

THE OVERALL STRATEGIC THRUST

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General facts about newsletters  
*And how are they most effective*

Company newsletters are known to be outstanding and effective public relations tools. They permit exceptionally precise targeting, are cost-effective, user-friendly and reasonably easy to produce.

And by keeping an updated mailing list, an industry can develop an ongoing relationship with selected target audiences.

The key to developing an effective newsletter lies in both its ability to inform in a credible fashion and in its creative edge. The right blend of reliable editorial, colour, graphics and design is critical in generating the appropriate marketing mix that will ensure getting results.

Overall objectives  
*Getting our message out, on our own terms, unfiltered*

No one will argue that the industry needs to take pro-active actions to somewhat bring the tobacco debate back some semblance of balance rather than one based primarily on the propaganda spread by the anti tobacco lobby. And neither will anyone dispute the fact that a newsletter cannot do this on its own. However, what a newsletter can do is to enhance the industry's ability to reach key target audiences, and present the "other side" of critical tobacco issues.

The overall objective in developing a newsletter for the industry is to bring forward a vehicle that will present, in a dependable and credible way, the seldom heard side of tobacco related issues.

No doubt this will surprise some, anger others and at the outset, not

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change anyone's mind about our industry. Nevertheless, with time and if its content is dependable and trustworthy, the newsletter clearly can contribute in shifting spontaneous negative attitudes to more objective and balanced initial judgements about public policy issues the industry will be faced with.

The success of the newsletter will depend on its credibility and in its ability to inform.

For example, the conclusions of the media analysis on plain packaging tell us that the journalistic community has barely covered the issue itself, but rather chose to report on related tobacco matters. One of the reasons that our message isn't getting out is due to the lack of interest from Ottawa based journalists, most of whom are much more interested in hot political stories than they are on fundamental public policy debates.

Because they get their information via the same media as the general population, one can assume that the journalistic community in general, except for those reporters who covered the hearings, knows very little about the issue of plain packaging.

The newsletter will therefore provide the industry with opportunities to present its point of view on - among other issues - this very important and critical subject. What is said must be relevant and informative. The tone should be intelligent, dispassionate and non-confrontational.

In developing the conceptual framework for the newsletter, we must keep in mind that we will be walking a fine line between outright advocacy and a passive neutrality. While the newsletter must be informative and unemotional, we want it to become an effective vehicle to get our own message out.

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**The Challenge**  
***Being read and seen as credible***

Since our primary target audience gets inundated with materials - a news editor can get as much as 100 pieces of mail in one day alone - we must ensure that its format, style and substance get their attention.

So our first challenge is to get our target audience not to, upon receiving it, trash it and following that, that they read it. In this regard, originality of graphic design and credibility of content is crucial. Also, keeping a balanced approach between editorial comment and reprints will be essential. Editorials or advocacy pieces only would be perceived as propaganda, and reprints only would be seen as useless fillers. Comments will have to be informative, detached, factual and substantive while reprints will have to be relevant to current public policy debates. A balanced combination of both is critical and in our view will do the trick.

**Target audiences**

The following list of target audiences is substantial, and all categories don't necessarily need to be targeted at the outset. All can be gradually included in our mailings.

***Media representatives and stakeholder groups - 500***

Media editorialists, columnists and beat reporters (influence change in the attitudes and tone of those who cover tobacco related issues by specifically targeting business reporters and columnists instead of health reporters only, whom hold strong views on matters related to tobacco);

Industry allies and stakeholder groups:

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**Industry employees - 6300**

Tobacco manufacturers employees, growers and processors;

**Politicians - 6000**

Federal MP's (295);

Provincial MLA's (700);

Mayors (4500);

**Business leaders - top 500**

Business community representatives and important Chambers of Commerce;

**Weeklies (1000)**

All weekly newspapers across Canada;

**The Editor**

**Paul Palango and CTMC**

As a representative of the Industry, CTMC could not ever be perceived to hold independent views on tobacco related issues. Also, human resources available here cannot permit us to undertake the task of writing and editing a newsletter, without seriously neglecting other important ones

Therefore, we recommend that the newsletter's editor should be a professional of the news business, with a keen sense of what will appeal to our primary target audience, ie. media representatives. The chosen Editor cannot be an insider of the industry, nor should he/she have ever been identified with any tobacco related issue.

Although CTMC will supervise content, with appropriate discussions with lawyers, a CTMC identified editor would clearly give the impression that views contained in the newsletter are anything but dependable.

A well known journalist undertaking this task would become news in itself and would bring attention to the newsletter during the early stages of its publication.

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In this regard, Paul Palango is the ideal candidate. A best selling author and veteran investigative journalist, Paul, a non-smoker, has spent 13 years at the Globe and Mail.

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