

 digitaltools

THE KNIGHT SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AT QUEENS

EMAIL NEWSLETTERS WORKSHOP

Digital Media Workshops

Knight School of Communication

10.4.14

IMMEDIATE / TIME-SENSITIVE

EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

- Push information quickly to an online community.
- More pro-active than website (pull)

SMS TEXTING

- Push information immediately.
- Very rapid alerts
- What do neighbors need to know immediately?

EMAIL NEWSLETTER

Central Questions

What unites your audience? What do they need to know? What is useful to them?

Do they have email access?

Tips

- Distribute on a regular schedule. Quarterly?
- Ad hoc, single alerts are possible. Use discretion.
- Collaborate. Train multiple editors to ensure continuity.
- Design for sustainability. Simple is better.

Tools



Constant Contact	Emma	MailChimp
Waltham, Mass., 500k customers	Nashville, 40k customers	Atlanta, 8 million customers
\$12/mo up to 500 addresses	\$21/mo up to 1,000	Free up to 2,000
+ Established, widely used, coaching	+ Hip designs, mobile- optimized, support	+ Free, simple, widely used, support forums
- Oldest, most complex	- Priciest	- Basic designs
constantcontact.com	myemma.com	mailchimp.com

What is Mobile Optimized?

91% of adults own cellphones

56% of adults own smartphones

60% + use cellphones to go online

33% of US adults get news on mobile 1x weekly

-- *Pew Internet Research, October 2012, May 2013*



Setting Up an Email Newsletter

- **Email distribution list. Gather email addresses.**
- **Photographs (reader-submitted, editor-generated)**
- **Make it easy for contributors to participate**
- **“Stringers” -- street editors or block captains**
- **News Types: calendar, neighbor news, upcoming events, services (babysitting, housepainting, etc.)**

Sustainability

- **Simple logo, color treatment, template selection**
- **Choose an easy template**
- **At least two editors**
- **Short articles are easier to write and read**
- **Guest columns, school assignments by middle or high school students, police department**
- **Curation – abstract, synopsis, or pointers to on-line home maintenance, security, real estate info -- citing the source**

Free, Useful Tools for E-Newsletters

- **Skitch.com.** Screen grabs, enables selection of one portion of screen
- **Photo editing: Gimp, Picasa are free. Photoshop Elements 12 is about \$90. Watch for specials.**
- **Photos: stock & archive: Flickr [Creative Commons])**
- **Workflow for editors and contributors: Google Docs. (Also Dropbox or Skydrive).**

SMS / TEXTING NEWS SERVICE

Central Questions

What do neighbors need to know immediately?

Do they have cellphone text message access?

Tips

- Use rarely
- Organize group leaders
- This will be a pilot. All group texting apps are new, and all neighborhood application is new.

Setting Up a Text Alert System

-
For large groups, gets too noisy for groupwide messages from all members

Neighborhood Leader

Group Curators / Block Captains



+
Works well top-down

Neighbor

Neighbor

Neighbor

Tools



Celly	Google Voice	kik
Portland, Ore., 20k groups	Mountain View, Calif., gadzillion users	Waterloo, Ontario, 80 million users
Free	Free	Free
+ Created for non-profits, new \$1.4m angel investment	+ Google ecosystem	+ Large user base, your kids use it, opp to monitor, help from teens
- New, 2011	- 5 numbers at a time	- Your kids use it
cel.ly	google.com/voice	kik.com

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