2015

Can you spare 2 hours? Target your audience with customized e-news

Bettina Peacemaker  
*Virginia Commonwealth University*, bjpeacemaker@vcu.edu

Patricia D. Sobczak  
*Virginia Commonwealth University*

Martha Roseberry  
*Virginia Commonwealth University*

Sue Robinson  
*Virginia Commonwealth University*

Follow this and additional works at: [http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/libraries_present](http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/libraries_present)

Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/libraries_present), and the [Public Relations and Advertising Commons](http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/libraries_present)

Downloaded from  
[http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/libraries_present/47](http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/libraries_present/47)
Target Your Audience with Custom E-News

Outreach to faculty is an ongoing challenge at Virginia Commonwealth University. Starting in the 2014-15 academic year, Academic Outreach librarians partnered with the Communications and Public Relations office to pilot a system of streamlined, customized e-newsletters. Using a scalable template on an affordable email management platform allows liaisons to reach faculty with pointed, subject-based information.

Pilot a Success

- Eight subject-based newsletters over three semesters
- Built strong lists with very few "unsubscribes"
- Most response (clicks) to feature stories
- Average open rate (48 percent) is above industry average
- Five percent click through rate, but content is skimmable, so clicks may not be best measure of impact
- Process streamlined into a three step process to maximize efficiency

Future Plans

- More liaison areas and broader themes like Scholarly Communications
- More interaction with more built in feedback and calls to action

E-News in Three Steps

First → Plan
- Choose publication date
- Outline content
- Share with PR
- Update your email list

Second → Write
- Find existing copy (from news, events, etc)
- Write/research/prepare copy
- Follow library style standards
- Review and revise

Third → Publish
- Input copy into template
- Test and share
- Get final approval from department head(s)
- Publish
- Review analytics

Tips for e-newsletters

- Create a simple template with imagery for visual appeal. Standardize design for scalability and efficiency--and also a consistent identity.
- Think about your audience. Review analytics and consider what your faculty need to plan ongoing content.
- Write stories with succinct language and consistent tone. Use a "less is more" approach with links to details, articles, guides, forms, or other "calls to action."
- Coordinate with colleagues for content that is intentionally and strategically developed to work across platforms--collections blog, website features, and social media.
- Educate audiences about resources or services that matter to their research, learning, and scholarship.