

Genealogical & Historical Council of Sacramento Valley
Discussion Session Notes – November 10, 2008

How to Publish an Electronic Newsletter

- ❖ Advantages of an Electronic Newsletter:
 - Takes less time to assemble than folding, labeling, stamping, and mailing a paper newsletter.
 - Costs less than printing and mailing a paper newsletter.
 - Offer your members a discount on their dues if they opt to receive their newsletter in electronic format only.
 - Can include live web and e-mail hyperlinks.
 - Can publish in color. Can include good-quality images of pictures, maps, etc.
- ❖ Publication and Delivery Options:
 - Publish and send as an e-mail in text format. (Boring to look at, no color, no pictures.)
 - Publish and send as an e-mail in html format. (Can create a more attractive layout, but some people can not, or will not, receive html e-mails.)
 - Publish in PDF format and send as an e-mail attachment. (Looks just like a paper newsletter, but some people can not, or will not, accept e-mail attachments.)
 - Several pdf conversion programs are available for download free online, including CutePDF, PrimoPDF, and PDF995.
 - Publish in PDF format and upload to website. Send an e-mail notice with a hyperlink to the file for downloading. (Requires newsletter editor and webmaster to work cooperatively.)
 - To prevent non-members from downloading the file:
 - Upload the file to your website, but do not place a link to it on the site. The file will be out there, but no one will be able to access it without knowing the file name/location. Members will use the link in their e-mail notice to find and download the file.
 - Or, if your website has a members-only area, you can put a link to the file there.
- ❖ E-mail Considerations and Problems
 - If sending mass e-mails directly to your members, send by “blind copy” to protect the privacy of their e-mail addresses.
 - Consider setting up a special mailing list for sending out the newsletter or newsletter notices.
 - There are mailing lists available (other than RootsWeb) that are not archived and will allow attachments.
 - Set up the list so that only the list administrator can subscribe/unsubscribe members to the list, and only the administrator (or other authorized person) can post messages to the list.
 - Spam filters are a problem. E-mails will not always reach all intended recipients.
 - Keeping members’ e-mail addresses up-to-date requires ongoing effort. They change with a much greater frequency than postal addresses.
- ❖ Have back-up technicians in case your editor or webmaster becomes unavailable to do the technical work:
 - Create the electronic newsletter (pdf) file.
 - Upload the file to website (if making available for downloading).
 - E-mail out the newsletter, file attachment, or download notice. The person doing this needs access to the mailing list.