
12 Easy-to-Create One-Page Newsletter Ideas

Topic ideas for a year's worth of monthly One-Page Newsletters, including examples, options, and hints for finishing each issue



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The success of your One-Page Newsletter program will be determined by the topics you choose for the first twelve issues and how efficiently you work.

Below are 12 tried-and-proven, certain-to-please topics plus a guide to completing each issue as quickly as possible.

As you review the examples, notice how—once you have identified the type of list best suited to your marketing goals—the keywords often will just come to you, providing the framework needed to complete the topic.

If you work at night, like I often do, you may have trouble turning off your “idea machine” when you go to sleep. Review the list before you go to sleep, and you’ll probably wake up with a desired topic just about written! Driving is another occasion where some of your best ideas will occur to you.

Biggest mistakes

Take a look at your prospects, your clients, and your competitors. What are the 10 biggest mistakes you see being made over and over again?

One of the best ways to kick-off your One-Page Newsletter program is to create an issue describing the 10 biggest mistakes first-time buyers make when purchasing your type of product or service.

A compilation of frequently encountered mistakes forms the basis of a very powerful, very easy to complete issue. The issue will be welcome by virtually every reader—because they want to make sure they’re not making one of the mistakes.

This approach makes it easy to educate your market and prove the need for your competence in a lighthearted, entertaining way. The consequences of the mistakes can be used to emphasize the need for your services. Here are some examples, along with the type of firm likely to use the title:

- **The 10 Biggest Mistakes of First-Time Authors**, (writing coach or literary agent)
 - **The 10 Biggest Mistakes of Trade Show Exhibitors**, (trade show consultants, event planners, trade show hospitality firms)
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- **The 10 Biggest Mistakes Made by Business Start-ups**, (banks, business consultants, Certified Public Accountants, colleges offering executive training)
- **The 10 Most Common Mistakes Presenters Make**, (presentation trainer, software publisher selling PowerPoint templates, or firms selling video training or video LCD projector)
- **10 Misconceptions about Back Care**, (chiropractors, alternative healthcare providers)

This is one of the easiest topics to prepare. Once you come up with the list of the 10 biggest mistakes, it will take just a few minutes to write a few short sentences describing each mistake, its consequence, and how to avoid it.

Case study

This topic is so popular that—once you create a newsletter around it, others may approach you about reprint rights.

One afternoon, I sent copies of my *Published & Profitable* newsletter describing the *Ten Biggest Mistakes of First-Time Authors* to various writer's publications. *Within an hour*, I had received two requests to reprint my topic in newsletters published by writer's groups. Both agreed, of course, to include my biography and contact information, with the article.

Another option

Indeed, one group decided to run my topic *one point at a time* in their monthly newsletter, providing me with a *year's worth of visibility* in their newsletter without *requiring any additional work* on my part!

2. Checklists

Another helpful and easy-to-complete topic involves showing your customers and prospects how to evaluate their own work. Simply provide checklists that remind them of the points they should check—and recheck—before completing their project.

Airline pilots rely heavily on checklists; your customers and prospects will appreciate checklists tailored to the tasks they perform.

Ask yourself: *"What should my customers and prospects pay attention to—and what are the consequences if they don't?"* Possible checklist topics include:

- **10 Things to Check before Leaving for Vacation**, (insurance agents)
- **10 Important Proofreading Tips**, (freelance editors, writing coaches, corporate trainers)

- **10 Ways to Pre-Flight Your Next Project**, (commercial printers, graphic designers)
- **10 Deductions that Invite Increased Scrutiny of Tax Returns**, (accountants, CPAs, etc.)

3. Trends

What external forces are effecting your field? "External forces" refers to changes in the economy, government regulations, demographics, popular culture, religious attitudes, international trade, global warming, or overseas health care problems.

What are the **latest developments** in your field? More important, What are the resulting **threats** or **opportunities** facing your clients and prospects?

Trend-oriented topics include:

- **6 Possible Results of Rising Interest Rates**, (financial advisors, Realtors)
- **8 Ways Changing Medicaid Reimbursement Legislation Effects Prescription Costs**, (healthcare providers, insurance agents, retirement planners)
- **What Do Drops In the Prime Rate Mean for Home Owners?**, (mortgage brokers, financial advisors, Realtors)

10 Ways Global Warming Affects Your Garden, (lawn and garden supply retailers, landscape architects)

Option

Trend topics may ideal once-a-year newsletter topics. Each January or February, for example, you can summarize the important trends that occurred the previous year.

Indeed, you can follow-up your yearly "trends" topic with a "predictions for the coming year" topic.

When you offer topics like trends or predictions, your market will soon begin to think of you as their "inside man."

4. Procedures

This topic involves describing the *sequence of steps* necessary to achieve a desired goal. Examples include:

- **6 Steps to Permanent Weight Loss**, (family and health care providers, personal trainers, health clubs, nutritionists)

- **8 Ways to Reactivate Lost Clients**, (marketing coaches and consultants, direct marketing firms)
- **4 Steps to Web Site Success**, (Internet marketing consultants, web designers, copywriters)
- **8 Steps to Better Pictures with your Digital Camera**, (photography retailers, photography refinishers, PhotoShop trainers)

Option

This topic not only works well by itself, but can also *provide an **outline*** for the **next few issues** of your newsletter.

The first issue of Espresso Dave's *Trade Show Marketing* newsletter, for example, was organized around a four-step program for attracting qualified trade show visitors.

Then, *each of the following four issues* was devoted to one of the four steps, i.e. planning, creating a "draw," promotion, and follow-up. In this way, a single topic, (i.e., "Four Steps to Success"), actually took care of developing the content for five newsletters in all!

5. Questions to ask

One of the easiest ways to assist your clients and prospects is to help them make *intelligent buying decisions*. Often, buyers default to price as a standard of comparison between options because they *do not know what else to look for, or how to evaluate* quality and value.

New prospects are entering your field each day. A "Questions to ask" topic indicates to them that you're interested in helping them make the right choice. Options include:

- **6 Questions to Ask When Refinancing Your Home**, (accountants, banks, Realtors, mortgage brokers)
- **8 Questions to Ask when Installing a Home Theater System**, (architect, audio/video installation specialists)
- **10 Questions to Ask before Starting Your Own Business**, (accountants, financial advisors, marketing coaches and consultants)
- **8 Questions to Ask before Starting Relationship Counseling**, (mental health professionals)

6. Terms

Another very easy One-Page Newsletter topic is a list clarifying the meaning of the words used in your industry. *What are the most important words your customers and prospects must be familiar with?*

Or—put another way—what are the *newest, most misused, or often misunderstood* words your market should know about?

Both prospects new to your field and experienced clients welcome glossaries. Examples include:

- **10 Contract Terms to Review Before Refinancing**, (Realtors, mortgage brokers)
- **8 Important E-Commerce Terms**, (web hosts, web designers, Internet marketing consultants)
- **12 Diet and Exercise Terms**, (health clubs, personal trainers)
- **6 Often Misunderstood Terms Relating to Cholesterol**, (health care providers, pharmacies)

Options

After creating a glossary of the basic terms in your field, you can return to the topic in later months and create *specialized glossaries* for words associated with specific tasks or goals associated with your field.

For example, I started out with a glossary of desktop publishing words. I then created separate glossaries for words associated with *printing, typography, color, visuals, page layout, and web sites*.

The web site glossary, itself, later became subdivided into separate lists for *web page design, e-commerce, and e-mail marketing*.

Glossaries make ideal web site registration incentives. These often rank high in search engine rankings.

Yearly updates

Trends is another topic that can be updated each year, as new technologies and social or economic forces effect your market.

7. Tips and techniques

Ask yourself these questions:

What *procedures or techniques* can you recommend to your clients and prospects?

What *shortcuts* have you developed that can save your clients and prospects time or money?

Have you discovered any *little-known workarounds* that can help your clients and prospects overcome a software program's limitations?

In today's hectic environment, everyone has to work as efficiently as possible. If you can help your market save time, it will reward you with respect and patronage. Even if they don't do the work themselves, this One-Page Newsletter topic *proves* that you know how to work as efficiently and productively as possible. Possible topics:

- **6 Safeguards to Protect Your Computer Against Viruses**, (software consultants)
- **10 Ways to Keep Your E-mail from Being Confused with Spam**, (Internet marketing consultants, copywriters)
- **6 Suggestions to Protect Your Heirs From Prolonged Probate Costs and Delays**, (attorneys)
- **8 Winter Driving Tips**, (automobile dealers, service stations, tire retailers)
- **10 Keys to Home Theater Speaker Set-Up**, (custom home theater installation specialists)

8. Symptoms

What *warnings* or *signals* can you teach your clients and prospects to watch out for? What are the **signs** that appear before something happens?

More important, what **steps** can your clients and prospects take to either **avoid negative consequences** or *take maximum advantage of positive situations*? These topics can be very popular. Best of all, you're probably so familiar with the consequences that you can probably prepare this topic in less than an hour! Examples include:

- **6 Signs of Impending Cash Flow Problems**, (accountants)
- **5 Warning Signs of Impending Client Defections**, (marketing coaches or consultants)
- **8 Signs of Job Burnout**, (life/work coaches, mental health professionals)
- **10 Indications It's Time to Look for Another Job**, (executive recruiters)

9. Bibliographies

One of the easiest ways to project an image of knowledge and credibility is to *identify and recommend* the best **books and/or the most useful web sites** in your field.

An *annotated list* implies that you have read the books, visited the web sites, or reviewed the various product and service offerings in your field. It shows you know enough about your field to make intelligent comments and recommendations.

One of my most popular newsletters was titled, *10 Business Books Every Entrepreneur Should Own*. An earlier topic was, *10 Important Books Dealing with Type*. Here are some more examples:

- **10 Important Web Sites for Competitive Research**, (marketing consultants)
- **6 Best Books for Parents of Children Who Stutter**, (speech therapists)
- **12 Best Health Care Newsletters**, (family practitioners)
- **8 Best Sites for Information about the Weather**, (agricultural supply retailer, farm equipment dealer)
- **10 Best Sites for Researching a Winter Vacation in Europe**, (travel agents, cruise brokers)

10. Qualifications

What does your market need to achieve its goals? Qualifications can take many forms, i.e. *attitudes, budget resources, experience, knowledge, tools, or training*. Here are some variations on the “qualifications” idea:

- **4 Skills Needed to Redecorate Your Home**, (architect, home remodeling specialist, building supply retailer)
- **6 Attitudes Needed to Lose 25 Pounds**, (healthcare professional, nutritionists, health and fitness coaches, personal trainers)
- **10 Tools Needed to Remove Branches Overhanging Roofs and Patios**, (tree surgeons)
- **8 Accessories Needed for Winter Mountain Climbing**, (outdoor guides, recreational outfitters)

11. Accessories and upgrades

Because they are not informed about all possible options, many customers and clients don't purchase a *complete solution* to their problem. Because the seller has not fully described all available options—perhaps out of fear of over-selling the prospect—the prospect makes an incomplete purchase.

One of the ways to avoid that is to describe—in general—step-up options and the advantages they offer. The goal is *not* to describe *specific products*,

i.e. make and model numbers prices, but categories of available products or services and the benefits they offer. For example:

- **10 Ways to Get The Most Out of Your Camera**, (photo retailer)
- **8 Accessories for Safe Ocean Kayaking**, (outdoor recreational outfitters, sporting goods stores)
- **6 Ways to Protect Your Financial Assets**, (accountant, CPA, financial advisor)
- **5 Ways to Keep Your Automobile Showroom Fresh**, (automobile dealers, insurance agents, after-market accessory retailers)
- **12 Ways to Display and Protect Your Prized Photographs**, (professional photographers, photo retailers, photo finishers)

12. Strategies

Strategies outline recommended courses of action for handling specific types of situations. Strategies reduce your client and prospect's fear of the unknown and, simultaneously, give you an opportunity to promote your competence and range of products and services offered. Strategies differ from procedures in that the goal of a strategy is usually more specific. For example:

- **10 Strategies for Boosting Your Child's SAT Scores**, (college entrance coach, private tutors)
- **8 Strategies for Halting Premature Hair Loss**, (hair restoration specialists, hair salons)
- **12 Ways to Reduce Marketing Costs**, (business coaches, accountants, marketing consultants)
- **6 Low-cost Ways to Increase the Value of Your Home**, (Realtors, architects, interior decorators, landscape services, residential remodeling firms)

Bonus topic—Questions and Answers

Here's a topic that you can either use to start the second year of publishing your One-Page Newsletter or use as a replacement for one of the earlier topics.

This is a fun topic, one that encourages you to listen carefully to your clients and prospects during the course of your everyday business. It also tightens the bonds with your market by getting them involved. Simply invite your clients and prospects to submit questions about topics they are concerned about.

- **Questions and Answers about Keeping Fit While Traveling**, (personal trainers, healthcare providers)
- **Questions and Answers about Remodeling Your Kitchen**, (architect, residential builders, interior decorators)
- **Questions and Answers about Search Engine Positioning**, (marketing consultants, Internet Service Providers, web designers)
- **Questions and Answers about Print-on-Demand Marketing**, (graphic designers, commercial printers, marketing consultants)

Hint

One of the best ways to identify topics for Question and Answer issues is to watch what's timeline in the newspapers like *USA Today*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and magazines like *Time* or *Newsweek*. These publications typically have their finger on the pulse of their readers, and are often first to report on the latest concerns and trends.

Translating ideas into finished newsletters

There is a simple process to create the above newsletter topics into finished newsletters. It's a process that will get easier and easier as you do it.

The *key to success* is to base each One-Page Newsletter issue on a *list*. Lists take the work out of producing each issue. Lists take the *stress out of writing* by providing a *step-by-step framework* that guides you.

Instead of being forced to be "creative"—starting with a blank screen—lists provide you with a "paint by number" or "fill in the blanks" guide to . There are three steps involved in writing a One-Page Newsletter from a topic list:

- **Choose a topic** from the above suggestions.
- **Identify 4 to 10 keywords** that support the topic and provide a framework for addressing the topic.
- **Prepare an Introduction.** In a single paragraph, explain the importance of the topic and its relevance to your market. Describe the consequences of ignoring the topic.
- **Expand on each keyword.** Describe the importance, characteristics, or the actions associated with each of the keywords you have chosen. The number of sentences needed will depends on the number of points included. In most cases, you'll only need one or two paragraphs, each containing just two or three sentences each.

- **Conclusion.** End by summarizing the importance of the topic and how your market can take the steps to either *maximize the benefits* of an opportunity or *avoid the threats* of a challenge.
- **Call to action.** This should relate the topic just discussed to the products and services you offer. *Tell your readers what to do next*, i.e., call you, visit you, download more information from your web site, etc.

Never before has it been so easy to keep in constant touch with your market while pre-selling your competence and professionalism!

Conclusion

As the above shows, the hard part of creating a One-Page Newsletter comes *before* you begin writing. Once you:

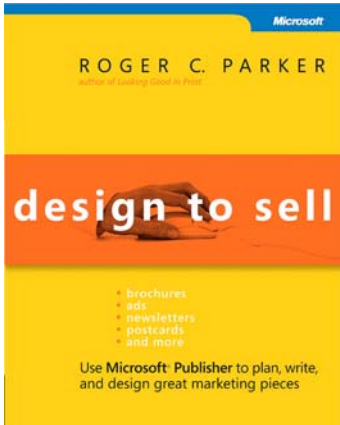
- **Define** your goals and identify your market's information needs.
- **Choose** an appropriate topic your market needs to know more about, in an area where you provide competent assistance.
- **Select** the key words associated with ideas you want to cover in each topic

Once you've identified the keywords, all you need to do is write a few, short sentences and paragraphs about each topic. The keywords will become the subheads of your newsletter, providing you with a "paint by numbers" structure.

About the author

Download Roger's free newsletter, plus **two free chapters** of *Design to Sell* at www.designtosellonline.com. You can also test your newsletter marketing IQ at www.OnePageNewsletters.com.

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Jay Conrad Levinson
author, *Guerrilla Marketing*

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Questions? Contact roger@designtosellonline.com

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