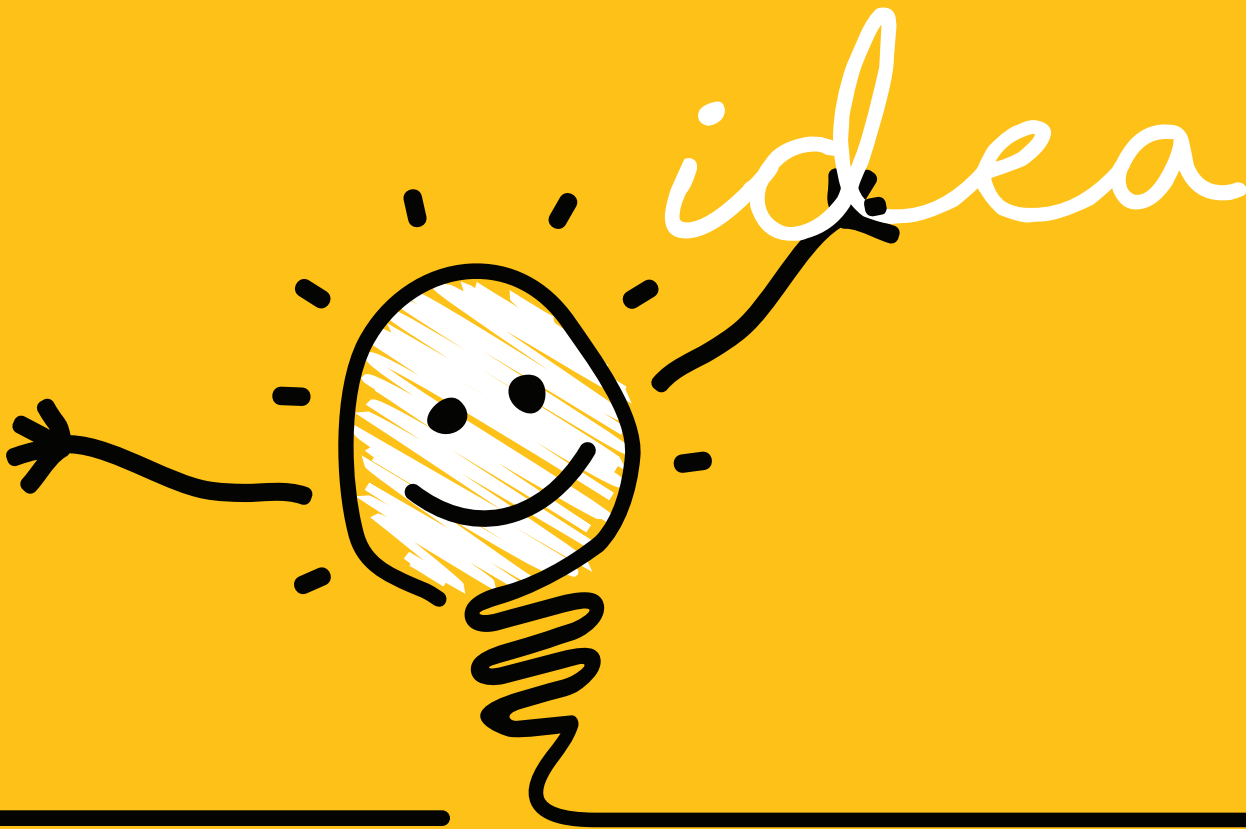


# PRINT MATTERS

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Behold the newsletter...

Would you call us crazy if we suggested you publish a newsletter in addition to a magazine? It may sound nuts at first, but please hear us out.

For starters, newsletters are THE hot thing right now in the world of media. Consider:

- The *New York Times*' morning newsletter has 17 million subscribers and had more than 1 billion unique opens in its first nine months;
- The *New York Times* and *The Washington Post* have 60 public newsletters each;
- *Forbes* recently had a massive expansion of paid newsletters;
- Twitter recently acquired Revue, a platform for creating newsletters; and
- Substack, another email platform, has 250,000 newsletter subscribers and its top 10 publishers collectively make \$7 million per year.

Granted, we aren't suggesting you'll see those sorts of numbers. But those numbers clearly indicate that readers respond very favorably to newsletters, even when they are already subscribers to a publication.

### Some good reasons

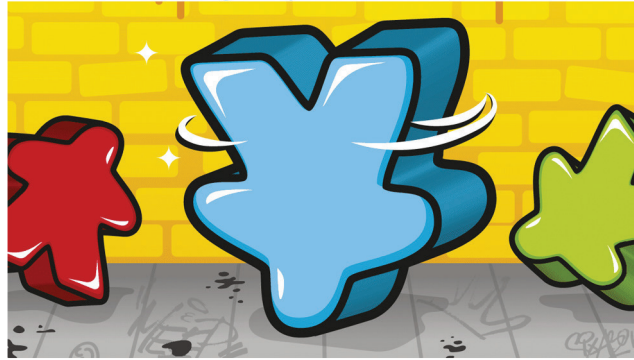
We think there are several excellent reasons you should produce a newsletter in addition to your publication. The most important of these is that it keeps your name in front of your reader, which is crucial if your magazine isn't monthly. If you are a quarterly, that's three whole months of silence between issues. When you have a small number of subscribers, each one is precious. The more you interact with them, the more likely they will be to renew their subscriptions when the time comes.

Email newsletters are also a great way to market your magazine. The quarterly magazine *Casual Game Insider (CGI)* serves as a good example of this. The print edition has 2,000 subscribers, but there are 5,500 subscribers for its free weekly email newsletter.

"Our newsletter is important for us to provide fresh content to our audience — both those who subscribe to our quarterly magazine and those who don't yet subscribe," said Editor-in-Chief Chris James. "It is crucial for us to be able to reach our readers directly for timely news, promotions, giveaways, etc. We provide a lot of free content via our blog and newsletter, and brand our magazine as premium content for those who want more in-depth articles and a more polished reading experience."

Email newsletters also serve to deepen the relationship you have

### [Bring Your Meeples to the Dance Floor in Real-Time Game Breakdancing Meeples](#)



The timer is ticking and you have sixty seconds to roll your meeples as fast as you can to complete dance routines and win the approval of the crowd.

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This is a small sample of what appears in *CGI's* free weekly email newsletters.

with your subscribers. You're providing additional content, and there's also an interactive component. It's just so much easier to respond by clicking on a link; you can conduct surveys or ask for input and readers can respond right away.

James cites another reason the *CGI* newsletter is a crucial tool for reaching his audience: the changed nature of social media. "Early on in our business, we focused on gathering as many social media contacts as possible," he explains. "However, organic

reach through social media became much more difficult as Facebook, for instance, started changing its algorithms to decide what posts were the most relevant to their users. Now, without highly unusual engagement on any given post, hardly any of our followers will see our content on social media unless we pay to boost a post."

### Some details...

It should also be noted that creating content for newsletters shouldn't be challenging, as the articles are much shorter than traditional features in print magazines. A good total word count would be 1,500 words; stories can be as short as 150-200 or as long as 400. But these are just guidelines; you will know what your readers would like to see.

In terms of format, you have to decide whether you want to just attach a PDF or send an HTML newsletter that appears within the body of the email. Both types can have links that readers can click on. The graphic designer who produces your magazine can create a PDF newsletter; there is a bit of a learning curve for creating an HTML newsletter. For a list of the advantages and disadvantages of each, please see the sidebar on Page 4.

If you're going to take on a newsletter, you should have a regular schedule for distribution, i.e. the first Friday of every month at noon. That way your readers will be looking for it, just like they anticipate your magazine.

Now that we've made our case, we're hoping you think we're a little less crazy. We're also really hoping you start a newsletter. Let us know if you do so we can share your story with others (you can reach us at: [tat25@comcast.net](mailto:tat25@comcast.net)). As always, we're rooting for your success.



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## Publisher's Corner

### PDF vs. HTML newsletters

*Editor's note:* This is a sidebar to the lead story.

If you're going to send out a newsletter via email, you'll have to decide whether you want to send a PDF or create an HTML newsletter. If possible, survey your readers to see which one they would prefer. Here is a list of the pluses and minuses of both approaches.

#### PDF

##### Advantages

- Easier to save, store and print.
- Easier to send — just attach and email.
- Always arrives looking beautiful — the formatting/fonts won't ever be distorted.
- Older folks prefer to read a PDF vs. navigate an HTML newsletter.

##### Disadvantages

- Attachments can be difficult for mobile readers.
- It creates a barrier to reading the newsletter; the recipient will have to make the effort to open the PDF. That said, PDFs are a good option when you know that your audience is actually interested in your newsletter and will want to open it.



#### HTML

##### Advantages

- Mobile-friendly.
- Quick to read. The content is right in the email and you can try to catch the recipient's attention with a bold graphic or headline.
- Trackable — you can track how many

people open the email, read different stories, etc.

##### Disadvantages

- Monthly cost of email newsletter service (Helpful link: [www.seedprod.com/best-email-newsletter-services](http://www.seedprod.com/best-email-newsletter-services).)
- More difficult to send — requires DIY formatting and layout.
- Content can be distorted on arrival, and sometimes the links don't work.
- Cannot be downloaded and saved or printed.