

MLIS/1/CT/03 Unit-2

Newsletters


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NEWSLETTERS

Newsletter can be defined as a serial consisting of one or a few pages in print, electronic or any other form, containing recent information or news which is of interest to a special or particular group of users and which is published periodically. Organisations often issue newsletters to members or subscribers.

History of Newsletters: Newsletters are forerunners of modern newspapers, current in use in 1600s and early 1700s, which presented news for general circulation. The earlier printed newsletters or news-sheets, which were often called occurrents or intelligencers were published in Europe's commercial centres. These newsletters contained business news and news of other public events likely to interest bankers and merchants. Newsletters were then followed by news-sheets. Official news-sheets began to appear during 1500s. written notices were posted up in public places in Venice.



They could be read on payment of a coin called a gazetta. The term gazette, a common name for early newspaper is derived from this practice. The first regularly published news-sheet seems to have been the Avis Relation oder Zeitung. From 1609, this news-sheet was published weekly in Strasbourg, then in Germany. In the U.S. the first newsletter to make its appearance in 1704 was Boston News-Letter, which eventually became a newspaper. In fact, in the 1700s, many newsletters flourished, and in the 1800s, most of them went the way of newspapers.

By early 1900s, newsletters made a comeback, apparently, businesses and industries needed a specialised information medium badly and newsletters filled up this void. The first one to appear in 1904 was 'Babson's Reports', an investment advisory newsletter. This was followed by Kiplinger Letter in 1923.

This newsletter continues to be the most widely read business-forecasting periodical in the world. In the 1930s, corporate newsletters emerged rapidly. Telecommunications Reports (a telecommunication industry newsletter) took the lead in 1934, this was followed by a series of newsletters. All types of newsletters ranging from farming to fashion became a common place. In 1964, the first newsletter about newsletters, Newsletter on Newsletters came out.

Types of Newsletters: Newsletters can be categorised into different types

based on the publishing organisations such as:

- R&D Organisations (National and International)
- Associations (National and International)
- Government Organisations; Public Sector Undertakings
- Private Institutions and Academic Institutions,



Functions:

Newsletters are publications, which are simple in format and provide speedy information for a definite group of audience. The newsletters are relatively easy, fast and inexpensive to produce. Most of the organisations issue newsletters to communicate news of their activities to the target audience in a timely and speedy manner.


The Newsletter serves as a medium to:

- Publicise or promote products and services of the institutions.
- Announce current and forthcoming events like conferences, seminars or workshops.
- Communicate information about social and cultural activities, personnel information, appointments, promotions, transfers, retirements, obituaries, etc. of the concerned institution(s).



Contents:

Contents of newsletters are based on the purpose of the newsletter. Different types of newsletters cover different category of information. For instance, newsletters issued by R&D organisations carry information about programmes of the organisation, grants and fellowships, awards and rewards, forthcoming conferences/seminars/workshops, news from research institutions, reports on seminars conferences, etc. and technical / scientific articles e.g., International Sorghum and Millet Newsletter by ICRISAT (International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics). Newsletters published by associations cover president's reports/remarks, announcements of association, employment news, personnel information and other news of interest to the member community e.g.,

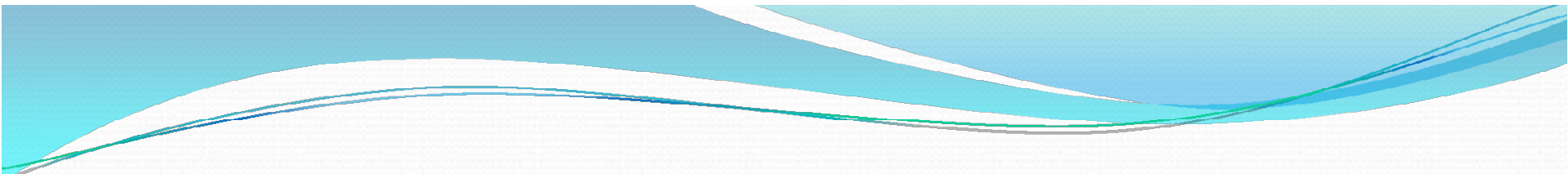


IASLIC Newsletter published by Association of Special Libraries and Information Centres. Newsletters from industrial enterprises are of two types, one for internal circulation and the other for external circulation. The newsletter for external circulation covers information about new products and services, highlights the achievements of the organisation, announces discounts and benefits for the customers, etc. Whereas the one for internal circulation covers news of the employees such as promotion, transfer, wedding, etc. announcements of welfare measures for the employees, social and cultural activities of the employees including sports, etc. and sometimes popular articles, short stories, jokes, etc. by the employees.



Electronic Newsletters:

Newsletters published and distributed electronically over the computer networks are known as electronic newsletters. E-Newsletters started appearing in 1990s and have proliferated since then. These are distributed by e-mail to people who voluntarily subscribe to them online. Initially, e-newsletters contained hyperlinks to web pages - a method employed by website operators to draw users to their sites. However various studies on usage of e-newsletters showed that users were more interested in getting information from their e-mail account than from websites. So e-newsletters became full-fledged and content-rich publications. More and more people in business and industry are advertising their products through e-newsletters, as they believe that, their advertisements are better targeted and more effective than banner advertisements..



From 1991 to 2001, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) followed the growth of electronic publications through its annual “Directory of Electronic Journals, Newsletters and Academic Discussion Lists” (<http://www.arl.org/scomm/edir/archive.html>). This directory showed the amazing growth of e-serials in this ten-year period and predicted the continued prominence of Internet publishing scholarly as well as business communication




Benefits of e-mail Newsletters:

- E-mail newsletters are convenient and delivered straight to the user's information desk.
- E-mail newsletters have timely information and real-time delivery
- E-mail newsletters are informative and keep users up-to-date.
- Users have high emotional reaction to e-mail newsletters. As they arrive in users inbox, users have ongoing relation with them and at times, if found useful, users forward them to their colleagues or friends



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Thank You