

Who will reach your prospects first?

In the Web 2.0 world, do email newsletters really make an impact any more in business to business sales?

We took this question to our LinkedIn network (www.linkedin.com) of 2.9 million B2B sales and marketing experts in October. Receiving over two dozen high level responses from heads of marketing firms, social media experts, internet consultants and heads of business development, a collection of **best practices resulted** which organizations can consider as they evaluate their communication strategies.

Excerpts from some of the top responses follow.

For more information, contact each respondent via LinkedIn.

Kathryn Neal Odell <http://www.linkedin.com/in/kathrynodell>

Email Newsletters vs. Blogs

- Blogs are more ‘of the moment’ and create a sense of transparency, help build trust, and foster a sense of relationship, but important to remember not everyone in your prospect universe or customer base is sufficiently engaged to come to your site; so leveraging that content, then repurposing as an email newsletter may be most efficient – and sometimes only – way you’ll connect with some segments. *Carol Lynn Martens* <http://www.linkedin.com/in/clcmartens>
- By all accounts email marketing is by far the highest ROI channel that marketing has available. That said, there is an opportunity to couple your email marketing with a blog or a microsite that contains the newsletter topics, subjects and articles. *Kim Albee* <http://www.linkedin.com/in/kimalbee>

Content

- Have most of the content written by real experts, not marketing. It's more authentic, even though they probably need coaching on how to write succinctly. When creating content, think of your readers' workflow. What are they doing that's important to them, and how does your information make their world a better place? Arrange and format the information, so it's easily usable from their workflow. *Christopher Rollyson* <http://www.linkedin.com/in/csrollyson>

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Content *Continued*

- It really depends on your target audience. Many people are just learning about blogs and RSS. Some have issues with Web 2.0 usability, especially those who are visually impaired. A happy medium is to have your newsletter be an aggregation of content posted on your Web site, blog, other Web sites, etc. Content is not "locked" in the newsletter, and is searchable on the Internet. [Mike Maddaloni](http://www.linkedin.com/in/mikemaddaloni) <http://www.linkedin.com/in/mikemaddaloni>

Technology Impact

- There are a lot of great perspective here. However, if your client is just starting to experiment with the idea of an email newsletter I advise them to take a step back and look 6 to 8 months into the future so they could put a solid communication + technology strategy in place. My company is going through this 2.0 evolution as are trying to consolidate our blog, email newsletters, a 1.0 website, video channel, traditional print communications as well as our accounting and reporting process. Not knowing what type of business it is, the end customer or there existing infrastructure I would advise them to consider a long term plan for a Web 2.0 model because trying to transition from 1.0 to 2.0 is a lot of work. Not to mention confusion for the end-user/customer. [Patrick Smith](http://www.linkedin.com/pub/1/919/261) <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/1/919/261>

Subject Line Messaging

- Creative messaging in the subject line is the recipe for success. Drive the correspondence in a provocative way to make sure the target market reader will want to open and take advantage of an opportunity to help their business thrive with promotions, new solutions to become heroes within their organization or just have some fun, make customers evangelists for the brand. Be willing to share success stories and ideas to grow their business. [Kirk Cleveland](http://www.linkedin.com/pub/7/477/62a) <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/7/477/62a>

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