

How to...

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Create

and mail a newsletter



A Microsoft Guide to Small Businesses

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Introduction

You'd be surprised how few small businesses follow-up their customers. It's an important, yet under-used, marketing strategy.

So why not consider creating a promotional newsletter? Fill it with trade news, customer stories, and new and interesting information about your business and you'll have a great tool to help you establish and improve your customer relationships.

Microsoft® Publisher is the ideal tool for this job because it can help you with the design and layout of the newsletter (a task which would be quite a challenge in Microsoft® Word), and it also has the tools to help you mail it to your customers. Even better, you don't have to be a desktop publishing expert to get some really professional-looking results.



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Plan it

To ensure your publication will be cost effective and have as much impact as possible, you should begin by determining the primary purpose of your newsletter.

You might choose to focus on updates such as information on new products and latest offers. Alternatively, you may want to build familiarity with your company, with articles featuring employees and your internal processes.

Another effective strategy is to provide “value-added” information that relates to your business, such as technical advice, tips on industry trends and information regarding legal regulations.

Once you’ve determined your purpose, consider some regular features. They will give your newsletter a consistent look and let readers know what to expect.

Possible features could include:

- *Letter from the editor or Managing Director.*
- *Question and Answer section.*
- *Feature article on a topical subject.*
- *Calendar of events.*
- *Special offers or coupons.*
- *Humour, anecdotes and other tit-bits related to your business.*



Design it

Good design helps you get your message across. If you don't have the time, desire or skills to create your own design, then it is worthwhile choosing from one of Publisher's many pre-prepared ones.

If you choose one of Publisher's designs, then use the same one again and again to ensure all of your material has the same look and feel. This will give you a co-ordinated company image.

To use Publisher's layout and designs to start your newsletter:

- Choose **New** from the **File** menu.
- Click on **Publications for Print**.
- Choose **Newsletters**.
- Scroll through the choices and select a design.

You can now use the **Newsletter Options** panel at the left hand side of the screen to set other options such as number of columns, the colour scheme and font scheme used.

To make it easy to mail your newsletter, then choose to include the customer address. This means the newsletter can be dropped straight into a window envelope without the need for additional address labels.





Create it

Having chosen the design, colours and layout for your newsletter, you now need to input the text and pictures you want to include.

Using text boxes


Generally speaking, you cannot start typing unless you are clicked in a text box. These text boxes will already be present if Publisher created the layout for you, but you can also add your own text boxes if you want to.

- To create a text box, click on the **Text Box** button  and then click and drag to draw the text box. When the text box has white handles around it (this means it is selected), you can type your text.
- Format your text by clicking and dragging over it, and choosing the appropriate option from the Formatting Toolbar. 
- Click and drag to resize or move the text box.

Changing pictures

Publisher will have inserted some sample pictures into your newsletter. To change these, first select the picture (this might take two separate mouse clicks), and then right click on it. From the menu which appears, choose **Change Picture**.

Working with multiple pages

- Add extra pages by going to the **Insert** menu and choosing **Page...**
- Navigate to different pages using the Page Navigation buttons at the bottom of your screen. 

Mail it

Having chosen to include the customer address in Step 1 of this leaflet, you can now use Publisher's mail merge facility to slot in your customers' names and addresses.

- *Display your newsletter on the screen and go to the **Tools** menu. Choose **Mail and Catalog Merge** and then **Mail and Catalog Merge Wizard**. The 5-step **Mail and Catalog Merge Wizard** starts in the task pane at the side of your screen.*

Step 1

Ensure the **Mail Merge** option is selected and move on to the next step.

Step 2

Now choose your data source – this is where your customer names and addresses are stored. Move on to the next step.

Step 3

Now you need to click in your publication in the text box where you want the customer name and address to appear. Click the **Address block** option to insert the name and address. (To be sure that Publisher has picked up the names and addresses correctly, click the **Match Fields** button to match up the headings from your data source.)

Step 4

Flick through your data using the buttons in the task pane to preview your publication and move on to the final step.

Step 5

You can use the **Print** option in the task pane to print out a copy of your publication for each customer.



Tips for working

with text boxes

Quick tips

- To zoom into your selected text box, press the **F9** function key. Press **F9** again to zoom out.
- To draw a perfectly square text box, hold down your **Shift** key while you create the text box.
- To select the whole story (the text in your text box and any connecting boxes) press **Ctrl A**.

Connecting text boxes

When a selected text box is full, you will see the overflow symbol at the bottom of the box. When this is present, you should either make your text box bigger, or connect it to another box either on the same page or another page. To connect text boxes:

- Create an empty text box ready for the overflowing text.
- Select the full box and click the **Create Text Box Link** button (left button, above).
- The mouse pointer will change to a pouring jug. Click on the empty text box to pour the overflow text into it.
- To move between connected boxes, use the 3rd/4th buttons on the bar, or click on the **Go to Previous/Next Frame** buttons which appear at the top or bottom of selected boxes connected to any other box.

Text box properties

Text Box Properties allow you to control settings like the margins within the box, and for connected boxes, text such as "Continued on page 3".

- To change text box properties, select the box.
- Go to the **Format** menu and choose **Text Box...**

The professional touch

Try some of these ideas to really make your newsletter something special.

Drop caps and fancy first words

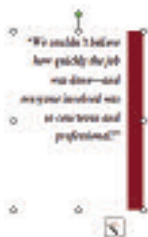
Drop caps are often used to add visual interest. To create a drop cap, click in the relevant paragraph, go to the **Format** menu and choose **Drop Cap...**



To make the whole of the first word fancy, from the same dialogue box, click on the **Custom Drop Cap** tab and choose the required options.

Pull quotes

A pull quote is an excerpt from the main text that adds interest to the page and attracts the reader's attention. To create a pull quote, go to the **Insert** menu and choose **Design Gallery Object**. Choose the **Pull Quotes** category and double click the style of your choice.



You can then type in the text, and if you want to change the design, just click the magic wand button to see the options.

Picture captions

In professional publications, you will often see caption text which briefly explains an illustration or photograph. Generally, readers look at the picture captions before reading the publication.



Go to the **Insert** menu and choose **Design Gallery Object**. Choose the **Picture Captions** category and double click the style of your choice. You can then right click on the default picture to change it to yours, and enter in the caption text.

Find the help and support you need

on Microsoft UK's products and services

Software support: There are a number of ways you can get help, advice and support from Microsoft. Microsoft® bCentral™ is a great starting point to guide you to the help and support you need and includes links to the specific areas listed below.

www.bCentral.co.uk/help/support.asp

Technology: This area provides information on how you can get more from your software investments, as well as help with specific tasks you're trying to carry out.

www.bCentral.co.uk/technology

Security: This section covers information and support on protecting your system including anti-virus options, networking systems and secure online purchasing.

www.bCentral.co.uk/technology/security

Unresolved or specific technical support queries: Microsoft has a dedicated website with centralised support resources. Here you can download software, review common issues related to your product, search the technical database (Knowledge Base), join a newsgroup and check the status of an ongoing query.

www.support.microsoft.com

Newsgroups: This page provides access to Newsgroups across a range of topics. Discuss issues with others who use Microsoft Products, including advice from Microsoft® Most Valuable Professionals (MVPs). Read interesting posts, search for specific topics, answer a question, or post your own question to any of the many groups.

www.support.microsoft.com/newsgroups

Free support calls: Retail customers may be eligible for two telephone or online support incidents at no charge. To find out if you are entitled, either telephone us on 0870 60 10 100 (8am – 6pm Mon-Fri), or submit your technical support incident online via the Microsoft UK support site to see if it is validated.

Links to other Microsoft resources from: www.bCentral.co.uk/help/microsoft.asp

Microsoft has a large number of websites designed to help you get more from your software, as well as keep it up-to-date and reliable. From this page you can follow the links to:

- **Microsoft UK home** – the place for everything Microsoft with information and resources on the entire Microsoft product range (including Microsoft® Windows®, Microsoft® Office and Servers) as well as the latest news and community offerings.
- **Office update** – to ensure you have the latest add-ons, security features and other tools on your PC.
- **Windows update** – similar to the Office update site, the section is dedicated to Windows.
- **Office for Macintosh** – find out more about how Microsoft supports the Mac and what's available – from help to the latest products available.
- **Licensing Compliance** – be sure you're using the right software.
- **Technet** – an information and community programme for IT professionals providing valuable free resources packed with technical answers and insights.
- **MSN** – for the latest consumer news and views.

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2. How to... Make sense of your financial data
3. How to... Create a website
4. How to... Create brochures and flyers
5. How to... Create and mail a newsletter

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