

Session Objectives

- **Explain** the pros and cons of eNewsletters.
- **Demonstrate** how to use online resources to successfully generate a quality eNewsletter.
- **Guide** participants through the creation of their own sample eNewsletter.
- **Enable** participants to leave the training ready to create higher quality eNewsletters.

Session Length: 55 Minutes

Appendix Resources

- Sample eNewsletter

Required Materials

- Class laptops or computers with Internet access
- Laptop and projector
- White board, flip chart, or digital display to list responses

Trainer Preparation

This Session assumes that the participants have basic general skills in writing and the presentation of ideas and content in written narrative. If computers are not used by the participants, generally good handwriting skills will be necessary.



Session Narrative

Introduction

3 Minutes

Trainer Tip: Before having participants introduce themselves, ensure everyone has the required materials.

With more and more Arrowmen carrying smart phones it is becoming easier to get information in the hands of our members. What are some ways to connect with Arrowmen digitally? *Solicit responses from the audience.* Some examples include:

- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Tumblr are used by the OA nationally)
- Texting (Mass texting services like Remind101)
- Website
- Email Newsletters

Today we will be discussing and the pros and cons of using eNewsletters as opposed to printed versions, examining what content to put into these publications, and designing a mock eNews campaign for your lodge, chapter, or troop. By knowing the best way to communicate with your group and distributing relevant content in an easy to digest format we can better inform our Arrowmen and strengthen the OA.

Printed Versus Digital Publications

5 Minutes

Both printed and digital publications have their place, but which style is best for your group and why? To delve deeper into the why, let's discuss the pros and cons of printed and digital publications.

Trainer Instructions: Solicit responses and write them on a board in a visible part of the class. Aim to include some of the examples below. Add them if necessary.

Digital Publications:

Pros

- Inexpensive
- Ease of access (might view on phone)
- Easy to layout and format
- Can integrate social media
- Wide reach (can be sent to parents and Arrowmen)

Cons

- Can easily be ignored
- Might not be delivered well (i.e. marked as spam)



Pros

- Prompts better recall
- Does not rely on internet access

Cons

- Expensive
- Environmentally unfriendly

Printed publications have their strengths, but today we will be discussing digital newsletters.

Choosing Relevant Content

7 Minutes

It is important to have information in your publication that is relatable and useful. If the content of your group's publications is relevant to the audience, they will become dedicated readers and open your future eNewsletters. If the content is not relevant, you risk making the readers bored and disinterested, thus causing them to quit opening your newsletters and obtaining the information in them.

On the national level, the OA has found the articles that get the most reads are ones that offer best practices for lodges, chapters, and troops. These are stories of other groups creating and successfully implementing innovative programs. What are some other types of articles that you can include in your publications and to whom would they appeal?

Trainer Instructions: Write down response and add these recommendations if necessary.

- Promotional – promote upcoming events (appeals to parents and Arrowmen)
- Updates – letters from officers/chairmen (appeals to Arrowmen)
- Reports – summaries from past events (appeals to Arrowmen)
- Historical – explain some historical aspect of OA (appeals to some Arrowmen)
- Interview – asking a prominent person questions (appeals to Arrowmen)
- Profile – gives the story of a prominent person (appeals to Arrowmen)
- Best practices (appeals to leadership, chapter and/or unit)

By filling your publication with substantive, relevant, content you can create long-time readers of your newsletters. Thus, it is important to ensure that articles are well written and have a central message that appeals to your target audience.



Trainer Instructions: In this section the trainer will first walk through the process of creating a newsletter while explaining the elements involved. The participants will then create their own Campaign Monitor accounts and design their own newsletter. While the participants are working on their publications the trainer will circulate around and answer any questions/give feedback. If the trainer is more familiar with another eNewsletter program, such as Mail Chimp, they should feel free to tailor this segment to that program. Keep an open mind about programs suggested by participants, as they may also be useful. One size may not fit all.

1. *Go to Campaign Monitor and sign up for a free account to log into prior to the session.*

To create our eNewsletter drafts, we will be using Campaign Monitor. This is the software used to send the OA's eNews updates on the national level. You might receive the *Lodge Ledger*, *Section Sentinel*, or *OA Today*, in your inboxes every few weeks. I will first walk through creating a campaign, explaining the elements that go into it, then you will get to create your own newsletter for your troop, chapter, lodge, or other group.

2. *Select campaigns tab in the upper left corner. Then click 'create a new campaign' on the right side of the screen.*

The first step is to name your campaign, write the subject line of the message, and add a reply-to email address. You want to make sure that your subject line encourages members to open the message. This may come in for of a call to actions i.e. *Sign up for spring fellowship today!* You should create a generic reply-to email address. This will allow multiple people to view the replies and be more professional.

Next you want to choose a template, if you have already created a campaign, you can use a previously chosen template. It is important to choose a design and stick with it. Do not use a new template for every publication so as to not confuse your readers. Redesigns are a good thing in moderations, perhaps consider updating your publication's design annually.

3. *Click 'next' at the bottom of the page to continue to the template selection. Then click 'featured' under create new on the left side of the page. Select any template to explain the elements of the campaign.*

Beginning at the top of the campaign, you can add your group's logo from a file on your computer.

4. *Add 'logo' file from the resources folder.*

Next you can edit text or add more text boxes. You can also add links into the articles.

5. *Insert a new text box and add the content from 'sample article' file in the resources folder. Be sure to highlight the title and put it in a heading font. Then highlight the text where the link goes and create a link to the national OA website (oa-bsa.org)*

You can also add images to your newsletters. This creates a more engaging experience for the reader. It is recommended to try to have an image for most, if not all of the articles.



6. *Delete the sample picture included in the template and add the 'sample photo' file from the resources folder.*

You can add in spacers or dividers to create separation between the different elements in your campaign.

7. *Add in a spacer and a divider between the sample article and sample picture.*

The final feature that we will discuss are buttons. There can be put in with links to direct people to sign up forms. They stand out more than links in the article text, so they are great for linking to event registrations and other important webpages.

At the end, in the footer, you will notice a section to put in your group's address and a reason why people are receiving the email. Be sure to include these important pieces of information. We will now look at customizing your campaign. This includes changing the font colors, background colors, and font type.

8. *Click the customize tab at the top of the side bar. Then click colors and fonts at the bottom of the menu.*

When choosing the font and background colors, you want to make sure that they do not clash. It is also important to remember to keep the font easy to read on the background in color and style.

9. *Click the 'preview' button in the upper right corner.*

Once you are happy with your design you need to see how it will look to your readers. Campaign Monitor gives you the ability to preview the desktop and mobile versions of your newsletter side-by-side. If you are happy with how the publication looks, you now need to select who to send it to.

10. *Click the 'define recipients' button.*

You can then upload a list of lodge, chapter, or troop members. There are also ways to create a plug-in for your groups website so that people can opt themselves into the subscriber list.

11. *Choose the 'sample' list and continue on to the next page.*

This page gives you the chance to review all the information in your campaign and send a test email. It is a good idea to send a test to several members of your leadership team to get their approval before send and have them see if they notice any problems with the email in the client they are using. If it looks good, you can send the campaign or schedule it to go out later. Most email blasts get the highest open rates mid-day on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. This may be true for your group, but you may also want to experiment and see if other days or times of the day get you high open rates.

12. *Click to send the campaign, then choose the campaign report.*

This page allows you to see who opened the campaign and who click links as well as percentages of the overall subscribers that have done so. Campaign Monitor offers several pricing plans to fit the





eNewsletters

How To

number of people you are sending emails to and the frequency that you send them. While there is some cost associated with email marketing, it is a lot more cost effective than mailing printed publications. Does anyone have any questions before we move into the breakout where you get to design your own newsletters?

Designing your own newsletter

18 Minutes

For this breakout you might have to pair up with someone who has a laptop. The first step is to go to campaignmonitor.com and sign up for a free account. Then you can start designing your own publication following the process that I just went through. I will be circulating around the room, please feel free to stop me if you have any questions.

Conclusion

2 Minutes

By creating eNewsletters with good, relevant, content, you can better inform and engage members of your lodge, chapter, troop, or other group. This will help them become more involved, helping your group grow and succeed. You should feel empowered to create a well-designed email newsletter campaign after today's session and I implore you to reach out to me for assistance if you come across any problems involving what we discussed today.

Thank you for your time!

