

Personalization. If the software you are using for your e-newsletter has a mail merge function, it will allow personalization of the emails. When someone receives something addressed to them—by name—it tends to draw their attention and engage on a more personal level.

E-Newsletters

MEASUREMENT AND METRICS

Open Rates and Click Rates. Most people look at open rates as a measure of success, but it is important to also consider how readers are interacting with the content through click rates and stay times.

Frequency. The frequency with which the e-newsletter is sent out will depend on the size of the content team, the audience, engagement and an array of other factors. This is best determined internally with each team to find the right balance based on analyzing metrics and feedback received.

Timing. Experiment with the timing of when the e-newsletter is sent. Different days and even different times of the day may work better than others. In general, sending late on a Friday afternoon will draw less engagement than other times throughout the week.

Managing Expectations. Having conversations with stakeholders ahead of the e-newsletter being sent is a good idea to set expectations for open rates, click rates and other trackable metrics. Although 20% sounds very low for an email open rate, it is seen as the average and is often considered quite good.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES AND TOOLS

Email Marketing

Constant Contact - E-newsletter software

iContact - E-newsletter software

Mailchimp - E-newsletter software

HubSpot - Customer relations management software

Hivebrite - Community engagement software

Art and Photo

University's PhotoShelter - Photos and videos

Office of University Development's PhotoShelter - Photos and videos

UNC Creative - Email template creation and graphic design

University's Visual Identity - Logos, textures, patterns, shapes, background photo treatments, photo frames and callout text templates

Pexels - Photos

Unsplash - Photos

Shutterstock - Photos, videos, illustrations, vectors, videos and audio

Canva - Design software

Snapseed - Photo editing app