



DIFFERENCE VEHICLES OF COMMUNICATION STRATA COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Series: Effective Communication is the most important issue for lot owners **Part 5 of 12: Different Vehicles of communication—Strata Community Newsletter**

Strata newsletters are a valuable and important way to communicate with owners corporations. Newsletters are distributed through various mediums – mail, email, intranet or websites. Each method has its pros and cons (cost, ease of distribution, etc) which should be carefully considered. To be most effective the newsletter should be written by a member of the community, i.e. an owner. Here are some tips that will help those who choose to build their community in this way.

Tips for a Successful Newsletter:

- **Be positive** – A newsletter that is really about the things you can't do is not fun to read.
- **Legality** – If the newsletter states that it is the official communication of the company, check the content carefully. If only a specific article is intended to be an official communication, the article should be clearly identified as such. If advertising appears, include a statement that disclaims company responsibility for the goods and services advertised. Think about the minimum level of verification required before publishing.
- **Establish a clear purpose** – Is the goal of the strata newsletter to inform? To provide official notices to owners? Establishing these ground rules will ultimately make your job easier.
- **Make sure news is timely** – People want to know about events when they happen. Make sure the information you print is timely. If your newsletter's content is considered "old news", people may not read it.
- **Use informative headings** – A heading should accurately describe the content of the article or section that follows.
- **Use action verbs** – Write, "The contract specifies that work will begin by May 1st." Instead of "The specification in the contract is that work will begin by May 1st."



COMMITTEE MEMBER EDUCATION NETWORK

- **Use short sentences** – This makes it easier for the reader to grasp ideas and concepts.
- **Masthead** – Always use an easily recognisable one.
- **White space** – Remember to use margins around text. White space sets off important information and tells readers where different parts begin and end.
- **Type** – Try not to use more than two different fonts at a time and avoid extensive use of capital letters.
- **Graphics** – Use as a way to signal the type of article presented. Use standard graphics for standard information or articles. Too many graphics or inappropriate ones will distract from your content.
- **Paper** – Avoid flimsy paper that may not hold up and avoid fancy paper that may distract from content or be considered inappropriate or extravagant by recipients.
- **Use of pictures** – People like to see some pictures.
- **Size** – Use A4 paper. It is the easiest to hold, store, post and produce on a printer or copier.
- **Colour** – Use a neutral or soft colour as they are easiest on the eyes.
- **Length of a line** – Use no more than 50-70 characters per line for ease of scanning.
- **Spacing between lines** – Be consistent in your spacing within a paragraph, between paragraphs, and between articles.
- **Boxes** – Box information to emphasise or draw attention to it. Don't overuse it.
- **Layout** – Avoid the cluttered or busy look to a page. This makes it harder to locate and read information.
- **Don't be too ambitious** – The world is littered with newsletters volumes 1 & 2 but not many issues beyond that. If you are going to start a newsletter make sure you are committed to a reasonable duration and then evaluate its effectiveness after that period.

Next week: Different Vehicles of Communication - Email