

What is a Camera Club Newsletter?

The Internet has radically altered the manner in which a camera club newsletter can be presented. Editors have been relieved of the repetitive tasks of printing, copying, stapling and delivering newsletters and a club no longer has to worry about the expense of publishing a beautiful colored newsletter. **The editor can concentrate on what is truly important, the contents of the newsletter.** But what should be included in the contents of a camera club newsletter?

Some items are mandatory. First and foremost, as this discussion is about camera club newsletters, the editor will certainly include both monochrome and color photographs from members. The editor might include the top print, slide, or digital image of the month, or an image that has won recognition outside of club competitions. Opportunities to present photographs should never be sacrificed for the inclusion of clip art. Secondly, articles should be included: "How-to" articles or articles discussing trends in photography or ethical issues are always interesting. The third mandatory feature should be member news. Positive gossip is always fun to read and will make the newsletter more interesting. Is there a member that has had success in the Photographic Society of America's (PSA) *Print of the Month* competition? Have members successfully competed in PSA-recognized International Exhibitions? Is a member exhibiting locally? Publish that member's name along with an award-winning photograph. Consider having a special page that features a camera club member and pictorial effort. The newsletter is communicating with photographers so the content should be interesting and pertinent to photographers.

Contact information is very important. A list of the officers and committee chair heads is appropriate. Whether or not you include telephone numbers is optional because some members might object to telephone numbers going out over the internet, but use e-mail addresses as they are less intrusive. The important objective is to provide a method of communication for members or prospective

members. Do include the club's web site address. Consider including a list of URLs of club members' web sites.

The inclusion of club competition winners is optional because there now are alternative methods of distributing this important information. Some clubs post monthly winners on the club's web site or the list is sent out in an e-mail through the club's e-mail group. These methods are preferable for clubs that do not publish a monthly newsletter.

The appearance and presentation of the publication is of paramount importance. Choose a color scheme and font selection and use them consistently. Use an appropriate size font for the readership. For instance, if publishing for a group over age 50, Times New Roman at point 12 is a good selection. The master design should be pleasing to the eye and inviting to the reader. Number the pages so that if members choose to print the newsletter, the order of the pages will make sense. If your newsletter is delivered through the website, make sure that the margins of the pages are sufficient to permit successful printing. Use the software's "spell check," but, note that spell check is not fool proof and have another member proof read the newsletter.

Balance the newsletter with a variety of information. Is there a good balance between past and future events? Are long and short articles included? Include information on speakers and judges. The club calendar or schedule of events is a good candidate for inclusion. Upcoming field trips can be cited.

There are many software programs that an editor can utilize in producing a club newsletter. For cost efficiency, a word processing program and MS Publisher, or its equivalent, are minimal necessities. If the editor can afford to spend money, then purchase Adobe InDesign or Quark. Both of these expensive programs have a steep learning curve. The editor must decide what can be afforded and how much time and effort can be mustered.

PSA does encourage all newsletters to use the PSA annual conference logo as well as the PSA logo itself in a club's newsletter. Have the

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club's PSA representative write an article on PSA happenings.

PSA has many resources available for editors. Visit <http://www.psa-photo.org/cccibc02.htm> and view the list of the 2006 International Newsletter Winners. There is a link to every newsletter which will enable an editor to view award winning newsletters from around the world. It is a superlative source for ideas. Study each newsletter and learn.

Editors can request to join the PSA **PhotoEditors group at <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/PhotoEditors/>**. The Group is an online e-mail group of 158 editors from PSA camera clubs. Many of them are experienced, award winning editors who are willing to discuss problems and questions. Free, shared articles, jokes, and fillers for use in camera club newsletters can be found on the site. Information on PSA and tips for editors are included. There is a section with links to newsletters around the world and editors can

refer to past e-mails to see what the group has been discussing.

A third resource available from PSA is the International Newsletter Contest which provides free entry to all PSA Camera Club Newsletters. The act of preparing a newsletter for competition will motivate its editor to produce a truly outstanding newsletter. Each entry receives a written evaluation from a panel of three judges. For information, e-mail contest director Margaret Sprott at **dick_margaret@verizon.net**.

Being an editor is a volunteer job that is truly a labor of love. Producing a camera club newsletter is a satisfying and creative endeavor. Editors from the many camera clubs around the world are to be applauded for the time and effort that are put into producing the many fine camera club newsletters. 🍷

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