

Newsletters

Newsletters allow the college, as well as some individual programs and offices, to keep a targeted audience informed and engaged.

@Cypress

Cypress College publishes the weekly @Cypress newsletter every Monday during the spring and fall semesters. The purpose is to inform both internal and external audiences — students, current and retired employees, alumni, and community stakeholders — of campus news, events, opportunities, etc.

Separate newsletters are sent to employees and students/external constituents to be tailored to those particular audiences.

[Insert details from Newsletter retooling session here.]

To propose a story and/or event for inclusion in an edition of @Cypress, please email Marcie Kagawa in the Office of Campus Communications.

Program/Office-Specific Newsletters

Some college programs and offices have newsletters they distribute to their own targeted audiences. These should be used to add value to individual recipients in some way, supplying relevant, interesting content tailored to the specific audience.

These newsletters should not be sent to the entire campus, either to all users or all students. Successful emails, particularly newsletters, are targeted to a core audience that has expressed or would understandably have high interest in the newsletter subject.

Designs should incorporate Cypress College branding elements to clearly convey that the newsletter is sent from an official Cypress College account. Cohesive branding is important to continue building and reinforcing Cypress College as a premier California community college.

Please include Marc Posner, Marcie Kagawa, and Cari Jorgensen of the Office of Campus Communications in the list of recipients of all newsletters. This will provide the office with access to web versions of newsletters to link to on the college website and in editions of @Cypress, as well as possible content to include natively in @Cypress.

Here are some tips to help you create a newsletter your audience will want to open:

- **Be creative with subject lines.** How will your audience read the newsletter you've carefully compiled if they don't even want to open it? Give readers a reason to open. Changing up the subject line instead of keeping it the same week after week or month after month will keep the newsletter fresh instead of conditioning the same response or actions from recipients, particularly the automatic trash click.
- **Send curated content.** Regurgitating general, irrelevant information, especially if that information has already been shared elsewhere, won't keep those opens coming. Content should always be interesting, thoughtful, engaging, and related to the specific purpose of the newsletter and audience.
- **Designate a primary call-to-action.** Newsletters inherently have numerous calls to action, but

Visual identity is more than just a logo.

most readers don't have time for much more than one or two clicks. Choose one primary action you'd like readers to take and make it simple for them to do. Including the action at the top of the newsletter (ideally above the fold) with a unique callout not repeated elsewhere in the newsletter is one of the easiest ways to achieve this.

- **Less is more.** Provide just enough information to give readers a general idea and entice them to take some sort of action, like click on a button, link, or photo. Those who don't click will still read the most important information; those who do click will provide helpful data about your audience and their interests for future content. Outside of the featured "story," refrain from publishing more than one to two sentences per piece of content.
- **Balance text and images.** Newsletters should incorporate small bits of text with images, graphics, and video. But be careful! Too much of either can create a messy, disorganized, and confusing newsletter that readers will not want to continue reading — or opening.
- **Embrace white space.** Newsletters can easily feel cluttered, so allowing for sufficient white space around and between text and elements is essential.
- **Keep accessibility in mind.** Emails should be ADA compliant, so remember to always enter alternate text for photos and graphics. Also be sure your design uses highly contrasting colors.
- **Understand that some readers will want to unsubscribe.** There should be a simple, clear mechanism for readers to opt out of receiving newsletters or emails from a specific email address or account. Though this doesn't sound ideal, it ensures that your content is ending up in the inboxes of a receptive audience.