How to ensure your e-newsletter doesn’t end up in the trash

NEW YORK — E-newsletters can be an immensely valuable way for businesses to reach and engage with clients, so more and more Realtors are turning to the email marketing strategy. But with the inbox becoming increasingly crowded, how do you make sure your newsletters end up in front of eyes and not in the trash?

Molly McKinley

“You have to be careful, as a brand, that you don’t cross the borders and boundaries of spamming,” said Molly McKinley, the executive vice president of marketing for Relola and the host of a panel on email newsletters at Inman Connect New York. “Headlines matter, your subject line matters, content is important. Think about prioritizing content based on action and what’s most valuable to you.

“Think about why you’re sending this email before you hit the send button, and make sure when you’re editing that everything sort of looks and feels aligned with the reason you are sending it,” she added. “And if not, if you’re in doubt, then scrap it.”

Kenny Truong, senior sales associate at Climb Real Estate Group explained that brand continuity is one of the biggest reasons he’s built a successful weekly newsletter.

Photo courtesy of Kenny Truong, Fast Agent's Facebook Page

Each newsletter features a unique, themed header image — sometimes superhero themed for example — that Truong then copies into his Facebook header, and he shares it on Twitter, Google Plus and LinkedIn.

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Photo courtesy of Kenny Truong, Fast Agent's Facebook Page

"That same piece of content gets distributed on many different platforms," he said. "It's good brand recognition to constantly see it wherever they go, or any platform they're on."

Truong newsletter has grown to 15,000 subscribers with a 15 percent open rate. Each week it features six stories, an infographic and a .GIF to go along with the creative header.

Kenny Truong

Another piece of advice Truong offered: save links throughout the week. He estimates that he spends roughly six hours putting his newsletter together, but the task is made much less arduous by saving links he thinks are interesting that he comes across while browsing Facebook and other sites.

Madeline Hammer, the director of enterprise solutions at video and email marketing company BombBomb sends out a twice-monthly newsletter that reaches over 150,000 people with a 42 percent open rate when it's at its most successful. BombBomb also helps real estate professionals build their own newsletter. According to Hammer, many agents are just sending newsletters to their contacts list and don't even have a dedicated email newsletter list.

One of the keys to the list is its continuity. There are no more than six stories in the email and it always features a video, which makes sense since BombBomb is a video company. They always lead with the best or most provocative story in a straightforward manner, and that lead story is always the subject of the email.

"Our philosophy is: it's better to be clear than clever," Hammer said.

She said it's important to weigh the possibility of getting a click versus keeping that subscriber. A "clickbait" headline may draw them in, but it may not get them to engage with the newsletter.

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