Technology for Your PTA

Document Storage & Email:

Google - Google offers access to the G Suite of apps, email, expanded document storage, google calendars and more.

> **https://www.google.com/nonprofits/**

Microsoft Office 365 - Office 365 will give your non-profit free access to online Office apps as well as document storage, email, video conferencing and more.

> **https://products.office.com/en-us/nonprofit/office-365-nonprofit**

Social Media:

Blog, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram, SnapChat

Know your target audience and which online platform your target audience is most responsive to and active on the most. It is not necessary to create an account for every social media platform. Take into account the process of maintaining and updating your content. Narrowing down your platforms and your target audience will help strategize and communicate your messages to your PTA members.

Negative comments are an inevitable part of social media. To be successful on social media, you have to be willing to take the good with the bad and recognize that you cannot control what other users say – you can only control how you react and what you post. In many cases, a post that you find disagreeable or contrary to your own opinion may not provide grounds for deletion. If you delete every post that you find objectionable, you may escalate the problem or alienate users on your page. Grounds for deleting a post include: use of profanity or derogatory language, personal insults or disrespectful language against another user, or spam or overly solicitous content. For most other comments, especially those that are of a "customer-service" nature, the best solution is to guide the conversation away from your page by having the user contact you directly via Facebook message or email. For other negative comments, it is best to respond in a respectful way and provide accurate information to support your position. Remain calm and judicious, and refrain from sharp, heated posts. Please note that you cannot delete negative comments on Twitter, but you can report or block serious offenders.

Communication with members/board:

Create an email database from memberships and use to send reminders, newsletters, etc.

Remind.com is a service that members can subscribe to, and you can send out reminders or messages easily from a phone or computer. You can create separate groups for the individual needs of your PTA.

Training:

Gain the skills you need to become a better PTA leader at PTA.org/eLearning

Take PTA e-Learning for a spin!

ptakit.org

HOW TO WRITE an AWESOME NEWSLETTER

the ANATOMY of a NEWSLETTER

What takes a newsletter from "meh" to "move over, there's a new sheriff in town"? We're spilling our secrets to break down the elements for you. Are you ready for this?

YOUR LOGO
- You better get your logo in there or else! Think of a newsletter in similar terms to a website layout: you need to let people know exactly what they're looking at from the get-go.
- Feature your primary logo prominently – near the top of every newsletter template.
- Including your logo at the very beginning sets the tone for your newsletter and ensures at least one strong aspect of your brand is present in its fully intact form.

HEADINGS
- Keep your reader moving along by using clearly differentiated heading sizes, weights and styles to let them know a new section or topic has been introduced.
- Bonus: headings are a great opportunity to incorporate your brand colors into your newsletter design.

IMAGES
- Full-width ftw: Full-width images are a great way to break up your content and add color to your newsletter.
- But! Use ONLY on-brand images! Does your brand embrace crappy stock photography? No? Then don't use crappy stock photography! It's better to just forego images altogether than to use images that don't fit your brand or message.
- Make sure to include appropriate attribution. Using an image without permission or proper attribution is stealing!

ON-BRAND EVERYTHING
- That's right: everything must be on-brand. That means colors, fonts (as best you can with your newsletter service), buttons, images, tone, content, and attitude.
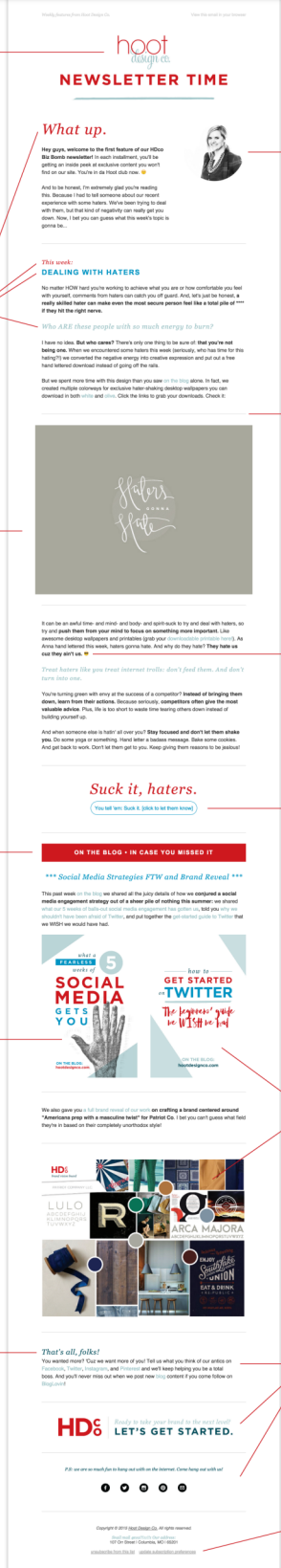
LINKS TO CONTENT
- Include links to your content (and other relevant sources, tool throughout your newsletter.
- Failing to link images is another key area many people neglect in their newsletters. You want to make it as easy as possible for a reader to find and access your content.

ENGAGING PACE
- No matter how serious your brand voice and tone is, your writing needs to be easy-to-read and engaging. You'll lose readers with stiff, boring copy or sentences that are too complex.
- Use online tools to check the reading level of your writing. An 8th grade reading level should be the absolute max you hit – 5th or 6th is best. Readers often skimming mode, so you want your content to be easy to consume.

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NEWSLETTER TIME

What up.

Hey guys, welcome to the first feature of our HDco Biz Bomb newsletter! In each installment, you'll be getting an inside peek at exclusive content you won't find on our site. You're in the Hoot club now.

And to be honest, I'm extremely glad you're reading this. Because I had to tell someone about our recent experience with some haters. We've been trying to deal with them, but that kind of negativity can really get you down. Now, I bet you can guess what this week's topic is gonna be...

This week:
DEALING WITH HATERS

No matter how HOW hard you're working to achieve what you are or how comfortable you feel with yourself, comments from haters can catch you off guard. And, let's just be honest, a really skilled hater can make even the most secure person feel like a total pile of **** if they hit the right nerve.

Who ARE these people with so much energy to burn?

I have no idea. But who cares? There's only one thing to be sure of: that you're not being one. When we encountered some haters this week (seriously, who has time for this hating?) we converted the negative energy into creative expression and put out a free hand lettered download instead of going off the rails.

But we spent more time with this design than you saw on the blog alone. In fact, we created multiple colorways for exclusive hater-shaking desktop wallpapers you can download in both white and olive. Click the links to grab your downloads. Check it:

Suck it, haters.

[You tell 'em: Suck it. (click to let them know)]

ON THE BLOG • IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

*** Social Media Strategies FTW and Brand Reveal ***

This past week on the blog we shared all the juicy details of how we conjured a social media engagement strategy out of a sheer pile of nothing this summer: we shared what our 5 weeks of balls-out social media engagement has gotten us, told you why we shouldn't have been afraid of Twitter, and put together the get-started guide to Twitter that we WISH we would have had.

SOCIAL MEDIA GETS YOU
how to GET STARTED on TWITTER

We also gave you a full brand reveal of our work on crafting a brand centered around "Americans prep with a masculine twist" for Patriot Co. I bet you can't guess what field they're in based on their completely unorthodox style!

That's all, folks!

You wanted more? Cuz we want more of you! Tell us what you think of our antics on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest and we'll keep helping you be a total boss. And you'll never miss out when we post new blog content if you come follow on Bloglovin'!

LET'S GET STARTED.

A HUMAN FACE
- Humans are programmed to gravitate toward human faces. Including an image featuring a legit human face near the top of your newsletter is a surefire way to pull your reader in. Psychology for the win!
- Bonus: make the face yours. Remember, as a small business owner you ARE your brand. Embrace and engage!
- This is one of the most widely neglected elements of an effective newsletter design.

DIVIDERS
- Yep, another human-programming fact: humans want to process information in chunks. Help your reader by breaking your content into logical sections.

EMOJI
- If emoji are on-brand for you, totally go for it.
- Including emoji is a great way to lighten the tone of your content and intersperse more key things we humans love – faces, context clues, and unexpected surprises.

INTERACTIVITY
- We're on a human processing streak! Humans love playing with stuff – and unexpected surprises.
- A click-to-tweet button or similar interactive feature within your newsletter's content is like a wake-up buzzer to readers who might be skimming content.
- Bonus: features like this are a great way to connect with readers via social media (who really clicks those "follow us on Twitter" buttons at the end, really?

VARIED SIZES
- Mixing up the shapes and sizes of your images is another way to keep readers' eyes on your content.
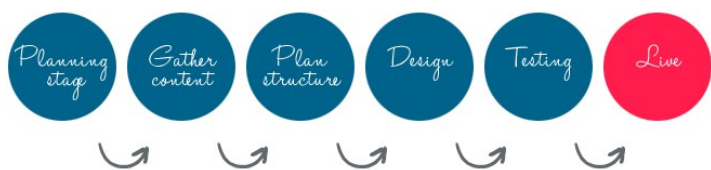
CALL(S) TO ACTION
- Call(s) to action are essential to converting a newsletter to whatever results you're hoping to see beyond your readers' continued subscription.
- If there are multiple actions you're aiming for readers to take, you need to include multiple calls to action to highlight each one.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS
- Any newsletter service you use should include elements required by law!

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Technology Products/Services:

TechSoup.com connects non-profits with tech companies that want to offer donations or products/services at a discounted price

Websites:

Wordpress.com is a free option to create a website. It is a very user-friendly tool; it takes you step by step through picking your theme and setting everything up. After the initial setup, they have tutorials that allow you to learn how to manage your website and add to it.

Wordpress.org is for serious website-builders. It is a paid version, and has more options for plug-ins and web site upgrades. If you aren't sure if your website will be worth investing in, you can start with the free version at wordpress.com and then move it over to wordpress.org if it takes off.

Website Build Process

Planning stage → Gather content → Plan structure → Design → Testing → Live

Newsletters:

Some people still want printed newsletters, and that's ok, but more and more are wanting electronic newsletters. This is as simple as creating one in a document processing software, saving as a PDF and emailing out using your email database that you created from your memberships.

Getting Volunteers:

SignUpGenius.com is BRILLIANT! If you want volunteers, you have to ASK for them. SignUpGenius takes a lot of the work out of managing volunteers. You upload your email database, create your sign up and send it out. People can sign up for time slots, items to bring, etc, and SignUpGenius will keep track of it all and even send people reminders!

SignUpGenius

Group Organizing Made Easy

Say goodbye to reply-all emails and paper sign up sheets. Coordinate events and people in minutes with online sign ups.

Create a Sign Up