



## Newsletters: So Much More Than a Writing Chore

*by Nikki Myers*

Newsletters are a great way to build community and set yourself up as the local expert in your field. Who are your patients or potential patients going to turn to with questions or when they need reassurance about their dental health? You! Using a simple, regular newsletter will do that for you.

Overwhelming as it might seem, starting a newsletter is easy when you take a bit of time to plan. A monthly schedule, pre-chosen topics based on holidays or seasons, and a standard 500-word count goal is all you need to get started.

## Begin with a year outline

Start by writing down the months in the year and a topic for that month. You can choose your topic by the seasons, by jotting down the most frequently asked questions from your patients, or by visiting a website such as [www.nationaldaycalendar.com](http://www.nationaldaycalendar.com) to look for monthly recognitions or days within that month that would make a good topic choice.

### **For example:**

#### **April**

Baseball and softball begin in the spring. Make mouth protection for sports your April topic. The first week of April is *Oral, Head, and Neck Cancer Awareness Week*. Remind your patients that hygiene appointments include a visual scan for signs of oral cancer.

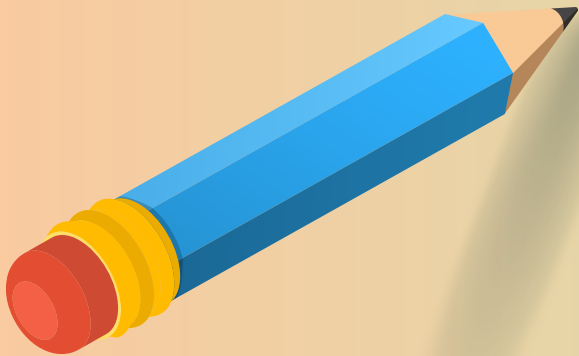
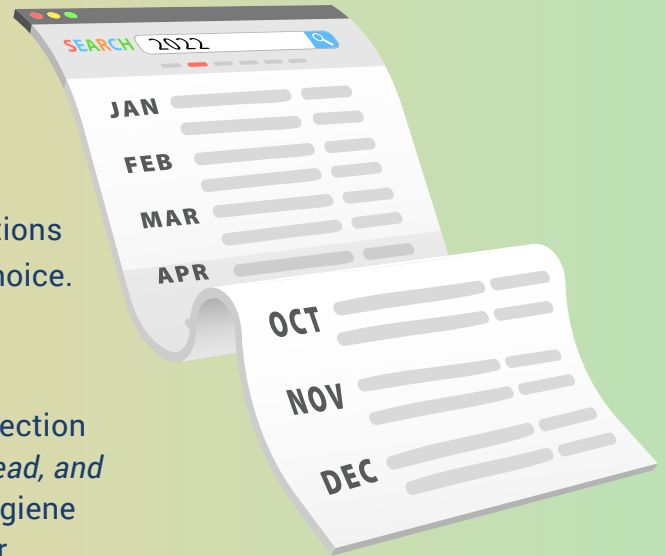
#### **May**

The end of the school year is coming and so is the *Memorial Day Holiday*. Suggest an exam to start the summer with a healthy mouth. Share a favorite cook-out recipe or two from your employees. Make a list of healthy and good snacks that can be part of a gathering or celebration.

#### **June**

Here comes summer! And so many national day themes you could lose count. Write a *Father's Day* message to all the fathers and father figures. Remind people not to gnaw on random items on *National Ballpoint Pen Day*. Or remind them about the importance of flossing after they indulge on *National Corn on the Cob Day*. People begin traveling during June. What do they often forget? Give them a list of oral health items to take with them on vacation.

### **You get the idea!**



## Time to write

Don't let the thought of writing an article stop you. Did you know that 500 words is about 4 minutes of talking? You can talk about an oral health topic for 4 minutes, can't you? Use the dictation feature on your phone or computer. Dictate directly into a document, or dictate an email to yourself that you can later copy and paste into a document. You talk to your patients all the time. You inform them about oral health all day. Turn that into your newsletter.

If you don't feel your writing skills are up to the task, ask for editing and proofing help. Don't have a writer or proofer in your practice? You can find a freelance copy editor or look for a copywriter that can turn your 4-minute dictation into your article. Resources like [flexjobs.com](http://flexjobs.com), [freelancer.com](http://freelancer.com), or LinkedIn's professional community exist to help small business owners complete tasks like a monthly newsletter.

## Putting it all together – Email list services

Here's where the fun begins for creative types. How do you get your newsletter out there, and to whom do you send it? Your patients are your audience, and there are online companies that specialize in email delivery. Chances are you have gotten emails sent to you through one of them.

### MailChimp

Mailchimp is an easy platform to work with once you get through some basic tutorials. You can drop your content into their templates. They have a free plan you can begin using right away. As you grow and need more features, their monthly plans start at \$9.99 a month.

### Constant Contact

The second most popular email platform, Constant Contact, gives you templates to help you design. You can start a free trial and see if this platform is best for you. Their basic email plan is \$20 per month.

### Integrations

Check with your practice management system. It may have integrations with email platforms that will eliminate the task of uploading emails and creating your contact lists.

## Wait! There's More!!

Once you have your newsletter written, there is much more you can do than send it to a list of emails. Work smart. Use that content as much as you can.



- Link your email platform to your social accounts. When the email goes out, a social media post automatically generates.
- Post the article on your website or blog.
- Video yourself talking about your topic. The video can be posted on social media during the month. Don't forget YouTube.
- Record yourself reading that newsletter. Post the recording on your website.

One article can generate a newsletter, social media posts, a blog or website article, and a video for YouTube and all your social media. Why not put that recording, instead of music, on your phone system if your patients have to hold!

A newsletter has far-reaching marketing potential. Always include links to your website and social accounts, list your phone number and hours of operation (especially any holiday closures), and encourage feedback and comments. When questions or comments come in, be sure to answer them promptly.

Cultivating the relationship between your office and your patients is important to build trust, reliability, and to set yourself up as their oral health expert. With a plan, a bit of dedicated time, and the right tools to make the task simple and fun, a newsletter is a great way to keep in touch with your patients.



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## FUN! Fact

**Australia has released  
a \$2 coin featuring  
the Tooth Fairy!**



Not only that,  
they've developed a kit to  
celebrate losing a baby tooth,  
with the special coin,  
a bamboo toothbrush,  
a floating glitter fairy pen,  
a tooth chart,  
and a special message  
from the Tooth Fairy!

## Ask the Consultant

**Q:** What is the maximum fee we can charge a patient for records?

**A:** State Board of Dentistry regulations require that record reproduction in a private office should be provided either gratuitously or for a "reasonable" fee reflecting the cost of reproduction. Charges made to patients for the reproduction of records should not be more than the cost of the reproduction of the records.

If the patient is enrolled in Medicaid, reproduction of records is no charge to the patient.

*Response provided by [Ramona Colbert](#).*

**Have a question?**

*Submit it through your Trojan online account or relay it through the service department. We'll attempt to find the answer with one of our renown consultants!*





## Service Savvy

### Just a Friendly Reminder!

Our Trojan Benefit Service clients have used many ways to update Trojan data; paper copies, microfiche, four-inch floppy discs, CDs, and now secure, online data downloads.

However, some of you are forgetting to update! The arrival of the CD in the past served as a physical reminder that it was time to update. To ensure you have the latest plan research, update at least once a week. Frequent updates keep the update process as quick as possible.

We have a few suggestions to help you remember downloading and processing your updates.

1. Make sure the Trojan Communicator is always running. It can be set to remind you each week to run an update.
2. Assign a particular employee to perform the task on a weekly basis.
3. Use tools like Microsoft's Post-it Notes on your desktop to set a reminder.
4. Add updating Trojan to the checklist for another routine or office procedure.
5. Do you have a morning huddle? Run the update while you talk.
6. Do you have time set aside to catch up on messages? Run the update during this time.


Make frequent updates part of your routine. Remember, the more often you update, the less time it will take.

If you have any questions or need assistance with the updates, please feel free to contact our Software Support Department at 800-451-9723, ext. 1.

Get the help you need at your convenience. Visit [Trojanonline.com](http://Trojanonline.com) and click **APPOINTMENT CALENDARS**. Select the **TRAINING CALENDAR** to schedule an appointment, and Trojan's Support Department will show you how to run the update.

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**Software Support is available Monday through Friday,  
6 AM to 4 PM PST at 800-451-9723, Ext 1.**



Check out [trojanonline.com](http://trojanonline.com)  
for some of our favorite  
"classic" Trojan Today articles:

2/15 **Doing a Good Job**  
by Mark Dunn

2/25 **When Bad Meetings  
Happen To  
Good People**  
by Debra  
Engelhart-Nash

### Quote-Worthy

“ If your actions  
inspire others  
to dream more,  
learn more, do more,  
and become more,  
you are a leader. ”

— John Quincy Adams

# Check it Out!

## Colgate Offers

Colgate Oral Health Network –  
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## Academy of General Dentistry

Practice Tools

For more information: [agd.org](http://agd.org)

## DIY Digital Dental Consulting

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for Today's Dental World

For more information:

<https://diydentalconsulting.com/>

## American Association of Dental Office Management

AADOM for dental office managers

For more information:

<https://www.dentalmanagers.com/>

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for details

## Sign up for your own copy of Trojan Today

<https://trojanonline.com/trojan-today/sign-up/>

## What Clients Say



"Trojan's name says it all!

Their services are the utmost in professionalism. We are daily users of Trojan's Eligibility request services for our patients and find it a very useful tool. Thank you, Trojan, for helping us out."

— A.W., Bookkeeper



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